

**SIXTEENTH COORDINATION MEETING ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

Population Division

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

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**CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL METROPOLIS PROJECT
TO THE GLOBAL DISCUSSIONS ON THE RELATIONS BETWEEN MIGRATION AND
DEVELOPMENT¹**

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

¹ The views expressed in the paper do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the United Nations Secretariat.

A. Recent data initiatives and research findings relevant to the implementation of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (A/71/1)

Over the past year, UNICEF has been involved in a series of data initiatives and research projects to protect children and generate better data, as set out in the goals of the New York Declaration. These have been carried out at global, regional and local levels, with the aim to ensure children's voices are heard – and can inform solutions.

Data Initiatives

At the global level, UNICEF has amended its Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) to include questions on migration. These migration-related questions are used to generate data from individual respondents aged 15 to 49 and allow the MICS surveys to be disaggregated by lifetime migration status, region, and type of residence prior to moving. MICS also includes questions on family migration status, and the migration of parents with children under 18 years, to collect information on children left behind. Questions on IDPs and the refugee status of households are also added to MICS questionnaires where relevant.

At the regional level, UNICEF is investing in multiple projects focused on migration and the displacement of children. In Eastern and Southern Africa, UNICEF Regional and Country Offices, in collaboration with the Danish Refugee Council's Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat, collect data on child migration in the region. The goal is to gather and analyze data on children in mixed migration movements, to generate evidence on why they move, what services they need, and how they fare before, during and after migrating or fleeing, to inform programming, and improve guidelines on the treatment of migrant children in vulnerable situations. Further, UNICEF's *Child Notice* reports are often used as a basis for evidence-based immigration and asylum decisions.

UNICEF has led similar projects in partnership with local police, European Asylum Support Office, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Red Cross and UNHCR among others, across the Balkan region. The goal is to obtain information on the number and profile of children arriving, seeking asylum, left stranded, or detained, as well as their access to services, child returns practices, unaccompanied and separated children, and children with disabilities to fill data gaps and inform policy change. UNICEF has also been collecting data on migrant children (for example, education level, work experience, special needs) in Italy and Greece to better understand the migration decision-making process and protection needs along the journey as well as in destination countries in Europe.

In partnership with the national statistical offices in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, UNICEF has mapped the availability of public administrative data related to ethnicity (incl. migrant and refugee populations). These findings have informed discussions on strengthening national data systems among the 28 countries participating in the Transformative Monitoring for Enhanced Equity (TransMonEE) initiative. In Latin America, UNICEF has invested in data collection along migratory pathways. One project has drawn attention to the barriers and discrimination faced by migrant children in the education system, while another focused on better understanding how migrant and refugee children use Information and Communication Technology, to support UNICEF's engagement with Member States in this emerging area.

Research Projects

In addition to specific data collection initiatives, UNICEF has been involved in a series of research initiatives producing findings to promote children's rights and help hold States accountable to their commitments to protect children's rights. Several global data-driven reports (*Uprooted. The growing crisis for refugee and migrant children*; and *A child is a child. Protecting children on the move from violence, abuse and exploitation*), have highlighted that while migration can bring substantial benefits for children, their families and communities, children on the move can face risks of grave violence, exploitation and abuse, when States do not deliver on their protection commitments.

Based on an analysis of more than 20.000 entries of IOM's Flow Monitoring Surveys dataset, *Harrowing Journeys: Children and youth on the move across the Mediterranean Sea, at risk of trafficking and exploitation*, was the result of a collaborative effort by UNICEF and IOM, providing a unique view into the vulnerabilities of children, particularly those who are unaccompanied, on their way to Europe. The report relied mostly on quantitative data to shed light on how age, xenophobia, racism, education, and other factors can impact children on the move. In contrast, *Children on the move in Italy and Greece*, a UNICEF/REACH Initiative report, was based on qualitative data, to provide an in-depth view into migrant and refugee children's reasons for leaving, and the dangers they face on their journeys. Finally, in line with the States' commitment to ensure access to education for migrant and refugee children, UNICEF analyzed migrant and refugee children's access to education in *Education uprooted. For every migrant, refugee and displaced child, education*, to support advocacy efforts to achieve the commitments anchored in the New York Declaration.

To support States to improve their protection migrant children through generating better guidelines and policies, UNICEF conducted a worldwide mapping of good practices in relation to child protection, access to services and integration into society. The report *Beyond Borders. How to make the global compacts on migration and refugees work for uprooted children* provides solution-focused promising practices that can be built upon, or scaled up.

Advocacy

As well as data collection and research initiatives, UNICEF has been taking an active role to build inter-agency partnerships to call for better data and evidence to protect migrant and refugee children. With the *Call to Action. Protecting children on the move starts with better data*, UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, Eurostat, and OECD urge States to invest in producing better data on children to allow for evidence-based policies and actions, and a better protection of the rights of children on the move.

B. Summary of recent and future activities to support the implementation of the migration-related commitments of the 2030 Agenda (A/70/1)

UNICEF's programming and advocacy work is built on the premise that a child is a child, independent of his or her migratory status. UNICEF's Six-point Agenda for Action for Children on the Move, covers priority areas including protection from exploitation; ending child immigration detention; keeping families together and giving children legal status; securing access to health and learning; addressing root causes; and combating discrimination and xenophobia. This agenda drives UNICEF's efforts to implement the migration-related commitments of the 2030 Agenda, and towards the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees.

UNICEF Programmes

UNICEF's presence along migratory routes (in countries of origin, transit and destination); its mandate (all children, regardless of refugee/migrant 'labels'), and its dual development and humanitarian focus has allowed the organization to tackle the complex challenge of migration – combining direct service provision to children on the move, capacity building of national authorities, advocacy and evidence generation to better understand – and respond to – the needs of children on the move. In 2016, UNICEF supported displaced or migrant children in at least 83 countries in areas including child protection, health and education, WASH, nutrition, social protection/cash and communication for development. Flagship programmes include UNICEF's response to Syrian refugee children in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon, programmes in the Horn of Africa and, since 2015–16, programmes in Europe along the Balkan route, in Germany, Greece and Italy.

The realities of children moving along migratory routes demand multi-sectoral responses across regions. UNICEF is responding to these needs by implementing cross-country and cross-regional programmes. Apart from ongoing humanitarian response to displaced children in 51 countries around the world, UNICEF is scaling up its work on mixed migration flows outside the humanitarian context. In Latin America and the Caribbean, UNICEF is piloting a regional programme covering El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico. A new cross-regional migration programme in eight countries in Southeast and Central Asia is being launched while all three regional offices in Africa are developing an all-Africa programme focused on the Central Mediterranean route and major routes in Eastern Africa.

Engagement with the Global Compact for Safe and Orderly Migration (GCM) and Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)

UNICEF supports the negotiation process towards both the GCM and GCR by providing evidence and concrete solutions, facilitating the contribution and inputs by children, creating opportunities for exchange of experiences among governments and different stakeholders, and providing technical input to ensure the rights of all children on the move are reflected. Many national, regional and local governments around the world are already making choices to protect the rights and improve the well-being of migrant children. Some are captured in UNICEF's *Beyond Borders* report. The Global Compact for Migration can help take these promising practices and examples to scale. And, by doing so, help to fully realize the rights of child migrants, no matter where they are, where they are from or where they are going.

To deliver what has been agreed in the New York Declaration, the Global Compact will need to set out a blueprint for providing a continuum of care and protection for children, to maximise the benefits for states and societies and reduce the risks for children moving along key migratory routes. Success will mean progress in achieving the SDG goals, protecting the rights of children on the move and their families, as

well as better managed migration governance. For UNICEF, this will mean advocating for greater investment in national child and social protection capacities and enabling laws and policies; supporting Member States to strengthen cross-border protection along migratory routes; and supporting State-led programmes to increase safe and legal channels to migrate or seek protection specifically for children and young people.

UNICEF will support the development of indicators and targets to measure progress in the implementation of the Global Compact, with a focus on its impact on children. This will mean actively participating in the review process at global, regional, and national levels, contributing to research, data collection and monitoring efforts, and providing technical support to States to progressively work towards full implementation of the Compact's commitments. UNICEF will support Member States to uphold the best interests of the child, at all times, as primary consideration in situations concerning girls and boys in the context of international migration. This will mean supporting the development of robust procedures in all legislative, administrative, and judicial proceedings, as well as in all migration policies and programmes that have an impact on children, to ensure best interests of the child is appropriately integrated, consistently interpreted and applied.

Uprooted Campaign

UNICEF's Uprooted Campaign will continue to advocate for governments to prioritize, adopt and implement policies consistent with UNICEF's Six-point Agenda for Action, to contribute to public opinion being supportive of refugee and migrant children, and to generate resources to support further action to protect the rights of children on the move. To support advocacy engagement around both the Global Compacts, UNICEF will continue to collaborate with sister UN agencies and entities, with mayors and local authorities as influencers, as well as with corporate leaders.

Inter-Agency Coordination Group Against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT)

As chair of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group Against Trafficking in Persons in 2018, UNICEF commits to stepping up its leadership and coordination role to accelerate progress towards the migration related 2030 Agenda and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Recognizing that an increase in safe and legal pathways and investment into child protection systems is an effective way to prevent exploitation and violence en route, reduce demand for smuggling services and combat trafficking, ICAT provides a platform to provide knowledge and policy advice to Member States.

Working in Partnership

UNICEF will continue to work closely with IOM, UNHCR, GMG, OECD, Eurostat, as well as Civil Society and Faith-Based Organisations, local governments, and children and youth. As a member of the civil society Initiative for Child Rights in the Global Compacts, UNICEF is working to ensure a coordinated and consistent approach to protecting the rights of children on the move and improving global migration governance. Through drawing on States' commitment to comply with the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* as well as specific guidance from the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the initiative aims to ensure both global compacts reflect a common approach to protecting children on the move.