Commission on Population and Development
Fifty-first session
9-13 April 2018
Item 3 of the provisional agenda*
General debate

Actions for the further implementation of the Programme of
Action of the International Conference on Population and
Development: Monitoring population programmes,
focus on sustainable cities, human mobility and
international migration

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Migration is a key feature of the globalized 21st century, and human mobility is
a cornerstone of achieving inclusive and sustainable development. International and
internal movements into cities are contributing to urban growth and creating highly
diverse centres of human settlement with the potential to enhance cross-cultural
understanding and stimulate development.

Human mobility can be motivated by conflict, humanitarian crises, or wherever people
feel that their prospects are limited or their human rights are threatened or violated.
People moving in response to poverty, lack of opportunity, conflict or crisis are often
highly motivated to find places with better prospects. Such is the case for large
numbers of young people migrating into and through cities in search of a better future.

As part of their migratory experience, individuals can move between different migrant
categories. While some may be classified as refugees for decades, others transition
from displaced person to internal migrant, and possibly to international migrant or
refugee, as circumstances and locations change. Regardless of their status, the support
for vulnerable, mobile populations should be universal and address their needs for both
subsistence and development. Interventions dedicated to meeting basic needs such as
health, education, housing and decent work for mobile populations should pay equal attention to such needs among national populations.

The present report, submitted in response to decision 2017/101 adopted by the Commission on Population and Development at its fiftieth session, in which it was decided that the special theme of the fifty-first session, in 2018, would be “sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration”, and prepared by the United Nations Population Fund, provides a brief summary of recent patterns of human mobility, followed by programmatic examples of how the principles and values of the ICPD Programme of Action are being operationalized to support people on the move and to promote the sustainable development of cities.

I. Human mobility – An overview

1. Mobility is a key feature of the 21st century and adjusting to a world with human mobility within and between countries is essential to achieving inclusive and sustainable development. It is a global phenomenon, with an estimated one in seven people in the world either an internal or international migrant, accounting for an estimated one billion persons worldwide.

2. People move for a variety of reasons, including for work, family reunification, education, or to escape poverty, violence and discrimination, the effects of climate change or environmental degradation. Unprecedented numbers of people have been forced to flee their homes and are now displaced within their own countries and/or across borders.

3. Mobility presents opportunities to escape poverty, and can bring tangible benefits for migrants and their families, as well as for local communities and national economies. Especially when their rights are protected, migrants and refugees can contribute to human, social and cultural development of communities in countries of origin, transit and destination. According to the World Bank, in 2017 remittance flows worldwide are projected to reach $596 billion, of which low- and middle-income countries are projected to receive $450 billion. Diasporas, migrant networks and returning migrants can foster the transfer of skills and technology, enhance innovation, and transform traditional roles and social barriers, in particular for women and youth. In countries of destination, migrants provide needed labour in key sectors, alleviating shortages.

A. International migration

4. According to the latest estimates from the United Nations Population Division, 258 million people, 3.4 percent of the world’s population, lived outside their country of birth in 2017. These estimates, which are inclusive of refugees and asylum seekers, are approximate, given the scope and complexity of irregular migration.

---

1 World Bank, “Migration and Development Brief 28” (October 2017).
5. Two-thirds of all international migrants (165 million) live in high-income countries. The United States of America hosts the largest number of international migrants (49.8 million), followed by Saudi Arabia, Germany and the Russian Federation (around 12 million each).

6. Of all international migrants, the largest proportion was born in Asia (41%), followed by Europe (24%), Latin America and the Caribbean (15%) and Africa (14%). These proportions do not reflect the distribution of the global population, as 60 percent of the global population resides in Asia, followed by 16 percent in Africa, 10 per cent in Europe and 6 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean. Despite ranking second in terms of world population, Africa ranks last among migrant sending regions.³

B. Forced displacement

7. In 2016, over 65.5 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide, and among them were nearly 22.5 million refugees, 40.3 million internally displaced persons and 2.8 million asylum seekers.⁴ Eighty-four percent of all refugees and asylum seekers live in low- and middle-income countries. Countries most affected in 2016 by new forced displacements included the Democratic Republic of the Congo (922,000), Syria (824,000), Iraq (659,000), Afghanistan (653,000), Nigeria (501,000) and Yemen (478,000).⁵ Since late 2017, more than 647,000 Rohingya refugees have fled violence in Myanmar, most travelling overland to Bangladesh.

8. Displacement exacerbates the risk of statelessness. Re-generating lost identity records or securing documentation from governments under siege can be particularly difficult. Based on recent estimates by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there are at least 10 million stateless persons worldwide, with statelessness obstructing access to education, healthcare, or employment.

9. The Horn of Africa faces a complex mix of social, economic, political and environmental challenges that have resulted in unusually prolonged displacement of people both within and across countries. Recently, the region generated over two million refugees and hosts approximately 1.7 million, the majority being Somalis and South Sudanese. Ethiopia is currently battling its worst drought in decades, affecting close to 700,000 people. Elsewhere in Africa, conflicts and persecutions have recently led to the forced displacement of almost 270,000 people from Mali into Mauritania, Burkina Faso and Niger.

10. Western Asia, including the Syrian Arab Republic, Iraq and Yemen experienced almost two million new displacements in 2016. As of January 2018, UNHCR counted 5,481,135 total registered Syrian refugees. This figure includes 2 million Syrians registered in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon, 3 million Syrians registered by the Government of Turkey, and more than 30,000 Syrian refugees registered in North Africa. The current burden on neighbouring countries is extraordinarily high, taxing all systems of support. The number of Syrian arrivals into Europe in search of

---

international protection is estimated at approximately 10 percent of all Syrian refugees to date.

C. Age structure of Migrants

11. While data on the age structure of migrants are often incomplete, the average age structure of international migrants displays a sharp rise after age 20, peaking at ages 30-34 years, before tapering slowly through the working years. Since migrants in each country account for a larger share of working-age persons compared to the national population, continued positive net migration may lower the dependency ratio of the receiving country.\(^6\)

12. The age structure of international migrants residing in Asia shows a clear peak among young working age adults ages 25-39, while in Africa the regional average includes more children (see Figure Ia to Ib). In both Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean there is a greater presence of persons aged 0 to 24 among international migrant populations relative to other regions.

Figure Ia: Age distribution of international migrants (both sexes) residing in Asia compared to the age distribution of the total migrant stock worldwide (2017).

\[\text{Source: Data extracted from International Migrant Stock, 2017 revision}\]

Figure Ib: Age distribution of international migrants (both sexes) residing in Africa compared to the age distribution of the total migrant stock worldwide (2017).

The predominance of young working age persons among international migrants is widespread. For example, nearly two-thirds of Mexican-born immigrants living in the USA are between ages 18 and 44 years, while this same age group among the native population represents only 35 percent of the population.

The international migrant population in Nigeria has a bi-modal shape, with a predominance of young adults between ages 20-40 years and very young children, when contrasted with the overall population of Nigeria. (Figure II)

**Source:** Data extracted from *International Migrant Stock, 2017 revision*

---

Figure II – Percentage distribution of international migrants (both sexes) in total migrant stock, and total population, 2017 in Nigeria.

---

D. Mobility of women and girls

14. Male and female participation in international migration is relatively balanced, with female migrants accounting for an estimated 48.4 percent of all migrants worldwide in 2017; and half of the world's refugee population is comprised of women and girls.8

15. Yet major geographic variations exist. While women are overrepresented among all migrants in Europe, Northern America, Oceania and Latin America and the Caribbean, they are largely outnumbered by men in Africa and Asia, particularly in Western Asia. For example, in 2015, women accounted for approximately 65 percent of all migratory movements from Thailand, but only for 35 percent from Bangladesh. Similarly, in 2017, 61 percent of migrants residing in Hong Kong were female, compared to 32 percent residing in Saudi Arabia.

16. Female migrants display higher labour force participation rates (72.7 percent) than non-migrants (63.9 percent), and key sectors account for large movements of female labour, for example one in every six domestic workers worldwide is an international migrant.9

17. The voices of migrant women in China, Bangladesh and Ethiopia speak to the empowerment that occurs with migration,10 11 suggesting that the fears and risks of migration may be outweighed by the chance it offers to escape oppressive gender-based restrictions at home. Young women move to escape violations of sexual and reproductive health and rights, including forced marriage, female genital cutting/mutilation (FGM), and lack of reproductive choices. But mobility in the context of humanitarian crises may augment traditional practices. Child and forced marriage has been found to increase in displaced and stressed communities as an effort to secure protection to a young girl during periods of family dissolution and migration. Exposure to sexual exploitation and abuse, a threat for all women, is

---

8 UNHCR, “Global Trends”, (June 2016).
especially heightened during conflict, displacement and irregular migration, and a major source of trauma for female migrants.\textsuperscript{12}

\section*{E. Internal migration}

18. Internal migration is difficult to define given the absence of statistical standards, variation in data sources and collection practices.\textsuperscript{13} The latest global estimate of internal migration was published in 2005, estimated at 763 million – suggesting that the number of internal migrants is approximately three times that of international migrants.

19. There are common patterns of internal movement towards urban areas, and away from locations with high levels of agricultural labour. Census data from 58 countries suggest that internal migration reflects self-sorting by education; those with less education are more likely to move to contiguous (neighbouring) areas, and remain in agricultural areas, while those with higher education migrate over longer destinations to areas with more professional work.

\section*{F. Cities as destinations, gateways and springboards of development}

20. The world’s population is increasingly concentrated in urban areas, reflecting both internal and international migration. On average, the global urban population has increased by a factor of five over the past 60 years, and UN projections anticipate continued urbanization in decades to come. Approximately 900 million new urban residents are projected by 2030, and another 1.3 billion by 2050. At the same time, the world’s rural population is projected to peak in 2022 and decline thereafter.

21. Urbanization and internal migration can lead to differences in age structure between urban and rural areas. In Latin America, internal migration has increased the proportion of people aged 15-29 in large cities (over 500 thousand people), reflecting high youth migration into cities, while smaller cities and towns are seeing a decrease in the share of young people. In Panama, for example, the proportion of people aged 15-29 in small cities and towns dropped by approximately six percent between 1990 and 2000, and again between 2000 and 2010.\textsuperscript{14}

22. In Africa, the age structures of urban and rural populations are starkly different from one another. For the continent overall, the dependency ratio (those age 15-64 years relative to those age 0-14 and 65+) was 78.9 in 2015. For rural areas, the dependency ratio was 88.4, while for urban areas, it was 66.5, indicating significantly higher proportions of working age adults in urban areas, relative to children and older persons.


\footnotesize\textsuperscript{13} United Nations, “Report of the Secretary General: Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration” (April 2018).

\footnotesize\textsuperscript{14} JV Rodriguez, “Cities and migration in Latin America and the Caribbean: updated estimates of key socio-demographic effects”, Paper prepared for the UN Expert Group Meeting on Sustainable Cities, Human Mobility and International Migration, (September 2017).
23. Urban populations in some regions are further augmented by the growing placement of refugees within urban centres, with over 60 percent of the world’s refugees and 80 percent of all internally displaced people currently residing in cities. Local authorities and host cities can play a major role in supporting migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons, and shaping policies to promote their successful integration into host communities.\textsuperscript{15}

24. Furthermore, evidence from numerous countries highlights the significant flow of internal migrants into cities as a first step to onward international migration, identifying cities as simultaneously destinations and gateways with some of the highest population diversity.\textsuperscript{16} According to a 2016 community survey in South Africa, more than half of all international migrants arriving in South Africa settled around the city of Johannesburg. At the same time, the number of internal migrants, almost 5 times higher than the number of international migrants, overwhelmingly moved into Johannesburg and Cape Town.

25. Migration into cities presents both opportunities and challenges, for while cities have historically driven economic and social development, the geographic sprawl of unplanned urbanization and growth can actually hinder access and opportunity, and exacerbate inequality. With increasing urbanization, more people are also living in slums, i.e. in households with one or more of the following ‘deprivations’: 1) lack of access to improved water source, 2) lack of access to improved sanitation facilities, 3) lack of sufficient living area, 4) lack of housing durability and, 5) lack of security of tenure.\textsuperscript{17} Approximately 828 million people, or one in three urban dwellers and one in eight people in the world, are currently living in slums.\textsuperscript{18,19}

\textsuperscript{15} The Brookings Institute, “The refugee crisis is a city crisis”, (November 2017)
\textsuperscript{17} United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), “Concepts and definitions”
\textsuperscript{18} The Borgen Project, “Poor Living Conditions for Those Who Live in Slums”, (July 2017)
\textsuperscript{19} London School of Economics Cities, “Health and the Urban Poor”, (November 2011).
26. It is often said that people living in slums get caught in a “poverty trap”, that is, by living in such conditions they cannot improve their income or standards of living. But the reality is more complex. For example, in South Asia slum populations include persons across a range of economic strata. Within two large slums of Nairobi, Korogocho and Viwandani, many people exhibit a “circular” pattern of migration to and from rural areas, and some are relatively well off and even investing in additional properties and businesses.

27. In 2014 an estimated one fifth of the global foreign-born population lived in “gateway” cities, where migrants represent over a third (and in some cases more than half) of the population. In some such cities population groups are highly segregated, but where populations are more integrated, there is evidence that high levels of integration diminish the risk of discrimination.

G. Risks of violence and discrimination in transit and at destination

28. Protecting those transiting through their territories has become an increasing challenge for many countries due to the irregular and fast changing nature of migratory movements. The most vulnerable are especially affected: according to UNICEF estimates from May 2016, 95,000 unaccompanied refugee and migrant children had reached Europe and thousands of vulnerable minors had vanished after registering with state authorities. Since 2000, more than 46,000 migrants are estimated to have died in transit, and the Missing Migrant Project of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates that in 2016 governments recorded 7,927 total deaths and missing persons.

29. Women and young migrants, refugees, and displaced persons are especially vulnerable to violence and discrimination, and separation from families and support networks in unfamiliar surroundings heightens risks of exploitation, violence and human trafficking for all. When mobility demands an unexpected need for money, it can be associated with sexual exchange for transit, protection or survival, and the ensuing risks of sexually transmitted infections including HIV, unplanned pregnancies, or unsafe abortion.

30. In humanitarian crises, when many sexual vulnerabilities and risks are drastically increased, sexual and reproductive health information and care are often unavailable or inadequate. The Women’s Refugee Commission has argued that lack of access to sexual and reproductive health care is among the leading cause of death, disease and disability among displaced women and girls of reproductive age. Because moving during pregnancy can enhance risks of survival, pregnant women may remain

---

behind while other family members venture to safer locations. Yet remaining behind is also risky, if factors leading to migration or displacement include the collapse of health services. In Syria before the conflict, skilled birth attendants assisted 96 percent of deliveries, but access to ANC, safe delivery and emergency obstetric care diminished rapidly, and parts of the country now have no reproductive health services.

31. The recent global attention to migration and refugees has heightened awareness of the complex issues of xenophobia, discrimination, and violence toward mobile populations in receiving countries. The rise of terrorism and local problems of underemployment of young people in many countries has contributed to a rise in anti-immigrant sentiment, vocal anti-immigration political discourse, and efforts to tighten borders.

32. Anti-immigrant sentiment seems to be particularly acute if jobs are scarce. Analysis of data from the World Values Survey collected in 2010-2014, covering 57 countries around the world reveals the proportion of people that would not like to have immigrants or foreign workers as their neighbour ranges from 1.7 percent in Uruguay to 59.7 percent in Malaysia, with a global median of 21.5 percent. However, the proportion of respondents that feel employers should give priority to natives over immigrants when jobs are scarce is far higher, ranging from 14.5 percent in Sweden to 92.5 percent in Jordan, with a global median of 71.1 percent.

33. Migrants frequently end up in vulnerable, informal employment, and are exposed to much higher risks of exploitation, unsafe working conditions or abuse. The service sector, including domestic, caregiving, sex and entertainment work, where many migrant women are employed, is largely informal and poorly regulated. These characteristics enhance risks of gender based violence. Yet gender based violence against migrants also appears in the formal sector, with physical and verbal abuse, harassment and rape reported by migrant workers.

34. Narratives from migrants, refugees and displaced persons also underscore that the vulnerability of people on the move can change quickly. Fragile support networks, risks of attack or injury, and the need to navigate through unfamiliar languages and locations means that security can be short-lived.

35. Despite these risks, the desire for a better life is strong. In a recent study by UNFPA, youth migrants in Beirut, Cairo and Tunis overwhelmingly report that their time in the city has been harder than expected, and they were not aware of the full risks of migration before leaving home. Almost 30% of youth migrants in Beirut had experienced either physical abuse, detention by security authorities, or kidnapping. Despite these risks, young people in each of these cities report that even knowing what they know now, they would still have migrated.

27 World Values Survey Data-Archive Online Survey analysis website. (January 2018)
II. Advancing the ICPD Programme of Action in a Mobile World

36. Member States have affirmed the need to assure that human mobility is voluntary, regular and safe. These commitments are prominent within the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action (1994) and within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

37. In 2016, the United Nations General Assembly hosted the high-level summit to craft a more humane and coordinated approach to large movements of refugees and migrants and adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants; Resolution A/RES/71/1, expressing the political will of world leaders to save lives, protect rights and share burdens and responsibilities to host refugees.30

38. The recognition that cities are major gateways and sites of destination for internal and international migrants contributed to commitments within the New Urban Agenda (NUA) to integrate migration within the strategic planning and management of cities and urban systems while affirming the human rights of all inhabitants, regardless of a migrant’s reasons for moving, length of stay or legal status.

39. The ICPD Programme of Action offers strong and compelling recommendations on the values that should guide both national and global approaches to large movements of refugees and migrants. These values include recognizing the humanity, dignity and human rights of all person, regardless of their status; recognizing the high social cost of equality; and providing both security for development, and the freedom to move.

40. Such principles are evident in many of the programmatic examples highlighted in the following pages. Successful programmes suggest that interventions for migrant or refugee populations have greater success if they enhance the well-being of both mobile and local populations simultaneously, whether the programmes are focused on education, housing, employment, or health. Programmes that emphasize universality not only enhance equality, but they also temper resentment in host communities where needs are widespread.

41. Many successful interventions in this report also advance an approach to “treat the furthest behind first”, regardless of migrant or refugee status. Given the transitory nature of internally displaced persons (IDPs) migrant or refugee status, successful interventions recognize that at the core of these movements are individual people, whose needs vary and change, as they traverse distances and borders in search of a better life.

A. Address Drivers of Migration through Development

42. At the core of the ICPD Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda are commitments to address the drivers of migration by creating a world where all persons are free from poverty, illness, discrimination, violence, and the consequences of

conflict or climate change. Development provides more individuals with the security, agency and means to reach their fullest potential at home. But because development also expands people’s horizons and aspirations, it provides the means for people to migrate. Hence, the goal of development should be to provide a world where migration is a safe choice, never a necessity, and the fruits of development are equally available to those who stay, and those who seek their fortunes afar.

43. As increasing numbers of the world’s youth grow into adulthood in circumstances of unrest or poverty, migration becomes an ever more promising alternative. Recent UNFPA research has found that more than half of all youth migrants in Beirut, Tunis and Cairo moved due to insecurity or political unrest back home, and while one-third of youth migrants in Tunis reported that they alone made the decision to migrate, another third was encouraged to migrate by their parents.  

Advance Prospects for a Demographic Dividend

44. Countries with a proportionately large cohort of working-age people have the potential to advance economic growth, in what is often called a “demographic dividend”. But such a dividend will only be achieved if governments deepen investments to ensure that young people can have prosperous future. For many countries, this includes improving the quality and reach of education and training, expanding opportunities for girls and women, including the chance to avoid early marriage and childbearing, and job growth.

45. Strengthening vocational training and higher education will be critical in countries with large youth populations, and should include portable skills aligned with regional employment opportunities. The potential for transnational and regional hubs of sector-specific training and industry, such as special economic zones, warrant more consideration to stimulate regional development. These should include reform of immigration policies to facilitate the movement of young people across national borders for both training and employment.

46. Skills training and entrepreneurship for young people in urban areas of low- and middle-income countries seem to be yielding a critical impact, especially when targeting disadvantaged youth. The Satya/Pratham programme in India, for example, provides training in tailoring within resettlement colonies in New Delhi, serving both local and migrant young women. Participants in this and similar programmes are not only more likely to be employed, and have higher earnings.

47. Jovenes En Accion in Colombia, was introduced after the Colombian recession of 1998 to support youth aged 18 to 25 in the seven largest cities of Colombia, providing three months of in-classroom training and three months of on-the-job training. Vocational training ranged from IT, data entry, and accountant to

administrative and manual occupations, with impressive results, including paid employment, particularly in the formal sector, and higher salaries for participants. women.\(^{35}\)

**B. Protect Those in Transit**

48. The UNHCR 10-point plan for refugee protection and mixed migration, adopted in 2006, has been an important framework to advance the rights of people in transit and strengthen protection mechanisms to combat smuggling, trafficking, extortion, and forced labour. In 2000, the General Assembly adopted the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and two of its supplementary Protocols namely: the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air.

49. At the UN, UNHCR also leads the work on statelessness in four key areas, including identification, prevention, reduction and protection. Between 2003 and 2013 actions by governments provided more than 4 million stateless people with the possibility to acquire or confirm a nationality, and 12 countries removed gender discrimination from their nationality laws to ensure that children are not left stateless.\(^{36}\)

50. Given the high risks of trauma in transit it is critical to provide urgent support at arrival. To improve reception arrangements for irregular migrant flows between Panama and Costa Rica, UNHCR developed a joint capacity building program for agencies and officials from both countries. Since implementation the joint programme has substantially improved coordination of international protection within reception arrangements for migrants, and it offers a valuable model to be explored by other countries sharing a major migrant border.

51. A field assessment of risks involved for addressing refugee and migrant women and girls in Greece and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia conducted by UNHCR, UNFPA and Women’s Refugee Council in November 2015 noted that women were among those particularly at risk and required additional protection measures.

52. UNFPA initiated a humanitarian initiative in Greece, the first ever emergency/humanitarian response programme in a non-programme country in Europe. Approaches enhanced coordination at the national and local levels, and helped to establish models of care for integrated programming, and supported implementing partners to provide direct services.

53. UNFPA experts conducted trainings on key topics in sexual reproductive health (SRH) and gender-based violence (GBV), providing many types of professionals with skills and guidelines to support not only migrants and refugees, but all those in need, regardless of status. Local hospital and domestic violence shelter staff were trained on SRH in Emergencies, and the Clinical Management of Rape (CMR), and GBV in Emergencies in Attica, Lesvos and Chios. In 2016 UNFPA trained 375 individual

---


service providers working in various regions of Greece, both on the mainland (northern and central regions) and the islands.

54. A hallmark of this programme was that trainings benefited both the refugee population in 20 refugee/migrant camps and the host populations in their surroundings, covering a total catchment population of 145,793 people. In 2017, UNFPA supported the further training of 708 Greek first responders (medical, protection, social work, police, site managers, psychologists/psychiatrists, lawyers, and other stakeholders) in SRH and GBV, including case management, legal frameworks, and life skills for unaccompanied minor boys. Again, the catchment areas covered by these programmes included refugees and migrants in camps and urban settings, but also a host population of 381,761.

C. Integrate Migrants and refugees into Host Communities

55. City conferences and mayoral networks have become an important forum for exchange of knowledge, sharing of good practice and coordinated approaches to addressing migration. Mayoral leaders and urban policymakers, acknowledging the positive role that migrants can play in shaping global cities such as Dubai, Bangkok, Mexico City, Nairobi, and London, have highlighted the pivotal role of local and regional governments in facilitating migrant integration, particularly by promoting language training, housing, security, and skills and entrepreneurship training.37

56. Municipal leaders have also committed to respect, protect and promote non-discriminatory treatment of both migrants and refugees, facilitating their access to health services and education, and by making cities safer for all persons. These political commitments have drawn strength from research such as the 100 Resilient Cities Report that found that cities that proactively incorporate migration into their urban planning are well-positioned to transform and thrive, and become better places for everyone, especially the most vulnerable residents of the host populations.38

57. Cities are seeking to prevent violence, particularly against women, through safer transport systems. In Cairo the Ministry of Housing, Utilities and Urban Development conducted women’s safety audits in partnership with local authorities, empowering women to identify safety and security conditions in their neighborhoods. Evidence from these audits have been integrated into Cairo’s urban planning processes. A similar programme in Quito Ecuador, amended a local ordinance to combat sexual harassment in public spaces, to reduce violence in transport systems. Under the new legislation, trolley stops in Quito were transformed with glass corridors to provide secure transfer and waiting areas for women. In addition, the Metropolitan Transport staff was trained to offer care and support, and simplify reporting of sexual harassment. By 2017, hundreds of cases have been received and transferred to the local court system Mexico City also now operates “women-only” buses as part of a commitment assure a safer mobility, ease of reporting sexual harassment, and provision of support for seeking justice. “Vive Segura” [Live Safe],39 a mobile phone

38 100 Resilient Cities, “Global Migration: Resilient Cities at the Forefront”
app has also been developed to facilitate reporting of sexual violence and identify local risk areas.

58. Connectivity is a particularly valuable source of safety and guidance for people in unfamiliar surroundings. Recognizing that refugees spend approximately one third of their disposable income on staying connected, in 2015 engineers, designers, social entrepreneurs and NGOs created “Techfugees”, a non-profit to address the communication needs of refugees. Now working with municipalities in 26 countries, including Morocco, Sierra Leone, Kenya, and Pakistan, Techfugees improve refugee access to the internet, provide online/offline training and courses for refugees and tech innovations for health.

59. To foster a welcoming attitude to diversity among children, the Kinderwelten program in Berlin fights prejudice by using storytelling and role-playing to help even the youngest children adapt positively to diversity. The program has been successfully integrated into early childhood programs to help children adapt to ethnic and racial diversity, and offers an impressive model of early childhood intervention to enhance values of non-discrimination.

Assuring Access to Education

60. In the 2030 Agenda and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, Governments have affirmed quality education as a right for all refugee and migrant children, regardless of their legal status. Despite these commitments, international migrant and refugee children face many barriers in exercising this right, due to legal exclusions, gaps in information or translation, fear of violence and discrimination, and missing documentation, among other reasons.

61. Various countries have included mechanisms to assess and address challenges regarding migrant education in their national legislation, policies and practices. In Burundi, the Ministry of Education and local partners designed an integrated plan of action and budget in early 2007 to respond to the educational needs of repatriated families. Under this plan, the Government of Burundi provides for additional classrooms in areas of returning migrants, accelerated language education for repatriated children and other special programs to address the educational needs of different categories of children.

62. Through the project “Primary Education for Migrant Children” (PRONIM), the Government of Guatemala and Mexico promote an intercultural approach to pre-primary and primary education for children of farmers, allowing migrant children to start and continue their studies in schools located on the farms on which they live.

63. In the Philippines, the migrant welfare fund pools financial contributions from Filipino migrants abroad or their overseas employers. Through this mechanism members or their beneficiaries can access scholarships and grants towards a baccalaureate course.

64. Legislation in Argentina, Belgium, Italy and Netherlands each include provisions to the right to education for irregular migrants. European policies recognize education as key element of migrant integration. Important to the successful

---

40 Techfugees, “Online Website” (January 2018).
41 Cities and Migration, “Dolls and Diversity” (May 2009).
education of migrant children is respect and promotion of cultural heritage, targeted support to migrant children and the establishment of partnerships with local communities. Acknowledging that migrants display higher dropout rates from school, in 2011 the European Union implemented targeted measures to reduce early school drop out for migrant children. Measures to bridge the educational system and migrant families have been implemented in the Netherlands, Germany, the USA, Turkey, Mexico, Australia, among others.

**Safe and Accessible Housing**

65. Crucial to the health, safety and successful integration of migrants, refugees and displaced persons is the provision of secure housing. A large but indeterminate number of people worldwide are homeless, and a common feature among homeless populations is an over-representation of recent migrants.

66. Addressing the housing gap is a particular challenge in contexts of high mobility and rapid urbanization, one that requires multiple approaches and stakeholders. South Africa and Ethiopia have among the largest government-led housing construction programmes for the poor in Africa. South Africa aims to build 1.5 million new low- and no-cost homes from 2014 to 2019, after building millions since 1994 to reduce the housing gap amidst rapid urbanization.\(^{42}\) Ensuring sufficient services and maintenance, as well as locations proximal to economic activity, have been major challenges. Ethiopia has built hundreds of thousands of units in and around Addis Ababa and other cities and towns, and sought to spur home-ownership through a mortgage system.\(^{43}\) Yet both countries have seen significant increases in the price of land and housing, due to competition for limited space, which has created challenges in maintaining affordability and accessibility for the poor.

66. New housing developments are ideally complemented with large scale slum upgrading programmes. Such programmes, when they engage and ensure the participation of local communities, can help maintain the density of slums with greater liveability, health benefits and tenure security.\(^{44}\) For instance, a large-scale program called Piso Firme, implemented by the Mexican government, replaced dirt floors with cement floors. Dirt floors are a threat to health because they provide a vector for parasitic infections, especially in young children. Replacing dirt floors with cement floors was shown to improve child health among recipients, and provide multiple positive outcomes for households as a whole.\(^{45}\)

68. Engaging other stakeholders for safe housing is vital as well. Habitat for Humanity responds to the needs of the urbanizing world by building decent and affordable housing for low income households, referred to as “partner families”, in over 70 countries of the world, and to date has helped more than 4 million people build, renovate or preserve homes.\(^{46}\)

**Address Health Needs**

---

\(^{42}\) See https://www.gov.za/about-sa/housing


\(^{46}\) Habitat, “Website”
69. Meeting the health service needs of mobile populations is a major challenge for
host cities, and states. Migrants face many health challenges in both countries of
transit and destination, with a significantly higher risk of maternal morbidity and
mortality for foreign-born migrants compared to native-born women, a greater risk of
HIV, and greater risks of trauma and violence. Many migrants reside in slums, areas
characterized by higher risks of traffic accidents, disability; and infectious disease;
lower rates of vaccination; limited clean water and inadequate sewage systems; and
less access to preventive and ongoing care.

70. Migrants generally have less access to health services, including reproductive
health services, due to language and information barriers, the inability to pay, lack of
transportation and security, and discrimination by health personnel. Young
international migrants in Tunis have reported discrimination within public health
services and a high financial burden to access the more welcoming private health care
facilities.

71. Yet, evidence suggests that the returns on health investments for migrants are
considerable. By enabling undocumented migrants broader access to healthcare
beyond emergency health services provides cost-saving for health care systems
overall. For example, enabling pregnant, irregular migrant women to access prenatal
care has generated health care savings of up to 48 percent in Germany and Greece,
and up to 69 percent in Sweden over a 2-year period.47

72. Across a range of tested interventions to improve health care access and delivery
for migrants in Europe, effective components include targeting communication and
ensuring access. Successful communication efforts include support for health worker
language training, use of interpreters, provision of information in the migrants’ native
languages, and diversity and sensitivity training for health staff. The city of Bilbao,
for example, promotes sexual and reproductive health information and services
among immigrant women, including empowering women about local gender roles,
through direct services, but also through print and online resources in the multiple
languages of migrants.48

73. Equally critical is expanding access by bringing services where migrants, and
young urban residents, are located, whether at the workplace, through urban mobile
clinics, or along transit routes.49 Mobile health (mHealth) interventions continue to
be important, including a policy implemented in the Long Bien industrial zone of
Hanoi. Sexual and reproductive health information and services are provided through
text messaging to internal migrant girls working in factories. Results show that the
intervention has measurably increased migrant women’s sexual and reproductive
health knowledge and practices,50 and similar community-based texting models are
garnering recognition worldwide.

---

74. In a major commitment to universal health coverage, the Thai government has developed insurance schemes for documented and undocumented migrants and also established dedicated migrant-friendly health services. Such insurance schemes have been instrumental in facilitating migrant access to quality health services. The initiative has not only proved cost-effective for the Thai government in managing the costs of chronic disease for migrant workers, but has advanced the human rights underpinnings of Thailand’s approach to universal health care.

**Expand Opportunities for Employment**

75. Expansion of labour market opportunities for international migrants and refugees is crucial, but it poses several policy challenges. Experience from Jordan is illustrative. As the Syrian crisis has been prolonged, the need for a sustainable approach to generating livelihoods has become increasingly acute for refugees in Jordan. Yet Jordan, like many States in the region, is confronting a shortage of labour market opportunities for national youth seeking to enter the labour force. Recent ILO research has highlighted the importance of developing approaches that synthesizes labour rights and labour protections with domestic refugee policy (ILO, 2015).

76. The Jordan Compact introduced several economic and labour market reforms, including reforms to the work permit and business formalization processes, opening up economic activity in refugee camps, and investment in special economic zones and infrastructure projects to provide opportunities for both refugees and Jordanian nationals, and encourage economic growth. More formal assessment of these initiatives is required to understand their impact on job creation for refugees and Jordanian nationals alike.

77. In a programme focused specifically on young urban migrants in Casal da Boba Portugal, the “Generation Project” was implemented in a municipality where more than half the population is younger than 24 years old, with a high rate of undocumented migrants struggling with unemployment, poor schooling, crime and family instability. Integrating a strong private public partnership between the City of Amadora and others, the programme provided training and professional opportunities, with good outcomes.

78. Promoting job opportunities for both nationals and refugees offers the prospect of capitalizing on the range skills and training in diverse communities, and advancing sustainable development for migrant and local communities in need. The ILO has recommended regional coordination for the creation of innovative partnerships to advance the right to work, and to delineate roles and responsibilities within regional and international law.

**D. Improve Data on Mobile Populations**

---


52 Access to work for Syrian refugees in Jordan: a discussion paper on and refugee laws and polices / ILO Regional Office for Arab States - Beirut: ILO, 2015


79. Numbers matter because people matter, and yet systematic demographic data on migrant populations is hard to come by. In virtually every thematic and regional consultation on global migration compact, stakeholders have highlighted the urgent need to strengthen migration data and research. Accurate and timely migration data are essential to meet the timely needs of migrants, and dispel stereotypes.

80. Data sources on migration, migrants and refugees include population censuses, surveys, administrative records, and demographic surveillance systems, among others, but many have long lead times, diminishing their value in circumstances of rapid population movements. Rapid appraisals on site, such as registration systems, short surveys, or service data, offer more immediate information for the provision of services. Satellite remote sensing or call detail records offer emerging possibilities for tracking mobile population flows, and the location and needs of people in transit.

81. The governments of Zambia and Jordan have pioneered integrating migration history and migrant profile modules into their census. The 2000 Zambian census included detailed questions about migration history of households and individuals, migrant/refugee status, and livelihoods that were subsequently used to guide protection initiatives. The 2015 Jordanian Census included questions on refugee status, migration history and housing conditions to understand differentials in health status and social context between refugee, migrant and native-born individuals. These types of data facilitate integrated policy and program development.

82. It is also important to improve the available data on the living conditions and welfare of persons residing in slums, lest they are left behind in development tracking. If residents fear authorities, they may prefer to be underrepresented in censuses and surveys, and highly mobile populations may simply be under-enumerated because their dwellings and settlements are transient, and not mapped. Global efforts to standardize definitions of what constitutes informal settlements and slums are needed to improve data comparability between countries, and to allow standardized tracking over time by governments to measure the success of related interventions.

83. The 2030 Agenda includes a commitment to strengthen national statistical systems and data capabilities by 2020, and these efforts should be accelerated to assure that they address the monitoring of mobile populations, and those living in urban informal settlements and slums, to enhance our collective efforts to leave no one behind, and protect the dignity and human rights of all persons.

III. Recommendations

84. States should embrace the contributions of migration and mobility to the political, economic, social and cultural fabric of countries of origin and destination alike, and to the global community.

85. States should support people’s right to move internally as a means of improving their lives, and promote, protect and provide all internal migrants with equal opportunities and access to social protection.
86. States should capitalize on the opportunities that urbanization provides for sustainable development and undertake participatory planning to harness the benefits of higher population density in urban areas, recognizing the significant impact that internal migratory flows have on the development potential and innovation of urban areas.

87. States should develop rural-urban development plans, including through support for innovation and enterprise hubs, and for special economic zones, and explore the potential for facilitating regional mobility for training and employment, in order to promote opportunity and economic growth for those residing in urban centres, small and medium towns and rural areas alike.

88. Investments in human capital development and policies to harness the potential for a demographic dividend should be informed by trends in youth mobility, including the predominance of movements from rural to urban areas, cross-border migration, and the clustering of young people in urban areas. Interventions and opportunities should be strategically located where youth congregate.

89. States and municipalities should promote universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights for migrant and mobile populations, as well as for refugees and crisis-affected populations, including sexual and reproductive health care services, family planning, information and education, HIV prevention and treatment and response to trauma and violence as part of universal coverage of preventive and curative health services.

90. States and municipalities should promote initiatives that simultaneously improve access to education, training, housing and decent work for national populations in need, as well as migrants and refugees.

91. Transport systems should be rendered safe for all persons to ensure that mobility itself does not invite security risks for women and girls, or for migrants fearful of discrimination and violence, and the provision of safe spaces in urban areas should include systems to facilitate the reporting of violence and harassment, and provide counsel to those affected.

92. States should be called upon to recognize the special vulnerabilities of women and girls among migrants and refugees, by implementing policies and programmes that measurably succeed in reducing gender-based violence, trafficking, and exploitation during transit and at destinations.

93. States are encouraged to develop national policies and interventions to combat xenophobia, racism and discrimination against refugees and other migrants, to advance their integration into host communities, and to promote a vision for safe, diverse and welcoming cities that accommodate the inflow and transit of mobile populations while protecting the rights of all people.

94. States are called upon to adopt policies to assist those without security of place, including those displaced by conflict or natural disasters, those in refugee circumstances, those living in areas of conflict, those in temporary or insecure housing, and the homeless; to improve the quality of all human settlements to ensure that all people have access to basic services, including water, sanitation,
and transportation, with particular attention to security and safety; and to
provide safe housing for all.

95. Consistent with commitments within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable
Development, both overseas development assistance and domestic resources
should be directed toward urgently improving national population data systems
to enable the count and registration of all persons, regardless of migration status,
without fear of repercussions, and to build capacity for the effective use of such
data to improve the delivery of public services and to protect the dignity and
human rights of all people.

96. In the context of the 2020 round of population censuses, all countries are
strongly encouraged to include the core recommended questions related to
migration, including questions on country of birth, citizenship and the year or
period of arrival, in their census questionnaires and to ensure the timely analysis
and dissemination of results.