

CLOSING REMARKS

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International Dialogue on Migration 2019

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

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Distinguished Ministers, Excellencies, Youth representatives, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to start by thanking you all for taking the time to join us in this IDM and for honouring us with your engagement and active participation during the day. This was the first of the two IDMs scheduled by the IOM in 2019 under the overarching theme “Youth and migration: Engaging youth as key partners in migration governance”.

Allow me to share with you several key takeaways from today:

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

- Evidence on youth migration is key to enhance awareness of the challenges and opportunities they face in the context of migration, and the role and contribution they can bring to the achievement of 2030 Agenda. Data on the impact of migration on young people is lacking. Youth staying behind is burdened of sustaining the household and often exposed to vulnerabilities and exploitation.
- As our speaker from UNDESA noted, numbers define policies needed. In this context we urgently need to produce reliable data and information on youth to enhance policy processes:
 - Build the capacity and financial resources for the collection

- Use and dissemination of accurate and timely data, especially in the least developed countries
- Develop new norms, practices and innovative approaches for data sharing across sectors and agencies, encouraging further sharing at local, national, regional and international level.

Social and economic exclusion often disproportionately impact those on the move

- In their new communities, young migrants may become victims of social marginalization and face difficulties and restrictions in accessing education, employment, social protection and other basic rights.
- But at the same time, they are extremely resilient, determined, strong and resourceful in facing challenges and crises. They possess valuable skills and voices to contribute to their host community and to help build solutions to problems.
- Fighting racism, xenophobia and discrimination should be a priority for all actors as a step to promote social integration and empowerment of youth. Social media and campaigns can be powerful tools in this respect by promoting migrant voices and engagement of youth. In the words of the 2 Youth Envoys, there can't be better advocates for an evidence-based counter-narrative that can inform policies on migration than young people are.
- Young migrants are a very diverse group of people on the move, so there is no one-size-fits-all model and measures should be tailored-made. There is also a need to address gender equality and the empowerment of young women.
- Bringing young people to the centre of policies and processes may reduce the likelihood of marginalized youth falling through the cracks when these policies are implemented.

Young migrants are at particular risk of exploitation

- All efforts need to be taken to address young migrants' vulnerabilities, including to provide safe means of migration for young people to protect them from human trafficking and smuggling. National child protection and youth empowerment strategies and action plans that mainstream youth needs are required. As noted by the President of the 73rd General Assembly and the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants young women migrants are particularly vulnerable to discrimination and violence.
- Youth can also be effective partners in addressing climate change-induced migration, we need to ensure their involvement in the response.
- Young migrants need better access to education and employment opportunities to equip them with skills and knowledge they need to become future leaders and entrepreneurs. We are glad to see reforms and actions to support young migrants to achieve their educational and career goals.
- Young migrants need an environment that supports their economic and social integration and protects them from exploitation. The creation of such an environment needs a direct dialogue between stakeholders, decision-makers and youth.

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

- Discussing youth migration strengthens young migrants feeling of inclusion and will increase their engagement. It is therefore, important to use the knowledge, the dynamism and the innovative ideas and expertise of young people in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth policy as highlighted by the UN Youth Envoy and the many speakers today.
- We learnt today that people-to-people contacts and exchanges between young migrants and their peers ultimately foster mutual understanding and counter

prejudice and stereotypes, thereby contributing to building more inclusive societies.

- We learnt from UN Habitat and our speakers from Hamilton and London that the integration of young people takes place in cities. Local authorities have a key role in creating spaces of social cohesion, in supporting youth entrepreneurship through identifying ways in which young migrants can be partners in migration governance, addressing youth-specific challenges, and empowering them to have greater influence in addressing challenges concerning them. We need to increase the capacity of local authorities in engaging youth.

In conclusion, allow me also to highlight the importance of coordinated action on engaging and empowering young people in migration governance. Many of you called for building partnerships between different actors, with youth playing a key role, to develop policies and programmes that promote good migration management and advance sustainable development goals, because it is clear that a better framework for migration management must reflect the needs and views of all concerned actors.

From IOM's side, engaging with youth is a priority. IOM has been committed to developing specific activities targeting the youth, and addressing their needs and vulnerabilities. More recently, IOM developed an Action Plan, aligned with the UN Youth Strategy and Agenda 2030, in which initiatives, programmes and activities are proposed for young people on the move. This IDM is part of this strategy, focusing on gathering knowledge and expertise on youth and facilitating evidence-based global awareness on youth.

This is a brief recap of the main messages of this meeting. As always, a longer summary will be available in the coming days, followed by a comprehensive report of this and the second session to be held in October in Geneva.

I thank all panellists and all of you for your participation and important contributions to this dialogue. It was good to have such a numerous, young and diverse audience

today and to hear so many good practices and perspectives on engaging young people and their examples of good migration policies.

I would like also to thank the interpreters for the excellent job they have done. My very special thanks to all my colleagues in IOM Geneva and New York that have worked on this event.

I hope that today's discussion responded to your interests and expectations and that it has been for you a day as productive and insightful as it has been for me. I hope you will return to your offices with a new set of tools and good practices from this session and start implementing them in your day-to-day work.

We look forward to a continuation of this dialogue at the second edition of IDM 2019 in Geneva on 15 and 16 October and wish those of you returning home safe travels. This session is adjourned.