

UPDATE ON THE OUTCOMES OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION ON THE GFMD CONSULTATION

GFMD – AFRICAN UNION REGIONAL CONSULTATION
BY UNMGCY



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

CONTEXT

Created in 2007, the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) is a state-led, informal and non-binding process, which helps shape the global debate on migration and development. It provides a flexible, multi-stakeholder space where governments can discuss the multi-dimensional aspects, opportunities and challenges related to migration, development, and the link between these two areas. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) took over the Chairmanship of the GFMD on February 1st 2020

The UAE has proposed that six GFMD regional consultations were held over the course of 2020, with the assistance of state-led regional processes. The regional consultations elaborated on the six thematic priorities, according to each region. The Friends of the Forum meetings will finalise background documents for the Summit, which is anticipated to take place, in the UAE, in January 2021.

The African region in consultation of the GFMD Chair organized its consultation on the following three topics, essential for the continent's development:

- **Governance of Labour Migration in the Changing Employment Landscape**
- **Addressing gaps in migrants protection**
- **Skilling migrants for employment**

Between March and April, 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 a national or international focus, **acting in 21 countries**, and **representing over 700 young leaders in migration issues**. The results of these consultations are published on UN MGCY's website summarized in the three policy briefs-both **English** and **French**.

CONTEXT

The main objectives of our participation were to:

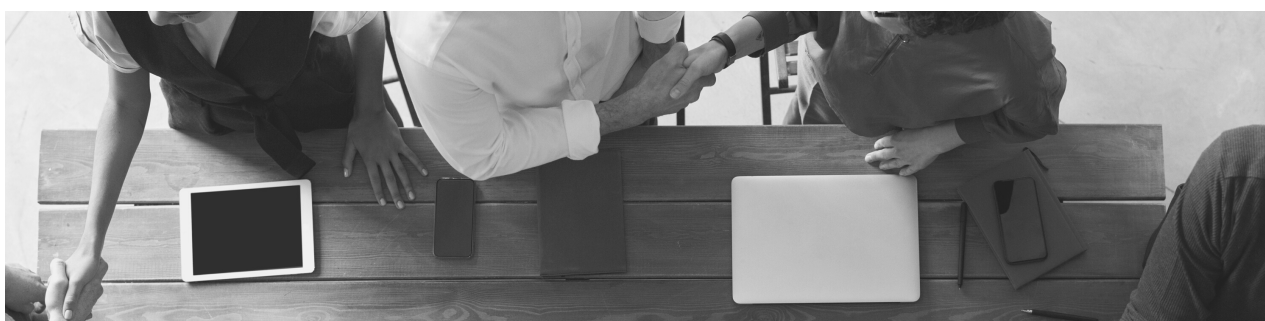
- **Identify youth-led actions and perspectives in the region**
- **Bring youth perspectives to the attention of relevant stakeholders**
- **Create a solid presentation and basis to foster partnerships among youth organizations and other stakeholders**

Co-organization of the Civil Society Preparatory Meeting:

The articulation of civil society in the AU GFMD Regional Meeting was facilitated by the Civil Society Days (CSD) Coordinating Office and was organized by 4 organizations:

1. **Pan African Network in Defense of Migrants' Rights (PANiDMR)**, which is the primary African regional civil society network in the GFMD Civil Society Days (CSD);
2. **International Steering Committee (ISC)**, in close cooperation with the African Foundation for Development (AFFORD), as the primary African diaspora networks in the Civil Society Days;
3. **UN MGCY**, through the participation of the **Migration Working Group** which represents the youth constituency on migration issues. The UN MGCY nominated 6 African youth who participated in the preparatory consultation to ensure that youth priorities and concerns were considered.

CONTEXT



21

countries represented in this process.

700

youth reached, including leaders and beneficiaries, on migration issues.

25

locally-based youth- led and youth- focused organizations working across the continent.

75%

of the youth representatives agree that we were able to effectively bring the voice of the consulted youth organizations.

100%

agree that our interventions helped to steer the debates.

REFLECTION ON OUR IMPACT ON THE GFMD PROCESS: BREAKOUT SESSIONS

We had **6 youth representatives in total**, distributed on the 6 breakout sessions (3 thematics in english and the same 3 thematics in french): **1 participant per session both in the English and French sessions**. We were given between 2 - 5 minutes per representative during the breakout sessions debates. We stayed within the allocated time and talked about the priorities mapped during the youth regional consultation. The **three policy briefs** mentioned above were a key instrument to help us structuring policy asks directly and concisely.

Based on our self- assessment impact performance, **over 75% of youth representatives** agree that we were able to effectively bring the voice of the consulted youth organizations and **100% agree that our interventions helped to steer the debates**. Approximately 75% also agreed that the UN MGCY team was well represented and had adequate time to speak.

Our remarks shaped the conversations especially during the breakout session on addressing gaps in migrant protection. We mentioned the need to collect, analyze and utilize timely and reliable data. **This point was echoed by other stakeholders and was well captured by the thematic leads**. We were also approached by stakeholders and partner organizations after the breakout sessions for questions and to discuss opportunities for further collaboration and **we had the opportunity to make a case at the Closing Plenary**. Also, UN MGCY was considered a key stakeholder across Africa, to be involved in the small group discussions proposed with the objective to foster the identification of potential partnerships.

REFLECTION ON OUR IMPACT ON THE GFMD PROCESS: BREAKOUT SESSIONS

In terms of improvements for next year, we believe that in order to increase our impact in advocacy **we must have continuous preparations and capacity building workshops** to best articulate youth concerns with elements of storytelling. We also suggest to dedicate more time to research, in order to have a broader repertoire of more detailed examples of youth-led projects. Often the description of successful cases presented through regional consultations still requires further study. **We stand ready to implement the necessary changes to make these improvements possible.**

The youth representatives team was very diversified and inclusive. There was a conscious effort to bring and maintain the voices of young people from english and french speaking regions across Africa during the consultation and at the GFMD process. On the UN MGCY team we had a translator and interpreter that ensured this accessibility of participation.

Overall, UN MGCY youth representatives are very honored to report that Africa' youth priorities, experiences and contributions were explicitly mentioned during the Regional breakout sessions, and that these priorities were mentioned and connected to the high-level policy discussion. **Youth have been successfully represented and included into the regional discussion**, which translates to an opportunity for the consulted organizations to further participate in the GFMD regional and global process.

ADDITIONAL NEXT STEPS PROPOSALS

The main objective of our advocacy strategy is to **get youth voices heard on migration issues**. We want youth experiences and perspectives to matter in the upcoming GFMD Forum, and successful projects to get **visibility**. In the next months, we aim to offer youth-focused and youth-led organizations and initiatives in the region new opportunities to engage with each other, creating a space to discuss shared goals and opportunities for partnerships.

For this reason, we are presenting the following for future activities:

- We will **host capacity building and awareness-raising webinars on GFMD and the GCM processes** to help young people to familiarize with the importance of these processes and how to understand opportunities for meaningful engagement. We are structuring two webinars, one focused on the GFMD process and another one on the GCM in September and November, respectively.
- We will participate in the **GFMD Migration Labs**, proposed with a focus on facilitating the identification of potential partnerships among GFMD stakeholders, to be presented at the GFMD Summit's Open Space. We will participate in **small group discussions**, to start fleshing out concrete ideas and building a work plan.
- We will increase our presence on **social media**, in order to deepen our advocacy on the importance of youth voices in policy making.

ADDITIONAL NEXT STEPS PROPOSALS

- We aim at establishing partnerships with as many youth-led and youth-focused organisations as possible, in order to bring their voices to the **Migration Youth Forum of the XIII GFMD**, where youth will sit at the same table as governments, mayors, business leaders, and civil society stakeholders to discuss common migration policy priorities and actions at the GFMD.
- We are also launching the 1st **Youth Leadership and Innovation Award for Migration**. The Award will showcase existing initiatives aiming to empower and improve the living conditions of young people on the move, led by youth at the XVIII GFMD and receive support in their ongoing journey, with a two months mentorship program, seed funding for their initiative (TBC) and the chance to participate in the Youth Forum and be part of the GFMD process.

For more information, reach us at migrationyouthforum@unmgcy.org

We thank all youth-led organizations that have participated in this process. This was only possible as a result of the contribution that all youth-led organisations offered to the consultation process.

We aim at establishing partnerships with as many youth-led and youth-focused organisations as possible, in order to be aware of all the innovative initiatives based on strong and successful track records present in the region and to insure meaningful youth participation in upcoming events.

We invite you to work with us to demonstrate youth's contributions and proposed solutions to these spaces.



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