



GFMD Youth Forum Concept Note

Side event to the GFMD Summit in Quito, November 2019

Background

Migration is one of the defining features of the 21st century. Migrants represent approximately 3% of the world's population, and often bring significant benefits to both their new and home communities; indeed they produce more than 9% of global GDP.¹ However, if migration is poorly managed, it can also negatively impact development: migrants can be put at risk, communities can come under strain, and development gains can suffer. The implementation of the SDGs and of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) provide opportunities for international cooperation to work to protect and empower mobile populations to fulfil their development potential and benefit individuals, communities, and countries around the world.² This is one of the reasons why the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) Summit, taking place in November 2019 in Quito, Ecuador, is so important, as it allows for a multistakeholder space to discuss challenges and opportunities in migration, showcase good practices, and create partnerships and strategies to tackle these issues.

It is crucial to include youth in the discussion. There are 64 million young migrants in the world, which account for 10.4 percent of the total population.³ Young migrants have specific vulnerabilities and needs, present unique opportunities, and are involved in many successful local initiatives focusing on the implementation of the GCM and the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. For these reasons it is of utmost importance that young people are continuously engaged in policy making processes where youth themselves can voice their priorities, present opportunities they identified, and show concrete examples of how governments, civil society, and other partners can protect young people on the move and leverage the opportunities that they present.

History of Engagement

Young people, including young migrants, have participated throughout the GCM negotiations and consultations thanks to the facilitation of the United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth (UN MGCY). These young people have participated in the regional consultations,

¹ Migration and the 2030 Agenda: Guide for practitioners. IOM. 2018.

² Migration and the 2030 Agenda: Guide for practitioners. IOM. 2018.

³ <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates17.asp>

the intergovernmental negotiations, submitted official papers and organised webinars, workshops and side events with young people all over the world. Their successful contribution has not gone unnoticed.

In particular, during Migration Week in Marrakech, UN MGCY organized a Youth Forum as an official side event to the Intergovernmental Conference on Migration. We brought together 150 young people from more than 50 countries to discuss, consult and commit to the Global Compact on Migration. The Forum's sessions built capacity in young leaders to take action on the GCM, and allowed young people to work together to consolidate the priorities coming from youth to present them at the Intergovernmental Conference through a plenary statement, a meeting with the Secretary-General, and with various other stakeholders including IOM, UNICEF, civil society organizations, and government delegations including Germany and the UK. More information is available in our [impact report](#).

Youth have also participated in last year's GFMD Summit in Marrakech, in particular through the presence of 5 Youth Rapporteurs who made timely interventions on youth issues and perspectives in their capacity of roundtable participants and panel speakers as part of the official programme of the GFMD. They also reported on the discussions and outcomes of the GFMD to youth through a formal session in the Youth Forum so to build capacity in youth around the current discourse on the issues and on avenues of engagement.

The 2019 GFMD Youth Forum

We are continuing to facilitate youth engagement in intergovernmental and multistakeholder migration processes. In particular, in order to give relevance to the specific needs and opportunities of young migrants in the GFMD Summit in Quito, we need formal avenues for youth to participate and use their voice. We need youth to have access to a space where they are able to discuss young migrants specific challenges, needs and opportunities, in order to consolidate solid policy priorities around the key issues of migration and development.

For this reason we are planning a **Youth Forum** to be held in Quito right before the GFMD Summit, to be held on the 17th and 18th November. The outcomes of the Forum will be concrete policy priorities to support and leverage young migrants, and examples of actions taken on the ground around key issues of migration that are youth-led and/or youth-focused and can be replicated by other stakeholders. These will be presented at the GFMD Summit by youth representatives, and will enrich the conversation at the GFMD with youth perspectives and concrete ways of acting on them, through clear priorities and actionable points for governments, civil society, UN agencies, and other relevant stakeholders.

The Youth Forum's programme will discuss key issues identified in last year's summit, including education and decent jobs for youth migrants, and on the themes related to the GFMD agenda, including "facilitating the economic and social inclusion of migrants", "providing regular pathways from crisis to safety", and "shaping public narratives on migrants

and migration”. The Youth Forum programme is built to be highly pertinent to these issues discussed during the GFMD Summit, as this allows the outcomes of the Youth Forum to feed into the roundtables of the GFMD.

During the Youth Forum, we will add focuses on youth priority themes, such as Education and Child Detention, and will endeavour to discuss the other topics with a youth lens. We will also focus on identifying already existing youth-led and/or youth-focused actions on these issues and present ways to scale or replicate them in partnership with other stakeholders. In each session, we will also make sure we consider specific vulnerabilities and opportunities related to gender, ethnicity, LGBTQ+, and disability.

The Youth Forum will count on the presence of 50 young leaders involved in relevant work in their communities. Applications will open on September 28th. We aim for a balanced representation, including aspects of regional, social, religious, age and gender representation. Taking into account that the Forum is taking place in Ecuador, we aim for 25 delegates representing Latin American countries (of which at least 10 representing Ecuador).

The MGCY Youth Forum leadership has followed closely the activities led by the GFMD chair and has promoted the engagement of youth in related event as the GFMD Regional Thematic Workshops, has organized timely webinars on the same topics to engage and build capacity in youth, and will continue to do so through a series of in-person and virtual consultations to reach as many youth as possible as part of the process that will culminate with the Youth Forum.

About the organizers

The organization of the Youth Forum and of the previous consultations and webinars is led by the United Major Group for Children and Youth (UN MGCY), and open for any young person to contribute to. The UN MGCY is the United Nations General Assembly-mandated, official, formal, and self-organised space for children and youth to contribute to and engage in the United Nations. We work to involve young people in policy design, implementation, and follow-up so that youth perspectives can be heard at all levels. [Here](#) you can find more information about us and our work, with [this page](#) having a specific focus on our migration working group.⁴

Following last year’s model, we are working in close partnership with IOM and UNICEF on the substantive issues of the Youth Forum and of broader youth participation at the GFMD.

For any questions, please contact the Youth Forum and GFMD Focal Point, Ms. Marta Verani, at marta.verani@unmgcy.org.

⁴ <https://www.unmgcy.org/> and <https://www.unmgcy.org/youth4migration>

APPENDIX: YOUTH FORUM PROGRAMME

Draft 1

GFMD Youth Forum Programme

November 2019, Quito

This is the draft programme of the Youth Forum, which will be held as an official side event to the 2019 GFMD Summit in Quito. The Youth Forum will focus on gathering youth perspectives in key thematic areas and from different regions, focusing on priorities for youth and children, and with attention to cross-cutting issues including gender, ethnicity, LGBTQ+, and disabilities. The Forum will also identify action-oriented solutions coupled with already existing successful initiatives addressing these issues, which can be suggested for replicating and scaling through partnerships with governments, civil society, and other stakeholders. The outcomes of the Forum will be presented directly to the GFMD through MGCY representation including during the Civil Society Day and the Common Space.

Draft Programme - Currently open for comments

Day 1

Time	Event	Title / details
9:00 - 10:30 am	Opening Ceremony	Interventions from relevant stakeholders, cultural performance
10:30 - 10:45	Coffee Break	
Thematic Roundtables Round 1: These roundtables will focus on the main priority themes identified in last year's Youth Forum. Participants will discuss youth priorities and policy recommendations on the issues, as well as actions on the ground that deliver on these priorities, including challenges and best practices, and support needed to scale / replicate.		
10:45 - 13:00	Thematic Roundtable 1	Labour and Decent Jobs
	Thematic Roundtable 2	Education and recognition of skills
	Thematic Roundtable 3	Drivers of migration: forced x voluntary
	Thematic Roundtable 4	Climate Change and Migration
	Thematic Roundtable 5	Human Trafficking and Child Detention

13:00 - 14:00	Lunch Break	
14:00 - 15:00	Optional Networking Fair	Open space to discuss and network
<p>Thematic Workshops Round 2: These workshops will focus on the main themes featured in the GFMD programme (including the Common Space and the Civil Society days). Participants will build upon the work from the previous workshops to discuss priorities and policy suggestions, present current projects on the ground that deliver on these priorities, share challenges and best practices, and identify the support needed to scale / replicate.</p>		
15:00 - 17:15	Thematic Roundtable 1	Providing regular pathways from crisis to safety with attention to mixed migration flows
	Thematic Roundtable 2	Shaping public narratives on migrations and migrants
	Thematic Roundtable 3	Ensuring the fulfilment of human rights during all stages of migration
	Thematic Roundtable 4	Supporting arrival locations (cities, ports, nations) and sending places (including rural areas)
	Thematic Roundtable 5	Facilitating social and economic inclusion of migrants
17:15 - 17:30	Coffee Break	
17:30 - 18:00	Reporting back and briefing	

20:00 - 21:00	Informal networking	In central location TBD
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Day 2

Time	Event	Title / details
<p>Skills blast workshops: The skills blasts workshops will focus on building capacity on key components needed for effective action on issues related to migration and development, the GCM, and youth advocacy. They will be delivered by leading experts on the topics and will build capacity in participants to continue youth-led action at the local, national, and regional level after the Youth Forum and GFMD Summit.</p>		
9:00 - 11:00	Skill Blast Workshop 1	Running and Effective

		Campaign
	Skill Blast Workshop 2	Youth Strategy and Advocacy
	Skill Blast Workshop 3	Changing and Creating Positive Narratives
	Skill Blast Workshop 4	TBD
11:00 - 11:15	Coffee Break	
<p>Regional Roundtable Round 1: During these roundtables participants will discuss the main issues affecting the region and what needs to be addressed. They will present and select already existing effective youth-led solutions and propose ways to replicate / scale / overcome challenges, with a focus on partnerships and thus including action points for other stakeholders including governments. In the last part of the roundtable they will work on a concrete action plan to spur and scale youth-led actions in the region.</p>		
11:15 - 13:15	Regional Roundtable 1	Latin America and Caribbean
	Regional Roundtable 2	North America
	Regional Roundtable 3	Asia and Pacific
	Regional Roundtable 4	Europe
	Regional Roundtable 5	MENA
	Regional Roundtable 6	Africa
13:15 - 14:15	Lunch Break	
<p>Regional Roundtables Round 2: These second set of regional roundtables will allow participants to address and discuss movements across regions with both regions involved. This will be a space to identify solutions together and cohesively across regions, drawing on the previous sessions and already existing actions, and presenting opportunities for partnerships.</p>		
14:15 - 15:15	Cross-Regional Roundtable 1	Latin America and Caribbean + North America
	Cross-Regional Roundtable 2	Europe + MENA + Africa
	Cross-Regional Roundtable 3	Asia and Pacific + MENA
	Cross-Regional Roundtable 4	Venezuelan diaspora
	Cross-Regional Roundtable	Asia and Pacific + North

	5	America
15:15 - 15:30	Coffee Break	
15:30 - 16:30	Reporting back	Reporting back of regional priorities and formal signing of outcome document
16:45 - 18:00	Closing Ceremony	