



GMG Symposium

Migration and Youth: Harnessing Opportunities for Development

SYMPOSIUM REPORT

17 – 18 MAY 2011, NEW YORK, NY

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

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

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 8-24**.

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

¹ As used in: *Global Migration Group (GMG) Symposium, "Migration and Youth: Harnessing Opportunities for Development" 17 – 18 May 2011, New York Concept Note DRAFT, 2 April 2011.*

² *Adolescents, Youth and International Migration: Figures and Facts*. See: http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/GMG_-_Factsheet_UNICEF-FINAL.pdf and *Annex 9*.

Children's Fund), three GMG Deputy Principals (United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Women), and other GMG senior management representatives. A synopsis of the presentations of high-level participants throughout the Symposium is provided in Section 2 of the GMG Symposium Proceedings Report.

- 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 panels³. 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**⁴ and the **Priorities for Action**.⁵
- 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.⁶ As the President of the UN General Assembly, H. E. Ambassador Joseph Deiss, highlighted in his

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".

⁴ See: <http://globalmigrationgroup.org/en/home/55-statement-of-the-gmg-at-the-general-assembly-informal-thematic-debate-on-international-migration> and <http://www.un.org/en/ga/president/65/initiatives/Migration/AnthonyLake.pdf>

⁵ See: <http://globalmigrationgroup.org/en/home/56-migration-development-and-international-cooperation-priorities-for-action>.

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).

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-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**⁷. 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**.

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 website¹¹.
- **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**.

⁸ See: *Annex 7* and <http://globalmigrationgroup.org/en/home/55-statement-of-the-gmg-at-the-general-assembly-informal-thematic-debate-on-international-migration> and <http://www.un.org/en/ga/president/65/initiatives/Migration/AnthonyLake.pdf>

⁹ See: *Annex 8* and <http://globalmigrationgroup.org/en/home/56-migration-development-and-international-cooperation-priorities-for-action>.

¹⁰ See: *Annex 9*.

¹¹ See: <http://www.globalmigrationgroup.org/en/home/37-gmg-symposium-qmigration-and-youth-harnessing-opportunities-for-developmentq-17-18-may-2011-new-york>.

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 youth¹³ 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 labor 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 instruments¹⁴.
- 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.
- 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,

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)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC 1989), its Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict (2000), and its Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (2000)
- 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)
- United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000) and its Protocols
- 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 Private Employment Agencies Convention No. 181 (1997)
- ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182 (1999)
- ILO Domestic Workers Convention No. 189 (2011)

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 labour rights.
- 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

The Global Migration Group (GMG) Symposium “*Migration and Youth: Harnessing Opportunities for Development*” was held on 17-18 May 2011 at UNICEF House in New York, immediately before the UN General Assembly Informal Thematic Debate on International Migration and Development (GA Informal Debate) on 19 May 2011.

The Symposium brought together 200 government officials, civil society, youth representatives and experts from different disciplines and regions of the world to discuss current knowledge, highlight existing gaps and future trends, and share good practices on how to increase the positive impacts and minimize the negative effects of migration on the development prospects of youth¹⁵.

Thanks to the generous support from the Swiss Government, the GMG Symposium on Migration and Youth successfully continued the GMG practice of bringing experts, policy-makers and GMG Member Agencies together to discuss critical issues and address relevant policy themes in migration and development. The first GMG Practitioners Symposium “*Overcoming barriers: Building partnerships for migration and human development*” was held on 27–28 May 2010 in Geneva.¹⁶ A *GMG Experts Meeting* was held on 22 October 2010 in Geneva, for members of civil society and social partners to explore ways to further the protection of the human rights of migrants in an irregular situation.¹⁷ The GMG Symposium on Migration and Youth on 17-18 May 2011 capitalized on the experiences and processes of earlier GMG events.

The preparation of the GA Informal Debate provided a great opportunity for the GMG Agencies to work collaboratively on the GMG Symposium “*Migration and Youth: Harnessing Opportunities for Development*” and address some of the key concerns that were outlined in the concept note of the GA Informal Debate. The synergies between these two events facilitated a coherent approach among the

¹⁵ The programme of the Symposium is included as *Annex 2*.

¹⁶ The GMG Practitioners Symposium “*Overcoming barriers: Building partnerships for migration and human development*” brought together stakeholders from different sectors and world regions to discuss joint challenges, practical solutions and ways in which partnerships at different levels of governance can serve to maximize the human development benefits of migration in three key areas: 1) improving the evidence-base for policymaking; 2) protecting the rights of all migrants, including stranded and vulnerable migrants; and 3) making migration an integral part of national and regional strategies for trade, employment, human development and long-term prosperity.

¹⁷ See <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/MHR/GMGExpertsMeetingRapporteursReport.pdf>.

different GMG stakeholders and provided an opportunity to also engage civil society partners in the preparations leading up to the GMG Symposium along agreed objectives.

The report below focuses on the *process* aspects of the GMG Symposium, highlighting its main achievements. It provides detailed information about the thematic focus and key objectives of the Symposium, its preparation, results (a section that covers participation, outcomes and outputs), and evaluation. Special attention is paid to the participation of civil society and young migrants, as well as to the synergies that the GMG Symposium aimed to create with the GA Informal Debate.

THEMATIC FOCUS AND KEY OBJECTIVES¹⁸

The GMG Symposium focused on the intersection between youth, migration and development. It aimed at examining the impact of migration on the human development of youth from a multidimensional perspective and highlight contributions made by young migrants to development. At the Symposium, the themes of the GA Informal Debate—i.e. the contributions of migrants to development and the role of international cooperation in the area of migration—were examined through a youth lens. Gender issues, South-South migration and human rights were considered as crosscutting themes throughout the GMG Symposium. Furthermore, an emphasis was put on youth migration and environmental change, as well as irregular migration issues.

The *key objectives* of the GMG Symposium were:

1. To foster policy dialogue between diverse stakeholders with expertise in youth and global migration, and to share best practices and policy initiatives.
2. To produce a set of key policy action messages (cf. *GMG Symposium Recommendations* and *Key Policy Messages* above) that could evolve into a road map for development practitioners, governments, academics, civil society partners and the international community for the next five years.
3. To increase the visibility of issues related to youth migration by showcasing evidence-based research and analysis on migration's impact on the development prospects of youth, and on youth's contributions to development.

¹⁸ In preparation for the GMG Symposium, UNICEF, as Chair of the GMG for the first half of 2011, prepared a concept note detailing the conceptual underpinnings and expected outputs. The Concept Note included information on key objectives, thematic sessions and partnerships with civil society for the GMG Symposium. This Concept Note was shared in April 2011 with SDC and is included below as *Annex 1*.

4. To create synergies with the UN General Assembly Informal Thematic Debate on International Migration and Development (GA Informal Debate) by incorporating its key issues into the GMG Symposium.
5. To foster synergies with the work of the GFMD, and in particular the Swiss Chair's 2011 three-main focus on labour mobility and development, addressing irregular migration, and evidence-based migration policies.
6. To share and consider opportunities for ways of achieving a more gender-sensitive, rights-based and development-oriented approach to migration, and to discuss strategies and build momentum and partnerships towards overcoming constraints with regard to this objective.
7. To bring the voices of youth into the migration debate in a meaningful way.
8. To increase collaboration with civil society organizations and other stakeholders.

SYMPOSIUM RESULTS

The objectives of the GMG Symposium, as outlined in the concept note submitted to the Swiss Government in April 2011¹⁹, were mostly met. These results were possible thanks to the fruitful cooperation and participation of many interested stakeholders, including the Swiss GFMD Chair, Member State participants, civil society organizations, international experts, and academic partners who attended the Symposium. Furthermore, GMG preparations for the Symposium were facilitated by the excellent synergies among GMG Member Agencies, which dedicated staff, time and resources to ensure a good outcome. The GMG tried to identify key experts who made substantial contributions to the discussions in the different panels and provided fresh insights and perspectives. The following sub-sections will address the participation in the GMG Symposium, as well as major achievements in terms of outcomes, outputs and key recommendations. This section also includes a sub-section on critical synergies between the GA Informal Debate on 19 May 2011 and the 17-18 May 2011 GMG Symposium.

PARTICIPATION

HIGH-LEVEL PARTICIPATION

The event generated a great amount of interest among high-level UN decision-makers and relevant civil society partners, as it was held immediately before the GA Informal Debate on 19 May 2011. The

¹⁹ The GMG Symposium Concept Note is included as *Annex 1*.

specific focus on youth was very timely, given recent international events, and the Symposium garnered interest from a variety of stakeholders working in the fields of youth, migration, and development. The policy relevance of the GMG Symposium was enhanced by the participation of 18 high-level panellists who accepted the invitation from the GMG Chair, UNICEF Executive Director *Anthony Lake*.

Mr. Anthony Lake, UNICEF Executive Director, hosted the Symposium in his capacity of GMG Chair, presided the opening and closing sessions, and engaged with GMG Principals and high-level speakers. The key messages conveyed by the GMG Chair are included in Section 2 of the GMG Symposium Proceedings Report.

H. E. Ambassador Joseph Deiss, President of the UN General Assembly, *Mr. Peter Sutherland*, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on International Migration and Development, and *Ambassador Eduard Gnesa*, Swiss Chair of the 2011 GFMD, lent their support at the closing session and delivered statements regarding the importance of the youth dimension to the international dialogue on migration and development. Many other high-level representatives agreed to make statements at the opening and closing sessions of the Symposium.

The high-level sessions also included the participation of *Mr. Sha Zukang*, Under-Secretary-General, UNDESA, *Ambassador William Lacy Swing*, Director General, IOM, *Ms. Rebeca Grynspan*, Associate Administrator, UNDP, *Ms. Marta Santos Pais*, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, and *Ms. Thetis Mangahas*, Deputy Regional Director, ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

Other dignitaries included: *H.E. Ambassador Libran N. Cabactulan*, Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Philippines to the United Nations, *H. E. Ambassador Claude Heller*, Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations, *H. E. Ambassador Carlos Enrique Garcia Gonzalez*, Deputy Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the UN, *Ms. Purnima Mane*, Deputy Executive Director, UNFPA, *Ms. Lakshmi Puri*, Deputy Executive Director, UN Women, *H. E. Ambassador Alfonso Quiñónez*, Secretary of External Relations of the Organization of American States (OAS) and Member of UNITAR Board of Trustees, *Mr. Ivan Šimonović*, Assistant Secretary-General, OHCHR, *Dr. Dilip Ratha*, Lead Economist and Manager, Migration and Remittances Unit, The World Bank, *Mr. John Bingham*, Head of Policy at the International Catholic Migration Commission and Civil Society Coordinator and Representative at the 2011 GFMD, and *Ms. Beata Godenzi*, Representative of the Swiss 2011 GFMD

Chair and Head of the Global Programme Migration, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

These high-level participants emphasized the policy relevance of the discussion and the focus on youth.

High-level panellists conveyed three common messages regarding youth, migration and development:

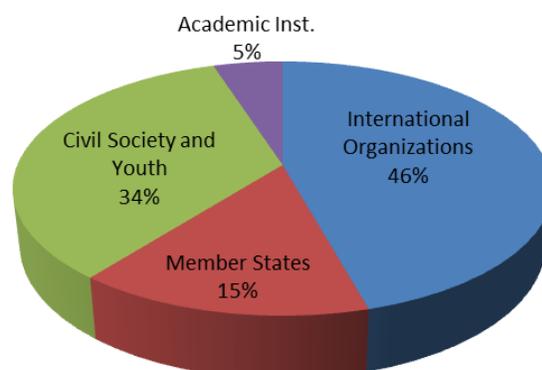
- The international community should adopt a rights-based approach when developing migration policies and programmes. These should be anchored in international human rights standards and promote meaningful youth participation.
- International cooperation and dialogue are essential to manage migration in a humane manner and to generate a triple-win scenario that benefits migrants, sending countries, and destination countries. High-level participants mentioned that the Arab Spring and the stranding of migrants and refugees showed the weakness of international migration governance. Global cooperation should be enhanced to protect the human rights of migrants.
- The rising level of anti-immigrant sentiments in some destination countries demands evidence-based responses that promote awareness about the contributions of migrants to their host countries.

OVERALL AND MEMBER STATE PARTICIPATION

The GMG Symposium was well attended: approximately 200 participants took part in the deliberations of this two-day event²⁰. Participants included Member State representatives, including government officials from capitals, a wide array of civil society representatives, including academic experts and resource persons from prominent think-tanks working on migration issues, grassroots organizations, UN and humanitarian agencies, as well as representatives of the 16 GMG Member Agencies and youth delegates.

Chart 1 shows the breakdown of participants at the Symposium. Forty-six percent of participants represented International Organizations, including 12 non-GMG international organizations, such as Organization of American States (OAS) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). Thirty-four percent of participants belonged to civil society organizations and youth, representing 54 NGOs

Chart 1: Participation Breakdown



²⁰ A list of the Symposium participants is included as *Annex 3*.

and private sector entities. Fifteen percent of participants were part of Member State delegations, representing 26 countries. Five percent of attendees belonged to 11 academic institutions from the global North and the global South.

The GMG Chair and GMG Member Agencies invited Member State delegations interested in migration and development to attend the Symposium. The support and involvement of Member State delegations was useful to create synergies and allowed to give visibility to youth migration issues ahead of the GA Informal Debate. Moreover, the role of GFMD representatives was critical in highlighting the youth dimension at the GA Informal Debate and other related meetings.

In particular, the President of the UN General Assembly, as well as the Permanent Representatives of Mexico and the Philippines to the United Nations, highlighted the special importance of youth issues in the migration-development debate. This was also reiterated by other Ambassadors, such as the Deputy Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations.

In his closing remarks, *H. E. Ambassador Eduard Gnesa*, the GFMD Swiss Chair, praised the expertise of the GMG and specifically underscored the need for all stakeholders to address the “major challenge of assisting and protecting children, and considering them as agents of change” by ensuring that actions “are linked at the national, regional and international levels, particularly within agreed cooperation schemes.” Moreover, Ambassador Gnesa insisted that it is imperative to “integrate the youth dimension into all debates related to migration and development”, further indicating that issues such as child labour and irregular migrant children will feature throughout the discussions of the 2011 GFMD process.

GMG PARTICIPATION

GMG agencies were represented by experts based in Geneva (ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNHCHR, UNITAR, UNCTAD and WHO), Santiago de Chile (ECLAC), Paris (UNESCO), Washington, D.C. (World Bank), and New York (IOM, OHCHR, UN Regional Commissions, UNITAR, UNHCR, UNDESA, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC, UN Women, WHO). In addition, some GMG representatives came from regional and field offices, including *Ms. Thetis Mangahas*, Deputy Regional Director, ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, based in Bangkok, Thailand.

CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

A key aim of the Symposium was to promote the active participation of a diverse set of civil society actors, both in the GMG Symposium and the GA Informal Debate. The GMG intended to continue the trend of progressive interactions with civil society partners to foster new partnerships on youth issues. This facilitated useful exchanges, including best practices among many actors working in the field of international migration and human rights.

Seventy-six participants represented civil society, and an additional 11 experts came from academic institutions. During the preparations leading up to the GMG Symposium, the GMG Chair and Member Agencies made a special outreach effort to enlist the support of key civil society partners working in the field of migration and development. Suggestions for civil society participation were obtained directly from civil society partners and global networks. The GMG Chair sought to engage Mr. John Bingham—Head of Policy at the International Catholic Migration Commission, as well as Civil Society Coordinator and Representative at the 2011 GFMD—to ensure an effective cooperation between the GMG and civil society not only at the Symposium, but also at the UN GA Informal Debate.

Mr. Bingham²¹ was invited to speak on behalf of civil society at the opening panel. Other participants who also participated actively in the meeting included well-known NGO experts and stakeholders who have been actively involved in the civil society segment of GFMD events since 2007. There was an explicit line of work by the GMG to reach out to civil society for its contributions and suggestions, with the understanding that civil society partners would substantially improve the discussions of the Symposium.

The NGO Committee on Migration and Ms. Eva Sandis, its Vice-Chair, were approached in January 2011 by the UNICEF GMG Chair. This partnership with the NGO Committee on Migration was indeed very useful for the preparation of the GMG Symposium. Specific inputs were provided during the proceedings, as some members of this network shared relevant information and contributed to the conclusions from the sessions.²² The Scalabrini International Migration Network and the Center for Migration Studies were also involved in the preparations leading up to the Symposium and the GA

²¹ ICMC and Mr. Bingham have worked with the GFMD since its establishment in 2006. For several years, ICMC has taken an active role in organizing civil society through the International Advisory Committee, and in 2010 they acted as Chair of the Steering Committee, mainly to lead the discussions during the two days of civil society meetings in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

²² This included Ms. Mary Jo Toll's intervention at Session 6 on "Leveraging the Beneficial Impact of Migration on Youth in Countries of Origin", which contributed views from the field on how children deal with a missing parent or a broken family due to migration.

Informal Debate. The UNICEF Chair and the GMG reached out to other civil society networks that are collaborating with the Geneva-based GMG Agencies on youth issues, such as the International Federation of the Red Cross and other humanitarian civil society organizations.²³

The Swiss Government's contribution was critical to facilitating the participation of key experts and practitioners in the Symposium. For instance Mr. Olivier Feneyrol, Terre des Hommes (TDH), made a very informative presentation about "young people on the move" in West Africa, highlighting the challenges and opportunities of adolescents and youth migrants in this region.

A significant number of civil society participants from different regions attended the GMG Symposium, including the African Black Diaspora Global Network from Canada, Fundación Cultural Baur from Mexico, Migrants Rights International based in Switzerland, the Organisation Mondiale pour l'Education Prescolaire from Sweden, the Ramphai Centre from the UK, Terre des Hommes from Djibouti, the Poverty Elimination and Community Education Foundation from Bangladesh, the International Catholic Migration Commission based in Switzerland, Sin Fronteras based in Mexico, as well as a Brazilian representative of the Intellectual Network from the South (INSouth).

Academics specialised in migration issues came from the following universities and research institutions: Harvard, Columbia, the City University of New York, the University of Houston, and the Social Science Research Council in the United States; the Geneva Graduate Institute in Switzerland; the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences and the University of Lanús in Argentina; and Utrecht University in the Netherlands.

Geographic representation among civil society networks was not as regionally balanced as initially intended, as other funding sources did not materialize. However, the GMG Chair and Member Agencies tried to take advantage of the presence of civil society representatives attending the GA Informal Debate.

²³ Mr. Magueye Thiam, Vice-President, Forum pour l'Intégration des Migrants et des Migrants (FIMM Suisse), provided insights and inputs prior to the Symposium and demonstrated interest in collaborating with the GMG for GFMD events in the second half of 2011.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION

The GMG agreed that it was important to include the voices of youth in a dialogue discussing how to harness development opportunities for young migrants. Thus, youth participants were given an opportunity to present their views and recommendations at the GMG Symposium. UNICEF's Adolescents Development and Participation (ADAP) Unit, in cooperation with several GMG Member Agencies, put together a panel to allow for solid and meaningful youth contributions. The panel included irregular migrant youth and youth representatives from the Indigenous People's Youth Forum. Youth delegates came from diverse cultural and geographic backgrounds, including Bolivia, Colombia, the Philippines, Japan, and South Korea.

OUTCOMES

During the GMG Symposium, a range of **policy issues, best practices and practical examples** were discussed, as evidenced by the summary of discussions provided in the GMG Symposium Proceedings Report. These issues were of importance to Member State discussions at the GA Informal Debate 2011.

The GMG Symposium successfully achieved the eight *key objectives*²⁴ set out in the concept note. For example:

- a) Synergies were created between participants present at the Symposium and the GA Informal Debate (see key objective 4);
- b) civil society was included into the whole process of the Symposium, contributing new knowledge and practical policy insights (see key objective 8);
- c) thirty policy recommendations were agreed upon by experts and participants (see key objective 2);
- d) the voices of youth made a meaningful contribution to the discussion (see key objective 7).

The lack of global governance in migration and the need for international cooperation in addressing the challenges of migration to maximise its gains was a theme that was emphasised at the GA Informal Debate on May 19 2011. This also came up during the Symposium. Several high-level speakers reminded the audience that **youth issues** were much **more visible** than in previous years due to recent events in North Africa and the Middle East, which have particularly affected young migrant workers. In view of

²⁴ See page 29.

this, it will be essential to sustain this interest on youth migration and work on practical approaches in the next two years, ahead of the High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development in 2013.

The GMG Symposium focused on ways to enhance coherence in migration and development policies with regard to youth. More efforts are needed to develop relevant capacities. This may be a relevant area to discuss in the 2011 GFMD Thematic Clusters and Concluding Debate. Some attention was also given to how **international cooperation** on migration could also be relevant to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), including youth. Several sessions focused on **sharing knowledge, as well as expanding the evidence base of policies** related to **youth migration, labour mobility, development, feminization of migration, global care workers, and irregular migration**. This also included an in-depth review of human rights challenges.²⁵

Several panellists noted the feminization of migration and the vulnerability of female migrants. Participants agreed on the need for **gender-sensitive** migration policies, including upholding protection standards and focusing on innovative remittance instruments. An in-depth examination of the links between migration, remittances, household income and female empowerment was recommended. Adolescent girls issues require more in-depth and evidence-based research.

Civil society representatives were actively involved at all stages of the preparation of the Symposium, contributed as speakers and rapporteurs to several panels, and provided useful recommendations following the Symposium. The event led to **strengthened partnerships among civil society organizations and specific GMG agencies**. Civil society participants reaffirmed their willingness and interest to continue working on the recommendations from the panels in the near future.

Another critical outcome of the Symposium concerned **active youth participation**²⁶. Youth participants attended a one-day participatory workshop, designed to enable them to reflect on their experiences and approaches in order to bring their perspective into the GMG Symposium. The substantive inputs that youth representatives made in Session 2, as well as throughout the rest of the Symposium, provided an opportunity for young people to share their experiences, good practices and recommendations, allowing them to influence migration policy dialogue on adolescents and youth. In addition, the participation of young people showed the importance of incorporating youth voices and supporting meaningful

²⁵ For more information on the recommendations and outputs .

²⁶ 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 at the Symposium, please see *Annex 5*.

participation of relevant stakeholders in the migration and development debate. This approach presents youth and adolescents as “agents of change” in their communities and societies. Youth participation was identified as a cross-cutting approach and key strategy for working on youth migration issues, including broader migration and development issues.

OUTPUTS

The GMG Symposium led to several concrete outputs, namely six briefing papers, two reports, as well as forty panellist presentations. Clusters of GMG member agencies²⁷ working together undertook the preparation of briefing papers for each session. The briefing papers were part of the materials distributed to participants at the GMG Symposium and are available on the GMG Symposium website.²⁸

GMG briefing papers were prepared on the following topics:

- *Globalization, Cooperation and Youth: Newly Emerging Trends*
(UNDESA, World Bank, UNFPA)
- Enhancing Development through International Cooperation on Migration
(IOM and Regional Commissions)
- *Cooperation – the Key to an Effective Policy Response to Global Environmental Change Migration and Youth* (UNESCO, IOM, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNITAR)
- *Enhancing the Contributions of Young Migrants to Development*
(UN Women, IOM, UNDP)
- *Enhancing the Well-being and Human Rights of Migrants in Support of Development*
(ILO, OHCHR, UNCTAD, WHO)
- *Enhancing Cooperation on the Protection of Unaccompanied Migrant Children and Youth*
(UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM)
- *International Migration in a Globalizing World: The Role of Youth*
(UNDESA)

A GMG Symposium Proceedings Report is available separately, also including the set of recommendations for policy action and key messages that came out of the Symposium. While the Key

²⁷ Draft versions of the briefing papers were reviewed by all GMG Agencies.

²⁸ http://www.globalmigrationgroup.org/gmg_symposium2011.htm. The guidelines for these briefing papers, as provided to GMG Member Agencies, are attached as *Annex 6*.

Policy Messages are broken down into six categories, it bears mention that, as the conference itself sought to highlight, all of them are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. Lastly, most of the presentations given by panellists are also available on the GMG website.

WAY FORWARD

Following the Symposium, the GMG agreed to elaborate a policy document which will be ready in time for the 2011 GFMD Concluding Debate. The Symposium presentations, recommendations, and substantive discussions will be used to develop this GMG document. The publication shall focus on youth and migration issues, including mainstreaming migration into national development planning, and aim at addressing some of the knowledge gaps that were identified during the GMG Symposium. The document will elaborate on several critical issues regarding the development opportunities of youth in the migration context.

GMG SYMPOSIUM AND GA INFORMAL DEBATE

The GMG Symposium took place immediately before the UN General Assembly Informal Thematic Debate on International Migration and Development (GA Informal Debate), held on 19 May 2011. The PGA was consulted on the viability of hosting a GMG Symposium immediately before the GA Informal Debate.

PARTICIPATION OF EXPERTS AND DELEGATES AT BOTH EVENTS

A number of experts and Member State delegates already planning to attend the GA Informal Debate participated in the GMG Symposium. There was a significant overlap of participants at both events, including high-level panellists and delegates coming various regions of the world. Among others, Ambassador William Lacy Swing, Director General of the International Organization for Migration, and Ms. Thetis Mangahas, Senior Migration Specialist and Deputy Regional Director for Policy and Programmes at the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, stressed the relevance of the youth dimension of international migration, especially with regard to employment opportunities in countries of origin and destination.

CONTRIBUTION AND THEMATIC RELEVANCE OF THE GMG SYMPOSIUM TO THE GA INFORMAL DEBATE

At the Symposium, the themes of the GA Informal Debate—the contributions of migrants to development and the role of international cooperation on migration—were examined through the youth lens. The GMG Symposium aimed at informing and being relevant to the GA Informal Debate. Thus, it highlighted the youth, human rights and gender dimensions of migration, sharing expertise and practical insights, as well as identifying concrete areas of intervention for policy-makers. Some of the ideas generated at the Symposium were reflected in Member State statements and throughout the discussions held at the GA Informal Debate on 19 May 2011.

GMG INPUTS FOR THE GA INFORMAL DEBATE

Two substantial GMG inputs were produced for the GA Informal Debate, namely the joint GMG statement and the Priorities for Action. The preparation and engagement of the GMG Member Agencies in the run-up to the GMG Symposium were useful for the production of these inputs. This also facilitated consensus-building on key policy messages, in addition to the preparation of briefing papers²⁹, the GMG Symposium concept note, and the Symposium agenda.

COOPERATION WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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. Furthermore, the UNICEF GMG Chair coordinated efforts with the PGA and UNDESA to guarantee effective and active participation of civil society at both the GMG Symposium and the GA Informal Debate. Capitalizing on the synergies between the two events allowed civil society attending the Symposium to take part in the GA Informal Debate as well.

²⁹ http://www.globalmigrationgroup.org/gmg_symposium2011.htm.

EVALUATION

For the evaluation of the GMG Symposium, the UNICEF GMG Chair designed a questionnaire and collected 57 evaluation responses from participants.³⁰ Twenty-six responses were received from participants representing international organizations, fourteen reviews from NGO and civil society organizations, nine reviews from Member State participants, seven reviews from academic experts and one review from a private sector participant.³¹

The overall assessment of the Symposium was positive, as **85 percent of participants rated the overall substance and organization of the Symposium as valuable or highly valuable**. More than a third of participants (35 percent) assessed the Symposium as *highly valuable*. Participants representing academia and governments expressed the greatest appreciation for the Symposium, with an average rating of 4.4 (i.e. between *valuable* (4) and *extremely valuable* (5)).³²

The evaluation survey confirmed the timely contribution of the Symposium to the migration and development debate, and the relevance of youth issues in this context. The evaluation shows that 96 percent of participants assessed the Symposium as relevant or *highly relevant* to their work, and 79 percent found it *likely* or *very likely* that they would use the information, knowledge and/or skills they gained from the Symposium. Furthermore, **77 per cent 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 the youth perspective.

According to the evaluation of individual sessions of the Symposium, Session 2 on “Youth Migration from a Youth Perspective”, and Session 1 on “Globalization, Cooperation and Youth: Newly Emerging Trends”, were particularly appreciated by participants. Participants assessed Session 1 as informative and providing new information. Session 2 on youth participation was perceived as very useful, and the diversity of perspectives that youth panellists brought into the Symposium was highly valued. The most positive evaluation of Session 2 came from government and civil society participants. Session 1 was particularly valued by academic and government representatives. Session 3 on “Enhancing the

³⁰ The evaluation questionnaire is provided in *Annex 10* and an overview of survey responses in *Annex 11*. The Symposium was evaluated within a scale from 1 to 5. In addition to survey questionnaires filled out during the GMG Symposium, participants had the possibility of assessing it online at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Q8FLPT6>.

³¹ This composition of respondents corresponds by and large with the overall participant breakout, according to the list of participants. 46% (46%) of total participants (survey respondents) were from international organizations, 34% (25%) from civil society and youth, 15% (16%) from Member States, and 5% (12.5%) represented academic institutions.

³² The private sector had to be excluded here given that the sample size was too small (only one returned questionnaire).

Contributions of Young Migrants to Development” and the Closing Session received particularly high evaluation ratings.

Participants expressed their appreciation for the diversity of voices and requested that future GMG symposia include civil society and migrant youth as important stakeholders. Furthermore, on potential themes of interest for future events, participants voiced a strong interest on South-South migration, with a focus on Africa, Central Asia, and the Asia-Pacific and the Middle East region.

In terms of suggestions for improvement, participants observed that perhaps the programme was too ambitious. It was suggested to dedicate less time to panel presentations and more time to in-depth discussions. This indeed was intended by GMG organizers and guidelines were provided by the UNICEF GMG Chair at the preparatory sessions. Indeed, in the run-up to the GMG Symposium, the Chair and the organizers reiterated that at least half of the time of each session should be reserved for the exchange of experiences and viewpoints, as well as for questions and answers. During the Symposium, the chairs of different panels had difficulties in balancing substantive presentations with the time dedicated to discussion with the audience.

In sum, the findings of the evaluation survey demonstrate that the vast majority of participants assessed the Symposium very positively, including its organization, content and structure. This is especially true for Member State and civil society representatives.