



# Internal Displacement for Children and Young People

## Intersectionality in Abuse in Conflict

**Response to:** UN Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement - Call for Submissions and Inputs

**Submitting entity:** United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth, Migration Working Group

**Submitted to:** The United Nations Secretary General High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement

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### I. Overview:

Throughout times of conflict, flight or times of displacement, particular groups are most vulnerable – children and youth make up a fundamentally vulnerable group. They are more vulnerable to exploitation at all levels as well as physical, mental, sexual and psychological abuse. Children may be separated from those take care of them, and are susceptible to being put at risk of sexual abuse and exploitation and recruitment into armed forces. Their entire childhoods and adolescent lives could potentially be disrupted. With little to no access to education and scarce opportunities as they grow

older, they ultimately find themselves ill-equipped to assume the roles and responsibilities of adulthood.

The UNHCR asserts that over half of the world's refugee population is made up of children.<sup>1</sup> Youth, aged between 15 and 24 years old also constitute 11% of all international migrants<sup>2</sup>, and a significant fraction of populations affected by forced displacement. Many young people and children will spend their entire childhoods and adolescent lives away from home, and at most times, separated from their

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laws and guidelines, family and other support unit structures, community skills) are taken into account in disaster planning at a local level, informed and upheld by national frameworks. Youth should be properly represented in discussion committees, ad-hoc mechanisms as well as in the platforms which

**Comprehensive financial, legal, social and governance reforms** are pivotal in order to facilitate and support the meaningful engagement of youth in the refugee and IDP systems and within the refugee and migration debates subsequently. Independent of these important reforms and partnerships between youth and other diverse stakeholders, it will be difficult to achieve sustainable solutions for forcibly not only the displaced populations themselves, but also the communities which will ultimately host them.

### **III. The Role of Development, Peace, Climate Change and Disaster Reduction Action: Fostering Integrated Approaches**

Integrated responses in the relevance and role of humanitarian, development, peace, climate and disaster reduction need to take place again, across multiple intersectional themes. These variables are encompass:

**Joint Reviews of Governmental, Regional, Local, and International Actor Plans, Frameworks, and Mechanisms for Disaster Response:** Specifically for internally displaced peoples, these joint reviews should include youth representatives, ideally spread across different locations, race/ethnicity groups, and financial backgrounds. Mechanisms should be put in place to ensure that local and regional representatives receive training and capacity building skills to properly contribute to these discussions. This could be done through specialized school training programs, as well as discussed with community leaders in areas where youth have less access to education and be geared towards providing a path for these youth representatives to positions in local government and within the UN system. These should be regularly considered for preventative measures, particularly in identifying at-risk areas and communities, and building resilience programs.

**Working with Governments:** In order to involve topics such as development, peace, and climate change in schools' curriculum for students to be aware of challenges they might face in their surrounding

because they have particular needs that can't be addressed under the current framework, such as education. Because education is a fundamental human right enumerated in various treaties and conventions, the international community could step in to ensure IDPs are able to exercise this right.

**For-profit disaster recovery**, such as in the wake of the Haitian earthquake, excludes the local populace generally, and children and youth specifically. When relief funds flow through private actors, that

The opposite is true in the MENA region. Because the international community struggles to trace and locate IDPs, internally displaced children are at risk of being trafficked.

**Revealing True Demographic Compositions:** With respect to developing countries like India, there is no official portal for the actual numbers of IDPs or even migrant workers for that matter. They are at

