



# A RIGHT TO BE HEARD

Listening to children and young people on the move

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

---

This publication was developed by the UNICEF Data and Analytics Section, Division of Data, Research and Policy in collaboration with the Office of Innovation and the Division of Communication.

**Conceptualization, project management and coordination:**

Claus Hansen, Danzhen You

**Polling:** Christopher Brooks, James Powell, Hira Hafeez ur Rehman and U-Report offices globally

**Analysis:** Jan Beise

**Writing and editing:** Tara Dooley, Timothy Ledwith

**Reporting:** Melanie Sharpe, Christopher Tidey, Codi Trigger

**Fact checking:** Xinyi Ge, Yasmine Hage

**Copy editing:** Natalie Leston

**Design and data visualizations:** Sinae Lee

**Thank you**

This report was made possible by the many thousands of children and young people around the world who actively engaged with UNICEF as U-Reporters and participated in the poll. You helped us better understand your concerns and opinions. Thank you.

Special thanks go to the young migrants who reviewed the poll questions and the report to make sure we remained focused on your concerns.

The poll would not have been possible without support, implementation and outreach provided by UNICEF Country Offices and National Committees, in particular: Bangladesh, Brazil, the Central African Republic, El Salvador, France, Italy, Malaysia, Mexico, Uganda, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.

This report benefited from valuable inputs and support from many colleagues. Particular thanks go to: Laurence Chandy, Director, Division of Data, Research and Policy; Mark Hereward, Associate Director, Division of Data, Research and Policy; Paloma Escudero, Director, Division of Communication. Essential inputs and support were provided by Marta Arias, Verena Knaus and Yanhong Zhang. Many colleagues throughout UNICEF provided valuable inputs including:

Anshana Arora, Noela Barasa, Giovanna Barberis, Saskia Blume, Diana Escobedo Lastiri, Attila Hancioglu, Karoline Hassfurter, Laura Healy, Karima Lahrach-Maynard, Christine Nesbitt, Behzad Noubary, Harriet Riley, Thierry Schlaudecker, Melanie Sharpe, Cecilia Silva Venturini, Ayano Suzumura, Turgay Unalan, and colleagues in Regional Offices, Country Offices and National Committees.

Thanks also go to the following partners for their support: the Office of the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for International Migration, United Nations Major Group of Children and Young People, the Global Forum for Migration and Development, International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Organization for Migration's Global Migration and Data Analysis Center (GMDAC), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Detention Coalition (IDC), Initiative for Child Rights in the Global Compacts.

**Cover:** An 18-year-old travels to a training programme from Za'atari Refugee Camp in Jordan. © UNICEF/UN0216407/Herwig

**Photo credits:**

Page i: © UNICEF/UNI181864/Sokhin

Page 2: © UNICEF/UN0255467/Moreno Gonzalez

Page 3 - 4: © UNICEF/UN028382/Rich

Page 7: © UNICEF/UN0179490/Sokol

Page 8: © UNICEF/UN051561/Tremeau

Page 11: © UNICEF/UNI200019/Gilbertson VII Photo

Page 14: © UNICEF/UN043094/Rich

Page 16: © UNICEF/UN067195/Vas

Page 17: © © UNICEF/UN027448/Volpe

Page 19: © UNICEF/UN058508/Vas

Page 20: © UNICEF/UN063091/Gilbertson VII Photo

Page 21: © UNICEF/2018/Prinsloo

ISBN: 978-92-806-4997-0

© United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), December 2018

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

FOREWORD	ii
INTRODUCTION	1
Portrait: Harold	2
THE POLL: HOW THE INFORMATION WAS GATHERED	3
POLL RESPONDENTS: YOUNG MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES	5
Age and sex	5
From around the world	5
KEY FINDINGS	6
Portrait: Tasmin	7
THE JOURNEY	8
Leaving home	9
Forced to leave?	9
Reason uprooted	10
Family support for journey	10
On the way	12
Sources of help	12
Accompanied, unaccompanied or separated	13
Medical services	14
Education	15
Destinations	17
Divided opinions	18
Moving on	18
VOICES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	19
Portrait: Ideeya	21
CONCLUSION	22
AGENDA FOR ACTION	24
ENDNOTES	25





Pupils in a tent used as a school after Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu.

# FOREWORD

---

After almost two years of consultations and negotiations, world leaders are on the verge of formally adopting the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The compact is the first-ever intergovernmental agreement on a common approach to every dimension of migration. It provides a platform for international cooperation to protect the human rights of all migrants while respecting national sovereignty. It also underscores the urgent need to safeguard the most vulnerable – a category that very much includes children and young people.

Right now, millions of migrant and refugee children around the world are living in precarious circumstances, disproportionately exposed to hardship, discrimination and abuse. Many of them continue to be placed in detention despite its grave and lasting effects on their health and development. Others have been deprived of security and legal identity, and are excluded from access to medical care, education and other essential services.

These young people should not – must not – continue living in the shadows. As the global compact is launched, it will be critical to frame migration and refugee policies in ways that consistently uphold children's rights and best interests. To that end, it is important to listen to the voices of young people themselves, including nearly 4,000 who responded to UNICEF's recent global youth poll. Their responses comprise the heart and soul of the report that follows.

Let us heed the insights of children and young people on the move today and keep them at the forefront of our work tomorrow. They own their personal experiences, needs and aspirations, and they are fully invested in their future. They have demonstrated incredible resilience in the face of daunting challenges. And they will be key partners – along with governments, civil society, the private sector and the United Nations – in successfully implementing the Global Compact for Migration, as well as the Global Compact on Refugees.

Regardless of their migration and refugee status, all children deserve an education and a peaceful future. Given the opportunity, they will make that future a reality.



Henrietta H. Fore  
Executive Director, UNICEF



Louise Arbour  
United Nations Special Representative for International Migration

# INTRODUCTION

For many uprooted children, the journey from home can be profoundly lonely and plagued by challenges that put their health, education and futures at risk.

Nearly 40 per cent of migrants and refugees aged 14–24 who participated in a new poll said they received no help at all during their journey in search of a safe and a better future – not from family, not from friends, not from institutions.

About 40 per cent said they travelled alone. Nearly half reported that they did not see a doctor when they needed one. Eighty per cent of those who were forced to migrate because of war, conflict or violence described missing valuable time in school.<sup>1</sup>

“You can’t trust anyone,” said a 17-year-old boy from Egypt. “And no one will help you for free and you always must be careful.”

These insights were provided as part of a poll conducted in September and October 2018 by UNICEF through U-Report, a social messaging tool for young people. The questions were sent digitally to U-Report users around the globe, and about 4,000 migrants and refugees aged 14–24 responded. The goal of the poll was to encourage children and young people to speak out about their experiences so their voices could be heard and heeded.

Globally, 30 million children lived outside their country of origin in 2017.<sup>2</sup> About 12 million children were refugees and asylum seekers.<sup>3</sup> Millions more have been affected by international migration. For example, some are stateless because they were born outside the borders of their parents’ home country. Others experience family disruption when their parents migrate.<sup>4</sup>

Far too often, millions of uprooted children and young people are invisible in data.<sup>5</sup> They face discrimination and isolation as they seek to make new lives for themselves. Many do not have access to national or local services and fall through the cracks of child protection systems as they cross borders. Indeed, data are scarce, and little is known about their health, their education, or how migration affects their futures.

Too often, they are talked about, but rarely are they listened to.

This new poll provides an opportunity to listen.

The results do not capture the typical experiences of all migrant and refugee children and young people because the results were not drawn from a representative sample. But the insights presented in these pages highlight some of the challenges and triumphs children and young people face when they leave their homes in search of a better future.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) recognize the importance of migration for countries of origin, transit and destination. The SDGs also acknowledge the role good migration management can play in creating a more peaceful, prosperous and sustainable planet.<sup>6</sup> Sustainable development is also a driving concern of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees, two frameworks aimed at addressing the challenges faced by migrants, refugees and host communities. To achieve the goals of these international agreements, the participation of children and young people will be essential.

The two global compacts include strong commitments to children and young people. They embrace the principle of acting in the best interest of the child and pledge protection and respect for their rights. They also acknowledge that international migration has been a “source of prosperity, innovation and sustainable development in our globalized world.”<sup>7</sup>

As implementation of the global compacts begins, it is essential to remember that children and young people are a significant part of international migration. If their vulnerabilities and needs are not addressed with concrete commitments backed by investment, implementation of the global compacts will fail.

With the right support, however, uprooted children and young people can drive success. Millions of young migrants and refugees have the potential to be great innovators, job creators, skilled workers and pillars of families and communities around the world. Connecting them with the information and services they need to start off in a new home – including education, health care and protection – is an investment in their future and the future of nations around the world.

“

*“It is hard to be a foreigner...You are never from here and you are not from there anymore. The accent always betrays you.”*

*– 23-year-old male, Brazil<sup>8</sup>*





### Portrait: Harold<sup>9</sup>

17, from Venezuela

---

Harold is travelling to Lima, Peru, to start a new life. When packing to leave, he discarded many things that did not fit in his bag. But he did pack one special object: his high school medal. The medal, he hopes, represents the first of many achievements in his life.



## THE POLL: HOW THE INFORMATION WAS GATHERED

As part of an effort to listen to the voices of uprooted children and young people, UNICEF worked with U-Report to ask a series of questions in September and October 2018. Most of the questions were multiple choice, but one allowed for open-ended responses.

Using SMS and social media platforms, the poll reached out to more than 320,000 people, and about 45,000 responded. More than 8,000 of the respondents said they were migrants or refugees. About half of these migrants and refugees were aged 14–24.

The respondents are not a representative sample of all migrants and refugees, because they do not come from a full range of demographic groups, countries of origin or current geographic locations. In addition, the poll respondents are not representative because they have access to the internet or mobile phones, and they have at least basic skills with technology, which is not true of all refugees and migrants.

It is also important to note that participants in the poll sign themselves up for U-Report and are responsible for providing accurate information about their age and sex, and the country where they are registering to participate – information that is not independently verified.

While the poll results are not representative of all migrant and refugee children, they provide valuable testimony from thousands of children and young people and offer insight into experiences too often hidden from public view.

Though the poll collected information from respondents 14 and older, the responses presented in this report focus on children and young people aged 14–24, a group considered old enough to respond to the questions UNICEF asked. As noted above, the report focuses on respondents in this age group who self-identified as migrants or refugees.

### Box 1. U-Report: Responses in real time

U-Report is a free social messaging tool that allows anyone from anywhere in the world to speak out on the issues they care about. UNICEF and partners developed the platform to capture a range of voices on critical development issues. U-Report also encourages citizen-led development, facilitates responses to humanitarian emergencies and magnifies local voices globally to create positive change.

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

[https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5\\_6114](https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_6114)

