



**Statement delivered by Elana Wong at the UNICEF Reception to announce the Youth on the Move Fellowship, held on 18th May 2022 on the margins of the International Migration Review Forum**

Thank you very much Verena for that very kind introduction. I am honoured to be here today with such esteemed friends and colleagues, especially since UNICEF and IOM have from the very beginning of MYCP in 2018 been our closest partners.

For those who do not know us, MYCP are a volunteer-led and run organisation that works to bring youth priorities and recommendations to migration governance spaces, with our recent GCM consultations reaching over 360 young migrants or youth-led organisations representing over 500,000 youth across the world. We wouldn't be here today without the immense support of our IOM and UNICEF partners- Verena, Rasika, Melanie, Giulia, Nour, Ilaria and the whole team here, Neha, Michele and others from IOM

I want to also highlight our amazing youth delegation:

- Alicja, a Polish migrant normally based in Chile but who has recently returned to Poland to assist with the influx of Ukrainian refugees,
- Moreen, an Iraqi migrant in Canada who I'm sure many of you heard fantastically deliver our statement on Monday,
- Florencio, a Colombian migrant in Brazil who is a founder of his own migrant-support organisation Glocals, as well as a member of his local youth council
- Yasmina, a Moroccan migrant here in New York, who uses her extensive experience in INGOs to help young women develop their leadership and political agency
- And we're joined also by Juan, a Venezuelan migrant in Colombia who started Venezolanas en Barranquilla, an organisation building support networks for other Venezuelans in the region

We're absolutely delighted to use this opportunity to officially announce our YOMA Fellowship programme, which we and our UNICEF colleagues have been working on for months.

This Fellowship, starting with a small cohort of 2 and hopefully expanding beyond this team to many UNICEF regional and country offices around the world, will be the first programme of its kind to offer **compensated** capacity building, career mentorship and project experience for young migrants with potential who do not have the traditional educational background normally required to access these spaces.

To launch this week feels particularly special, especially as we bring youth voices to the IMRF with the heavy knowledge that many qualified and talented migrants in our team could not attend due to visa and funding restrictions, and knowing all the time and effort that is needed to prepare young people for such spaces regardless of their privilege.



It has not been easy trying to pave a new way forward, and I would like to specially thank Giulia, Nour and Verena for their great efforts in working with us to make this vision a reality.

As we reflect on the progress of GCM implementation, we're happy to add this one initiative that we hope will have impact for years to come on ensuring migrants and diaspora are able to not only contribute to sustainable development, but also contribute to the decisions that affect their lives. Thank you.