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# Talent on the Move

Listening to children and young people on the move  
to unlock their potential



Kingdom of the Netherlands



Major Group for  
**Children and Youth**  
the space for children and youth in the United Nations

# Acknowledgements

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# Foreword

## Talent on the Move: Engage, empower, equip!

When you think of a place that inspires innovation, you may not think of an informal urban settlement or sprawling refugee camp.

When you think of the next great tech developers or social entrepreneurs, you probably won't think of a young refugee or undocumented migrant.

When we think about the future of countries affected by conflict or displacement, we see only problems, and rarely possibilities. But at UNICEF, we want the world to see beyond these obstacles to what is, in fact, a wealth of untapped talent and potential in some of the most unexpected places on earth.

Powered by the voices of 8,764 young people around the world, this report highlights the potential of young migrants, internally displaced or refugees as changemakers, leaders and innovators. Young people on the move who are featured in this report — like Nujeen, Faridah and Alejandro — are transforming their communities and economies.

Told through the eyes and voices of young people, this report offers story after story about hidden talents, aspirations and resilience. Each young leader and changemaker profiled inspires us to shape a new narrative around children on the move — not as victims or burdens, but as assets to any society. As we listen to them — and learn from them — our job is to find new ways to support their dreams and ambitions, and unlock new opportunities for them to learn, earn and thrive.

Let's match their incredible resilience and hope with our own best efforts to support them and ignite the full potential of every child and young person, no matter who they are or where they come from.

**Henrietta H. Fore**  
UNICEF Executive Director



## Youth as Solution Providers and Innovators

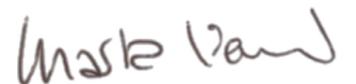
Combating xenophobia in Colombia, providing peer support and training to fellow migrants in Kenya or using art to foster integration and healing in the US — in every country and every city young people on the move are transforming the communities they live in.

They are spearheading innovative solutions and technologies and building bridges between host communities and people on the move. They are speaking out and raising issues that are bigger than themselves, such as unequal access to education, jobs, and services, official qualifications going unrecognized or discrimination because of a person's migratory status.

Obstacles that, if not removed, lead to wasted talents and injustice — leaving behind a generation unable to fulfil its potential. Young people have strong voices, clear priorities, and practical solutions, and we are calling loudly for meaningful partnerships and support.

We joined forces with UNICEF to co-design the poll questions, reach and engage young people in our own networks and co-create this report, because we want the voices of young people — their stories and solutions — to come to life. To be heard and listened to. Not by passively asking for help, but by offering our support and genuine partnership. This report is an invitation to follow the lead of young people to come together for change.

**Marta Verani**  
Global Focal Point  
Migration Youth and Children Platform —  
Major Group for Children and Youth



## Let's keep Youth at Heart

*"We need to get into the habit of structurally listening to what youth have to say."* – Sigrid Kaag, Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of the Netherlands

The very idea that young people should be able to have a say on matters that affect them is exactly what UNICEF has done with the U Report poll. This report is placing the voices of young people first and brings to light their experience in the transition from 'learning-to-earning'. This has been conducted under the Prospects partnership<sup>1</sup> bringing together the Government of the Netherlands, IFC, ILO, UNHCR, UNICEF, and the World Bank to provide a unique combination of humanitarian assistance, longer-term development support, and private sector solutions to help forcibly displaced persons rebuild their lives, with a particular focus on youth and women.

**The findings in this report help Prospects partners understand barriers and opportunities youth face on their 'learning-to-earning' pathways and inform Prospects programming.**

Meaningful youth participation is a human right, which also improves development interventions and makes them more sustainable. We do not want to lose a generation but ensure that youth from both forcibly displaced and host communities have (future) prospects, can build a life for themselves, and contribute to the societies in which they live. Let me express my appreciation to UNICEF and the Prospects partners for this flagship report. Let me also thank the youth that have shared their ideas, views, needs, concerns and insights through the poll. The results from this report show that there is enormous merit in meaningful engagement with young people. Let's keep learning from each other and let's keep youth at heart.

### Tijmen Rooseboom

*Ambassador for Youth, Education and Work,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands*



# Introduction

While COVID-19 has brought the world to a standstill, millions of children and young people continue to be 'on the move' – many driven by hopes for a meaningful life and aspirations to learn and earn.

There are an estimated 281 million international migrants.<sup>2</sup> One in five is a young person<sup>3</sup> and 36 million are children.<sup>4</sup> Worldwide, more than 4 out of 10 forcibly displaced persons are younger than 18, with 33 million children living in forced displacement at the end of 2019 – either as internally displaced persons within their country or abroad as refugees or asylum seekers.<sup>5</sup> Each day of 2020, almost 26,900 children were displaced by climate-induced disasters alone.<sup>6</sup> While many are uprooted from their homes due to conflict, violence, political persecution or disaster, for others, the decision to move may be influenced by personal, family, cultural or economic factors - including gendered roles and responsibilities or family crises, like the sudden death of a parent or breadwinner.

**While we know surprisingly little about how young people come to decisions, one thing is certain: decisions to leave home are never taken in isolation.**

They usually happen in a context of constrained life choices faced by young people caught between their aspirations and hopes, a duty of care to their families and communities, and pressures to leave home.

The journey of a young person is rarely linear and will often take place in stages. It may be a move from the village to the capital city; the young person may be internally displaced before becoming a refugee; he or she may move safely and regularly, or may be forced to take great risks, falling prey to smugglers or becoming a victim of trafficking. For some, the journey will continue abroad; for others it will involve a return to their region of birth.

Regardless of their reason for moving, their journeys from learning to earning are often disrupted, leaving young people without recognized credentials, social networks, mentors, or peer support, as they move and settle in unfamiliar places. Along with their right to education remaining unfulfilled, their CVs remain blank, and their dreams and career ambitions are seldom realized.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (UNDESA), 2020, International Migration 2020 Highlights, executive summary, p.1, available at [https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/undesa\\_pd\\_2020\\_international\\_migration\\_highlights.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/undesa_pd_2020_international_migration_highlights.pdf); data from 2020 includes refugees and asylum seekers.

<sup>3</sup> UNDESA, Population Division, 2020, International Migrant Stock 2020.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) data website, April 2021, Child Migration, available at <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-migration-and-displacement/migration/>; Data from 2020 - young person is under 25 and child is under 18.

<sup>5</sup> UNICEF data website, April 2021, Child Displacement, available at <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-migration-and-displacement/migration/>

<sup>6</sup> UNICEF UK, 2021, Futures at Risk – Protecting the rights of children on the move in a changing climate, p.5 available at <https://www.unicef.org.uk/futures-at-risk-climate-report/>

<sup>1</sup> The partnership is active in eight countries in the Middle East and the Horn of Africa (Egypt, Ethiopia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Sudan and Uganda).

## BOX 1

## Definitions

**Children on the move:** International or internal child migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, as well as internally displaced children or returnees.<sup>7</sup>

**Young people and 'youth':** While there is no single definition of "youth" or "young people", this report focuses on young people, aged 14 to 24, and uses the terms 'young people' and 'youth' interchangeably.

**Host population 'youth':** In this report, host population youth is used to describe all young people, aged 14 to 24, who have not left their homes and are neither migrants nor displaced.

**Migrant:** A person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a home country regardless of whether the move is voluntary or involuntary regardless of their legal status or length of stay.<sup>8</sup>

**Refugee:** A person who lives outside his or her country of nationality and is unable to return because of persecution or fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group.<sup>9</sup>

**Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs):** Individuals or groups of people who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of, or in order to avoid the effects of, armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border.<sup>10</sup>

Yet young migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) across continents represent a unique, untapped pool of talent, ideas, and entrepreneurship. Often resilient, highly motivated and with experience overcoming adversity, they have the potential to help solve some of our greatest challenges.

While COVID-19 has spurred a myriad of on and off-line 'skilling and employability' initiatives for young people, efforts to support youth on the move – especially the most vulnerable – to transition into the world of work, often fail to identify their hidden talents or to connect them with the opportunities available to them.

**Powered by the voices of youth, this report harnessed the technology of U-Report to ask 8,764 young people, aged between 14 and 24, if they felt heard and invited them to share their aspirations to learn and earn.**

According to this poll, **nearly 40 per cent of young people on the move identify education and training as their biggest priorities, and 30 per cent prioritized looking for a job. When asked what was holding them back from achieving their goals, 70 per cent said that limited financial resources prevented them from learning, and 38 per cent identified a lack of available jobs as their biggest barrier to earning an income.**

What they told us confirmed the simple truth that for many, while talent is universal, opportunity is not. The right of every child and adolescent to develop their talents to their fullest potential is often a distant dream as quality skills-building and employment opportunities are hard to come by.

*"I want to learn everything",*  
said an 18-year-old woman from Egypt.

*"I would like to learn how to become a great person and how to succeed in life",*  
said a 17-year-old boy from Kenya.

While the story we hear is often one of difference, discrimination, and exclusion, we learned that young people – whether they are migrants, forcibly displaced, or have never left their homes – share the same dreams and aspirations for their futures. They are united in their desire to launch their careers, earn a living and live a meaningful life. We heard stories of ambition, resilience, and empowerment. Of having faced the odds and succeeded.

*'Everyone asks you about the past, but no one asks you about the future. But I reimagine my future every day',* Kotada Yonus, former Syrian refugee and youth entrepreneur.<sup>11</sup>

This report provides an opportunity to listen – and then to act with and for young people on the move. This means working together to cocreate personalized and flexible pathways to help young people learn, gain necessary skills and build resilience to future shocks. It means leveraging and tailoring digital innovations and private sector partnerships to overcome barriers. It means identifying and fostering the talent of high-potential youth.

As the examples in this report highlight, young people on the move are a force for success. But only by creating incentives and opportunities for them to fulfil their aspirations can we turn their passions, energy and hopes into something productive and empowering.



U-Report, Guatemala

7 UNICEF, 2016, Uprooted – the growing crisis for refugee and migrant children, p. 14, available at <https://data.unicef.org/resources/uprooted-growing-crisis-refugee-migrant-children/>

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

11 Youth At Heart Virtual Forum - livestreamed on YouTube [Youth@Heart LIVE - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

## PORTRAIT #1: Alankrita Dayal



Alankrita Dayal is a young migrant who, at age 17, founded an organization called Program yoUr Future (PUF) to help students – particularly young women and youth from immigrant and refugee backgrounds in the US – acquire the skills needed to lead successful careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Alankrita struggled as one of the few migrant girls in her community. It was difficult to find mentors or to feel welcomed. This fuelled her passion to advocate for equity and inclusion and sustainable prosperity for all, especially the most marginalized.

Alankrita was accepted to the University of California-Berkeley, where she studied a double major in Computer Science and Cognitive Science, with minors in Public Policy and South Asian Studies, and a certificate in Entrepreneurship and Technology.

Now through her entrepreneurial reform efforts at Program yoUr Future, she is actively inspiring others with the necessary tools, connections, and resources to be able to do the same.

Alankrita has supported over 20,000 youth by providing access to data-driven interventions that help build a more inclusive culture that appreciates and welcomes the diversity that migrant and displaced people bring to a community and helps overcome skill and social barriers.

## The poll: How the information was gathered

As part of an effort to listen to the voices of young people on the move, UNICEF worked with U-Report,<sup>12</sup> a messaging programme for adolescent, youth and community participation that amplifies the voices of 15 million U-Reporters in 81 countries.

The poll questions were co-created in partnership with young people and the Migration Youth and Children Platform of the Major Group for Children and Youth. Partners involved in the Prospects partnership funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs joined to support the poll's outreach and dissemination; these included the International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation.

Launched in May 2021, the poll ran over four weeks on five independent U-Report platforms: at global level; regionally through the interagency Uniendo Voces platform targeting Venezuelan migrants and refugees living in Ecuador, Brazil and Bolivia; and through national U-Report programmes in Iraq, Kenya, Lebanon and Uganda.

The questions focused on aspirations and barriers to learning and earning. Most questions were multiple-choice, with only some requiring open-ended responses.

**The poll reached 26,375 people and 16,326 provided a valid response, including 8,764 young people between 14 and 24 years of age. Among them, 3,157 respondents, aged 14-24, self-identified as migrants, refugees or IDPs.**

### BOX 2

#### U-Report

U-Report is a real-time social messaging tool that allows anyone from anywhere in the world to speak out on the issues they care about. It was developed by UNICEF and partners to provide a platform for capturing a range of voices on the critical development issues of our time.

U-Report has members called U-Reporters. U-Reporters can join the platform by SMS or social media channels such as WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger, allowing them to respond to polls, report concerns, support child rights and work as positive agents of change. Currently more than 6 million U-reporters are present in over 50 countries.

To sign-up, U-Reporters must register their age, gender and where they live. Once signed up, U-Report sends SMS messages and alerts about polls or updates from ongoing campaigns. Their responses are analysed in real-time, providing an immediate snapshot of the situation.

<sup>12</sup> U-Report website, available at <https://ureport.in/>

**BOX 3**

**Poll Questions**

The U-Report poll asked one question on the migratory status followed by four multiple choice questions and one open-ended question:

1. My current status is?
2. What is your top priority now?
  - a. If your top priority is education, what are the main obstacles to access learning?
  - b. If your top priority is finding a job, what do you most need to access income sources?
3. If your top priority is to access learning, what would you like to learn? (open ended)
4. If your top priority is accessing employment, what are the main obstacles to accessing job opportunities? (open endend)
5. Do you feel you can contribute your opinions, skills and talents in your community?
6. How would you like to share your voice in your community?

The respondents are not necessarily a representative sample of migrant and displaced youth based on their demographics, their country of origin or current geographic location. In addition, the poll respondents are a select group because they – unlike many others – have access to the internet or mobile phones, and have at least basic digital skills. It is also important to note that participants in the poll signed themselves up for U-Report and were responsible for providing accurate information about their age, sex and the country they were in.

While this report captures the voices of a subset of youth on the move, it is important to note the poll's limitations in reaching some of the most vulnerable. Complementary research approaches to target those without connectivity, and efforts to bridge the digital divide, are needed if we want to attain a more comprehensive picture of the aspirations and challenges for youth on the move.



U-Report, Iraq

# Profile of children and young people

The results presented in this report represent the voices of 8,764 young people aged 14-24, of whom 3,157 self-identified as a migrant, refugee or IDP.

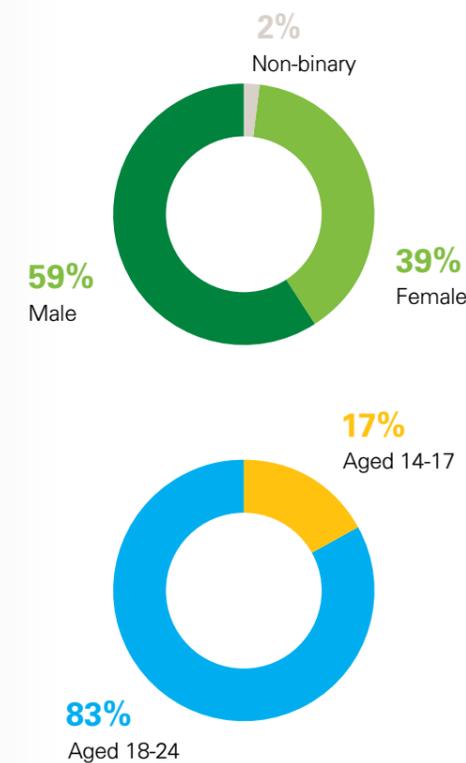
Though the poll collected information from respondents younger than 14 and older than 24, the report focuses on those aged 14–24, in line with UNICEF's mandate.

About 59 per cent self-identified as male, 39 per cent as female, and 2 per cent as non-binary. Less than one in five respondents were younger than 18 and 83 per cent said they were aged 18–24. Of the 3,157 youth on the move, 68 per cent were forced to leave their homes, while 32 per cent left by choice.

Nearly 95 per cent of the respondents participated from countries in the Middle East and North Africa (52%) and from Sub-Saharan Africa (43%) -with far fewer participants responding from Latin America and the Caribbean or other parts of the world.

**Age and Sex**

Fig 1. Percentages of the 3,157 young people on the move (aged 14-24) by gender and age.



The response rates were particularly high in Iraq and Uganda due to strong national U-Report platforms and partnerships that could be leveraged to reach young people.

In Uganda, partners working in refugee-hosting districts promoted the poll amongst their youth networks, inviting interested participants to send the trigger word, 'learning', to join the poll and have their voices heard. In Iraq, the poll was shared with young people in IDP camps through established partnership networks. As noted earlier, partners of the Prospects partnership – including ILO, UNHCR, the World Bank, IFC and the Netherlands – also joined the effort to promote participation of young people, particularly those living in areas hosting displaced populations.

## PORTRAIT #2:

# Maher Azdo Zalvo



*Maher Azdo Zalvo is a 25-year-old internally displaced person in Iraq.*

Maher used to live in Tal Uzair in Sinjar district before being forced to leave his hometown. He is now internally displaced in the Kurdistan region of Iraq.

For two years Maher stayed with his family in Mamlyan camp, unable to continue his education. In 2017, the family moved to Mam Rashan camp, where Maher participated in activities organized by Voices of People and Families (VOP-FAM), a UNICEF-supported adolescent programme providing community leadership and English language courses, computer and e-journalism trainings as well as sports activities.

Last year, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Maher started volunteering with VOP-FAM to help raise awareness among the IDP community on how to prevent transmission of the virus and supported a skills building programme for adolescents to serve the community through social and civic

engagement activities. Today Maher works with CARE International.

*“The courses and activities offered by VOP have prepared me for this job and helped me transition from learning to earning”,* Maher told one of the VOP-FAM’s Community Mobilizers.

He is also an active U-Reporter and helped to reach young IDPs in his community, encouraging them to share their views in the poll informing this report.

## PORTRAIT #3:

# Nimo Mohammad



*Nimo Mohammed is a 25-year-old refugee, living in Nakivale Refugee Settlement, Uganda.*

When Nimo's father was killed in the war in Somalia, her family fled to Kenya. In 2016, because of security risks and driven by hopes for a better future, Nimo and her family fled to south-west Uganda.

Nimo is an active U-Reporter and has participated in youth-led research activities with U-Report and UNICEF.

She is currently the woman representative for Base Camp One in Nakivale and a former vice chairperson for the Somali community in Base Camp Three.

In these roles she focuses on promoting women’s rights, preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in her community and fighting to support gender equality.

Nimo works with fellow leaders to promote peace amongst refugee and host communities. As a leader, Nimo has organized meetings with the two communities and facilitates dialogue about living and working together.

## PORTRAIT #4: Faridah Luanda



Faridah Luanda is a 23-year-old refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo, now living in Sweden.

*“My life experience as a child mother, SGBV survivor and a victim of forced marriage has inspired me to want to make a difference and to create change in my community, my life, and my family by transforming our vulnerabilities into strengths.”*

*“Engagement of refugee girls and women in decision-making is the key to success in every community at all levels.”*

Faridah is a fierce advocate, a mother, a friend, founder of DaVision Group and co-creator of One Touch (solar-powered) Music Studio, which specializes in producing songs with a social message. DaVision Group works to transform the lives of young refugees through music, dance, drama, education and livelihood activities.

Faridah also established a training centre for child mothers and school dropouts where young

women and girls can learn skills, such as tailoring, hairdressing, counselling, public speaking, reading and writing. The training centre supports vulnerable girls and young women to gain independence and confidence and to bring change to their communities.

Faridah has been working tirelessly to help her community respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, producing and distributing hundreds of homemade handwashing stations to enable households with limited access to running water to wash their hands regularly.

## PART I : Talent is universal, but opportunities are not

Often resilient, highly motivated and brimming with ideas and aspirations, young migrants and displaced youth represent a valuable pool of talent and innovation. The experience of moving equips many with the ability to adapt quickly to new environments.<sup>13</sup> They often bring knowledge, language skills and new business connections to their host communities. McKinsey calculated that migrants made up just 3.4 per cent of the world’s population in 2015, but **contributed nearly 10 per cent of global gross domestic product (GDP) - equal to \$6.7 trillion**.<sup>14</sup> Our own lives are touched every day by inventions and products developed by migrants or refugees. In 2017, half of all Fortune 500 companies were founded by American immigrants (92) or children of immigrants (124).<sup>15</sup>

*“We are not here just to take something from the place where we live, but to give something to society, we are young people, strong, with good ideas.”*  
Daouda, UPSHIFT participant from Ivory Coast.<sup>16</sup>

Too many children and youth on the move grow up deprived of an education, learning opportunities and the long-term benefits they afford. Refugees have some of the lowest education rates in the world when compared to low and middle income countries, with less than a third enrolled in secondary school and only 3 per cent in higher education.<sup>17</sup>

Girls are impacted the hardest, with only 27 per cent enrolled in secondary school, compared to 36 per cent of refugee boys. The learning and development loss is immense. In 2019, it was estimated that refugee women could contribute up to \$1.4 trillion to global GDP annually if given the opportunity in each of the top 30 refugee-hosting countries.<sup>18</sup> In Jordan, for example, the World Bank estimated that refugee women could boost Jordan’s GDP by approximately \$145 million annually if employment and earning gaps between refugee and Jordanian women were eliminated.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>13</sup> University of Birmingham, 2021, International interventions and migration choices – the final report of the Migchoice project, p.13, available at <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/government/departments/international-development/research/projects/2019/migchoice/index.aspx>

<sup>14</sup> McKinsey Global Institute, 2016, ‘People on the Move: Global migration’s impact and opportunity’, p.1, available at <https://www.mckinsey.com/global-themes/employment-and-growth/global-migrations-impact-and-opportunity>

<sup>15</sup> Brookings, Almost half of Fortune 500 Companies were Founded by American Immigrants or their Children, December 4, 2017, available at <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2017/12/04/almost-half-of-fortune-500-companies-were-founded-by-american-immigrants-or-their-children/>

<sup>16</sup> UNICEF, July 2019, How young people in Sicily are changing the migration narrative, available at <https://www.unicef.org/eca/stories/how-young-people-sicily-are-changing-migration-narrative>

<sup>17</sup> Save the Children, 2021, Progress under threat, p.3 (Fig 1), data from 2019, available at [https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/18632/pdf/progress\\_under\\_threat.pdf](https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/18632/pdf/progress_under_threat.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> RescueWorks, 2019, Unlocking Refugee Women’s Potential, Executive Summary, pp. 3-4, available at <https://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/document/3987/reportrescueworksunlockingrefugeewomenspotential.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> International Finance Corporation (IFC), 2021, Barriers and Opportunities for Refugee Women Engaging in the Digital Economy in Jordan and Lebanon, p.1, available at: link; citing World Bank, Mashreq Gender Facility, available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/mashreq-gender-facility>

Refugees, however, represent just a portion of children and youth on the move. Many young migrants and asylum seekers, especially those who are undocumented, are excluded from learning and earning opportunities due to their citizenship, legal or migration status. Discrimination, digital exclusion and lack of connectivity often drive an even greater wedge between youth on the move and their host population peers – especially in a post-COVID-19 world. For example, in Somalia, Ethiopia and Sudan only one in four migrant and displaced children and youth have access to the internet.<sup>20</sup>

Even those lucky enough to attend school often struggle to transition into the world of work. A lack of relevant, flexible and accredited learning-to-earning pathways leaves many young people with no option to acquire the foundational, transferable, digital, job-specific, and entrepreneurial skills needed to thrive in the world of work.

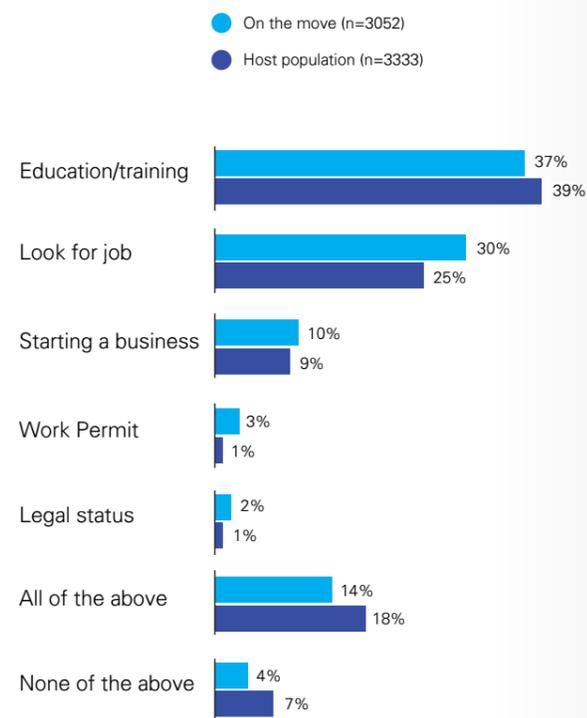
### What I really want

To hear about their experiences directly, U-Report asked young people about their aspirations and priorities for the future.

Thirty-seven per cent of youth on the move considered education and training to be their greatest priority and 30 per cent placed greatest importance on looking for a job. Children on the move (aged 14–17) were more likely to prioritize education and training over jobs than young adults (aged 18–24) and finding a job was more frequently mentioned with increasing age. Girls and young women selected education slightly more frequently as a top priority than boys and young men.

Priorities were similar for all young people who responded, whether on the move or not, illustrating a common desire to pursue opportunities to learn and earn.

Fig 2. What is your top priority now? Per centage of respondents aged 14-24 by current top priority.



### What I would like to learn

This question was open ended, and answers were received in multiple languages. A simple keyword search was applied to the translated answers to collate and analyse the results.

When asked what they would like to learn, the answers most often related to professional skills, such as law, administration, business or education. There was a strong preference for courses with a clear career pathway to transition from learning into the workforce.

*“I want to become a lecturer so that I can help the youth”*, said a 22-year-old woman in Nigeria.

*“I would like to learn leadership”*, said a 24-year-old man from Uganda.

*“I would like to learn about business and investment”*, said a 19-year-old man from Lebanon.

Another highly desired skill was languages (e.g. English, Arabic, French) and obtaining relevant certificates (e.g. IELTS). Language skills are critical to support integration and access information on available services and opportunities. Women and girls on the move mentioned their aspirations to learn a language at more than twice the rate of boys and men.

Tech skills were the third most common theme. Skills such as coding, engineering, and digital tools were highly sought after among respondents – more so by boys and young men. Tech skills were mentioned by 194 female respondents and 313 male respondents. The difference may relate to the digital divide, with girls and women often at a disadvantage when it comes to digital adoption due to less access to and use of digital technology than boys.<sup>21</sup>

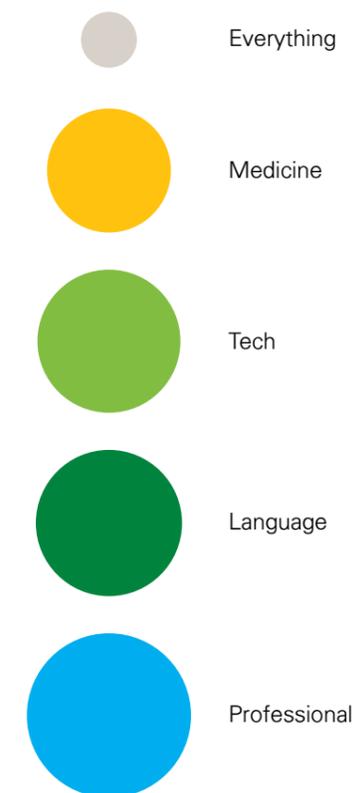
*“I would like to learn basic computer skills, in addition to learning English”*, said a 20-year-old man from Egypt.

*“I want to learn information technology”*, said a 24-year-old woman from Kenya.

Medicine and other health-related themes such as nursing, dentistry and psychology were also frequently mentioned.

*“I want to be a nurse or doctor”*, said a 21-year-old woman in Kenya.

Fig 3. If your top priority is access to learning, what would you like to learn? The following are the most frequent answers among young respondents on the move (14-24 years) grouped in themes (relative frequencies).



20 UNICEF, 2020, Innocenti Blog, Children on the Move in East Africa – Research insights to mitigate COVID-19, available at <https://www.unicef.org/eap/innovation-and-technology-gender-equality>

21 UNICEF East Asia and Pacific, Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality: Gender tech toolkit: Building digital solutions for, with, and by girls, available at <https://www.unicef.org/eap/innovation-and-technology-gender-equality>

## Breaking glass barriers

Young migrant and displaced people experience multiple barriers to learning, with financial constraints and lack of information identified as their most pressing challenges. For many, moving can also mean losing livelihoods and income, with families struggling to cover the cost of school fees and classroom supplies. **Seventy per cent of youth on the move considered money to be their biggest obstacle to learning.** Children and youth on the move may live in camps or informal settlements, they might be in immigration detention, unaccompanied or separated from their families, or squatting in urban slums. They are often hardest to reach with accurate information in a language they understand.<sup>22</sup>

Information may be unavailable, or it may be inaccessible due to practical or cultural barriers. **Thirty-two per cent of migrant and displaced youth polled considered lack of information about available learning opportunities and resources as a key barrier to education.** Furthermore, difficulties in getting previous studies recognized was a key issue for 23 per cent of young people on the move who were trying to access additional learning and training.

COVID-19 has compounded many existing barriers, with millions forced out of school or training and at risk of never returning. **Eighteen per cent of youth on the move pointed to the role the pandemic has played in limiting their access to learning opportunities.** But COVID-19 has also accelerated the shift to greater use of digital technologies in youth education programmes, with education systems moving to distance learning and blended learning models. Multiple organizations have pivoted to scale-up online skilling opportunities,

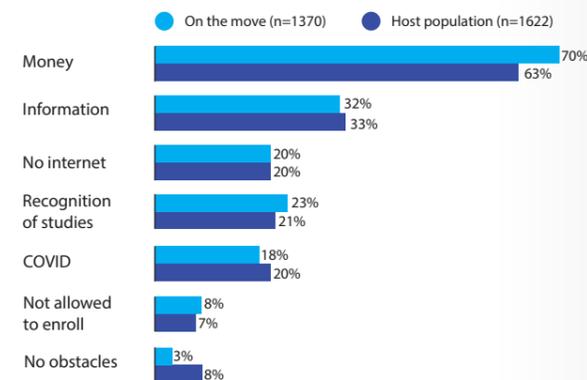
introducing gamified applications, and enhancing the focus on digital entrepreneurship. While the poll targeted those with access to connectivity or at least a mobile phone, **one in five youth on the move indicated that better access to internet would improve their access to education and training opportunities.**

### Barriers and obstacles to access learning opportunities

Seventy per cent of youth on the move considered lack of money a significant barrier – and this was echoed by 63 per cent of host population youth. **Only 3 per cent of migrant and displaced youth felt they faced no obstacles accessing learning opportunities.** Unlike the other questions in the poll, this one allowed for multiple answers.

These findings challenge us to better understand the barriers and obstacles that prevent youth on the move from accessing learning opportunities. The findings embolden us to reimagine incentives that could be offered to young people on the move to help them overcome barriers and offset the economic and social costs associated with continued learning.

Fig 4. If learning is your top priority, what is the main obstacle to access learning? Percentages shown are of those respondents aged 14–24 who had selected 'access to learning' as a priority. (multiple answers possible).



## PORTRAIT #5: Nujeen Mustafa



Nujeen Mustafa is a 22-year-old Syrian refugee living in Germany.

*"Make information accessible for us – it's our right! Make schools accessible to people with disabilities... I am a girl, I am a refugee, I am Kurdish which is a minority, and I have a disability – I have so many labels – but I don't like to be seen as a victim! No one has the right to take away my chance as a fighter!"*

Nujeen was just sixteen, when she made the 3,500-mile journey from Syria to Germany in a steel wheelchair. Nujeen was born with cerebral palsy and spent most of her life confined to her apartment in Aleppo, Syria, where she taught herself English by watching shows on TV.

As war broke out, Nujeen and her family were forced to flee, first to her native Kobane, then Turkey. Nujeen's family did not have enough money for them all to make it to safety in Germany, where her brother lives, so her parents stayed in Turkey

while Nujeen set out with her sister across the Mediterranean, braving inconceivable odds for the chance to have a normal life and an education. Since moving to Germany, Nujeen has been attending vocational college and aspires to go to university to study psychology. She is also a powerful advocate for refugee youth, undertaking media interviews and speaking at several high-profile conferences.<sup>23</sup>

22 UNICEF, 2021, Migrant and Displaced Children website, available at: <https://www.unicef.org/migrant-refugee-internally-displaced-children>

23 USA for UNHCR website, available at <https://www.unhcr.org/nujeen-mustafa.html>

## Making a living

Many migrant and displaced youth experience a mismatch between skills development and opportunities for work. Access to labour markets are limited by the absence of relevant, flexible, accredited, and recognized learning-to-earning opportunities, technical and vocational education and training (TVET), and informal education certification. Further, migration status (or lack of 'legal status') and outright discrimination and exclusion from national labour markets hold back many seeking to enter the workforce.<sup>24 25</sup>

**Thirty-eight per cent of youth on the move identified the lack of available jobs as their biggest challenge to earn an income.** In fact, this was the greatest concern for all youth respondents, with 43 per cent of host population youth also pointing to lack of jobs as their biggest barrier. **Youth respondents also indicated lack of support to find a job and limited access to information as significant obstacles.** Migrant and displaced children (aged 14–17) placed higher importance on the internet as a tool for generating income compared with young adults (aged 18–24).

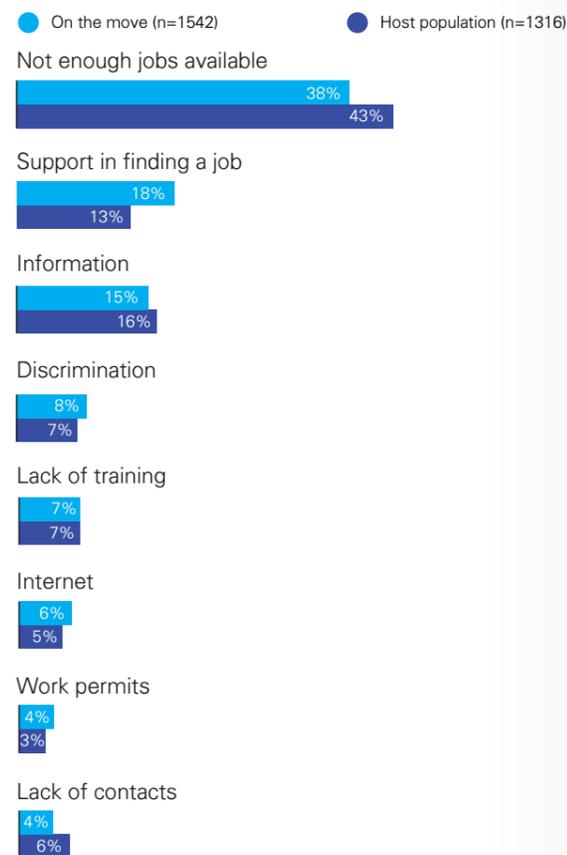
Addressing this challenge goes beyond simply finding a decent job to earn an income – creating purpose and a meaningful life is also key.

Yoma, a digital marketplace for youth across the world is designed to support young people by actively engaging them in social impact tasks and offering personalized learning and earning opportunities. Continued learning and self-development is incentivized through a reward system offering digital tokens.

One of Yoma's recent initiatives – the Digital Livelihoods Challenge – seeks to equip young people with the digital tools and entrepreneurial competencies to monetize their unique passions. Also, key to addressing the mismatch between jobs and aspirations is providing youth with information about the realities of the labour market and availability of jobs to allow them to make more informed decisions as they transition

### What I need most to make a living (find income sources)

Fig 5. What do you need most to access income? Per centage of respondents aged 14–24 who said their priority is finding a source of income according to what is most needed to achieve this goal.



24 International Labour Organization (ILO), 2020, Protecting the rights at work of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons during the COVID-19 pandemic Recommendations for Policy-makers and Constituents, p.1, available at [https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/labour-migration/publications/WCMS\\_748485/lang-en/index.html](https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/labour-migration/publications/WCMS_748485/lang-en/index.html); ILO, 2020, Protecting migrant workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, available at [https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/labour-migration/publications/WCMS\\_743268/lang-en/index.html](https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/labour-migration/publications/WCMS_743268/lang-en/index.html)

25 Legal status, discrimination and exclusion from national labour markets was cited as a major concern by the Major Group for Children and Youth reference group who reviewed and helped develop the report.

## The main obstacle to employment opportunities/earning an income

Youth were asked an open question about their greatest barriers to work, and these are some of their voices:

*“The current economic situation and even though I am skilled technician, I do not have professional certificates”,* said a 24-year-old man from Jordan.

*“There are not enough jobs available...there are thousands of youth who are highly competitive and skilled but unfortunately cannot find employment”,* said an 18-year-old man from Kenya.

*“Racism. Not working according to the law”,* said a 21-year-old woman in Ethiopia.

*“Not having good connections and good curriculum”,* said a 21-year-old woman from Italy.

*“In Kakuma refugee camp where I live there are not enough opportunities for jobs. I have no permits or documents”,* said a 21-year-old man in Kenya.

*“Limited access to available internet connections”,* said a 23-year-old man from Iraq.

*“I would like to learn how to manage projects with youth”,* said a 17-year-old woman from Bolivia.

Fig 6. If your top priority is to find an income, what is the main obstacle to accessing employment opportunities? The following are the most frequent answers among young respondents on the move (aged 14–24) grouped in themes (relative frequencies).



## PORTRAIT #6: Regeza Kamangu



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Regeza Kamangu is a 30-year-old refugee graduate of the UNICEF-supported African Drone Academy.

*“Grab the opportunity when it comes. I was given the opportunity once, and just grabbed it. I wanted to help other refugees. With those skills (drone technologies) I could do it.”*

Regeza is Congolese and he spent four years in Dzaleka refugee camp in Malawi. He is studying online for a BA in management from Southern New Hampshire University in the USA. He co-founded Nyota, an organization that offers guidance on proposal writing and fundraising to community-based organizations in the Dzaleka camp in Malawi.

Regeza worked as a teaching assistant in the Regis Diploma programme through Jesuit Worldwide Learning, and he tutored refugees worldwide. He also worked as the Global Education Movement Employment Editor.

Regeza obtained drone pilot certificates from Virginia Tech, with UNICEF support and has been working as a pilot for Swoop Aero to supply essential goods, vaccines and collect blood samples to and from hard-to-reach areas in Malawi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DCR) and Mozambique.

## Youth on the move as innovators

All around the world, youth are leaders of change, innovators and experts in their fields. The 2020 Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) Youth Leadership and Innovation Award shone a spotlight on youth-led initiatives that empower and improve the lives of young migrant and displaced people.<sup>26</sup>

Winners were supported in their ongoing journey through a two-month mentorship programme, seed funding and access to networks. The nine finalists included powerful examples of youth-led innovations and solutions that address real-life challenges from combating xenophobia facing Venezuelan migrants in Colombia to using food in Italy or poetry in Kenya to foster social cohesion and social entrepreneurship.<sup>27</sup>

One of the winners was the **Association for the Integration of Women (AIW)**, a non-profit organization based in Modena, Italy. Its mission is to provide resources for women to establish roots and flourish with programmes designed to give migrant women the opportunity to show their potential, including paid technical and nontechnical training programmes or community-building activities.

Another finalist – **Refupoet** – is a non-governmental organization that provides a safe space for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants to tell their stories of trials and triumph through music, poetry, dance and the visual arts. Creating art can be a source of emotional support for young people who have experienced trauma, while also raising awareness about refugee and migrant issues to shape positive public narratives about them.



U-Report, Malawi

<sup>26</sup> Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY), Youth for Innovation Contest, 2021, available at <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b2586e41aef1d89f00c60a9/t/5f3ef256f2a2f3141e0b3024/1597960839069/YOUTH+INNOVATION+CONTEST+2021.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> MGCY, Youth4Migration website, available at <https://www.unmgcy.org/youth4migration>

## PORTRAIT #7: Alejandro Daly



“Where is home?” Alejandro’s dream is to shape a world where the answer to that question is “everywhere”

Alejandro is the Director of El Derecho a No Obedecer, a platform of Corporación Otraparte that proposes, develops and accompanies citizen advocacy processes to achieve greater impacts in Colombia. Currently, he is working to promote the integration of Venezuelan migrants and refugees in Latin America, impacting more than 115,000 people through artistic and cultural productions, public conversations and social media.

He is co-director of the Xenophobia Barometer, the first platform to analyse the narratives around Venezuelan migrants and refugees in social media with the objective to positively transform them. The aim is to tackle the negative language that provokes the spread of hate speech towards migrants and refugees, and to build a system to inform key stakeholders that can provide support and mitigate risks. Alejandro’s work with the Xenophobia Barometer was recognized in the 2021 GFMD

Summit, where he was awarded first place in the Youth Leadership and Innovation Award, in the category ‘Shaping Public Narratives on Migration’, organized by the Migration, Youth and Children Platform of the Major Group for Children and Youth, with the support of IOM, UNICEF, Switzerland and the United Arab Emirates.

## The African Coding Network: women in tech

The World Economic Forum estimates that 15 to 20 million increasingly well-educated young people will join the African workforce every year for the next two decades.<sup>28</sup> Sub-Saharan Africa is already home to 13 per cent of the world’s working age population, a number that is set to increase to more than 17 per cent by 2030,<sup>29</sup> exacerbating the skills gap and placing even greater pressure on an already saturated job market.

To address Africa’s tech skills gap and growing inequality, the African Coding Network supports marginalized African youth to select quality learning-to-earning pathways, to train in high-demand digital skills, and to accelerate their careers in tech. In partnership with UNICEF, Yoma and other partners, the African Coding Network opened its programmes to high potential youth on the move, identified through recent youth challenges such as the #ReimagineYourFuture or Better Together Africa programmes offered on Yoma.

Some of the young women who joined the women in tech challenge have themselves left their home countries in search of better opportunities:

### Stephanie Ojee

*A young migrant woman from Kenya, now living in Norway.*

*“Leaving my home country was a bold step in my search of better quality of education. I had recently completed my undergrad and was baffled by the constant requirement for advanced degrees for entry level jobs, so I applied for a master’s*



*degree in Natural Resources Management at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. Soon I will graduate and hopefully my career will have a better chance at progressing.*

*In a foreign country, language is a big obstacle. I was able to find a community that encouraged me to learn a new language and I am proud to say that it has helped me integrate better with the Norwegian population and appreciate their culture.”*

### Temitope Obasa

*Nigerian migrant living in the Netherlands*



Although I finished my studies some months ago, I am still walking the unemployment path and remain hopeful. I spend each day exploring my city and nearby cities, while sending out applications and taking online courses. I think that maintaining a level head and keeping hope alive

28 World Economic Forum (WEF), 2019, Why the skills gap remains wider in Africa, available at <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/09/why-the-skills-gap-remains-wider-in-africa/>

29 WEF, 2017, The future of jobs and skills in Africa – preparing the region for the fourth industrial revolution, p.1, available at [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_EGW\\_FOJ\\_Africa.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_EGW_FOJ_Africa.pdf)

is vital to accomplishing my goals. I have faced a couple of challenges since I moved abroad but I think the biggest one has been loneliness. Being so far from home, living in a country with a very different culture, language and social norms can take its toll on your mental health. To combat this, I acknowledged that I was lonely and began to connect with other internationals in my school and city. Soon enough I found my tribe!



To give back, I opened a YouTube channel where I share tips on studying in the Netherlands. I also offer free one-on-one consultation services for Nigerians seeking to move to the Netherlands for study.

#### Paule Kevin Nembou Kouonchie

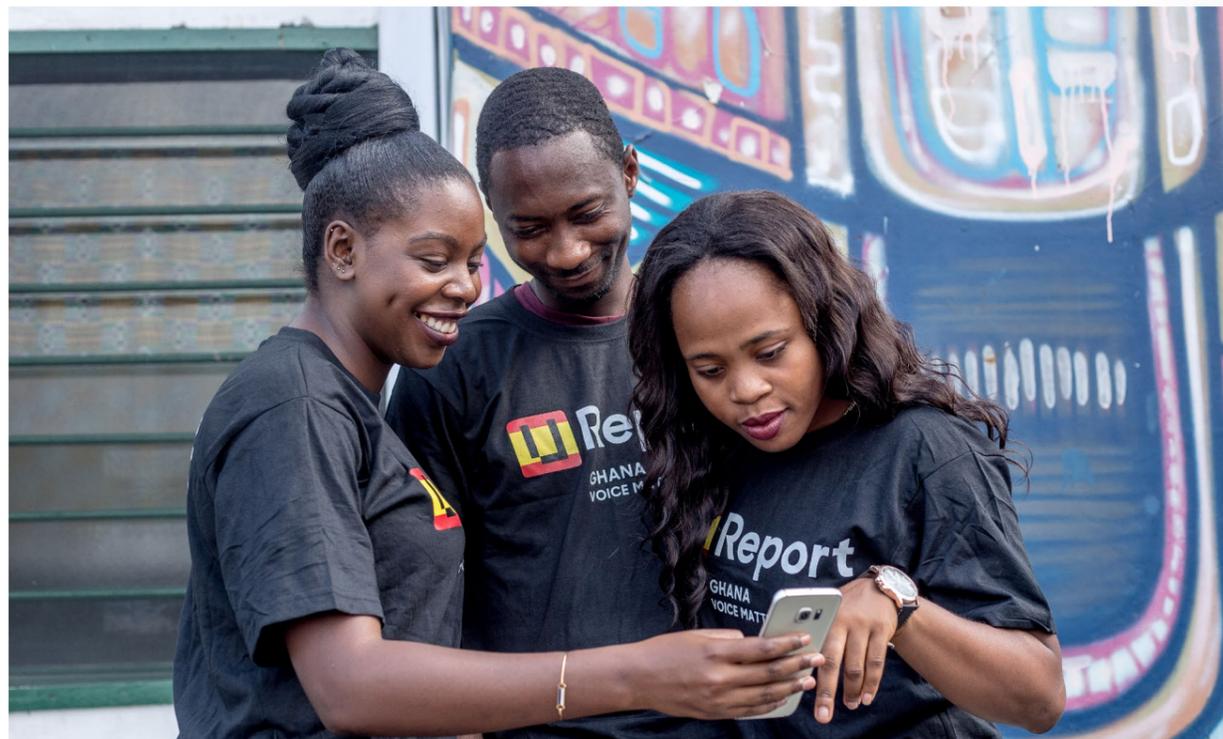
25-year-old Cameroonian refugee living in Kenya.

I hold a bachelor's and a master's degree in Telecommunication Engineering. One of my dreams has always been to continue my studies up to the Ph.D. level.

My parents did not have enough money to support me, so I began looking for scholarships

and I was successfully admitted into the Pan African University in Kenya, to study for an MSc in telecommunications. The determination to move forward and to go further has always been my greatest motivation. Hence, I work very hard.

I come from a French-speaking region in Cameroon. Studying in English has not been easy. When beginning lectures here, we were given one month of intensive English language classes which helped me in my studies. Also, in Kenya, they speak mostly Kiswahili and this makes communication with people difficult.



U-Report, Ghana

## PART II: Listening to young people on the move

Young migrant and displaced people know their needs better than anyone. Their hopes, priorities and ideas are essential for shaping better learning-to-earning solutions that support their communities to thrive. To tap into their potential – and to both design and scale the right solutions – we need to listen to young people on the move, amplify their voices, and provide opportunities to co-create better solutions to meet their needs.

Promoting and recognizing the strengths, interests and abilities of youth on the move – including the most marginalized – to shape their own destiny and contribute to their communities is critical for building resilience, improving mental health and promoting social inclusion.<sup>30</sup> Inclusive youth participation in policy-making spaces – including interactions with governments, civil society, and other stakeholders – can help young people on the move influence, create alliances, and shape the future they aspire to. Further, many young people are already experts and leaders in their fields, creating businesses, designing innovative solutions and inspiring positive change.

While many children and youth on the move remain voiceless without means or opportunity to express their views and needs, those who participated in the poll told a very different story. With all respondents having at least limited access to connectivity and a mobile phone, those who participated in the poll feel empowered and are

ready to seize every opportunity they can to voice their opinion. **More than 80 per cent of migrant and displaced youth expressed they could contribute to their communities very well (59 per cent) or somewhat well (29 per cent).** Despite their challenges, they have confidence in their capacity to contribute positively to the lives of the people around them.

The willingness and conviction of young people on the move to speak out and spearhead change in their communities is a call on governments and partners to create an enabling environment for their meaningful participation and engagement. It highlights the need to systematically include young people in the design of learning-to-earning opportunities and to invest in capacity-building of young people themselves.

This level of confidence and the opportunities to speak out are not within reach for all – particularly for the most vulnerable. For example, IDP youth who were consulted by UNICEF and the Migration, Youth and Children Platform of the Major Group for Children and Youth in Syria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Colombia and Somalia – many of whom had limited access to the internet – felt they had no way to communicate their concerns. More than 90 per cent of IDP youth consulted wanted to actively participate in decision-making processes but felt unable to do so.<sup>31</sup>

30 UNICEF, Technical Note – Adolescent Empowerment, p.5, available at <https://www.unicef.org/media/101901/file/Adolescent%20Empowerment%20Technical%20Note.pdf>

31 UNICEF and MGCY, 2020, Youth Consultations with Young IDPs and their Host Communities for the High Level Panel on Internal Displacement. 360 young IDPs and host community members (between 10 and 32 years) across six countries participated.

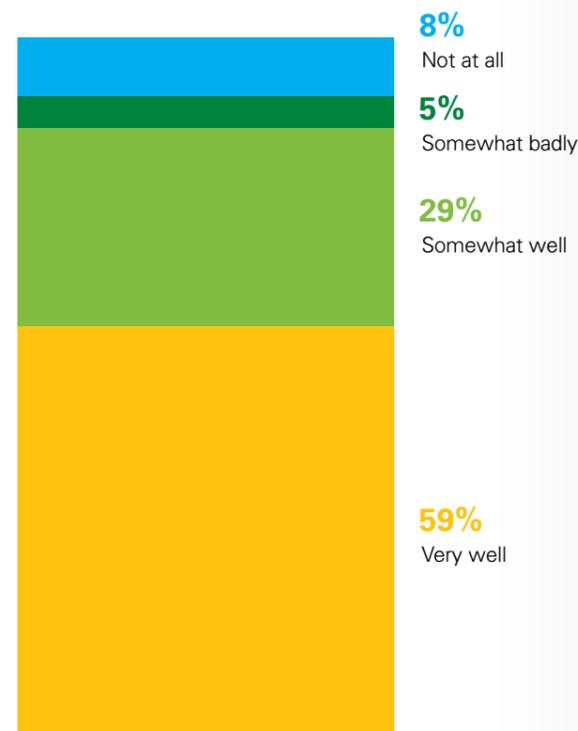
## Resources and tools on working with and for young people

- [With us & for us: Working with and for Young People in Humanitarian and Protracted Crises](#) – these IASC guidelines are a ‘go-to’ guide for working with and for young people in humanitarian settings and protracted crises.
- [Engaged and Heard: Guidelines on Adolescent Participation and Civic Engagement](#) is a key resource on principles, strategies and approaches to meaningful youth participation
- [The Adolescent Kit For Expression and Innovation](#) is a resource to empower adolescents and young people with the skills they need and provide them with opportunities to take action within their societies (available in English, Spanish, Arabic and French)
- [The Youth at Heart Principles](#) developed by approximately 1200 young people from East Africa and the Horn of Africa, Middle East and North Africa and the Sahel Regions. They are a call to action for governments, civil society, private and public sector, bi- and multilaterals and knowledge institutions to invest in the prospects of young people and to work in partnership with young people (also available in [Arabic](#) and [French](#)).

### Do you feel heard?

Eighty-eight per cent of young people on the move who participated in the poll felt they could contribute their opinions, talents and skills to their communities somewhat well.

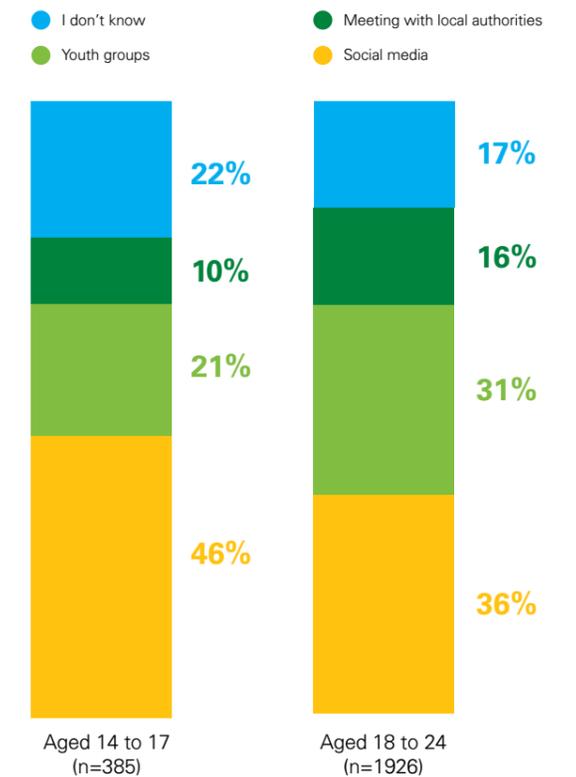
Fig 7. Do you feel you can contribute your opinions, skills and talents in your community? Per centage of young people on the move (aged 14–24) by perception of degree of contribution of skills and talents to the local community.



### How would you like to share your voice in your community?

When asked about how they would like to share their voice in the community, 46 per cent of the younger respondents aged 14–17, irrespective of migratory status, said they preferred to share their voices via social media, whereas the figure for older youth was only 36 per cent. Youth groups and meetings with local authorities were the communication methods preferred by young adult migrant and displaced people. Social media was the most sought-after tool for displaced children on the move to share their voices (41 per cent). In contrast, migrants preferred youth groups as a medium to share their opinions, skills and talents. Uncertainty on sharing their voices was reported marginally more frequently by children than by young adults (22 per cent and 17 per cent, respectively).

Fig 8. How would you like to share your voice in your community? Per centage of young people on the move (aged 14-24) by aspired way of sharing their voice in the local community.



## PART III: Taking action – together!

In this poll, young people from around the world describe their dreams and aspirations to learn and earn. They talk of becoming doctors, coders and engineers, and of learning new skills and new languages. They are eager for more information and resources to voice their opinions and foster their talents and skills.

Migrant and displaced youth tell of life changing experiences determined by circumstance and imperfect choices, and they are often excluded from education and work due to financial barriers and saturated job markets. But many will persist, in the face of tremendous odds, to become young entrepreneurs, innovators and change-makers in their communities.

We have heard how despite different cultures, experiences and languages, migrant and displaced youth share the same dreams to learn and earn as their host community peers – sending a strong message of solidarity and painting a picture of the shared future they want to create.

### **The poll exposed the gap between the rights and aspirations of young people – and their potential – and shows there is more to do.**

The voices of young people are a call to action for governments, policy makers, donors and partners, from the public and private sector and civil society, to do more to bridge the gap between aspirations and opportunities and to unlock the wealth of untapped talent on the move.

**As a first step, governments, donors and businesses must acknowledge young people on the move as ‘assets’ and ‘rights-holders’** rather

than ‘problems’ or ‘threats’ to help harness their innovation, creativity and energy.

*“Follow your passion and know that you’re not a burden, you are a problem solver.”,*

*Rafik Amrani, Young People’s Action Team member, Algeria.<sup>32</sup>*

Partner with youth on the move to cocreate solutions for learning and earning. Trust young people on the move to participate and lead, providing adequate resourcing and support to strengthen their capacities and the impact of their work. Provide opportunities to cocreate learning-to-earning solutions with and for young people on the move. And involve children and youth on the move – alongside host community children and youth – in local, national and global level decision-making processes that will affect their lives.

**Second**, host country governments, donors, employers and partners need to join forces to tackle the biggest barriers to education and transitioning into the world of work. This will mean removing financial barriers that prevent vulnerable children and youth, including youth on the move, from accessing education. This will mean abolishing school fees, establishing scholarship programmes and paid traineeships, providing financial assistance for school supplies and leveraging technologies to provide incentives for continued learning and self-growth.

*“I have a great concern about the future and I am afraid that I can not complete my studies because of the economic and legal conditions”,* said a 16 year old boy in Lebanon.

**Third**, youth entrepreneurship needs to be supported by alleviating legal, administrative and financial obstacles and barriers to starting a business. This includes assisting migrant and displaced people’s start-ups to help them meet regulatory requirements and expanding financial inclusion, regardless of migratory status. Promote and ensure decent jobs for youth that provide a minimum wage to survive, opportunities for career improvement, access to social protection, safety and health in the workplace, and the right to interact and organize.

**Fourth**, prior learning and qualifications of migrant and displaced children and youth need to be recognized and validation and accreditation processes must be improved. Solutions like the Learning Passport or Yoma, where young people can build their own verified digital CV, can be leveraged to achieve this. Education systems need to be strengthened to provide high-quality learning opportunities for all young people – regardless of migratory status – and supported to include migrant and displaced children to realize their rights and cater for their specific needs.

**Fifth**, young people need to be provided with more relevant and targeted information on available education and employment resources, training and opportunities. This should be in a language that youth on the move will understand, and communicated through channels they trust and that are most accessible – for example, working with diaspora communities, youth groups or social messaging apps.

**Sixth**, more is needed to close the digital divide by including migrant and refugee-hosting schools and communities in national digitization efforts to improve connectivity and fair access to digitally empowered education, especially for young girls and those with disabilities. Initiatives like

Reimagine Education, which aims to reach every child and young person – including those who are migrants or displaced – with world class digital learning solutions require buy-in from the public and private sector, to ensure that we reach the most marginalized. Initiatives like the global school connectivity mapping and acceleration efforts under Giga or the Connected Education resources must be expanded to include areas hosting large numbers of young migrants, IDPs or refugees. For us to ensure that local skills gaps and the needs of labour markets are filled, digital tools and digitally powered learning opportunities and innovation efforts must become more accessible and inclusive.

**Now is the moment – as we reimagine education and the future of mobility – to invest in and scale up solutions** that provide portable, flexible, personalized, adaptable and inclusive learning-to-earning pathways for young people as they move, as well as meaningful opportunities for young people to create positive social impact in their communities, networks and homes.

Putting these recommendations into action will require the reach, resources and creativity of partnerships between local and national governments, communities, businesses and private sector.

To harness the full potential of mobility and leverage innovations and technologies to find the ‘diamonds in the rough’, we need to better understand the drivers and incentives that motivate young people to learn, to earn, to move and to stay. And there is no other, better way, than to start by listening to young people themselves.

<sup>32</sup> Quote from Youth At Heart Virtual Forum - livestreamed on You Tube [Youth@Heart LIVE - YouTube](#)

## ANNEX I: Discover more: youth-led solutions and innovations

Many young people, together with national and local governments, private sector, donors and partners, are already creating and implementing innovative solutions to help migrant and displaced youth learn and earn. The solutions outlined below are some examples of youth-led solutions that can be adapted, replicated and scaled to help bridge the gap between aspirations and opportunities. For more information on digital solutions, please see UNICEF's forthcoming companion report, *"Unlocking the Power of Digital Technologies to Support "Learning to Earning" for Displaced Youth"*.

### SOLUTION #1: YOMA ON THE MOVE

Yoma is a digital marketplace for youth across the world to build and transform their futures by actively engaging in social impact tasks and learning and earning opportunities. It is an ecosystem solution that links young people with opportunities, provided by a range of partners, such as private enterprises and educational institutions. Yoma aims to identify, nurture and connect hidden talents (diamonds in the rough) using psychometric tools and dynamic experiential learning, allowing for individualized growth journeys. Yoma provides critical opportunities for youth on the move to help foster their talents, skills and potential.<sup>33</sup>

As young people engage in the marketplace and complete social impact tasks or learning activities, their accomplishments are recorded on their profile. This allows them to build a verifiable digital CV

using blockchain. By means of privacy-preserving AI and machine learning, young people are presented with personalized growth choices that match their aspirations and talents and can point to employment or entrepreneurial opportunities.

Especially valuable for youth on the move, who are without credentials and social networks, Yoma provides users the chance to build a verifiable digital CV and trust profile that is portable, thereby enabling them to compete again and demonstrate reliability and acquisition of skills. Creating positive behavioral incentives and access to Zlto, a digital token, helps them continue their growth journey.

### SOLUTION #2: U REPORT ON THE MOVE

U-Report is a user-friendly, cost-effective, anonymous social messaging tool designed to empower youth – equipping them with critical information, allowing them to speak out on issues that affect them and their communities, and encouraging citizen-led development to create positive behaviour change.

Engaging over 15 million U-Reporters worldwide, the U-Report On The Move platform's has been adapted to address the specific needs and aspirations of some of the most vulnerable beneficiaries - young migrant and displaced people – either along their journey or in their host community or country. U-Reporters are provided with a wide range of services and activities, including dissemination of critical information, participation in polls or one-on-one consulting and case management.

It is a tool to support young people to voice their concerns about their living conditions and to be empowered to become active citizens in their communities.<sup>34</sup>

### SOLUTION # 3: LEARNING PASSPORT

Supported by UNICEF, the Learning Passport is an e-learning platform developed and implemented in partnership with Microsoft. Currently, available in 10 countries through UNICEF Country Offices, it is expected soon to reach a further 25 countries. It was initially specifically targeted to youth on the move, seeking to address major learning gaps and to provide opportunities for young people to be better positioned to obtain fulfilling employment. However, the Learning Passport is already proving its worth more broadly, and is for instance increasingly being used to digitalize resources related to national curricula. The form and function of the Learning Passport varies widely between countries; for instance, in the Middle East and North African region it has been used primarily for technical and vocational education and training (TVET), soft skills, non-formal education and work readiness.

Now three years into the deployment of the solution, the key priorities are to better understand the user experience and to offer a wider range of assessment options.<sup>35</sup>

### SOLUTION #4: INNOVATIVE SKILLS AND TALENT PARTNERSHIPS

**The Global Skill Partnership** is a promising model that envisages a bilateral agreement between the country of origin and the country of destination, in which young potential migrants are given training in their home countries. Not all the trainees migrate, and those who remain then contribute to their local origin community with more advanced skills, capacity, and teaching potential. The destination country can be directly involved in shaping the skillsets of potential migrants, while establishing

training facilities and programmes in the country of origin. Those who choose to migrate to the destination country will integrate more quickly and will be better skilled to fill job gaps in the local market.

Recognizing that climate change and other forces will create vast pressures for greater migration in the region in future, the Australia-Pacific Training Coalition (APTC) is a network of five technical training centers across the South Pacific, including in low-income countries such as Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. The network was launched in 2007 with Australian funding support, and as of mid-2019, it had trained 12,887 young people in vocational subjects such as hospitality, construction, and automobile maintenance. It grants qualifications recognized uniformly across the region and focuses on skills that are needed in both origin and destination countries.<sup>36</sup>

### SOLUTION #5: REMOTE MENTORING

**Micromentor** supports young entrepreneurs across the world, with global reach that includes young people in low-income contexts. A Mercy Corps initiative, Micromentor began in 2008 offering an online 'matching' service between entrepreneurs and mentors around the globe. Connections are facilitated through the platform, but subsequently communications are managed outside the platform. In 2020, the platform was facilitating over 5,500 connections involving 1,900 mentor volunteers. Sixty-eight per cent of the connections were between countries, and Sixty-eight per cent of entrepreneurs supported are in low- and middle-income countries. Micromentor's own impact data suggests that mentoring can have a huge effect on an entrepreneur, with 92 per cent reporting in a survey of alumni that they had built confidence and one or more business-related skills as a result

33 Yoma foundation website, available at <https://www.yoma.foundation/>

34 U-Report on the Move website, available at <https://onthemove.ureport.in/>

35 Learning Passport website, available at <https://www.learningpassport.org/>

36 Center for Global Development, August 2019, A Pacific Skills Partnership – Improving the APTC to meet skills needed in the region, available at <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/pacific-skills-partnership-improving-aptc-meet-skills-needed-in-region>

of the mentoring relationships brokered by the initiative. There are also huge benefits for mentors themselves.<sup>37</sup>

## SOLUTION #6: TALENT CITIES

“Talent Cities” engages and supports city leadership and mayors to take responsibility to strive for equity, sustainability and inclusion in their cities, including optimizing talent opportunities for all youth, regardless of their citizenship, legal or migration status. The initiative works to foster the skills, talents and potential of ‘youth on the move’ through helping local governments reach the most vulnerable with learning opportunities and educational resources, including digital tools, and connecting them with local job markets. By connecting cities along migration routes, ‘talent pathways’ are created between cities seeking to attract untapped talent.

The city of Bamenda, in Cameroon, has fully embraced the Talent Cities approach. The city aims to become an innovation hub, and to achieve this, Bamenda needs skilled, entrepreneurial talent. A major source of untapped talent is migrant and displaced youth. Over 15,000 people have left Bamenda to go to Calabar, Nigeria, using a well-established commercial route between the two cities. Turning this well-established commercial route into a ‘talent pathway’, the City of Bamenda is actively encouraging migrant and displaced youth to return to Bamenda to receive digital and entrepreneurial skill credentials, and to connect them with their local livelihood and entrepreneurial opportunities. Bamenda wants to encourage young people to stay in Bamenda – building their lives and contributing their skills and talent to the city’s economy.<sup>38</sup>

37 UNICEF, 2021, Digital Learning to Earning Solutions Background Paper (forthcoming), citing Micromentor website, 2021, available at <https://www.micromentor.org/>

38 Provided directly by Talent Cities

39 UNICEF, 2017, Adolescent kit for expression and innovation, available at <https://adolescentkit.org/>

## SOLUTION #7: ADOLESCENT KIT FOR EXPRESSION AND INNOVATION

The Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation is an excellent tool to support young boys and girls, to cope with the anxieties they face, as well as develop skills and competencies to enable them to take action and bring about positive change in their lives and communities as they transition from learning to earning.

The Adolescent Kit, developed through a human-centred design approach, with UNICEF experts, partners and young people, offers activities and approaches to support adolescents in learning, and using complex competencies, such as those for problem solving, creativity and innovation. Since it was rolled out in 2016, the Adolescent Kit has been implemented in nearly 25 countries (and expanding to 20+ more countries by the end of 2023), reaching over 360,000 adolescent girls and boys in refugee, migrant, displaced contexts as well as in low resource settings.<sup>39</sup>

## ANNEX II: Resources and tools for young people

### Online education, learning and scholarship platforms

- [Coursera for Refugees](#) serves over 26,000 refugees across the globe to provide access to Coursera’s catalogue of online courses for hundreds of accredited institutions, ranging from full master’s degrees to short courses in topics such as data science, business, IT, social sciences, personal development, arts and humanities, mathematics, physical sciences, and health. Financial assistance is often available for applicants.
- [Open Learning Exchange’s Planet Learning](#) operates a free and open access platform. This involves both an online cloud-based repository for managing learning content and a community server that delivers learning resources, courses, and learner management tools.
- [Kiron Campus](#) is an online learning platform which targets both refugees worldwide and underserved communities in the Middle East, offering free access to accredited courses and degrees worldwide.
- [Learning Passport](#) is an Online, Mobile, and Offline tech platform enabling high quality, flexible learning
- [Cell-Ed](#) uses microlearning modules to provide a tailored industry-specific micro-lessons to any mobile device through text and audio only, complemented by live coaches who provide support and encouragement.
- [EDX](#) provides access to more than 3,000 free online courses from more than 160 leading institutions worldwide.
- [Marj3](#) is a platform that connects youth largely from the Middle East and North Africa with educational opportunities around the world. It provides online information on administration processes for accessing university and studying abroad.

### Online language courses

- [Akelius Foundation](#) enables marginalized children and youth to learn English, French, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Russian. The application can be accessed online through a web browser or on any Android device (tablet or mobile phone).
- [NaTakallam](#) pairs displaced people with learners worldwide for online language learning and cultural exchange
- [DuoLingo](#) is a free gamified language training app that offers 19 different languages

### Web or app-based information and mentoring

- [YuWaah!](#) connects India’s youth to aspirational socio-economic opportunities, and engages them as active changemakers. The portal currently serves over 17,060,996 young people.
- [Pratham’s Youth Network](#), digitally connects young people in rural areas with mentors working in various industries to support career awareness and planning, English language capability, and digital skills.
- [Job Centre Plus Connectr](#) by My Kinda Future is a pilot providing 18- to 24-year-olds with digital mentors to support them into work and help them succeed in employment.
- [Micromentor](#), a MercyCorps initiative, provides support to budding young entrepreneurs across the globe by matching them each with a mentor to provide support virtually.
- [Migrant Media Network](#) provides young Africans with reliable information and training on migration issues and social media
- [Goodwall](#) is a mobile-first personal and professional development platform with more than 1 million members across over 150+ countries, that guides 16 to 24-year-olds through the world of education and work offering them access to equitable and inclusive opportunities.

### Job-search and job-matching platforms

- [ALiGN initiative](#) which uses psychometric assessment to match refugees (and other unemployed young people) with hard-to-fill roles.

- [ECSJO](#) is an e-counselling platform developed by the ILO to enable Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanians to connect with employers.
- [Action Emploi Réfugiés](#) in France provides a job board that employers can use to reach potential refugee employees.
- [Kormo Jobs by Google](#) operates in Bangladesh, Indonesia and India to match urban youth seeking entry level jobs with employers in service and informal sectors including food markets, street vendors, retail, and hospitality.
- [Talent Beyond Boundaries](#) works through an online Talent Catalogue containing profiles of more than 20,000 skilled workers, who are also refugees based in Lebanon and Jordan. Candidates are able to upload their profiles to the Talent Catalogue and potentially be matched with employment opportunities in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom.

#### Training for remote digital livelihoods

- [Yoma Digital Livelihoods Programme](#) seeks to equip young people with the digital tools and entrepreneurial competencies to express and monetize their unique passions.
- [Atingi](#) is a learning platform that provides free,

open source, modular content to compliment and augment formal education, and to provide access to learning for out-of-school youth.

- [Workwell Refugee Tech Hub](#) focuses on coding, graphic design and accounting for displaced Syrians and Iraqis.
- [Rebootkamp](#) focuses on coding in Tunisia and aims to provide services in Africa and the Middle East.
- [RET's Digital Work Livelihood Programme](#) equips refugee youth with the ICT skills to obtain online jobs and lead self-reliant lives.
- [African coding network](#) supports marginalized African youth to select quality learning-to-earning pathways, train in in-demand digital skills, and accelerate their careers in tech.
- [Umuzi](#) provides online resources to help kick-start a career in tech.
- [Start-ups Without Borders](#) connects the most ambitious refugee and migrant entrepreneurs with resources to grow their business, while providing investors with an entry-point to under-the-radar start-ups.
- [Refugee Force](#) invest in skilled, motivated, and diverse asylum seekers and refugees who struggle to find employment that matches their interests, experience, and ambitions.



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