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<tr>
<td>CMW</td>
<td>United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families</td>
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<td>CRC</td>
<td>Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECLAC</td>
<td>United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
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<td>GFMD</td>
<td>Global Forum on Migration and Development</td>
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<td>GMG</td>
<td>Global Migration Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>IFRC</td>
<td>International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
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<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAS</td>
<td>Organization of American States</td>
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<tr>
<td>OHCHR</td>
<td>Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDC</td>
<td>Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNCTAD</td>
<td>United Nations Conference on Trade and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDESA</td>
<td>United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<td>UNHCR</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
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<td>UNITAR</td>
<td>United Nations Institute for Training and Research</td>
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<td>UNODC</td>
<td>United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN Women</td>
<td>United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
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GMG SYMPOSIUM HIGHLIGHTS AND OUTCOMES

- The GMG Symposium *Migration and Youth: Harnessing Opportunities for Development on 17–18 May 2011 at UNICEF House in New York* was attended by over 200 high-level participants, including civil society representatives. The Symposium aimed at bringing together a wide range of experts and practitioners to discuss current knowledge, identify research gaps, share good practices and present future trends in order to increase the positive impacts and minimize the negative effects of migration on the development prospects of youth.

- The GMG examined the impact of migration on the human development of young migrants from a multi-dimensional perspective, including gender and rights, as well as South-South migration flows. The Symposium marked an important milestone in bringing together youth development experts and stakeholders. Moreover, the GMG Symposium aimed at enhancing the visibility of youth migration ahead of the UN General Assembly Informal Thematic Debate on Migration and Development (GA Informal Debate). *The GMG Symposium took place immediately before the GA Informal Debate*, held on 19 May 2011. The Office of the President of the General Assembly (PGA) and the GMG worked together to gather momentum around the GA Informal Debate, most notably by ensuring that the Debate and the GMG Symposium were complementary and mutually reinforcing. The UNICEF GMG Chair coordinated efforts with the PGA and UNDESA, as well as other members of the GMG, to guarantee effective and active participation of civil society at both the GMG Symposium and the GA Informal Debate.

- In spite of the growing number of young people affected by international migration, youth has been largely absent¹ from research, public debate and policies on migration and development. There are approximately 35 million international migrants between the ages of 10 and 24, which represent about 17 percent² of the 214 million international migrants. Youth account for a large proportion of the persons changing their country of residence in any given year, proportions that can be up to 50 percent or higher in some countries. Moreover, the numbers of youth born to migrant parents and of children and youth affected by migration in countries of origin exceed this percentage by far.

- A set of recommendations and key policy messages that emerged from the GMG Symposium are provided in pages 9-25.

PARTICIPANTS

- High-level participants included the President of the 65th session of the UN General Assembly, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on International Migration and Development, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, the Swiss Chair-in-Office of the 2011 Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), three Global Migration Group (GMG) Principals (International Organization for Migration, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Children’s Fund), three GMG Deputy Principals (United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Women), and other GMG senior

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management representatives. A synopsis of the presentations of high-level participants throughout the Symposium is provided in Section 2 below.

- The GMG Symposium benefited from the active support of the GFMD Chairs (incumbent Swiss GFMD Chair and two former GFMD Chairs, Philippines and Mexico); the latter were represented by their respective Ambassadors, who actively participated in leading some of the panels. Twenty six high-level Member State delegates participated in the two-day event.

- Civil society played an active role in preparations leading up to the GMG Symposium as well as during its proceedings. The GFMD Civil Society Coordinator and Representative made a contribution in the high-level opening session, and the NGO Committee on Migration collaborated with the GMG in different aspects of the event.

- A number of experts and Member State delegates already planning to attend the GA Informal Debate also participated in the GMG Symposium and contributed substantially to the discussions.

**PROCESS OUTCOMES**

- The GMG Symposium generated discussions and raised awareness on the youth dimensions of the migration and development nexus for the participating high-level and working level representatives from United Nations Member States, civil society and GMG Member Agencies.

- The GMG Symposium aimed at providing substantive inputs for the discussions at the GA Informal Debate, highlighting the youth, human rights and gender perspectives, as well as practical insights and areas of policy intervention for the near future. During the preparation for the GMG Symposium, two substantial GMG inputs were produced for the GA Informal Debate, namely the Joint GMG Statement and the Priorities for Action.

- The concerns raised and recommendations made at the GMG Symposium were most relevant to Member State discussions at the GA Informal Debate 2011. Youth issues had come up during the 2010 GFMD in Mexico, as well as in two resolutions of the UN General Assembly from December 2010, which underscored the role of youth migration in the development of countries of origin, transit and destination, as well as the need to protect young migrants. As the President of the UN General Assembly, H. E. Ambassador Joseph Deiss, highlighted in his remarks at the concluding session of the GMG Symposium, “The conclusions of these two days of discussions will usefully feed into our Thematic Debate tomorrow as well as into the High-

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3 H. E. Ambassador Eduard Gnesa, Swiss Chair of the 2011 GFMD intervened in the Closing Session of the Symposium. H.E. Ambassador Libran N. Cabactulan, Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Philippines to the United Nations, participated in Roundtable 1.1 on “Enhancing Development through International Cooperation on Migration”. H. E. Ambassador Claude Heller, Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations, participated in Session 3 on “Enhancing the Contributions of Young Migrants to Development”.


6 Both GA resolutions recognize “the contributions of young migrants to countries of origin and destination, and in that regard encouraging States to consider the specific circumstances and needs of young migrants” (A/RES/65/212 and A/RES/65/170).
Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Youth that will take place in New York on 25 and 26 July 2011.”

- The GMG Symposium led to **fruitful cooperation and strengthened partnerships with civil society organizations**. Civil society representatives were very involved at many stages of the preparation of the Symposium, contributed as speakers and rapporteurs to the various panels, and provided useful recommendations following the GMG Symposium.

- Another critical outcome of the GMG Symposium refers to **meaningful youth participation**. Youth participants attended a one-day participatory workshop designed to enable them to reflect and share their experiences and views. This approach provided an opportunity for young people to discuss good practices and prepare recommendations to Symposium participants. This also allowed youth stakeholders to present their fresh perspectives and to influence the ongoing policy dialogue on child and youth migration. The GMG Symposium illustrated how meaningful youth participation can avoid the pitfalls of tokenism by recognizing youth as agents of change who should have a stake in ongoing policy conversations and follow-up processes.

- The organization of the GMG Symposium brought all **16 GMG Member Agencies** together and **increased the GMG inter-agency collaboration and visibility** on critical migration and development issues concerning youth. It also allowed participants to focus on priorities for policy action related to international cooperation on migration and development. These collaborative efforts strengthened both the practical outcomes of the GMG Symposium and value-added by GMG Member Agencies. Ownership was given to particular clusters of GMG Agencies to focus on specific panels and outputs. The joint preparatory efforts for the GMG Symposium also stimulated collaboration among GMG Member Agencies to agree on a Joint GMG Statement and the Priorities for Action for the GA Informal Debate.

- It is hoped that some of the insights gained at the GMG Symposium can also inform other thematic meetings in the fall of 2011, especially the **GFMD 2011 Concluding Debate**.

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7 For more information on the methodology used to enable youth participants to share their views and experiences, as well as information on key points raised by youth delegates during the Symposium, please see: Annex 5.
OUTPUTS

The GMG Symposium produced:

- **Joint GMG Statement**[^8].
- **GMG Priorities for Action** on *Migration, Development and International Cooperation*[^9].
- **Factsheet on Adolescents, Youth and International Migration: Figures and Facts**[^10].
- **Six briefing papers.** The preparation of briefing papers was undertaken by clusters of GMG Agencies working together for each session. Draft versions of the briefing papers were reviewed by all 16 GMG Agencies. The briefing papers were part of the materials distributed to participants at the GMG Symposium and are available on the GMG website[^11].
- **Two GMG Symposium reports (GMG Symposium Report and GMG Symposium Proceedings Report).**
- **Forty panellist presentations.** Most of the presentations are available on the GMG website.
- **Audio and video recordings** of the proceedings are also available upon request.

KNOWLEDGE GAPS

- In spite of the magnitude and potential of youth migration and the importance of migration issues for youth in countries of origin, transit and destination, **many knowledge gaps remain**[^12].
- **Institutional capacities must be developed through financial and technical support** to facilitate the collection and analysis of *sex- and age-disaggregated statistical data* by government officials in cooperation with research institutions, in order to identify trends and emerging issues related to migration and development that will inform the formulation of future policies.
- It is not sufficiently understood how the protection of the **human rights** (including economic and social rights) of **young migrants** can allow them to positively contribute to both their countries of origin and destination. More studies are also needed on the **economic impact of the exclusion of migrants** and on the causal mechanisms between **migration, environmental change and urbanisation**.
- The research community should also address the current lack of relevant data and undertake comparative research that examines innovative ways of reducing remittances costs, the links between **migration, remittances, household income, human development and gender empowerment**, and the correlation between migration and risky adolescent behaviour.


[^12]: See pages 18 and 19 for more detailed information about data and research gaps.
EVALUATION

- The **overall feedback** provided by the GMG Symposium participants was **positive**, as **85 percent** of them **rated the overall substance and organization of the Symposium as valuable or highly valuable**. The evaluation results indicate that **96 percent** of the responding participants assessed the Symposium as **relevant or highly relevant to their work**. Furthermore, **77 percent** of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the information presented at the Symposium was new to them. This confirms the relevance of approaching discussions on migration and development from a youth perspective while furthering partnerships with stakeholders and civil society.

VOTE OF THANKS

- On behalf of the Global Migration Group, the UNICEF GMG Chair wishes to express its sincere **thanks to the Swiss Government and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation** for their invaluable support to, and collaboration with, the GMG Chair in the preparation and proceedings of the GMG Symposium. The Symposium would not have been possible without the generous support of the Swiss Government. The many contributions by GMG Member Agencies and the active participation of civil society organizations were also key to the success of the event. The GMG Chair, UNICEF, would like to express gratitude to all panellists and participants.
GMG SYMPOSIUM RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Enhance the visibility of youth migration issues in international migration policy dialogues and debates**, such as the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), through new channels and platforms, including the use of social media.

2. Adopt a **rights-based approach** to migration and youth, ensuring that all legislation, administrative regulations, policies and interventions that affect migrant children and youth comply with State obligations under international human rights instruments and are guided by the principle of the **best interests of the child**.

3. Ensure the realization of **civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of all young migrants, regardless of their immigration status**. Rights are an essential condition for the full integration of migrant children and youth into destination societies and for enhancing their contributions to development.

4. Provide **equitable access to social services** such as healthcare and education to ensure the right to development of migrant children and youth, irrespective of their immigration status. Such services should be gender-sensitive and not be used to monitor the legal status of young migrants or their families.

5. Ensure that **all migration-related decisions and procedures**, especially those concerning unaccompanied migrant children and youth, are **age- and gender-sensitive**. This includes, inter alia, en route interception, entry, identification, status determination, guardianship, integration, third-country resettlement, returns and repatriation.

6. Improve the collection, dissemination, analysis and use of **sex- and age-disaggregated migration data** for policy formulation, and expand **policy-relevant and action-oriented research** on the human, economic and social benefits and costs of migration as they relate to youth. Such research should **take the views, needs and experiences of young migrants into account**.

7. Promote meaningful participation and active **engagement of young migrants** at all stages of the migration and development debate and policy-making process at the local, national, regional and global levels. This is especially relevant for planning and implementation of policies and programs in education, migrant integration, health services and labor training, as well as for combating xenophobia and discrimination.

8. Avoid the criminalisation of **irregular migrant children and youth**. Punitive measures of any nature, such as administrative detention and deportation, should only be applied as last resort and ensuring at all times the best interests of the child. Explore ways to address irregular migration of youth through the promotion of regular migration channels and regularization programs.

9. Provide **unaccompanied migrant children and youth** with **protection**, support and durable solutions that address their needs and take into account their best interests and right to family unity, regardless of their immigration status, in accordance with human rights standards. The right to protection does not end at international borders, and States have the responsibility to ensure protective environments for migrant children and adolescents.
10. Facilitate **access to justice** for young migrants, especially adolescent girls and young women, including appropriate protection measures, meaningful redress, and legal aid and assistance for victims of rights violations, including victims of human trafficking.

11. Recognise the **entitlements and rights of young migrants to seek asylum** on their own. Gender- and age-related forms of persecution should be taken into account in refugee-status determination procedures, including forced labor, domestic violence, female genital mutilation, other forms of sexual- and gender-based violence (SGBV), and forced military recruitment.

12. Prevent and combat **human trafficking and migrant smuggling**. Gender-sensitive and age-appropriate policies and programs that involve actors in origin, transit and destination countries should be implemented in this field. Children and youth must have access to age-appropriate information on safe migration, the risk of trafficking and smuggling, their rights and obligations, and ways to (re)claim these rights in contexts of exploitation in countries of transit and destination. **Victims of trafficking**, especially adolescent girls and young women, must be ensured swift access to protection services, including (but not limited to) legal residence in destination countries, following best interests determination.

13. Promote the design and implementation of **holistic migration policies and programs** that do not merely focus on the economic dimensions of migration, but also address the needs and contributions of young migrants in both their home and host societies from a **broader human development perspective**.

14. **Mainstream migration into development policy and planning.** Human mobility must become an integral part of development strategies to maximize the development potential of youth migration, generating a triple win for countries of origin, destination, and young migrants themselves.

15. **Mainstream gender and human rights** into the formulation, implementation and evaluation of all policies and programs related to migration and development.

16. Adopt a **comprehensive approach to youth in countries of origin**, providing children, adolescents and youth seeking to migrate with gender-sensitive pre-departure information to help them make informed decisions, and assisting **youth and families left behind** through social services and periodic assessment of their human development and subjective well-being (i.e. their own assessment of her/his overall life satisfaction).

17. Address the particular vulnerability of young migrants to rising levels of **xenophobic violence and discrimination** through enhanced socio-economic inclusion and protection. **Countries of destination and transit** should prevent the escalation of these trends and guarantee that public perceptions of migrants are fair and balanced. **Countries of origin** should address discrimination of young migrants upon return.

18. Increase **financial and technical support** to policies and programs that strengthen governmental and non-governmental **institutional capacities** at all levels. **Countries of destination** should train immigration authorities and border officials to recognize and appropriately respond to the vulnerabilities, needs and rights of migrant youth. **Countries of origin** should invest more in education, training and creation of employment opportunities, which would help mitigate brain drain. **Countries of origin and destination** should collaborate in promoting the developmental benefits of migration by encouraging youth entrepreneurship and skills transfers, including through
diaspora networks, exchange programs and circular migration.

19. Harness the human development and growth potential of youth migration at all levels through international cooperation, coordination and dialogue between and within countries of origin, transit and destination, in particular in areas such as human trafficking, employment, health and education. Mainstream migration into international cooperation on trade, MDGs, development aid, financial assistance and conflict-prevention. People-centred and cross-regional development partnerships between origin and destination countries and sub-regions on these issues should be further encouraged.

20. Promote multi-stakeholder dialogues and synergies at the national level. All relevant actors, including employers, workers, local governments and the media, must be included in the design of a coherent national approach to address challenges faced by young migrants, especially labour exploitation and xenophobia.

21. Raise further awareness of the development potential of leveraging remittances and diaspora contributions, while recognizing that remittances are private funds and no substitute for coherent economic development strategies, and that States have a responsibility to ensure the fulfillment of socio-economic rights.

22. Enhance the positive impact of remittances, especially on the well-being of children and youth in countries of origin, by reducing transfer costs through competition and technological innovation, and by promoting financial inclusion of recipients, in particular young women and rural populations. This could entail actively encouraging diaspora investment in countries of origin through diaspora bonds and through gender-sensitive or women-targeted development and empowerment initiatives that are carried out in consultation with local women.

23. Consider the adoption of an international protocol addressing the situation of populations displaced because of global environmental change, taking into account the youth dimension. Mainstream environmentally-induced migration into National Adaptation Plans to provide assistance and protection to environmental migrants, especially young migrants. Enhance meaningful youth participation in sustainable development and disaster risk reduction strategies.

**GMG SYMPOSIUM KEY POLICY MESSAGES**

The following key policy messages are a compilation of the main ideas and recommendations formulated by participants at the GMG Symposium. They have been grouped around six themes: (I) Rights, Protection and Participation of Young Migrants; (II) Capacity Development; (III) Cooperation and Development; (IV) Data Collection, Knowledge Gaps and a Research Agenda; (V) Remittances; and (VI) Environmental Change.
A RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO MIGRATION AND YOUTH

- The main objective of a rights-based approach to migration and youth\[13\] should be focusing on “the faces behind the facts” of each individual migration story.
- Migration policies and migrant protection mechanisms should be gender- and age-sensitive, as well as take into account the social and cultural reality of each migrant.
- The traditional clear-cut distinction between forced migration and economic migration should be approached with discernment - motivations of migrants are extremely complex and intertwined, and not all economic migrants are migrants ‘by choice’.
- Migration should be a choice and not a necessity. Migration should not be the only alternative for young people and the right of every person not to migrate should be encouraged in countries of origin.
- Managing migration responsibly – that is, in a humane and orderly manner - requires greater recognition of the overwhelmingly positive contribution of all migrants, including young migrants, to host economies and societies.
- Strengthening the links between human rights, migration and development is key to maximize the contributions of migrants to development, as well as the positive impact of migration on the human development of migrants.
- A holistic and cross-sectorial approach to migration policy-making and planning should be promoted to address the needs of children and young migrants, as well as those of children who remain in countries of origin.
- The rights of migrant and non-migrant children and youth in origin, transit and destination countries must be monitored, protected and upheld, regardless of their immigration status, to minimise the risks that they face throughout the migration process. Special attention must be paid to vulnerable groups such as children, young migrant women and men, and stranded migrants.
- Migration policies need to factor that youth often leave home voluntarily. States should develop and enforce a safe migration framework for children and youth that prevents violence and exploitation, including giving greater visibility and addressing migrant child labour issues, as well as the lack of registration of migrant children and youth.
- Age-assessment procedures should be culturally sensitive. Clinical tests (e.g. X-rays) do not allow for a precise assessment of age and may therefore not be a reliable means in the absence of an official birth certificate.
- Child- and youth-friendly information should be provided at all stages of the migration process in a language that children and young migrants understand. All individuals considering migrating or closely affected by migration should also be provided information on the potential risks involved in migration, as a means of promoting safe and regular migration.
- International development agencies could support initiatives that showcase effective models and best practices on combating abusive child and adolescent labour practices.

\[13\] Youth is defined by the United Nations as people between 15 and 24 years of age. See: UN Social Policy and Development Division - http://social.un.org/index/Youth/FAQ.aspx
INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS

- States should ensure that all legislation, policies, and administrative regulations that affect young migrants comply with obligations under international human rights instruments.\(^{14}\)
- States should ratify, inter alia, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its Optional Protocols, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the ILO Migrant Workers Convention No. 143, the ILO Private Employment Agencies Convention No. 181, the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182, and the ILO Domestic Workers Convention No. 189.
- States should also take into consideration internationally-recognized rights and standards contained in non-binding ILO instruments, such as the ILO Decent Work Agenda and the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration (a comprehensive synthesis of all applicable principles and guidelines in this field).
- States should be encouraged to put in place policies that effectively ensure the protection of all children living within their territory, in accordance with their international obligations. Sufficient budgetary allocations for competent child protection institutions should be ensured.

BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD

- Migrant children are children above all, and as such it is crucial to ensure that the principle of ‘best interest of the child’ remains at the heart of all interventions adopted by any State regarding child and young migrants, especially unaccompanied migrant children and youth.

\(^{14}\) Such instruments include:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR 1966)
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR 1966)
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD 1966)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW 1979)
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT 1984)
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW 1990)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD 2006)
- International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CPED 2006)
- Declaration on the Human Rights of Individuals Who are not Nationals of the Country in which They Live (1985)
- Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (2001)
- ILO Migration for Employment Recommendation No. 86 (Revised 1949)
- ILO Minimum Age Convention No. 138 (1973)
- ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention No. 143 (1975)
- ILO Migrant Workers Recommendation No. 151 (1975)
- ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182 (1999)
- ILO Domestic Workers Convention No. 189 (2011)
States have an obligation to ensure the protection of all children and adolescents at all stages of the migration process. Decisions and procedures regarding entry, identification, status determination, integration, guardianship, third-country resettlement, en route interception, detention, returns, and repatriation should take into account this principle, as called for in the CRC.

Best Interest Determination (BID) procedures must involve legal guardians and State welfare entities, comply with international law principles, and be based on the participation of children and adolescents at all stages of the procedure.

The case of each and every child and adolescent is unique and should be considered in the light of his or her specific circumstances by taking into account age, gender and specific needs. Responses to such needs must be informed by the views and experiences of each individual child or adolescent.

All children and young migrants are entitled to their fundamental human rights and protected by international law, regardless of their migratory status. In all circumstances, deprivation of liberty for children and youth should only be used as a measure of last resort and for the shortest possible period of time.

**MEANINGFUL YOUTH PARTICIPATION**

Member States should promote and ensure the right of youth to active and meaningful participation and engagement in the design, planning and implementation of migration and development policies and programmes at all levels, taking into account their social and cultural reality.

To enhance the development potential of migration, it is necessary to recognize young migrants as essential and active stakeholders and participants in migration and development policies.

It is of key importance to increase youth visibility in migration policy dialogues and debates, such as the GA Informal Debate on Migration and Development and the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) process, through various channels and platforms, including the use of new social media or artistic expressions. Youth should also be included in initiatives to combat xenophobia and discrimination.

**SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL RIGHTS; LABOUR RIGHTS; INTEGRATION**

Ensuring economic and social rights for young migrants is a *sine qua non* condition for their full integration into their host societies. Human rights enhance the contributions of migrants to development and help prevent discrimination, exclusion, poverty and inequality, contributing to social cohesion in countries of destination.

States should effectively implement the principle of equality of treatment. Migrants and their families must be granted equal access to the job market, wages, healthcare, education and other social services, working hours, portable social security schemes, freedom of association, and labour rights.

States should ensure the safe, legal and transparent recruitment of migrants, as well as decent work conditions, through labour migration policies and schemes that are gender-sensitive, promote human development, reflect consultation with social partners, and recognize labor
• Young migrants must be protected from child labour and other forms of exploitation, in compliance with the CRC and ILO Conventions 138 and 182.

• Member States should not disregard their obligations emanating from international human rights instruments such as the ICESCR and should eliminate constraints that may hinder access of migrants to their social, economic and cultural rights, such as irregularity (evidence shows that regularisation processes substantially increase the levels of human development of migrants); obligations of civil servants to report irregular migrants; criminalisation of migrants; detention and deportation practices, including of unaccompanied migrant children and families travelling with children; cultural and linguistic barriers; institutional discrimination.

• Effective access of all migrants to education, healthcare, decent housing, and work should be ensured. In particular, access to healthcare should be improved, as well as the capacity of Member States to offer culturally- and linguistically-appropriate health services and to address the specific health needs of migrants, especially of young migrants.

• Service provision in areas such as health education for migrants, especially for vulnerable groups such as children, women, and migrants with disabilities, should be improved. Migrant health services must be culturally and linguistically appropriate as much as possible and emphasize prevention and health promotion.

• It is important to facilitate access of migrant children and youth to social media and information and communication technologies (ICTs), as well as media literacy.

### IRREGULAR MIGRATION

• Address irregular migration by creating additional regular channels of migration and by putting in place regularization policies; amending restrictive migration policies that cause irregular migration and human trafficking.

• All children and young migrants are entitled to the respect of their fundamental rights and to protection, irrespective of their migration status. Care, support, and provision of social services, including healthcare, should be assured.

• Children, adolescents and youth should never be criminalised because of their migratory status. In any case, punitive measures of any nature, such as administrative detention and deportation, should only be applied as a last resort and in the context of promoting the best interest of the child. Administrative detention should always be for the shortest period of time and subject to judicial review. Meaningful alternatives to administrative detention should be provided, such as regularization programmes.

• Child and adolescent migrants travelling with their parents should also be granted alternatives to detention, in order to ensure their right to family unity and physical liberty.

• Migration policies should aim to protect and avoid punishing young migrants, especially second-generation irregular immigrants, by hindering their access to services such as education, healthcare and employment.

• Social services should not be used to identify irregular migrants for deportation purposes.

• All children must have access to birth registration. Legal and administrative practice should not
render any child stateless in the context of migration.

UNACCOMPANIED MIGRANT CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

- States are responsible for providing immediate protection and support to unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents, addressing their needs, including their health needs, in accordance with human rights standards, regardless of their migratory status. Such efforts should ensure an individual case-by-case analysis with attention to particular circumstances, vulnerabilities, and protection needs. When performing situational and family assessments and reaching a decision concerning an unaccompanied child or young migrant, their evolving capacities and agency must be taken into consideration and respected.

- International law principles such as non-discrimination, best interest of the child, age-appropriateness, right to life, right to full development, right to family unity, right to participation, access to information and justice, and confidentiality must remain at the heart of policies and interventions addressing the needs of unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents.

- When reaching a decision concerning an unaccompanied child or young migrant, focus should be on durable solutions, thoroughly and systematically assessing whether assisted voluntary return or integration are more suitable. This decision is never straightforward and must be always guided by the principles of best interest of the child and family reunification (either in the home or in the host country).

- Return of unaccompanied children and youth should only happen in accordance with international standards, after a best interest determination procedure has taken place and with the necessary safeguards and assistance (family tracing, participation of legal guardians, plan for the future development of the child, etc.).

- All unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents are entitled to protective measures that take into account their best interest. Protection systems should ensure a continuum of protective environments for migrant children and youth, before and after they cross an international border.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND LEGAL PROTECTION

- The role of the judiciary system and independent monitoring bodies should be strengthened as far as the rights of young migrants are concerned.

- Legal protection mechanisms must be enhanced to protect young migrants and prosecute exploiters.

- Rules and practices should seek to identify a means for children and youth, whether alone or together with their families, to be heard in proceedings concerning admission, residence, and deportation of their parents.

ASYLUM

- Children and young migrants should be recognised the entitlement to seek asylum on their
own and be granted access to justice accordingly. They should be provided with relevant child-friendly information on asylum-seeking procedures.

- The situation of young asylum-seekers once they turn 18 must be effectively addressed by all governments, as voluntary return should not be the only option available to them.
- Refugee-status determination procedures should be gender- and youth-sensitive, as well as taking into account forced labor, domestic violence, female genital mutilation, other forms of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and forced military recruitment.

**TRAFFICKING**

- Gender-sensitive development policies and programmes involving all development and human rights actors in origin, transit, and destination countries should be implemented to protect and prevent human trafficking, to which adolescent girls and young women are particularly vulnerable.
- All forms of migration-related exploitation, including child labour, trafficking and sexual abuse, should be addressed in countries of origin, transit and destination.
- Counter-trafficking measures should be prioritised by all States, although it should not be assumed that all “youth on the move” are trafficked.
- Children should have access to child-friendly information on safe migration and the risk of trafficking, smuggling, and other forms of exploitation.
- Victims of trafficking, especially adolescent girls and young women, should not only be identified, but also be granted access to protection services, including legal residence in destination countries.

**HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (MIGRATION AS ‘TRIPLE WIN’)**

- Social, economic and political integration is crucial to enhancing the full contribution of young migrants to development: increasing their access to welfare and education is transforming them into contributing members of society. Their human development is essential to the development of their societies of origin and destination, as migrants are always agents of change, being for example key to improve the education and health levels of families who remain in countries of origin.
- It is crucial to promote the design and implementation of holistic migration policies and programmes that do not merely focus on the economic dimensions of migration, but also address the needs and contributions of young migrants to both their home and host society from a broader human development perspective.
- Migrant development initiatives should not only focus on economic issues, but encompass broader human development and human rights concerns. For instance, apart from employment opportunities, migrants could take part in civic engagement initiatives. Migrants can enrich both their destination and origin society in multiple ways. Young migrant’s energy, vitality, imagination, curiosity and hope should be harnessed for the enrichment of both home and host societies.
• The contributions of young migrants to development can only be maximized if their development needs and potential are met through improved access to healthcare and educational services that are culturally and linguistically sensitive.

GENDER
• Gender and human rights should be mainstreamed into migration and development policies, including access to preventive healthcare and education.
• Gender-sensitive pre-departure information about legal forms of migration, labour laws and low-cost loans should be provided.

CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN: POTENTIAL YOUNG MIGRANTS AND YOUTH WHO HAVE REMAINED IN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN
• Potential young migrants should be provided support to make informed decisions about their lives and decision to migrate.
• The conditions in which children and youth who have remained in countries of origin access rights should be taken into account; access to social services is essential for migration to have a positive impact on their own development.
• A comprehensive approach should be adopted for youth who have remained in countries of origin, not forgetting the inter-generational aspects of their reality, as they are mostly taken care of by their grandparents. Care-givers and youth who have remained in countries of origin should be provided assistance, including social protection, and their human development and satisfaction levels should be assessed.
• Visa policies should aim to allow families to migrate together, as well as to facilitate circular migration, regularization, and family reunification, changing the current paradigm where migration is framed as a security issue.

XENOPHOBIA AND DISCRIMINATION
• Social and economic inclusion, enhanced protection of young migrants in host societies, and improved access to basic social services is of critical importance to break the link between migration, discrimination and xenophobia.
• States should ensure that public perceptions of migrants are fair and balanced. This is particularly important in the context of youth, whose potential is yet to be fully developed.
• The particular vulnerability of young migrants to rising levels of xenophobic violence, hate crimes and discrimination worldwide should be addressed, including upon return to their home countries.
• Member States must provide strong responses to prevent the escalation of such trends through, inter alia, monitoring and documentation of cases; data collection, information-sharing and dissemination among different State institutions; support to training on xenophobia and the work of social protection institutions on the ground; prosecution of anti-immigrant abuses and crimes.
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

- Factual evidence is not the only precondition for sound policy-making. Capacity building should address accountability, transparency, policy evaluation, absence of corruption, and training needs of government officials and civil society.

- Capacity building at the national level is a key building block of international cooperation on migration and youth, especially in new countries of immigration. Migration is a new issue for many governments, including developed countries. Authorities and personnel working on child and youth migration issues should be trained to recognize and appropriately respond to the vulnerabilities, needs and rights of young migrants.

- Governmental and non-governmental institutional capacities require further financial and technical support at all levels to address the issue of youth migration.

- Evidence-based policy-planning tools and multi-stakeholder dialogue should be promoted. This could include support to national research institutions to collect, analyze and disseminate disaggregated statistical data. This will allow identifying trends and emerging issues for future planning of policies and programmes.

- The GMG can provide relevant support to training activities and foster more opportunities to share best practices among countries and regions. Capacities in developing countries could be enhanced to enable their full participation in the GFMD and relevant migration fora.

- Statistical data collection disaggregated by sex and age must be promoted to enhance the evidence base on migration, development and remittances, including capacity building.

- As mentioned above, migration should be a choice and not a necessity. Migration should not be the only alternative for young people and the right of every person not to migrate should be encouraged in countries of origin. Developing countries need to invest in education and training, as well as on skills, workforce development and creation of employment opportunities. This can help address “brain drain” of young people by ensuring that high-skilled workers have incentives to remain in countries of origin.

- Adequate political, economic and social frameworks can maximize capacities and new skills acquired during the migration process. Diasporas could be engaged in “brain gain” initiatives, such as exchange programmes and return or circular migration.

- Health, educational, and capacity development activities in countries of origin should be linked to employment schemes, not only to satisfy the demand of the labour market, but also to increase migrants’ personal development and productive contribution to society.

- Protection at the border should be enhanced by providing training to immigration authorities and border officials, so that they are sensitive to the vulnerabilities, needs and rights of migrant youth and are able to identify and adequately respond to potential victims of trafficking. Such measures could provide border guards with age-appropriate information about children’s rights, available services, and ways to record and consider the views of youth during the petitioning and appeal process.

- More capacity-building initiatives could address State institutions, civil society, and young migrant networks working with unaccompanied migrant children and youth. Further support should be given to personnel working on repatriation issues to address the specific vulnerabilities and protection needs of unaccompanied migrant children and youth.

- Awareness-raising and advocacy on xenophobia, discrimination and hate crimes against immigrants should be promoted, including training workshops for civil servants.
• Teachers and health workers need to be informed and trained to address the specific needs of youth belonging to migrant and non-migrant households.

COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

• Cooperation, coordination and dialogue at all levels between and within countries of origin, transit, and destination are essential to harness the human development and economic growth potential of international migration.

• Further efforts in promoting a rights- and evidence-based approach to migration are needed in international cooperation to maximize gains and reduce risks.

• International and national governance of labour migration should recognize that most migration, including youth migration, is in search of decent work. Greater legal opportunities for labour mobility (especially for low-skilled workers), through development- and mobility- and circulation-friendly policies are needed. Current temporary and circular labour migration programmes cannot address the permanent demand for migrant labour.

• More international cooperation, inter-governmental partnerships and bilateral agreements (or effective implementation of existing mechanisms where they exist) are needed in the following areas:
  - the protection, prevention and prosecution of human trafficking in countries of origin, transit and destination, in particular of migrant children, youth and women;
  - the creation of opportunities for youth development in areas such as employment and education;
  - health- and labour-related aspects of child and youth migration.

• Identifying, disseminating, and replicating good and best practices in migration management, i.e. bilateral cooperation agreements or regional dialogues on migration.

• Regional, sub-regional and bilateral cooperation initiatives have proven very effective, as well as complementary to cooperation at the global level, and should be enhanced. Recent examples of regional and sub-regional cooperation initiatives are: the Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs); the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Observatory on Migration; the Managed Migration Program of the Caribbean; the Fund on Migration and Development established by the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Government of Spain; the Migration Facility established by the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States; and the advisory opinion relating to the rights of migrant children promoted before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR) by the High Authorities of Human Rights and Ministries of Foreign Affairs of MERCOSUR (RAADDHH) and Partner States.

• South-South cooperation should be strongly encouraged.

• Further efforts to monitor recruitment agencies are necessary.

• Policy cooperation between countries of origin and destination should also be promoted,
e.g. by ensuring that old-age, disability and survivor pensions, benefits paid for employment injuries and occupational diseases, and health insurance benefits are portable and account for dependent family members (accompanying and/or those family members who have remained in places of origin).

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

- Drawing on normative core values, including the equality and dignity of all human beings, the United Nations System (and particularly the GMG) will need to focus more attention on policy advocacy and evidence-based migration policies. Only facts and arguments can oppose emotional and negative responses to migration in host countries. For example, rising xenophobia and discrimination against immigrants can be addressed by fostering public understanding of the contributions of migrants to the development of countries of destination. The UN System (and particularly the GMG) can better address the difficult situation of migrants by promoting inter-agency cooperation, as well as mainstreaming a human-centred approach to migration and development in ongoing policy debates (IMF, LDCs, CSW).
- In the wake of the “Arab Spring”, Member States need to take action to tackle mass youth unemployment and underemployment, which is the basis of increasing youth migration.
- Migration should be mainstreamed into international cooperation on issues such as trade, MDGs, development aid, and conflict-prevention. This is key to addressing the root causes of migration and making of migration a choice and not a necessity, although migration is no panacea for development and the links between the two should not be overestimated.
- International organisations and the GMG should develop more effective alliances with the private sector, civil society and migrant organisations on youth and migration issues.
- The GFMD, which has so far provided a useful platform for governments to share experiences and ideas, will play an important role in the formulation of coherent and cohesive responses to global migration and development challenges. Member States participating in the 2012 assessment of the GFMD are encouraged to consider migrant youth issues.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

- Cooperation entails a multi-level process: a coherent national approach to migration is a precondition for effective international cooperation. To develop such an approach, all relevant stakeholders should be taken into consideration, including employers and local governments. Multi-stakeholder dialogues on migration need to include civil society to promote an objective policy discussion and solutions. This may require capacity development of civil society to enable it to enter into dialogue with States.
- Regular dialogue and synergies among national actors should be promoted to enhance the development potential of migration.
- Coordination and cooperation are required among line ministries in charge of migration, health, education, and labour policies in countries of origin, transit and destination.
- Social partners (workers and entrepreneurs alike) should work together to address the main challenges of labour migration. In this regard, the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration can provide useful guidance and good practices.
- All stakeholders should be involved in combating anti-immigrant violence and xenophobia. States could collaborate more effectively with journalists and opinion-makers to address
negative images of migrants in the media, including social media.

**INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

- Human mobility must become an integral part of development strategies to maximize the development potential of migration, generating a triple win for countries of origin, destination and migrants themselves. People-centred and cross-regional development partnerships between origin and destination countries and sub-regions on key development themes such as aid, trade, and financial assistance should be further encouraged.
- Member States should mainstream migration into development policy planning, integrating it in national development strategies (see for example the recommendations contained in the GMG Handbook on “Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning”).
- Countries of origin should address the root causes of youth migration by creating opportunities for youth development.
- Civil society organizations, academia, the private sector, and diaspora communities should be considered by countries of origin and destination as active development actors that can be proactive in addressing youth issues.
- Capacity development, policy coherence, cooperation and dialogue between international organisations and agencies, Member States, and development actors should be enhanced to ensure access of young migrant to their rights. This has to be balanced with the need for host countries to regulate migration flows.

**INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON UNACCOMPANIED MIGRANT YOUTH AND ADOLESCENTS WHO HAVE REMAINED IN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN**

- The international community should adopt a holistic protection system allowing governments and stakeholders to understand the complexities surrounding unaccompanied migrant youth. Such an approach should include cultural factors.
- Inter-agency cooperation on this issue is particularly relevant, as well as the participation and involvement of unaccompanied children and youth themselves, local communities, extended families and diasporas. In West Africa, local populations and NGOs working in the field have successfully developed a comprehensive protection framework for “youth on the move” throughout the entire migration cycle. National ministries of interior, labour, social welfare, child protection and immigration in the sub-region are also coordinating efforts with international organizations (UNHCR, IOM and UNICEF).
- International cooperation should focus on providing children and youth in countries of origin with alternatives to migration through quality public education, scholarships and youth employment opportunities.

**DATA COLLECTION, KNOWLEDGE GAPS AND A RESEARCH AGENDA**

- The collection, dissemination, analysis, and use of age- and sex-disaggregated data for migration policy formulation must be improved. Addressing the current lack of reliable and timely data is essential for evidence-based policy-making.
• All relevant stakeholders should work towards a common agreement on the definition of youth to ensure comparability. Furthermore, any analysis involving youth should explicitly state how youth are defined in that specific context.

• Comparative data should be collected on: anti-immigrant incidents and violence; the social costs of migration, including costs for families; youth and children who remain in countries of origin; unaccompanied migrant youth.

• Sound rights-based indicators in migration data analysis should be developed.

• It is particularly important to increase international cooperation through capacity development, as well as financial and technical support, to facilitate statistical data collection, dissemination, and analysis by government officials in cooperation with research institutions and international organizations. This includes identifying trends that will inform the formulation of future policies and programmes in migration and development. This will promote a knowledge-based approach to migration and development management.

• Ensuring an evidence-based and sound analysis of migration issues is key to counter anti-immigration sentiments and misconceptions about migration, as well as to harness the economic, social and cultural potential of migration.

• Decision-makers should be presented with a set of evidence-based policy options on migration and development. A knowledge platform on this issue could be developed in the near future, including experts with divergent views and using peer-review mechanisms.

• Research on migration and youth should aim to:
  - be policy-relevant and action oriented;
  - be mainstreamed into development plans, in particular regarding women’s empowerment;
  - take the views, needs and experiences of young migrants into account;
  - develop evidence-based strategies for enhancing the safety, well-being and contribution to development of migrant children and youth.

• A coordinated research agenda should provide evidence on the following topics:
  - trends and emerging issues related to migration and development;
  - the correlation between migration and violence, exploitation and abuse;
  - the links between migration (in particular female migration), remittances and development;
  - the negative economic impact of the exclusion of migrants, including migrant youth (as this would provide valuable arguments for advocacy upon Member States);
  - the impact of internal, short-term and cyclical migration on development;
  - linkages between migration, remittances, household income, human development, and gender empowerment;
  - stigmatisation of migrant households and correlation between migration and risky adolescent behaviour;
  - innovative ways of reducing remittance costs through technology;
  - the human and social dimensions of climate change, especially the links between migration, climate change and urbanization.
REMITTANCES

- Remittances are private funds and cannot be an alternative to ODA or development policies. States cannot depend on remittance flows as a substitute to reforming macro-economic and gender-equity policies. Member States have a responsibility to ensure the fulfilment of socio-economic rights in their societies.
- States should implement policies aiming at lowering the cost of transferring remittances through competition and technical innovation; this will enhance the flow of international remittances.
- States could implement projects and policy programmes to enhance the financial inclusion and economic literacy of migrants, including young migrants. This may work to maintain the level of remittances and even augment them in the long term.
- More awareness of the potential of leveraging remittances, especially of mobilizing diaspora wealth, is needed. Global diaspora savings are estimated in USD 397.5 billion. To encourage diaspora investments in countries of origin, it is advisable for their governments to consider offering diaspora bonds.
- States should implement projects and policy programmes to improve the financial inclusion and economic literacy of migrants through technology, especially young migrants, women, and populations living in rural areas.
- Financial services should target both migrants and recipients of remittances, especially women and rural populations, to ensure their broader inclusion into financial systems and markets through loans and saving products for productive investments.
- Remittances should be linked to capital markets through remittance-securitization for development bond financing.
- Diaspora investment in countries of origin should be actively encouraged, in particular in gender-sensitive or women-targeted development and empowerment initiatives, in consultation with local women.
- Given the feminization of migration and women’s potential to save and remit more, it is important to design innovative women-focused financial instruments and investment options, such as diaspora bonds.
- Remittances could and should be invested more productively, for example as collateral credit or as innovative financial mechanisms for development.
- Promoting dialogues on migration and finance, as well as innovative financial instruments that leverage remittances for development financing, albeit migration and remittances are no panacea for development.

CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

- Internationally-recognized terms and definitions regarding environmentally-induced migration must be developed and adopted.
- Climate change must be acknowledged as a challenge for the human rights of environmental migrants, who should accordingly be provided assistance and protection. A wider range of options should be made available to particularly vulnerable groups affected by environmental change.
• The international legal system needs to be reformed in order to provide a normative protection framework to all those displaced by environmental push factors. For instance, an international protocol on environmentally-induced displacement could be adopted and the legal status of stateless people could be defined taking into account environmental change, for example sea-level rise.

• Environmental adaptation and risk-reduction mechanisms through diversification of household income sources should be enhanced to prevent forced migration and displacement, particularly among rural populations where agricultural decline due to environmental change is likely to be substantial.

• It is of key importance to facilitate circular mobility, including seasonal migration and strong urban-rural linkages, to provide support structures and allow for income diversification. Such efforts should be gender-sensitive, consistent with the sustainable growth of urban spaces, and anchored in human rights standards that promote the right to family unity.

• Disaster risk-reduction and conflict mediation strategies must be supported, along with strengthened humanitarian response capacity to environmental change, in particular with regard to youth and women.

• Environmentally-induced migration should be mainstreamed and climate change adaptation strategies integrated into disaster management tools.

• International and regional cooperation on this issue should be enhanced at all levels and focus not only on mitigating the impact of forced mass environmentally-induced migration, but also on facilitating migration as adaptation strategy.

• Multi-stakeholder discussions on climate change and migration must be stimulated. The voice, agency and participation of all those whose livelihoods are affected by environmental change, including youth and women, should be enhanced through training, advocacy and policy-planning in order to include their perspectives into disaster risk management and environmental change strategies.

• Data collection and research in this field should be solid and sound to counter alarmism on the media.
INTRODUCTION

Globally, approximately 35 million international migrants are between the ages of 10 and 24 years, representing about 17 percent\(^\text{15}\) of the 214 million international migrants worldwide. Developing countries host a higher proportion of adolescent and young migrants than more developed countries\(^\text{16}\). These numbers may increase in the near future, as young people are likely to migrate driven by poverty and under-development, education, population dynamics, family formation and reunification, limited livelihood options, employment, humanitarian crises, and environmental changes.”\(^\text{17}\)

Over the past decades, there has been growing interest among Member States and stakeholders on the interdependence between migration and development, as well as on the impact of migration on children, youth, and families in both countries of origin and destination. Academic research and policy literature largely suggest that migration is both a cause and effect of development, and has significant consequences on migrants, their families, and their communities of origin, transit and destination.

Drawing on new research, a number of recent reports, including the 2009 UNDP Human Development Report (HDR), argue that, while human mobility (including child and youth migration) is not a panacea, “its largely positive effects both for movers and stayers suggest that it should be an important component of any strategy to generate sustained improvements in human development around the world.” Migration can indeed promote human development through financial and knowledge transfers between origin and destination countries.

Nonetheless, poverty, lack of development and unemployment in countries of origin, as well as discrimination and social exclusion in countries of transit and destination, remain major challenges for the full realization of the rights and capabilities of youth affected by migration. Furthermore, young migrants are particularly vulnerable, especially when they travel unaccompanied and undocumented. Many of them migrate as a result of violence at home or in the school, also fleeing forced marriage, persecution or armed conflict. Violence is often present along their journey as well, in the form of trafficking, abuse and exploitation.

It is only when these challenges and risks\(^\text{18}\) are adequately addressed that the positive impacts of migration can be fully harnessed. Furthermore, the dynamic nature of migration makes international

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\(^\text{15}\) Adolescents, Youth and International Migration: Figures and Facts. See: \text{http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/GMG - Factsheet_UNICEF-FINAL.pdf}
\(^\text{16}\) “Approximately 21 percent of the total international migrant population residing in less developed countries is between 10 and 24 years of age. In contrast, adolescents and youth represent 14 percent of the total migrant population residing in more developed countries”. See: Adolescents, Youth and International Migration: Figures and Facts - \text{http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/GMG - _Factsheet_UNICEF-FINAL.pdf and Annex 9.}
\(^\text{17}\) Some experts have stressed that “a central motivation for children to migrate is the generally underplayed desire for income. Migration for education is another insufficiently stressed aspect of children’s migration”. In this regard, there have also been calls for further attention on livelihood issues as cause of migration, in particular “the regional and rural poverty that triggers high levels of adult and child (and youth) migration.” See: Whitehead and Hashim (2005), Children and Migration.
\(^\text{18}\) The Ragusa Declaration highlighted that “young people are in the front line of migration and are among the groups most vulnerable to its risks, as students, as migrant workers, as forced migrants, asylum-seekers or refugees or as children of
cooperation an indispensable prerequisite to achieving this goal, including by enhancing institutional capacities.

While new data and research on the relationship between migration and development, including sex-disaggregated data, have become available in the recent past, the medium- and long-term developmental impacts of migration on youth within an equitable, sustainable, and gender- and rights-based framework have remained largely underexplored. In other words: how can migration contribute to creating opportunities in terms of human capital formation, poverty reduction, and increased standards of living for youth? Does migration reduce inequality of opportunities in receiving societies?

Migrant youth have not only been invisible in academic research. Indeed, despite the growing number of young people affected by international migration and the role that young migrants play in the development of countries of origin, transit and destination, young migrants have also remained largely absent from migration policy debates and policy-making processes, even if in December 2010 two UN General Assembly Resolutions stressed the role of young migrants in the development of countries of origin, transit and destination, as well as their need for protection. 19

On 17-18 May 2011, UNICEF, the Global Migration Group (GMG) Chair, together with GMG Member Agencies, organized a Symposium entitled Migration, Adolescents and Youth: Harnessing Opportunities for Development at UNICEF House in New York. The thematic focus of the Symposium aimed at emphasizing the importance of cooperation and coordination for harnessing the opportunities and addressing the challenges created by migration for youth in countries of origin, transit and destination. By sharing relevant knowledge and expertise, the Symposium intended to facilitate an examination of the impacts of migration on the human development of youth from a multidimensional perspective, highlighting the contributions made by young migrants to development. These issues were addressed from a gender and rights perspective, giving particular emphasis to South-South migration flows. Special consideration was paid to identifying practical ways and common policy spaces in which international cooperation can be substantially increased to improve the capacity of stakeholders in terms of data collection, evidence-based policy advocacy, and dissemination of best practices 20.

The GMG Symposium was planned ahead of the UN General Assembly Informal Thematic Debate on International Migration and Development 22 (GA Informal Debate) on 19 May 2011. The emphasis on migrant youth was also particularly timely and relevant in light of the International Year of Youth (IYY) 23.

The Symposium allowed experts and practitioners to discuss current knowledge, identify existing gaps, share good practices and lessons learned, and map out future trends on how to increase the positive

migrants often growing up separated from their parents.” See:  
20 Two GA resolutions recognize “the contributions of young migrants to countries of origin and destination, and in that regard encouraging States to consider the specific circumstances and needs of young migrants.” (A/RES/65/212 and A/RES/65/170).
21 See: Concept Note (DRAFT 2 April 2011) of the Symposium, included as Annex 1, pages 1-4.
impact of migration on the development prospects of youth from a gender and human rights perspective, while minimizing its negative effects. Moreover, thanks to the Symposium, the GMG could provide a set of rights-based policy messages to Member State delegations and civil society organizations participating in the GA Informal Debate.24

The GMG Symposium brought together over 200 participants from different disciplines and regions, including high-level speakers, government officials, practitioners, academic experts, civil society representatives, and young migrants. Sessions and roundtables focused on a variety of issues, inter alia, newly emerging trends regarding youth migration; international cooperation on migration and global environmental change; the contributions of young migrants to development; the enhancement of the well-being and human rights of migrants in support of development; the protection of unaccompanied migrant children and youth; and the beneficial impact of migration on youth who remain in countries of origin.

Gender and human rights were cross-cutting issues throughout the discussions. The GMG Symposium also included the participation and voice of young migrants themselves, acknowledging them as active stakeholders in the policy dialogue seeking to address the ways in which international migration affects their lives and well-being. A full discussion of the methodology used to enable youth participants to share their views and experiences is available in Annex 5, and a synthesis of the contributions of young migrants at Session 2, entitled “Youth Migration from a Youth Perspective”, is provided in Section 3.

Regarding the main results of the GMG Symposium, a set of recommendations and a series of key policy messages that emerged from the discussions are available on pages 9-25. These recommendations are intended to serve as inputs for a roadmap for future action by the GMG, being also useful for communication, advocacy and policy-making purposes at all levels. They are also relevant for the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) 2011 Concluding Debate, as well as future events related to child and youth migration.

The report below focuses on the content aspects of the GMG Symposium. Section 2 summarizes the main points raised by high-level speakers, and Section 3 synthetizes the main ideas and policy recommendations that emerged from each of the 6 sessions and 2 roundtables of the Symposium. The main recommendations emerging from each high-level intervention or session have been listed separately for ease of reference. In section 3, recommendations have been clustered around five broad thematic areas: (I) Rights; (II) Capacity-Building; (III) Cooperation; (IV) Data Collection; and (V) Remittances. Indeed, the recommendations and key policy messages on pages 9-25 are but a synthesis of this extended list of recommendations that emerged from the GMG Symposium.

The Symposium was formally opened by the GMG Chair, Mr. Anthony Lake, Executive Director of UNICEF. The GMG Chair’s welcoming remarks set the stage for the Symposium by reminding the audience that, “today more people are on the move than at any previous time” and that youth migration is “an increasingly important issue”, since “migration has an impact on young people, just as young migrants can make a big difference in their families and communities”. UNICEF’s Executive Director emphasized that “most young migrants leave home in search for greater opportunity, and from the desire to help their families” and that many more children than those who migrate “are indirectly affected by both the positive and negative impact of migration on development”. Furthermore, UNICEF’s Executive Director mentioned that, in his capacity as incumbent GMG Chair, he would also convey the outcomes of the GMG Symposium discussions in Panel Two of the GA Informal Debate on “Improving International Cooperation on Migration and Development”. UNICEF’s Executive Director Mr. Anthony Lake, concluded by expressing his hope that the Symposium would allow participants to share experiences and good practices, as well as identify common goals and challenges for the road ahead that would in turn shape the agenda ahead of the next High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development in 2013. Lastly, the GMG Chair expressed his hope that the Symposium would “lay the foundation to make a real difference in the lives of migrant youth – and to help us all reap the benefits of global migration”.

In her remarks, Ms. Purnima Mane, Deputy Executive Director at the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), gave a human face to migration by presenting the personal stories of three migrant girls. The three experiences reflected how migration can empower women to contribute to the development needs of their countries of origin, as well as the risk of exploitation and abuse that female migrants face in the migration process.

In her points and recommendations, Ms. Mane noted the need for:

- Sex- and age- disaggregated data on female migration and remittances.
- Enhanced youth participation in migration policy dialogue and programs.
- Improved technical and financial support for both governmental and non-governmental institutions working on migration issues.
- Service provision in areas such as preventive healthcare and education for migrants, especially for vulnerable groups like children, women, and migrants with disabilities.

Ms. Lakshmi Puri, Deputy Executive Director of United Nations (UN) Women, started by restating the high significance of the gender dimensions of migration for several of the strategic priorities of UN Women: economic empowerment, ending violence against women, and national planning and financing for women’s development. Regarding migration, “UN Women’s focus is concentrated on two related areas: protecting migrant women’s socio-economic and political rights and well-being at all stages of migration and enabling them to contribute more fully to sustainable human development”.

Ms. Puri then focused on remittances, “perhaps the most obvious aspect of the migration and development nexus”, stressing that “the narrative of women’s migration, especially of the poor, is not
just about vulnerability and victimhood, but also about agency”. Indeed, the contribution of migrant women “to improving living standards of families and communities, enhancing human capital and being local leaders is an inspiration for other young women in the community”.

The Deputy Executive Director of UN Women stressed that the proportion of women has increased in global migration flows over the last decades. Women constitute today about half of international migrants. Most of these women migrate independently and are increasingly recruited into a growing number of women-specific jobs that often are low-paid and unprotected, such as domestic, hospitality or factory work. Migrant women contribute significantly to countries of origin and destination, representing a target group for remittance services. Women typically save and remit more, more frequently and more consistently than men. They also are the major recipients of remittances, either because they are in vulnerable situations or because they are seen as better household financial managers and care-givers, thus directly enhancing family or community well-being. Furthermore, migration also contributes to women’s own development, as when migrating women also benefit from cultural exchange and exposure to new ideas, skills, attitudes and knowledge, developing independence and self-confidence, as well as acquiring greater status and decision-making power within households and communities thanks to remittances. However, there are numerous challenges, including structural constraints, to protecting migrant women’s well-being and optimizing the development benefits of migration. In particular, investment of remittances by women is not as productive as it could be, not least because the “full potential of the women’s remittance market is largely untapped”.

Ms. Puri concluded by reaffirming the commitment of UN Women to deepen existing partnerships with all stakeholders “in support of national priorities on the gender dimensions of migration and development”.
In her recommendations, Ms. Puri called on governments, the private sector, women migrants’ groups and the UN to work together to:

- Compile and analyze sex-disaggregated migration and remittance data, much of which exists in household surveys, and use it to design well-resourced policies, development plans, and programs that can harness women’s contribution to development.

- Implement policies and programs in countries of origin, transit and destination, including co-development strategies that protect migrant women’s well-being and prevent trafficking. The Deputy Executive Director of UN Women mentioned several examples of good practices, such as Sri Lanka’s program to reduce irregular migration by providing gender-sensitive information on using legal migration channels; pre-departure training programs in Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Philippines, which also focus on how women can protect themselves, save and transfer remittances safely; and gender-sensitive labour laws and contracts covering domestic workers in Jordan and South Africa.

- Advocate with banks and money transfer companies to lower the transaction costs of remittances and open the market to more players, such as micro-finance institutions (that are more accessible to poor rural women) and to new technologies (such as mobile transfers and card-based transfers) which might be particularly beneficial to women in certain contexts.

- Promote women’s financial literacy, facilitate the introduction of an array of financial products in which women can invest; and promote women’s businesses through gender-sensitive policies, regulations and institutional environments.

- Encourage diaspora investment in gender-sensitive or women-targeted development initiatives, in consultation with local women.

For remittances to contribute effectively to sustainable development, policies and programs must focus on improving women’s access to and control over productive assets, employment-oriented training, and the creation of more and decent jobs for women, as lack of employment opportunities for women perpetuates the migration circle.

Ms. Beata Godenzi, Head of the Global Migration Programme, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, noted that while migration has always taken place, it has accelerated in recent times, with an increasing number of young migrants migrating for various reasons. Ms. Godenzi highlighted that migration has both positive and negative effects, and called for “a new vision of ‘youth on the move’ as contributing to development and not simply as victims”, while emphasizing that at the same time we must be aware of the particular vulnerabilities of migrant youth. She observed that migration often leads to acquiring new skills, which are an asset for development, wherever migrants find themselves.

On behalf of the 2011 Swiss Chair of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), Ms. Godenzi expressed “belief in the importance of cooperation at all levels”.

www.globalmigrationgroup.org
In her remarks, Ms. Godenzi stressed the need for:

- **Migration policies to have a youth and gender dimension.** Such policies should promote youth movement, as well as greater dialogue and partnerships.
- **A rights-based approach in addressing the needs of young migrants and formulating migration policies.** Specifically, Ms. Godenzi highlighted the need to protect children and adolescents at all times as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and other international human rights treaties.
- **Enhanced youth participation in migration policy debates such as the GA Informal Debate and Development and the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) process.**

**Mr. John Bingham, Civil Society Coordinator and Representative at the 2011 GFMD,** also contextualized youth migration by presenting the personal stories of three migrants. The experiences of these migrants were characterized by debt bondage, abuse, and exploitation in the migration process, showing how young migrants migrate irregularly due to lack of human development opportunities in their countries of origin.

**Mr. Bingham’s points and recommendations highlighted that:**

- The traditional clear-cut distinction between forced migration and economic migration or migration “by choice” should be revisited, as motivations of migrants are extremely complex and intertwined.
- In the wake of the “Arab Spring” and the Jasmine Revolution, which have been both led by youth, renewed attention should be paid to promoting youth employment and human rights standards.
- Restrictive migration policies including “blocked departure, push-backs, and systematic detention and return” are not solutions to reducing or stopping migration, given unequal labour needs across countries.
- Promoting domestic development in countries of origin is key to make migration a choice instead of a necessity (“right to not migrate”).
- Rights-centred international cooperation is needed to maximize the gains and reduce the risks of migration, especially for children and young migrants.

**INTRODUCTION TO THE SYMPOSIUM**

**Mr. Piero Bonadeo, Deputy Chief of the New York Office of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC),** spoke on behalf of Mr. Yury Fedotov, Executive Director of UNODC. The UNODC representative started by stating that “smuggling of migrants and human trafficking are global challenges that demand a global response, strong partnerships and the commitment and engagement of all sectors”, reaffirming UNODC’s commitment to inter-agency cooperation in all its activities, in particular through the expertise that it contributes to the GMG. Mr. Bonadeo continued by highlighting that “smuggled migrants are vulnerable to life-threatening risks, violence and exploitation throughout their journey”, insisting that “special attention needs to be paid to unaccompanied or separated children, who are particularly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation in the migration process”.
Mr. Bonadeo made the following points and recommendations:

- The UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime provides a multilateral framework for international cooperation and prevention of transnational organised crime to its 161 States Parties. UNODC is the guardian of the Convention and its additional Protocols (to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children and against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air).

- Following the International Framework for Action to Implement the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, this year UNODC will launch a similar Framework to Implement the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol that will provide guidance to States and create new opportunities for cooperation with NGOs and other organisations. This Framework elaborated by UNODC, as well as other tools such as the Toolkit to Combat the Smuggling of Migrants, include specific sections on children, and place the best interests of the child at the core of their concerns.

- When dealing with trafficking and smuggling, the crucial role of civil society cannot be forgotten. All stakeholders should work together to ensure that “migration is safe for all”.

- The recently established UN Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, managed by UNODC, recognizes the fundamental needs of victims and survivors, especially women and children. This Fund provides support to organisations that offer humanitarian, legal and financial aid to trafficking victims. Awareness should be raised about the existence of this Fund. The first call for proposals for the Small Grants Facility of the Fund was launched in March 2011.

H. E. Ambassador Alfonso Quiñónez, Secretary of External Relations of the Organization of American States (OAS) and Member of the UNITAR Board of Trustees, recalled the long history of migration and its symbiotic relation to development, in the form of technological advancement, exchange of ideas, and new artistic expressions. After thanking UNICEF and the GMG for organising “this significant and timely Symposium” and reminding the audience that the current global figure of young migrants “is likely to grow exponentially”, H. E. Ambassador Quiñónez emphasized the importance of recognizing young migrants as key development actors that need to be included in migration and development policies. The OAS Ambassador also pointed out the difficult tasks undertaken and numerous challenges faced by young migrants, as well as their high vulnerability to crime and human trafficking.

In his capacity as Member of the UNITAR Board of Trustees, H. E. Ambassador Quiñónez quoted UNITAR’s Migration and Development Seminar Series, “a face-to-face platform for information sharing and exchange of migration policy and practice”, as example of the 10 years of UNITAR’s capacity-development experience in the field of global human mobility. In this context, the high-level representative singled out a briefing held in April 2011 by UNITAR and its partners on “Migration and Youth, Overcoming Health Challenges25”, which made evident that young irregular migrants are particularly vulnerable to a series of health risks, due to social marginalisation and lack of access to health services. However, the World Health Assembly, the European Parliament and MERCOSUR have undertaken positive normative steps in this regard, which shows the increasing willingness of States to increase health-related social protection of migrants.

In his capacity as Secretary of External Relations of the OAS, H. E. Ambassador Quiñónez emphasised that “the quantitative relevance” of both South-South and South-North international migration “poses

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challenges as well as opportunities for the American States”. The high-level representative referred then to several migration-related initiatives of the OAS: the Inter-American Program for the Promotion and Protection of the Human Rights of Migrants; the Inter-American Program on Education for Democratic Values and Practices; the Special Committee on Migration Issues (CEAM); and the Migration and Development Program (MIDE). The OAS-MIDE initiative is working with ministries of education of American countries to improve their capacities in developing, evaluating and improving the current educational offer to migrant children and youth.

H. E. Ambassador Quiñónez made the following points and recommendations:

**Health and Young Migrants**

- Address barriers that prevent migrants from accessing health services.
- Improve the ability of national health systems to offer culturally- and linguistically-sensitive health services to match societies that are rapidly changing in their demographic composition.
- Facilitate and promote the implementation of innovative financing schemes specifically tailored to the health needs of migrant communities and migrant youth in particular.
- Support the engagement of migrant communities in the development, implementation and evaluation of health services.

**Capacity Development**

- As evidenced by the Survey of GMG training activities implemented worldwide in 2010-2011, training and capacity building initiatives supported by GMG agencies could better reflect the relevance that certain migration policy topics and felt needs have in specific regions of the world.
- Support the training and capacity development needs of regional and local migration officers, as 80 percent of stakeholders currently participating in training activities are national government officials.

**Participation of Young Migrants in Policy-Making**

- Ensure social inclusion and participation of youth in migration and development policy debates and programmes.
- Include the perspectives and needs of migrant youth in efforts aimed at promoting youth development.

**Migration and Development**

- Encourage developed and developing countries to mainstream migration into development policies and planning.

**Data Collection**

- Support the collection of a more comprehensive set of data and monitoring tools, including sex- and age-disaggregated data on the impact of migration on development that could improve the quality of capacity-development initiatives.

Ms. Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on Violence against Children, started by reminding that most of current migration happens “across and within countries in the South” and that the face of migration is getting younger (young migrants between 12 and 24 are
about a third of the migrant flow from all developing countries). The SRSG also noted that by 2050 there may well be around 200 million environmental migrants and that the rapid growth of Africa’s population will substantially increase international migration flows of young people.

Ms. Santos Pais stated that “challenges are present at every moment of the migratory process and violence illustrates this well. Violence against children knows no geographic boundaries”. Whereas countless children migrate as a result of violence (at home, in school, fleeing forced marriages, persecution for belonging to a minority, as well as armed conflict), they also encounter violence during the migration process (in the form of abuse and exploitation, including child labour, trafficking, detention in inhuman conditions, and forced repatriation). In this context, unaccompanied and undocumented minors, girls in particular, are extremely vulnerable, especially if they do not speak the language of the host country, running risks such as “maltreatment by unscrupulous employers”, isolation, sub-standard working conditions, and non-payment of wages.

The SRSG warned that despite “the undeniable links between migration, violence and exploitation, child migrants remain largely invisible in debates about migration; and they are also absent from discussions on child protection and child labour”. Ms. Santos Pais warned that “policy responses are fragmented at best, and largely fail to protect the rights of children in migration and to offer them genuine opportunities for their personal development”. This is the more regrettable as the protection of young migrants “is an ethical and legal imperative” and the normative basis in this regard is very solid: the CRC and its two Optional Protocols “prohibit discrimination of any kind, and require States to safeguard the rights of all children under their jurisdiction”. The ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour and the Roadmap adopted in The Hague in 2010 also provide a practical framework for the protection of all children, including in migration, from the most serious forms of exploitation”.

www.globalmigrationgroup.org
The points and recommendations of the SRSG included:

- All children, including those in migration, are entitled to the respect of their fundamental rights irrespective of their migration status. They are children before being migrants. States have an obligation to “ensure the protection of all children in all stages of their migration process”.
- States have the legal obligation of giving a primary consideration to the best interests of the child in all decisions. The case of each and every child is unique and should be considered in the light of his or her specific circumstances, age and special needs. Responses to such special needs must be informed by the views, perspectives and experiences of the child.
- Integrate the protection of children and youth in national policy agendas by making sure that the best interest of children and violence against them are given systematic and high level attention.
- Ensure that migration laws, policies and regulations are guided by core international human rights standards, in particular the CRC and its Optional Protocols, the ILO Conventions No. 138 and 182, and the Palermo Protocols on Human Trafficking and the Smuggling of Migrants.
- Promote a “protective environment” to ensure that the needs of young migrants are met by providing a “safe framework” that prevents violence and exploitation, including child labour, and helps children make informed decisions. Many children and young people choose to leave home voluntarily and policies cannot be aimed at simply stopping this voluntary migration.
- The lack of statistical information and research on children in migration should be addressed through disaggregated data and a coordinated research agenda. Such efforts should be based on methods that promote child participation and make young migrants more visible in the policy agenda and child protection budgets.
- Support further analysis on the correlation between migration and violence, exploitation and abuse.
- International cooperation and well-coordinated governance are crucial to preventing risky migration and safeguarding the rights of children on the move between and across countries, while offering them genuine opportunities for their personal development.

Dr. Dilip Ratha, Lead Economist and Manager of the Migration and Remittances Unit at the World Bank, shared his personal experience and emphasized that “in certain places livelihoods can be very challenging and we need to be very sensitive with our policy choices”.

Dr. Ratha stated that internal and international youth migration is a growing phenomenon, although youth are currently overrepresented among internal migrants. The speaker highlighted issues related to the migration and development nexus and referred specifically to findings of various country studies on how migration could promote development at the household and country level. The World Bank’s high-level expert observed that “remittances remained resilient during the recent financial crises and migration presents a huge untapped potential.”

Dr. Ratha warned against untrue assumptions and generalisations, noting that migration has both bright and dark sides, and flagged the urgent need for robust data with regard to youth migration that accurately reflect the motives and circumstances of young migrants, including global skill levels.

Dr. Ratha observed that in the future migration pressures will increase dramatically. Sub-Saharan Africa will add nearly 700 million of working-age (15-64) population, whilst Europe and North America will see a decline of over 100 million. However, it will not be easy to fill labour gaps in Europe with migrants from Africa, unless significant investments are made in education and skills development. The high-level expert further noted that migration will not be sufficient to create jobs for those 700 million working-
age people, and called for solutions other than migration and for investment in skills, always keeping in mind local and global labour markets.

**Dr. Ratha made the following points and recommendations:**

- Promote more awareness of the development potential of leveraging remittances and mobilizing diaspora wealth. Globally, there is an estimated USD 397.5 million of diaspora savings. To encourage diaspora investments in countries of origin, it is important to promote diaspora bonds.
- Financial services should target both migrants and recipients of remittances, especially women, to ensure their broader inclusion into financial systems through loans and saving products for productive investments.
- Support research on innovative ways of reducing remittance costs, as well as on the impact of internal migration on development.
- Encourage diaspora investment in gender-sensitive or women-targeted development and empowerment initiatives, in consultation with local women.
- More research and innovation through technology are needed to enhance the flow of international remittances at a lower cost for remittances senders.
- Promote capacity-building through sex- and age-disaggregated data on migration, remittances and development, and ensure regular policy dialogues among relevant stakeholders.
- Decision-makers could be presented with a menu of evidence-based policy options on migration and development. A knowledge platform could be developed and would provide value added in this area. Ideally, it would include stakeholders and experts with divergent views and work through a peer-review system.

**Mr. Antoine Pécoud, Migration Specialist at the International Migration Section of UNESCO,** presented the core activities of UNESCO in the field of international migration on behalf of the Organisation’s Director General, Ms. Irina Bokova. Mr. Pécoud mentioned that UNESCO joined the GMG in 2007 and would chair the GMG from July to December 2011. Mr. Pécoud, UNESCO stated that “migration is a multifaceted phenomenon that impacts directly on several core concerns of UNESCO,” including education and cultural diversity, emphasizing that “a characteristic of UNESCO’s approach to the movement of people is the stress on the human face of migration,” as well as on “the cultural and identity-related challenges raised by the movement of people”. The speaker reminded the audience that migrants “are above all human beings with rights and responsibilities, with culture and identities.”

The UNESCO representative drew attention to the fact that “migration has today become a major source of human rights violations” and that “human rights challenges are further increased by new trends in migration dynamics, in particular as far as climate change is concerned”. Mr. Pécoud alluded to the limited research and policy development on the links between climate change and migration, as well as to uncertainties and disagreements on this issue. On behalf of UNESCO, the expert reaffirmed UNESCO’s commitment to producing “policy-relevant knowledge to improve States’ capacity to address the challenges raised by climate-induced migration”. In his remarks, the speaker called on the international community to face the social and human dimensions of climate change through an international framework and the development of toolkits relevant to policy-makers.

Mr. Pécoud mentioned that UNESCO would focus its GMG chairmanship on the relationships between climate change and migration and would host the GMG Principals meeting in November 2011. In closing, the expert flagged that “in the current context, marked by some confusion in the debates, a clear and
strong statement by the GMG may be of great relevance to bring discussion forward.”

UNESCO’s points and recommendations included:

- It is necessary to incorporate the human face of migration in migration policies, as this crucial to ensuring the full respect of human rights.
- The international community could rely more on a major existing tool, namely the UN Migrant Workers Convention, an instrument that more States should ratify.
- There is a need for in-depth research in all fields related to international migration, as well as for increased research-policy linkages.
- The international profile of the socio-cultural impacts of migration in terms of social cohesion and integration in a context of respect of cultural diversity in multi-ethnic and multicultural societies should be raised.
- Enhanced efforts for better data on the social and human dimensions of climate change are needed to monitor environment-related migration.

ROUNDTABLE 1.1: ENHANCING DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON MIGRATION

H. E. Ambassador Libran Cabactulan, Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Philippines to the UN, started by reminding the audience that at present there are some 8.2 million Filipino workers living in over 200 different countries (3.6 million as temporary workers, 3.9 as permanent residents, and 0.7 in an irregular situation), who remit about 18.76 billion USD to the Philippines every year. The Permanent Representative of the Philippines further noted that the Government of the Philippines, through several of its departments, has put in place a well-developed system that provides comprehensive assistance to its nationals, regardless of their migratory status abroad, while also helping them to obtain the maximum level of protection from their host country. However, in regions like the Middle East, the situation of Filipino migrant workers remains precarious.

H. E. Ambassador Cabactulan stated that international cooperation could further support efforts aimed at ensuring that migration is a choice in developing countries, by addressing both push and pull factors. The Philippines Ambassador mentioned that individuals are sometimes considered commodities and not given the freedom of movement of other factors of production such as capital.
H.E. Ambassador Cabactulan made the following points and recommendations:

- A multi-sectorial approach to international cooperation is needed that includes not only all relevant governmental agencies, but also civil society and other relevant stakeholders.
- Encourage domestic economic development to make migration a choice instead of a necessity.
- Legal protection mechanisms must be enhanced to protect young migrants and prosecute exploiters.
- Ensure that recruitment standards are enforced to promote the safe and transparent movement of migrants.
- States should ratify and implement the UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, as well as the ILO Decent Work Agenda, the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration and the ILO Convention concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers.
- A renewed focus on capacity-building through enhanced statistical data collection is advisable.
- Provide research resources to identify trends and emerging issues related to migration and development.
- Promote the identification, dissemination and replication of good and best practices in migration management, such as bilateral cooperation agreements.
- Provide greater technical and financial support to developing countries to enable them to participate in international migration dialogues and cooperation activities, such as the GMG and the GFMD.

SUMMARY OF DAY 1

The first day of the Symposium concluded with a summary by H. E. Ambassador Alfonso Quiñónez, Secretary of External Relations of the Organization of American States (OAS) and Member of UNITAR Board of Trustees.
H. E. Ambassador Quiñónez highlighted the following points and recommendations:

- **Enhance sex- and age-disaggregated data for migration-related research.** The OAS representative called for further research and capacity-building in order to support evidence-based policies and action in this area, having noticed difficulties in agreeing on a definition of youth and forced migration.
- **Encourage stakeholder participation in migration dialogues, as well as active youth participation in migration debates at all levels.**
- **Ensure the protection of migrants according to national and international human rights standards, given the vulnerabilities faced in the migration process.**
- **Review and reconsider new emerging challenges posed by internal migration and urbanization.**
- **Support policy dialogues on migration and finance, and innovative financial instruments that leverage remittances for development financing, albeit migration and remittances are no panacea for development.**
- **Promote further discussions on climate change and migration, as well as integrating disaster-management and climate change adaptation strategies into migration policy discussions.**
- **Encourage States to show political will and mainstream migration into development-planning efforts to maximize the positive impact of migration.**
- **Promote further cooperation, dialogue and synergies among relevant stakeholders and actors, as migration is “a fact of life.” Encourage States to better manage migration policy through cooperation to achieve a triple win for countries of origin, destination, and migrants themselves.**

**SESSION 3: ENHANCING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF YOUNG MIGRANTS TO DEVELOPMENT**

**H. E. Ambassador Claude Heller, Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations**, highlighted that Mexico is at the same time country of origin, transit and destination for international migrants. Ambassador Heller stated that “one out of three Mexicans (36 million) is between the age of 12 and 29”. This growing youth population has far-reaching implications on public-policy planning, as well as on the protection of migrants.

Ambassador Heller mentioned the milestone of the 2010 International Youth Conference in Mexico, which was attended by over 4,000 young representatives. In this context, the high-level representative referred to the “Guanajuato Declaration”, that recognizes young migrants as an asset for sustainable development in origin and destination countries; calls on States to adopt comprehensive immigration policies that protect and promote the rights of migrants, including young migrants; and encourages cooperation among States to promote safe migration and prevent exploitation of and violence against young migrants.
The following points and recommendations were made by H. E. Ambassador Heller:

- Ensure the respect for and enforcement of the human rights of all migrants (including social rights and irrespective of their migration status) to minimise the risks that they face throughout the migration process.
- Fulfil the human rights of youth (including social rights) at the national level through quality service provision in the area of education, health, and employment, to promote the human development of youth.
- Adopt a holistic approach in migration policy-making and planning across different sectors to address the needs of young migrants, including unaccompanied children and children “left behind”.
- Improve youth access to social media and ICTs, as well as media literacy
- Promote the participation of children and youth in migration- and development-related debates and policy planning through various channels and platforms, including the use of new media.
- Enhance cooperation at all levels to expand opportunities for youth development in areas such as employment and education. Such options could promote legal and safe migration channels for youth.

SESSION 4: ENHANCING THE WELL-BEING AND HUMAN RIGHTS OF MIGRANTS IN SUPPORT OF DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Thetis Mangahas, Deputy Regional Director and Senior Migration Specialist at the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, drew attention to the close links between child labour and migration, as migrant children and youth usually follow adults. Young migrants are not only deprived of access to education and other social services, but also end up in unregulated, difficult and dangerous employments, such as domestic work, agriculture and fishing, thus exposed to exploitation and abuse. As ILO research has corroborated, “even when migrant children are working alongside local children, they receive less pay, work longer hours, attend school less, and face more abuse”.

According to the high-level ILO representative, the major challenge in the field of youth migration is transforming normative principles into policy actions. In this regard, the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific has put in place innovative programmes to promote safer migration of young migrants, regardless of their migratory status, and include migrant youth into policy discussions. For example, a model policy program in China was mentioned where child-friendly materials have been developed to target potential young migrants through the use of music and other innovative approaches. Furthermore, Ms. Mangahas flagged an important initiative by the Government of Thailand that guarantees access to services to all children and youth, regardless of the migratory status of their parents.
The following points and recommendations were made by Ms. Mangahas:

- States should comply with their responsibilities under the CRC and ILO Conventions 138 and 182, which call on them to ensure protection of all children under their jurisdiction.
- The international community should increase the visibility of child and youth migration, including the vulnerability of young migrants to abuse.
- Countries of destination should put in place enhanced monitoring systems for recruitment agencies, as well as labour inspection mechanisms. Such efforts should be responsive to child labour concerns.
- Voluntary youth migration, whether it happens with or without parents, should at all times be distinguished from trafficking.
- Provide alternative options and incentives to migration, such as scholarships, free quality education, and youth employment.
- Promote measures to address the lack of birth registration of an estimated 51 million children born in foreign countries in the Asia-Pacific region, a situation that contravenes the CRC.

SESSION 6: LEVERAGING THE BENEFICIAL IMPACT OF MIGRATION ON YOUTH IN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

H. E. Ambassador Carlos Enrique Garcia Gonzalez, Deputy Permanent Representative (DPR) of El Salvador to the UN, began by noting that out of the approximately one-quarter of the total population of El Salvador living abroad, 90 percent live in the United States. The DPR of El Salvador recalled the legacy of civil wars in Central America, and noted that individuals migrate for security, family reunification and economic reasons.

Regarding inter-state cooperation on migration issues, Ambassador Garcia Gonzalez reminded the participants that El Salvador has various types of bilateral agreements with different countries, such as Canada, the US, Mexico, Spain, Guatemala and Australia. The DPR also mentioned that youth in Central America faces external and internal threats. At the international level, over the past four years drug cartels have moved their bases to Central American countries, which are not just transit countries anymore. At the regional level, gangs act with total impunity and US deportation policies do not act as a deterrent. At the national level, poverty, as well as gaps in the education and healthcare systems, are also major challenges. All these issues and risks put youth in a particularly vulnerable situation in El Salvador.

In mentioning the positive and negative implications of migration at the household and national level for Salvadorians living both in El Salvador and in the United States, H. E. Ambassador Garcia Gonzalez stressed the importance of remittances to El Salvador. These money flows represent about 19 percent of the country’s GDP, constituting one of the most important income sources for El Salvador (coffee exports only represent 11 percent of its GDP). The high-level speaker mentioned the strong ties and relationships that unite the US and El Salvador, as well as the active links between communities living in both countries.
H. E. Ambassador Garcia Gonzalez of El Salvador flagged the following points:

- The important role of regional dialogues on migration within Latin America as part of efforts of the war on drugs.
- A more comprehensive approach to children left behind should be adopted, not forgetting the inter-generational aspects of this reality (as they are mostly taken care of by their grandparents).

SUMMARY OF DAY 2

Dr. Josh DeWind, Director of the Migration Program at the Social Science Research Council, summarized the key messages of the second day of the GMG Symposium.

Dr. DeWind highlighted the following:

- Ensure the social, economic and political integration of young migrants into their host countries is crucial to enhancing their contributions to development.
- Promote the design and implementation of holistic migration policies and programmes that do not only focus on the economic dimensions of migration, but also address the broader human development needs of young migrants. This can include harnessing the energy, vitality, imagination, curiosity and hope of young migrants into their new society.
- Cooperation and dialogue among various State and development actors are needed to ensure young migrants’ access to their rights while keeping States’ ability to regulate migration and meeting the needs of citizens of host countries.
- Ensure youth participation in migration and development processes at all levels. To understand the situation of young migrants, it is important to take into account their cultural and social reality, as well as that of children “left behind”, while also considering threats such as international drug trade, regional gang activities, and poverty in countries of origin.
- Provide social protection services for children “left behind” and assess their human development and satisfaction levels.
CLOSING SESSION: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND THE YOUTH DIMENSION OF THE MIGRATION-DEVELOPMENT NEXUS

H.E. Ambassador Joseph Deiss, President of the 65th session of the UN General Assembly (PGA), started by noting that the GMG Symposium had demonstrated that one of the strengths of the GMG is the expertise that it brings together to inform Member States. The PGA then stressed that “youth definitely deserve a specific focus in the context of migration”: young people have a higher propensity to migrate, they are the most likely to take risks, more exposed to abuse and violence, and therefore require adequate mechanisms to protect their rights. The PGA flagged that “today, more than 80 percent of world youth live in developing countries and youth accounts for about half of the world total unemployed. Aspirations for change and for better living conditions are powerful incentives for migration”. Yet, given the fragility of the world economy and the global labour market, there is a lot of anxiety in the developed world against migrants. In this context, the PGA warned against “isolationism” and “a backlash against free trade and immigration”, calling on the GMG to “bear in mind the anxiety that many of our populations are experiencing” and “work to counteract these concerns with evidence and sound analysis”, since “to be beneficial, migration has to occur within a framework of norms that balance the interests of the migrants, of the host societies and the communities of origin”. H. E. Ambassador Deiss reminded participants that “it is the task of the GMG to assist governments, civil society and other stakeholders in adopting this framework, in tailoring to each situation and enforcing it”.

The PGA concluded by stating that “the Symposium has rightly focused on the opportunities that migration brings and identified the obstacles and challenges that lie ahead”, reaffirming that “the conclusions of these two days of discussions will usefully feed into our Thematic Debate tomorrow as well as into the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Youth that will take place in New York on 25 and 26 July”. The PGA called on the GMG to continue its “good work”, stressing how much Member States appreciate it.

The President of the General Assembly, H. E. Ambassador Joseph Deiss:

- Urged participants “to continue to work in a coordinated and collaborative way, particularly at the country level, to support all stakeholders in tackling the challenges of migration and making the best of its opportunities”.
- Encouraged GMG Member Agencies “to continue to provide strong analysis and policy recommendations to defuse misperceptions about migration and to help harness its economic, social and cultural potential for growth and development”.

Mr. Peter Sutherland, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on International Migration and Development, stated that there has never been a time where the need to put the issue of migration and development on the agenda was so evident. The SRSG on Migration and Development then reviewed the main milestones of the international dialogue on migration since 2005-2006. Mr. Sutherland mentioned that this process, even if initiated just a few years ago, has already led several governments to provide better policy responses to migration.

According to the SRSG on Migration and Development, young migrants are “the first in the fire line”. Mr. Sutherland mentioned the recent humanitarian crisis in Libya as an example and referred to the uncoordinated response of the international community, especially in view of its failure to protect refugees and economic migrants in this country. The SRSG observed that “the North African crises have
illuminated serious gaps in the management of international migration, as they led to the stranding of over a million international migrants far from home, and over half a million refugees. Libya was a test not only for the ability of the international community to respond to an humanitarian crisis, but also for international solidarity. 

The SRSG on Migration and Development called for the promotion of human development strategies that build the capacities of young migrants to meet the labour market needs of both countries of origin and destination.

In his points and recommendations, the SRSG on Migration and Development:

- Urged the GMG to play a crucial role in the formulation of coherent and cohesive UN responses to global migration and development challenges, which is not an easy task given divergences among Member States on this issue.
- Called on Member States to actively and objectively participate in the 2012 assessment of the GFMD, that has so far provided a useful platform for governments to share experiences and ideas.
- Mentioned that States and other actors must ensure the protection of stranded migrants and refugees, especially of vulnerable groups such as children and women, in accordance with international human rights law and United Nations values.
- Advocated for more evidence-based responses that address rising xenophobia and discrimination and foster public understanding about the contributions of migrants to the development of their host countries. Ultimately, only ideas, facts and arguments can be opposed to emotional, negative or racist responses to migration. The UN must be able to contribute robust arguments to discussions on this important issue. The core values of the UN, the equality and dignity of all human beings, should provide inspiration for this difficult task.
- Called on the UN to seize the opportunities opened up by the “Arab Spring” to develop initiatives that address the generational aspects of the current situation in North Africa and show the readiness of the international community “to move from the talking show to the field”.

H. E. Ambassador Eduard Gnesa, Swiss Chair-in-Office of the 2011 GFMD, focused his intervention on the linkages between the GMG and the GFMD, highlighting how the former may best support the latter. H. E. Ambassador Gnesa started by putting the 2011 GFMD into perspective, stressing that “governments remain the key actors in the GFMD, but the GMG Member Agencies have played a crucial role in supporting the Forum with their expertise since the first GFMD in 2007, and continue to offer sustained input for the implementation of the proposed work plan in 2011.”

H. E. Ambassador Gnesa presented the highlights of the 2011 GFMD process under Switzerland’s Chairmanship, in particular the organisation of a series of action-oriented thematic meetings around the world “in partnership with all governments, international organizations and civil society”. The GFMD Chair-in-Office highlighted that “the 2011 GFMD Concept Paper was drafted after close consultation with all governments and other relevant stakeholders, including the GMG”, and thanked the GMG for its consolidated feedback on the 2011 GFMD Concept Paper, as these inputs and comments provided “an excellent basis for collaboration during the 2011 GFMD process”. H. E. Ambassador Gnesa reminded participants of the overarching theme proposed by the Swiss Chair for the 2011 GFMD: “Taking Action on Migration and Development – Coherence, Capacity and Cooperation”, and of its key objectives: “to focus on action by drawing on the concrete experiences of practitioners on the ground” and “to examine
some of the practical applications of the GFMD discussions and outcomes so far at national, regional and international levels”. The GFMD Chair-in-Office also reminded participants of the three thematic clusters of the 2011 GFMD process: 1) labour mobility and development; 2) addressing irregular migration through coherent migration and development strategies; and 3) tools for evidence-based migration policies and development policies. The high-level speaker went on to give some specific examples of how the issue of migrant youth would be mainstreamed across these three 2011 GFMD thematic clusters.

Regarding the first cluster, H. E. Ambassador Gnesa pointed out that “child labour is very much a development issue” and child migrant workers “are often discriminated against, abused and exploited”. Concerning the second cluster, the Swiss Chair-in-Office intends that the human rights and special vulnerability of migrant children in the context of irregular migration constitute an integral part of the discussions. As far as the third cluster is concerned, H. E. Ambassador Gnesa pointed out that “youth is one of the key target groups of development interventions with respect to migration”, drawing attention to the Handbook on “Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning” recently published by the GMG. This Handbook is a key tool that dedicates special attention to the particularities of different social groups, including youth, especially in policies related to employment, social protection, and education. The Handbook is being implemented through a pilot project led by IOM, UNDP and the Government of Moldova.

The high-level speaker concluded his intervention by calling on participants “to ensure that the conclusions of the various thematic meetings, as well as your collective expertise and practical knowledge feed into the final debates in December”, reaffirming that “through the GFMD 2011, the Swiss Chair seeks to have institutional and policy coherence and capacity and cooperation within and between States, international organizations and civil society.”

H.E. Ambassador Gnesa:

- Encouraged participants “to integrate the youth dimension into all debates related to migration and development”, since “the major challenge in assisting and protecting children and considering them agents of change is to ensure that the actions of all of us here today are linked at national, regional and international levels, particularly within agreed cooperation schemes”.
- Advocated for enhanced capacity-development, policy coherence, and cooperation among all stakeholders in the management of migration.
- Emphasized that “much of the proposed GFMD 2011 work plan can only be implemented through partnerships, in particular among the GFMD participating governments. The GMG will play a key role in supporting this partnership.”

Mr. Sha Zukang, UNDESA Under-Secretary-General, congratulated UNICEF’s Executive Director, Ambassador Lake, for organising the Symposium and for his leadership, under which “the GMG has proven that it continues to mature”. Mr. Zukang also highlighted the significance of dedicating a Symposium to youth migration in the middle of the International Year of Youth, and thanked UNICEF for urging the Population Division of UNDESA to embark “on the systematic analysis of the distribution of international migrants by age”, a research project whose findings “help frame the discussion on youth and migration”. The UNDESA USG described this work as “just one example of fruitful collaboration among members of the GMG”, emphasizing that the GMG Symposium “has provided ample evidence that, working together, we can make important contributions and provide reliable information for
Governments”, not least because of the links and “fruitful synergies” between the work of the GMG and the ongoing international dialogue on migration and development (GA Informal Debate and GFMD).

The UNDESA USG then focused on two issues “that have important implications for how we view migration and foster international cooperation”: the globalisation of higher education and the globalisation of the family. UNDESA USG Mr. Zukang highlighted the far-reaching implications of the expansion of Western universities to developing countries, as well as the potential of “migration for education” to build bridges across borders and to provide a global knowledge-base that is needed “if young people today are to succeed in addressing the challenges of tomorrow”.

Ahead of the Rio+20 UN summit-level Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012, the USG noted that population dynamics have been identified as an emerging challenge for sustainable development. In view of this, the USG called for ideas and proposals on how to address this issue.

The UNDESA USG suggested:

- “Migration can open up many opportunities for youth and inspire their creative energy. Governments can do much do ensure this energy is not wasted”.
- “The international community has the opportunity to garner the knowledge-base that mobile students represent if we develop the right programmes”.
- The implications of the globalization of the family need to be better understood to foster its beneficial aspects “and develop the strategies to address their not so beneficial consequences”.

Ms. Rebeca Grynspan, UNDP Associate Administrator, congratulated UNICEF for organising an “appropriate and timely discussion”, especially in view of the disproportionate impact of current global crises on youth and women, crises that have left millions of young people outside any protection framework, be it institutional, educational, or occupational. Indeed, “the lingering fall-out from the economic crisis has left young people around the world even more vulnerable”, since according to the ILO 81 million of economically active youth were unemployed at the end of 2009, the highest figure on record to date.

Ms. Grynspan recalled that “one of the ways young people pursue opportunities is through migration”, that “young people make up a disproportionally high percentage of the world’s migrants”, and that the global demographic imbalance, together with high levels of inequality between countries, are important and underlying drivers for global migration”.

The UNDP Associate Administrator noted that migration should be framed first and foremost as an opportunity for human development, a positive correlation already advocated by the 2009 UNDP Human Development Report and by the 19 regional and national human development reports that have addressed issues related to migration since 2000. Nonetheless, as the 2009 Report cautioned, “the benefits of migration must not be taken for granted, as they are strongly dependent on who moves and in which conditions. For instance, “where only the privileged have access to migration, movement can enhance existing inequalities”. Thus, only through adequate and effective policy and institutional frameworks in both countries of origin and destination can the benefits of migration be broadly distributed.
Ms. Grynspan stressed the crucial importance of mainstreaming migration into development planning, although she cautioned that migration cannot replace development. In this regard, UNDP Associate Administrator recognised that “the GMG with the valuable support of the Swiss Government is taking steps towards better understanding and addressing country-specific needs with respect to migration mainstreaming”, referring to the GMG working group on this issue established in 2010 and to the GMG Handbook on “Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning”, describing this initiative as “an example of coherent international cooperation on migration and development”. Furthermore, the high-level speaker referred to the collaboration of UNDP country offices around the world with national and international partners “to help countries advance and uphold the rights of migrants; make the most of remittances and diasporas; and ensure that migrants can access services”.

UNDP Associate Administrator reminded the audience that the Human Developed Report 2009 recommended a package of specific reforms with regard to migration and development, including:

- ‘Earned regularisation’.
- Ensuring the basic rights of migrants everywhere.
- Undertaking initiatives specifically designed to improve the outcomes of migrants as well as destination communities.
- Making mobility an integral part of development strategies by mainstreaming migration into development planning. Migration must be included as a part of countries’ national development plans and strategies, in cooperation with international and national partners.

Ms. Grynspan also called for:

- Effective policy and institutional frameworks in both countries of origin and destination that allow for the benefits of migration to be broadly distributed.
- Coherent international cooperation in the field of migration and development.

Ambassador William Lacy Swing, Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), stated that “we live in an era where mobility – whether across countries or continents- is literally inscribed in the life scenarios of virtually every young person”. The Director General of IOM focused his intervention mainly on two issues of concern on migration and youth, namely global youth unemployment and unaccompanied children.

Regarding the first issue, the Director General of IOM stated that “youth unemployment and underemployment cast a long shadow over much of the developing and developed world”; this is a major concern and a priority for many government leaders in the developing world. Moreover, the gender dimension of youth unemployment should not be neglected, as “many young women see migration as a pathway to empowerment”.

Ambassador Swing, Director General of IOM, highlighted the connection between migration, the internet (“a driving force in the desire of youth to migrate to improve their lives”), and the spread of social media (which accelerate human movement and give voice to young peoples’ demands for jobs and dignity). Ambassador Swing referred then to the “Arab Spring”, observing that the global youth bulge, mass youth unemployment, and social media have served as a catalyst for recent events across North Africa and the Middle East. Concerning Libya, Ambassador Swing noted that more than 800,000
migrant workers, most of them young, had fled violence in that country as of May 2011, many with the help of IOM and UNHCR. The Director General of IOM pointed out that “most migrant workers will return to the same joblessness that drove them to Libya in the first place, and now with no more remittances supporting countless families”.

With regard to the issue of unaccompanied children, Ambassador Swing mentioned that this is “a direct consequence of massive youth unemployment”, bringing attention to the fact that most of these children “have no official identity”. The Director General of IOM concluded by stating that the only relevant question is how we are going to organise ourselves to manage youth migration responsibly and effectively so that its effects remain positive and all can take advantage of them.

The Director General of IOM, Ambassador Swing:
- Observed that unaccompanied migrant children and youth need protection and support, and only the State can provide these essentials.
- Called upon Member States and stakeholders to manage migration responsibly and intelligently – that is, in a humane and orderly manner – which requires greater recognition of the overwhelmingly positive contribution of all migrants, including young migrants, to our economies and societies.

Mr. Ivan Šimonović, Assistant Secretary-General at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), flagged the challenges and dangers that most migrants face, particularly children and young migrants in an irregular situation, who are most vulnerable. Mr. Šimonović drew attention to the abusive and violent conditions that many migrants must endure and concluded by calling for “full protection of the human rights of migrant children and youth”.

Mr. Šimonović, Assistant Secretary-General at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), called upon State and non-state actors to:
- Strengthen the link between development, migration and human rights to maximize migrants’ contribution to development, as well as development’s contributions to migrants.
- Address growing anti-immigration sentiments in some receiving countries.
- Uphold and respect the human rights of all migrants, especially children and youth, irrespective of their status. All migrant children are protected by international law, first and foremost as children by the CRC.
- Promote access to education, healthcare, decent housing and work for all migrants.

Mr. Anthony Lake, Executive Director of UNICEF and GMG Chair, closed the Symposium by thanking the “many distinguished speakers and participants for their thoughtful contributions, which have challenged our thinking and sparked useful debate” on “the growing impact of migration on children and young people”.

The GMG Chair mentioned the GMG joint statement that he would present at the GA Informal Debate the following day and emphasized that the issues of youth migration were “interwoven” throughout the
key priorities articulated in the GMG statement. He also stressed the GMG’s hope that “these points can serve as the basis for further discussion, especially as we look ahead to the second High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development in 2013.” Mr. Lake concluded by calling on the audience to take into account the experiences that young migrants shared with participants at the Symposium, always remembering “the faces behind the facts and the millions of people whose lives are shaped by migration. We have a chance to make a difference in their lives and to harness the power of migration to benefit us all.”

The GMG Chair and Executive Director of UNICEF, Mr. Antony Lake, made the following points and recommendations:

- Collect evidence and data on the negative economic impact of the exclusion of migrants, including migrant youth, as this can provide valuable arguments for advocacy upon Member States.
- Focus on each individual migration story, always having in mind that migrants are neither mere instruments of development nor recipients of charity.

### SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

The following sections summarize the key points made in each of the 6 sessions and 2 roundtables of the GMG Symposium. Recommendations from each session and roundtable have been clustered around five broad thematic areas: (I) Rights; (II) Capacity-Building; (III) Cooperation; (IV) Data Collection; and (V) Remittances.

#### SESSION 1: GLOBALIZATION, COOPERATION AND YOUTH: NEWLY EMERGING TRENDS

Participants in Session 1 focused on data, statistics and trends regarding global youth migration flows. International migration is “rather the exception than the rule”, as the almost 214 million international migrants worldwide represent only 3 percent of the world population. Internal migration is much more difficult to capture through statistics. In 2010, about 40 percent of international migrants live in developing countries and 60 percent in developed countries.

On average, international migrants are older in more developed countries than in developing countries. In both developed and developing countries, the migrant population is getting older. Youth migration is therefore important in slowing the ageing of both the migrant and the overall population in destination countries. As far as the international flow of remittances is concerned, the World Bank referred to the unprecedented number of 400 billion for 2010 (and these flows are underestimated). Remittance flows are three times larger than ODA and are resilient in times of crises, also according to the World Bank.

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26 The Symposium programme is provided in Annex 2.

During Session 1, the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations (UNDESA) presented a briefing paper entitled “International Migration in a Globalizing World: The Role of Youth." This document shows that those aged 18 to 29 are the most mobile among people of all ages and discusses the factors that underlie the high propensity of youth and young adults to migrate.

Although there is no universally accepted definition of youth, the United Nations defines youth for statistical purposes as persons aged 15 to 24 years. However, for the purposes of migration data, the age range 18-29 may be more relevant, so there are reasons for being flexible in using different age limits depending on the analysis that is being carried out. The age of majority varies across countries, and ages at which various rights or powers may be exercised often differ from the age of majority. Young people migrate for many different reasons that are not easy to verify, main drivers of youth migration being employment, education, marriage, family reunification, adoption, as well as humanitarian reasons.

According to newly available estimates of the migrant stock by age produced by the Population Division of UNDESA, by mid-2010 the global number of international migrants aged 15 to 24 was 27 million, constituting about one-eighth of the global migrant stock of 214 million, i.e. 15 percent of all international migrants in developing countries and 11 percent in developed countries. Young people make up a high proportion of global migrant flows, and about half of them have moved to developed countries over the past two decades. 36 to 57 per cent of all international migrants to Europe are between 18 and 29 years, most of them being in their twenties, and it can be assumed that in other regions this age range accounts for a very large proportion of the persons changing country of residence in a given year, proportions that can be 50 percent or even higher for some countries.

Male are slightly overrepresented in migrant youth flows, particularly those coming from Africa. Female migrants are underrepresented among young migrants in developed countries (they constitute 48.9 percent of migrants aged 15 to 24) and even more underrepresented among young migrants in developing countries. At the global level, about half of all international migrants are women. These data do not support the existence of a clear trend toward an increasing feminization of migration (young females migrate as daughters in the same proportion as their brothers, but not so much on their own after they reach majority).

In the near future, international migration is bound to increase, especially migration of young people born in Africa and the global South, given demographic, labour, and income imbalances between developing and developed regions. For example, 50 percent of North African youth is unemployed, as the 50 million people who enter the labour market each year are well beyond the absorption capacity of the global labour market.

Session 1 concluded with the following key recommendations:

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www.globalmigrationgroup.org
Rights

- Reform restrictive migration policies, as they would only result in more irregular migrants, given global economic and demographic imbalances.
- High-skilled migration is undoubtedly larger in countries with low skill levels; however, “brain-drain” should not be addressed by preventing the high-skilled to leave their country of origin, as this not only violates their rights, but does not solve the problem. Developing countries could instead invest in education and training to first increase the supply of high-skilled workers, instead of reducing the demand for them.
- Investment in “brain-gain” initiatives should not be expected to yield results in the short term, but only after 10-15 years.
- Diasporas could be engaged in exchange and return or circular migration programmes to this end. Middle-aged migrants with families are indeed likely to return when given incentives.

Cooperation

- Promote South-South cooperation through bilateral and regional initiatives to address the challenges faced by young migrant.
- Regular dialogues among stakeholders, including governments, civil society, the private sector, and migrant organizations is needed to enhance the evidence base that will improve the design and implementation of migration and development policies.

Data Collection

- Current limitations of available data for the analysis of youth migration should be addressed:
  - Most types of administrative data produced by immigration authorities, including data on the reasons for migration, lack information on age or provide information grouped in such a way that it is not possible to identify young people.
  - The analysis of youth migration dynamics would benefit from statistics classified by age. The experience and status of young migrants may vary considerably according to whether or not they fall below or above the thresholds established by laws or regulations for the exercise of certain rights or as requirements for migration. The current lack of statistics makes impossible to ascertain the implications of those regulations.
- Reliable sex- and age-disaggregated data are needed on the links between migration, remittances and development.

ROUNDTABLE 1.1: ENHANCING DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON MIGRATION

The history of international cooperation on migration is extremely short, which is related to the absence of a single global international migration regime, an absence that has in turn hindered the full liberation of the human and social development potential of migration. Lack of international cooperation has been
partially due to the diverging and sometimes opposite interests and views of States on migration.

After a series of pioneering initiatives, such as the 1994 UN Conference on Population and Development or the Berne Initiative, migration was timidly put on the international agenda around the mid-2000s thanks to two major milestones: the presentation of the Report of the Global Commission on Migration and Development in October 2005, and the High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development in 2006. The migration and development nexus has emerged as an important issue with enough consensus potential for deeper international cooperation in this area. The establishment of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), although a state-led process outside the formal UN framework and of not-binding nature, has constituted a major step towards constructive international dialogue, adequate capacity-building, and substantial government commitment. This has provided the basis for effective international cooperation among Member States on international migration.

International cooperation on migration and development since 2005 has been key to increasingly building confidence among stakeholders at all levels. Nonetheless, new and pressing issues such as integration, security, and human rights should be added to the agenda of international cooperation on migration. Some fundamental challenges in this regard refer to the restoration of public confidence in the State’s ability to manage migration, where ‘manage’ is not a euphemism for control, but stands for facilitating legal migration, including youth migration.
Participants and panellists in this roundtable noted the following:

**Rights**
- States should ratify and implement the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.
- States should ensure that public perceptions of migrants are fair and balanced.
- States should promote the safe, legal and transparent recruitment of migrants, as well as decent work conditions.
- Youth should be given opportunities to take part in initiatives to combat xenophobia and other anti-immigrant sentiments.

**Capacity Building**
- Institutional capacities need substantial reinforcement, also in developed countries, for States to be able to address youth migration comprehensively and objectively. Such capacities should be strengthened through financial and technical support to foster inclusive policy dialogue and practice at all levels.
- Factual evidence is not the only precondition for sound policy-making, but also a series of elements for which capacity-building is crucial, such as accountability, transparency, policy evaluation, absence of corruption, and training of bureaucrats and civil society.
- Adequate capacity is needed at the national level, as States are the building blocks of international cooperation. Migration is a new issue for many governments, which due to their lack of capacity cannot approach it in a holistic and balanced manner.
- Capacity-building through financial and technical support should be stepped up to facilitate evidence-based policy planning. Training of government officials, together with support to research institutions through international cooperation, is needed to collect, analyze and disseminate disaggregated statistical data that allow stakeholders to identify trends and emerging issues that can inform future planning on migration and development policies and programs.

**Cooperation**
- Mainstream migration into international cooperation on issues such as trade, MDGs, development aid, or conflict-prevention. This is key to alleviating and addressing the root causes of migration and making of migration a choice and not a necessity, although migration is no panacea for development and the links between the two should not be overestimated.
- Support regional, sub-regional and bilateral cooperation on migration, as this has proven very effective, as well as complementary to cooperation at the global level. Noteworthy examples are the Regional Consultative Processes (RCPs) to which the GMG has provided extensive assistance through its Member Agencies, as well as the work of the sub-regional bodies of the UN System, which have increasingly put migration on their respective agendas.
- Cooperation should be understood as a multi-level process: a national coherent approach to migration is a precondition for effective international cooperation. To develop such an
approach, all relevant stakeholders must be taken into consideration, including employers and local governments. However, two elements are essential to a multi-stakeholder dialogue on migration: training civil society and promoting an objective discussion on this issue, thus putting an end to traditional polarisations such as “government vs. civil society” or “executive vs. judiciary”.

- Migration should be mainstreamed into development policies and planning to increase the number of such policies in which countries of origin and destination have mutual and interdependent socio-economic and human rights interests. In this regard, States are invited to implement the recommendations contained in the GMG Handbook on “Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning”.
- States should ensure international cooperation on protection, prevention and prosecution of human trafficking in countries of origin, transit and destination.
- Civil society organizations, academia, the private sector, and diaspora communities need to be seen by countries of origin and destination as active development actors. The inclusion by States of all these actors in dialogue, debates and knowledge-sharing initiatives, as well as in the design and implementation of migration- and development-related policies and programmes, constitutes a significant step towards better governance and a fair and balanced discussion on this issue.
- Ultimately, the political will of States is key to enhancing international cooperation and policies that promote youth development.

ROUNDTABLE 1.2: COOPERATION – THE KEY TO AN EFFECTIVE POLICY RESPONSE TO GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE, MIGRATION AND YOUTH

Environment-related migration refers to migration due to sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect people’s lives and livelihoods. Although economic and political factors are the dominant forces driving migration, participants at this roundtable drew attention to the fact that environment-related migration is a growing phenomenon that has already affected millions of people around the world, although estimates vary widely.

Environment-related migration is not only an issue for developing countries. However, it was noted that the increasing intensity and frequency of natural disasters, changing migration patterns, competition for scarce resources, and evolving demographics make environment-related migration more likely to occur in developing countries than in more developed ones.

Environment-related migration is not only international migration but also internal migration, especially from rural areas to urban centers. Environmental change and urbanization were identified as two phenomena that go hand in hand. Environment-related migration will most likely increase flows to cities, due to deteriorating conditions in non-urban areas.
These flows will intensify demographic, social, and economic pressures in those areas, which in turn could potentially alter livelihoods and opportunity structures in terms of education and employment, making certain segments of the population such as young people more likely to engage in risky behaviours.

In the context of migration and environmental change, this roundtable underscored the need for policy objectives that increase the range of options offered to the most vulnerable categories of people affected by environmental change through:

**Rights**
- Preventing forced migration and displacement as much as possible through adaptation mechanisms.
- Providing assistance and protection to environmental migrants.

**Capacity Building**
- Enhancing youth-centred participation and perspectives in disaster risk reduction and environmental change strategies.
- Mainstreaming environment-related migration into existing disaster management tools.
- Provide technical and financial support to communities and countries whose livelihoods are affected by environmental change through enhanced adaptation mechanisms.

**Cooperation**
- Modifying the international legal regime to address movements of people due to environmental push factors.
- Cooperation on this issue should be enhanced at all levels. Progress has already been made at the regional level (for example, the Dhaka Declaration recognises this kind of migration).
- International cooperation should focus not only on mitigating the impact of forced mass environmental migration, but also on facilitating migration as adaptation strategy.

**Data Collection**
- Support research initiatives aimed at producing robust and sound findings should be a priority.
- Research and data on the causal mechanisms between migration, environmental change and urbanization are key to achieve migration and environmental policy objectives.
- Explore the complex interrelations between climate change and human mobility in order to develop the necessary data, expertise and capacity to address this challenge and to achieve close cooperation between environmental and social sciences.
SESSION 2: YOUTH MIGRATION FROM A YOUTH PERSPECTIVE

Even though migrants between 10 and 24 years represent almost a quarter of international migrants, young voices are often absent from the migration policy debate. For the first time in a GMG Symposium, a group of young migrants and youth leaders participated as panellists to share not only their views, but also their policy recommendations.

Young migrants see migration from a different perspective. In their own voice, migration represents personal growth, as well as the chance to expand one’s life experiences, opportunities and perspectives. For young people, such potential and opportunities could be enhanced through positive measures that promote social inclusion and allow them to pursue education and employment in their host countries.

Policies such as those that grant irregular migrants access to formal secondary education but not to higher education or the formal labour market should be reformed to further allow migrants with acquired human capital to maximize their contributions to their destination societies, as well as to their countries of origin.

At this session, the recommendations and points of young participants included the following:

Rights

- Create youth-centred opportunities that ensure meaningful and inclusive participation of young people in migration policy debates. Such engagement of young migrants would provide first-hand information about the daily challenges of young migrants and how migration and development policies can better suit them.

- Promote the social inclusion, protection and human rights of young migrants. The provision of positive outlets (i.e. community service and access to education and employment) and the support of the rights of special categories of migrants such as children and young girls should be a policy priority for governments of destination countries. Such efforts will promote the full economic and social integration of migrants and protect them from prejudices and social discrimination.

- Social media and arts can play a key role in allowing young migrants to participate in and contribute to the policy-making process from a different angle, which in turn would allow them to engage in the public debate and present their recommendations.

- Migration policies should avoid criminalizing young migrants, especially second-generation irregular immigrants, by hindering their access to services such as education, preventive healthcare, and employment, which are critical to their human development and ability to contribute to the development of their host country.

29 For more information on the methodology used to enable youth participants share their views and experiences, as well as information on key points raised by youth delegates during the Symposium, see Annex 5.
Address the root causes of youth migration. Youth participants called on sending countries to create the necessary opportunities for the human development of youth. Such opportunities could come in the form of employment, educational opportunities, and meaningful youth participation in the governance process of the country, thus making migration a choice instead of a necessity.

SESSION 3: ENHANCING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF YOUNG MIGRANTS TO DEVELOPMENT

The first session of day two started by stressing that the International Year of Youth offered a timely opportunity to discuss strategies to enhance the contributions of young migrants to development in countries of origin, transit and destination, reminding the audience that young migrants are included in the World Programme of Action for Youth.

Concrete examples were given by IOM of different projects aiming at enhancing the contributions of young migrants to development, such as the working group on “children on the move”, the GMG Handbook on “Mainstreaming Migration into Development Planning”, education and training activities for Egyptian youth organised in Fayoum Governorate to promote regular migration, UNITAR’s “Migration and Development” seminar series, and the PLURAL + youth video festival.

Panellists agreed that policy formulation in this area is particularly complex, due to the heterogeneity of the living conditions of children and young migrants. Proof of this is the scarcity of specific measures to address the situation of the 33 million migrants under age 20 worldwide, according to UNDESA and UNICEF data. Presenters highlighted further gaps and obstacles in the design of policies that enhance the contributions of young migrants to development.

One of these obstacles is the discrimination that migrant women and children often suffer throughout the migration process. In a context of increasing global need for skilled and unskilled women labour, migrant women face insecure livelihoods and are more likely to be negatively affected by budgetary cuts on public services. Women are often forced to migrate without their children and as dependent family members, being more exposed to isolation, exploitation and violence. Furthermore, militarization of borders makes migrant women highly vulnerable to smugglers, contributing to an atmosphere of anti-immigrant feelings and rising xenophobia. Increasing circular migration patterns further expose women not only to temporary contracts and precarious jobs, but also to detention and loss of parental rights. In general terms, migrant women are underpaid and face barriers to access social services. This long series of discriminations, inequities, and vulnerabilities prevents migrant women from having a positive impact on the development of both their host and home communities.

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30 See: Global estimates of international migrant children and adolescents
In order to enhance the contributions of young migrants to the development of their societies of origin and destination, policies and programmes should focus on enabling young migrants, including young migrant women, to fully develop their potential and become “agents of change”, by promoting their social, economic and political integration. Contributions of migrants should not be understood from a merely economic approach to development, as migrants can enrich both their home and host societies in multiple ways. Thus, migrant development initiatives should focus on broader human development concerns. For instance, young migrants should not only be provided employment opportunities, but also be involved in civic engagement activities.
At this session, recommendations focused on:

**Rights**

- Mainstream gender and human rights in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of policies, programmes and development plans with respect to children and young migrants, including in the areas of preventive health, education, employment, non-discrimination, and social and economic integration, in order to promote their personal development.

- Develop and ensure the enforcement of effective protection mechanisms for young migrants and their families throughout the migration process, especially girls, young women and unaccompanied migrant children, including protection against gender-based and domestic violence, exploitation, abuse, human trafficking, and migrant smuggling.

- Raise awareness and facilitate effective access to protection mechanisms and facilities for young migrants. These mechanisms and facilities should be tailored according to the specific needs of young migrants, including gender- and age-specific needs.

- The views and experiences of children and youth, as well as those of young migrants’ associations, must be considered and constitute an integral part of policies and strategies developed to enhance the well-being of young migrants.

- Implement mechanisms to ensure meaningful participation of women and youth when planning development policies that may affect them, especially in countries of origin.

- Combat raising levels of xenophobia and discrimination against migrants in both countries of destination and origin (upon return and during the reintegration process) by raising public awareness on the rights of young migrants and their families, as well as their contributions to the development of communities in countries of destination.

- States should ratify and implement relevant international human rights instruments, such as CMW, CEDAW, and relevant ILO Conventions.

- Ensure access to social services and education for young migrants, including higher education, in order to enable the “second generation” to contribute to the development of both host and home societies.

- Engaging all stakeholders in protecting and monitoring the rights of migrant and non-migrant youth in origin, transit and destination countries.

- Adopting a gender-equity approach to migration and development that addresses discrimination against women and young migrants all along the migration process, as well as the disproportionate impact of globalization on women.

- Further efforts, including advocacy initiatives, are needed to decriminalize migration
and stop the use of punitive measures such as detention or deportation.

**Capacity Building**

- Strengthen capacity development and skill sets of children and young persons, in particular young migrants, to enhance and maximize their contributions to development in both countries of origin and destination.

- Although the creation and expansion of human capital increases the development prospects of any given country through investments in education and health, educational and training activities must be linked to employment schemes, not only to satisfy the demand of the labour market, but also to increase migrants’ personal development and productive contribution to society.

**Cooperation**

- Strengthen multilateral cooperation and regional and bilateral partnerships on migration through dialogue and cooperation at the inter-State and inter-agency levels, as well as with civil society and other stakeholders, to enhance the well-being of young migrants and their contributions to development.

- The UN System, and in particular the GMG, can better address the difficult situation of migrants by promoting inter-agency cooperation, as well as mainstreaming a human-centred approach to migration and development in on-going policy debates (IMF, LDCs, CSW).

- Improve cooperation on migration at all levels, aiming at greater policy coherence and more action-oriented responses to address the gaps and challenges related to youth migration.

- Establish genuine people-centred and cross-regional development partnerships between origin and destination countries and regions, especially in areas such as aid, trade and financial assistance.

- The basis for international cooperation on migration should be the promotion of humane, safe, and legal migration.

- International organisations must join forces with all stakeholders, including the private sector, and act under a common approach.

- International development agencies should further collaborate and share good practices on effective institutional initiatives on combating child labour.

**Research and Data Collection**

- Enhance reliable age- and sex-disaggregated data collection efforts.

- Undertake policy-relevant and action-oriented research, informed by documented good practices and taking the views, needs and experiences of young migrants into account, to identify and develop evidence-based strategies for enhancing the safety, well-being, and
contributions of young migrants to development.

- Support research on the specific vulnerabilities of young migrants, in particular those undocumented, unaccompanied or separated, as well as of children and youth who have remained in countries of origin.

Remittances

- Remittances could be invested more productively, for example as collateral credit or as innovative financial mechanisms for development.
- Remittances should not be used as an alternative to sound development policies, macro-economic reform, or gender equity measures.

SESSION 4: ENHANCING THE WELL-BEING AND HUMAN RIGHTS OF MIGRANTS IN SUPPORT OF DEVELOPMENT

A rights-based approach to migration enhances the social and economic integration of young migrants while promoting overall development. During Session 4, Symposium participants drew attention to some of the challenges faced by young migrants in this regard, such as health risks, gender inequalities, xenophobia, and socio-economic disparities between migrants and non-migrants in any given society. These challenges prevent the full integration of migrants into host societies, promoting their marginalization.

The lack of a rights-based approach to migration is evident in the failure of States to provide migrants with effective access to healthcare and education. Special attention was brought to the right to health of young migrants by Dr. David Ingleby31, from Utrecht University, who started by reminding the audience that ‘rights do not travel’ and that the rights of migrants vary depending on their country of destination. The right to health is one of the main responsibilities of States, not only upon their own citizens, but also upon migrants living under their jurisdiction. However, the right to health of migrants is often eroded in different ways: a) migrants are not entitled to use most health services in many countries; b) migrants suffer institutional discrimination, as the way in which the healthcare system is designed does not match their needs and therefore excludes them; c) migrants are subject to unnecessary health risks, for example those derived from exploitation and discrimination.

Although it can be assumed that young migrants tend to be healthy because they are young, very few generalizations can be made about this particular group, as there are a lot of variables involved, such as age group and living conditions. Evidence shows that migrants rarely are heavy users of healthcare, although in certain areas their health is very much at risk. Furthermore, there are a series of specific health risks which migrants are particularly vulnerable to, unaware of, or unfamiliar with, which makes health education and promotion especially necessary among migrant populations. Apart from the health risks derived from Western lifestyle, to which all incoming migrants are very much exposed (obesity,

31 For the presentation visit:
diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, etc.), there are specific risks affecting particular groups that must be mentioned. With regard to sexual and reproductive health, young migrants are particularly vulnerable to sexual harassment and exploitation, and are not familiar with Western practices and systems of prevention regarding contraception, pregnancy, birth, or STDs. As far as mental health is concerned, services are generally mobilised too late, when problems are already out of control.

The three main problems with regard to the health of young migrants are lack of entitlement to healthcare services, poor health education, and unmatched health necessities. Regarding entitlement, irregular migrants are a group of outmost concern, as most regular migrants enjoy roughly the same rights as citizens in terms of health. Irregular migrants are mostly young and particularly vulnerable, as they are not able to exercise the few health rights that they have for fear of being deported and are unaware of what their rights are.

On a positive note, since 2000 the international community has made increased efforts to put the health of migrants on its agenda, both at the international (WHO and IOM) and the regional level (European Parliament and Council of Europe). However, at the national level the financial and economic crisis has made increasingly difficult to advocate for the rights of migrants.

Ultimately, the question was raised whether migrant youth should be at all responsible for, or concerned about, contributing to development or whether it is us who should rather be concerned about their development and well-being as human beings and citizens.
Session 4 ended with the following recommendations and points:

**Rights**

- Adopting and effectively enforcing a rights-based approach to migration is a sine qua non condition for social integration and cohesion in host societies, as well as preventing social exclusion, poverty and inequality among young migrants, including girls.

- States and practitioners should enhance and uphold the well-being and human rights of young migrants by effectively implementing the principle of equality of treatment. Migrants and their families should be granted equal access to the job market, wages, social services (including healthcare and education), working hours, portable social security schemes, freedom of association, and labour rights.

- Migrants, in particular young migrants, are overrepresented in precarious jobs, live in hazardous situations and are often victims of trafficking and the bad practices of placement agencies.

- With regard to recruitment agencies, States should ratify the ILO Convention No. 181 on Private Employment Agencies.

- States should not disregard their obligations under international human rights instruments, such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR). This also includes eliminating constraints that may hinder migrants’ access to their social, economic and cultural rights, such as obligations of civil servants to report irregular migrants; criminalisation of migrants; detention and deportation practices, including of unaccompanied migrant children and families travelling with children; cultural and linguistic barriers; institutional discrimination.

- Evidence shows that regularisation processes substantially increase the levels of human development of migrants and their integration in society.

- States must put in place policy actions to effectively ensure the protection of all children living within their territory, in accordance with their international obligations. Particularly challenging in this regard is visualising and regulating migrant child labour, as well as addressing the lack of registration of migrant children.

- The role of the judiciary and independent monitoring bodies should be enhanced.

- Heath education and promotion among migrant populations must be improved.

- Immigrants, especially immigrant children and youth, are targets of xenophobic violence, hate crimes, and discrimination in many countries.

- More advocacy initiatives upon Member States are needed on these issues to encourage a stronger response by governments to prevent the escalation of such trends through, inter alia: monitoring and documentation of cases of xenophobic violence; data collection, sharing and dissemination among different State institutions; support training on xenophobia; enhance the work of assistance institutions on the ground; prosecution of anti-immigrant abuses and crimes.

**Capacity Building**

- Support capacity building and institutional cooperation, as well as policy coherence between government and non-governmental agencies, to enhance the full integration of young
migrants.

- **Promote training on xenophobia, discrimination and hate crimes against immigrants, especially for civil servants.**

**Cooperation**

- **Social partners (workers and entrepreneurs alike) should work together to address the main challenges of labour migration. In this regard, the ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration can provide guidance and best practices.**

- **All stakeholders should be involved in combating anti-immigrant violence and xenophobia. One particular good practice in this regard is the “Diversity Initiative” in the Ukraine, were international organisations took the lead but partnered with NGOs, as well as national and local authorities.**

- **International cooperation should focus on providing children and youth in countries of origin with alternatives to migration through free quality education, scholarships, youth employment, etc.**

- **South-South cooperation should be enhanced to effectively monitor recruitment agencies.**

- **Bilateral agreements in the field of both migrant health and labour must be promoted.**

**Data Collection**

- **More data about cases of anti-immigrant violence should be collected and shared.**

- **There is a need for sex- and age-disaggregated data with rights-based indicators.**

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**SESSION 5: ENHANCING COOPERATION ON THE PROTECTION OF UNACCOMPANIED MIGRANT CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

The phenomenon of unaccompanied migrant children (UMCs) and youth is far from being exceptional - only in 2009, over 18,000 UMCs applied for asylum worldwide, 81 percent of them in Europe. Although it is clear that all UMCs need special care and protection, their individual vulnerabilities and needs vary greatly. However, policy responses have been so far fragmented, inconsistent, and not evidence-based.

Given the complexity and multi-dimensionality of this phenomenon, when addressing the situation of UMCs, both consistency and flexibility are needed, not just because it is necessary to adapt to the different needs of different regions, but also because best interest determination (BID) procedures are subject to numerous variables. Thus, policy and programmatic responses can only be relevant, effective and sustainable if they are: a) tailored to the personal circumstances and to the migratory motivations and expectations of unaccompanied migrant children (for example, the wish to help their community or to have a better life); b) based on relevant research and on the views and recommendations of young migrants. Furthermore, sustainable actions in this field must involve capacity building, partnerships and comprehensive approaches that start in countries of origin and address the whole migration cycle.

To better capture the challenges faced by UMCs throughout the migration process, the notion of “children on the move” can be useful. This term refers to all children who have left their place of origin or usual residence, either on the way or already arrived at destination. Movement means risks but also
opportunities for children. Children on the move not only face more risks than other children (abuse, neglect, mistreatment, exploitation), but are also more difficult to protect. However, per se, movement does not increase the vulnerability of children and youth, it is the conditions under which they move that do so. Movement has a negative impact when children lack protection. ‘Protection’ should be understood not only as freedom from violence and abuse, but also as the fulfilment of the right to development of migrant children and youth. In this regard, it is essential that unaccompanied migrant children are seen not only as victims, but also as agents and subjects.

Ultimately, both preventive and protective measures and strategies in this field must be able to adapt the implementation of international standards to different cultural contexts and adjust to an always complex and changing reality, trying to protect children on the move and make their movement safer, but not to control or stop them. This can only be done together with the children (the beneficiaries of these protective measures), as well as with their close family and social environment.
Participants in Session 5 made the following recommendations:

**Rights**

- **International law principles** such as non-discrimination, best interest of the child, age-appropriateness, right to life and full development, family unity, participation, access to information and justice, and confidentiality must remain at the heart of policies and interventions addressing the needs of unaccompanied children.

- **Best Interest Determination (BID) procedures** must involve legal guardians and State welfare entities, comply with international law principles, and be based on the participation of the child throughout the whole process.

- **Children should be recognised** the entitlement to seek asylum on its own and be granted access to justice accordingly. In particular, the situation of young asylum-seekers once they turn 18 must be effectively addressed by all governments, as voluntary return should not be the only option available to them.

- **Focus should be on thoroughly and systematically assessing** whether assisted voluntary return or integration solutions are more suitable, a decision that is never straightforward and that must always be guided by the principles of best interest of the child and family reunification. In this area, IOM, whose work had an impact on approximately 20,000 UMCs between 2006 and 2009, assists roughly 100 unaccompanied migrant children every year.

- **Return of unaccompanied children** should only happen after a best interest determination procedure has taken place and with the necessary safeguards and assistance (family tracing, participation of legal guardians, plan for the future development of the child, etc.).

- **Counter-trafficking measures** should be prioritised by all States, although it should not be assumed that all children on the move are trafficked.

- **All migrant children are entitled to protective measures** that take into account their best interest. Child protection systems should be oriented towards accompanying migrant children along their way, ensuring a continuum of protective environments.

- **Provide unaccompanied children with relevant child-friendly information** on asylum-seeking procedures. Children in countries of origin should have access to child-friendly information on safe migration and the risk of trafficking and smuggling.

- **Make protection mechanisms child- and gender-sensitive**, as well as based on the respective social and cultural reality of the child or youth migrant.

- **Remove provisions in migration polices that criminalize irregular migrant children, adolescents and youth.** Alternative responses should include regularization programmes, especially for children.

- **Protect instead of punish children and adolescents with irregular migratory status.** None of them should not be held accountable for migration-related offenses.

**Capacity Building**

- **Capacity building initiatives** should target States, civil society, and young migrant networks working with unaccompanied migrant children.

- **Protection at the border** should be enhanced by providing training to border agents and officials, so that they are able to identify vulnerable children, including potential victims of
trafficking. Such measures should provide border guards with age-appropriate information about child rights, available services, and ways to record and consider children’s views while petitioning.

Cooperation

- The international community should adopt a holistic protection system allowing governments and stakeholders to understand the complexities surrounding unaccompanied migrant children. Such an approach should take culture into account.

- Inter-agency cooperation on this issue is particularly relevant, as well as the participation and involvement of unaccompanied migrant children themselves, local communities, extended families and diasporas. The notion of “children on the move” fosters cooperation between local populations, UN Agencies, and NGOs working on the ground.

- Enhance institutional coherence and cooperation by building partnerships based on a shared and coordinated vision of how to address the needs of unaccompanied migrant children and youth throughout the entire migration cycle. At the national level, this implies that ministries of interior, labour, social welfare, child protection and immigration need to coordinate their efforts to design rights-based “umbrella” policies. At the international level, governments of countries of origin, transit and destination must work together, along with international organizations (especially UNHCR, IOM and UNICEF), and civil society, in particular NGOs working in the field.

Data collection

- Data on unaccompanied migrant children and their situation are extremely scarce, not least because most of them are undocumented and invisible, and move within their country of origin or region.

SESSION 6: LEVERAGING THE BENEFICIAL IMPACT OF MIGRATION ON YOUTH IN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

Session 6 focused on how the beneficial impacts of migration can be enhanced and its negative effects minimized as far as youth in countries of origin is concerned.

Participants noted the importance of a holistic perspective on this issue, as the impacts of parental migration on children and youth left behind are ambivalent and go beyond simple economic indicators. Whilst remittances undoubtedly increase access to health and education, it is not clear that they actually increase subjective life satisfaction. On the contrary, there often is a clear correlation between migration, lower life satisfaction and risky social behaviours, which has a negative impact on the individual well-being of children and youth, while the entire family structure is also negatively affected. Furthermore, remittances affect not only the household but also the entire community, being sometimes at the basis of stigmatisation of adolescents that are not supervised and have money.

Crucially, remittances can have a gendered impact, as they usually improve only certain development indicators, especially for girls and young women. In Mexico for instance, daughters of migrant parents often have to give up education to take care of their family. However, evidence on this issue is also
ambivalent, as some studies state that family separation can have a positive psychological impact and be empowering for girls and young women, as prejudices concerning the division of roles within the family are not transmitted to them.

In any case, it should be kept in mind that the impact of migration and remittances in countries of origin is mediated by a series of factors, such as household structure, level of social investment in the community, and existence of educational frameworks and social networks accompanying children, adolescents and youth affected by migration.

This session concluded with the following recommendations:

**Rights**

- The conditions in which children and youth who remain in countries of origin access rights should be taken into account, as social goods are essential for them to be able to take advantage of the positive impacts of migration on their own human development.
- To leverage the beneficial impact of young migrants on their countries of origin, it is necessary to re-focus discussions towards a people-centred approach to development.
- Visa policies should be reformed to allow for families to migrate together, as well as to facilitate circular migration, regularization, and family reunification, changing the current paradigm where migration is framed as a security issue.

**Capacity Building**

- Teachers should be specifically trained for classes where students belong to migrant and non-migrant households.

**Cooperation**

- States should closely cooperate with journalists and other relevant stakeholders to address negative images of migrants in the media.

**Data Collection**

- It was noted that many studies concerning children and youth left behind have been based on particular case studies and a variety of different methodologies, which makes it difficult to draw general conclusions. Most of the studies in this area have focused on the effects of remittances and increased household income on the access of children to rights, but the paucity of data and comparative research has led to mixed results and concurrent interpretations.
- The linkages between migration, remittances, household income and gender empowerment must be further examined.
- It is necessary to conduct further research in order to complement a set of studies indicating that migrant households are often stigmatized in countries of origin.
- The relation between migration and risky adolescent behaviour should also be further analysed.