



## Youth Consultations in Africa for the AU-GFMD Regional Meeting

In the vision for its Chairmanship of the [Global Forum on Migration and Development](#) (GFMD) over the course of 2020, the UAE sets out a commitment to fostering a year-long process. To that end, the AU-GFMD Regional Meetings have been proposed to take place in May 2020. These Regional Meetings are designed to encourage the incorporation of more local and regional perspectives into the background papers, for discussion by GFMD participants at the end-of-year Summit, as well as stimulating the formation of partnerships on relevant issues. The focused on the following themes: *The Governance of Labour Migration in the Context of Changing Employment Landscapes*, *Skilling Migrants for Employment*, and *Addressing Gaps in Migrant Protection*.

The United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth (UN MGCY) led an open Africa regional consultation on youth perspectives and priorities on these three topics, for which we consulted 25 locally-based youth-led and youth-focused organizations with national or international focus, acting in 21 countries, and representing over 700 young leaders in migration issues. The results of these consultations are summarized in the policy briefs contained in this document.

UN MGCY's Africa Focal Points then brought these key issues and voices to the AU-GFMD process. They participated and co-organized the civil society consultations before the AU-GFMD event. They will now participate in the main AU-GFMD Forum, representing in all breakout sessions, in both the English (May) and French (June) sessions, ensuring youth voices are heard at the highest levels and taken into consideration when identifying priorities and designing solutions.

For any questions or to be included in the mapped youth-focused and youth-led organizations and networks, please email [migrationfp@unmgcy.org](mailto:migrationfp@unmgcy.org).

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## The Governance of Labour Migration in the Context of Changing Employment Landscapes: *Policy Brief on Youth Perspectives in Africa*

Labour migration in Africa is largely intra-regional (80%),<sup>1</sup> with a large majority of migrants estimated to be under 35 years old and categorized as low-skilled workers. Following the GFMD Chair's and African Union recognition of "Labour Migration" as a priority theme, UN MGCY led an open Africa regional consultation on youth perspectives and priorities on this topic, for which we consulted 25 locally-based youth-led and youth-focused organizations with a national or international focus, acting in 21 countries, and representing over 700 young leaders in migration issues. The results of these consultations are summarized in this policy brief.

### Key Youth-led and Youth-Focused Projects

Youth have been at the forefront of the response to labour migration concerns, including to:

- Support labour migrants by partnering with relevant institutions to ensure they are able to access the relevant documentation and to participate in diverse skills-trainings;
- Empower young migrants with legal capacity-building so that they are able to navigate the job market and avoid exploitation, including awareness on negotiating and signing contracts;
- Work on push factors of migration by increasing economic opportunities in low-income areas, in particular targeting youth;
- Prevent migrants to fall trap of human trafficking by raising awareness, specifically with youth;
- Advocate to meaningfully include youth stakeholders in the design and review of National Migration Policies.

### Policy Recommendation for Government and other actors

Youth in Africa have been able to participate in the design of national policies in many countries, while other countries still lag behind in this inclusion. Policies need to account for all stakeholders and the most vulnerable, including low-skilled migrants and youth. **Youth calls on governments to catch up and ensure a transparent and meaningful inclusion of youth and other stakeholders in all policy design.** Youth organizations stand ready to mobilize youth constituencies and engage them in these processes.

Currently, many good policies have been designed around labour governance but have not been fully implemented, monitored, or enforced. **Youth calls on governments to double actions to ensure the full implementation of labour migration policies and the protection of all stakeholders,** which is key to harness the benefits of migration to create jobs. Youth-led organizations stand ready to support and to partner in these efforts to identify policies that need to be further implemented and offer suggestions and partnership to do so.

A particular area of concern is the current high incidence of labour exploitation. **Effective and regular checks need to be done to employers and private recruitment agencies in order to ensure the rights of migrant workers are respected,** especially considering vulnerable groups such as young women, as well as **ensure the provision of reliable information** with up-to-date and accessible data to help migrant workers make informed decisions about their jobs.

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<sup>1</sup> Flahaux, Marie-Laurence, De Hass, Hein: African migration: trends, patterns, drivers, Comparative Migration Studies, 2016.



## Skilling Migrants for Employment: Policy Brief on Youth Perspectives in Africa

Given the right conditions, migrants greatly contribute to society's economy. More than half of migrants in Africa have completed secondary or tertiary education, but often are not able to get those recognized in their host country.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, migrant workers often face other challenges such as with language, acquiring relevant skills, employment permit requirements, and financial pressures. Following the GFMD Chair's and African Union recognition of "Skilling Migrants" as a priority theme, UN MGCY led an open Africa regional consultation on youth perspectives and priorities on this topic, for which we consulted 25 locally-based youth-led and youth-focused organizations with national or international focus, acting in 21 countries, and representing over 700 young leaders in migration issues. The results of these consultations are summarized in this policy brief.

### Key Youth-led and Youth Focused Projects

African youth are playing a critical role in capacity-building and "skilling migrants", including:

- Advocate to optimize skills recognition and facilitate the validation of educational titles and certifications;
- Provide technical and vocational education and training in key areas, providing relevant certification, to help fill skills gaps and improve employability prospects of migrants, refugees, and IDPs, for instance training young refugee and migrants in camps on computer literacy and coding;
- Creation of partnerships for job intermediation, including with the private sector, with priority often given to vulnerable groups including young women and considering other intersectional factors;
- Connect migrants with cooperatives and financial institutions to secure soft loans, and micro-credit for their business and create the environment for them to operate within the SMEs ecosystem;
- Research labour market needs to identify opportunities for migrants to find employment and contribute to the host society; for instance, encourage them to venture into agriculture and guide them to identify opportunities and/or land, seedlings and market for products.

### Policy Recommendation for Government and other actors

Youth in Africa calls on stakeholders and relevant state institutions to leverage migrants' potential contribution to society's economy by **investing and supporting skills building and vocational training of migrants**, including language, based on labour market needs. Moreover, it is crucial that young people and children can **join local education institutions and continue their schooling with minimal disruption**. Youth organizations stand ready to share lessons learnt, data on skills gaps, and offer to partner to scale up existing training programs.

In regards to recognition of already existing skills, it is **crucial to facilitate and remove barriers to the recognition of migrants' qualifications**. This is crucial to leverage the skills and knowledge of migrants and that their qualifications can be used to contribute to society's well being. Youth migrants have great potential and knowledge and need this to be recognized in order to fully contribute to society.

It is also important to **promote micro-credit for entrepreneurs and productive employment creation**, as well as financial support, such as migrant welfare funds that support young migrant workers and their families, including victims of trafficking and other vulnerable groups. Youth organizations can partner to leverage young migrants' creativity and innovation potential and help indicate the support needed from other institutions.

<sup>2</sup> AFRICA'S YOUTH: JOBS OR MIGRATION? Demography, economic prospects and mobility, 2019 Forum Report, Mo Ibrahim Foundation

## Addressing Gaps in Migrant Protection: *Policy Brief on Youth Perspectives in Africa*

Migrants, especially migrant women and children, are amongst the most vulnerable groups in Africa, and sometimes struggle to receive the same amount of social protection as other groups, thus suffering heavy consequences such as on their health, education, and safety. Following the GFMD Chair's and African Union recognition of "*Gaps in Migrant Protection*" as a priority theme, UN MGCY led an open Africa regional consultation on youth perspectives and priorities on this topic, for which we consulted 25 youth-led and youth-focused organizations based in 21 countries, and representing over 700 young leaders in migration issues. The results of these consultations are summarized in this policy brief.

### Key Youth-led and Youth Focused Projects

Youth in Africa are playing a key role in addressing the gaps in migrant protection at all levels, including through initiatives on the following issues:

- Leading advocacy to include migrants, refugees, IDPs, and returnees in social protection programmes available to all citizens, such as access to education and health insurance and services, and paying attention to specific vulnerability related to gender, age, sexuality and status;
- Combating xenophobia and promoting integration through leading community dialogues in host communities and schools aimed at deconstructing harmful stereotypes about migrants and refugees;
- Providing research and data to understand the risks across migration transit routes, from their homes before starting their journey, throughout travel, and at arrival, making it thus easier for specialized agencies and organizations to target their protection measures;
- Fighting human trafficking and its associated sexual and labour exploitation risks, and promote migrants' safety in collaborations with the police and other relevant government agencies;
- Raising awareness and sharing information to sensitize potential young migrants about the risks they face and precautionary measures that can be taken.

### Policy recommendations for governments and other actors

Many governments already have policies in place to ensure migrants can be included in local institutions, including health and education. However, often the relevant information does not reach the target populations and institutions, hindering the local implementations of these policies. **Relevant entities should invest more in outreach and sharing of information, and invest in capacity building of institutions' local branches.** Youth organizations stand ready to partner to support this: we can offer constructive feedback to improve local institutions capacity, and use our links to target populations to ensure the information can reach them.

43 per cent of countries and territories in Africa do not have age disaggregated data on migrants.<sup>3</sup> Young migrants - children, girls, and boys - have specific vulnerabilities - which need to be understood to protect them effectively. Youth calls on governments and relevant research entities to **collect disaggregated data on migrants (by sex, age, income, etc), and use it as a basis for evidence-based policies.** We stand ready to share our own research and help identify populations to include in relevant surveys.

In order to effectively protect migrants and to minimize violence, social integration is crucial. Xenophobia and intolerance pose a significant threat to this, and are currently a widespread reality in many countries in Africa. Youth **calls on governments and all stakeholders to give high priority to changing narratives**, by investing in and implementing **evidence-based campaigns and promoting dialogue.** Again, youth are already working on this and are open to share lessons learnt and work to scale existing projects.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.iom.int/news/massive-data-gaps-leave-refugee-migrant-and-displaced-children-danger-and-without-access-basic>