



Expert Workshop
Children on the Move
Building Migration Data Capacities



CHILDREN ON THE MOVE

BUILDING MIGRATION DATA CAPACITIES

Rabat, 20-22 March 2019

Workshop report







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Children on the Move: Building Migration Data Capacities

Introduction

The expert workshop “Children on the Move: Building Migration Data Capacities” was held in Rabat, Morocco on 20-22 March, 2019 against the background of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR). Both compacts, in the context of the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, have identified as a priority the need to develop the collection, analysis and dissemination of data to improve governance and develop policies and programs specifically tailored to the need for protection of children on the move.

As mentioned in the first objective of the GCM, the signatories: *“commit to strengthen the global evidence base on international migration by improving and investing in the collection, analysis and dissemination of accurate, reliable, comparable data, disaggregated by sex, age, migration status and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, while upholding the right to privacy under international human rights law and protecting personal data. We further commit to ensure this fosters research, guides coherent and evidence-based policy-making and well-informed public discourse, and allows for effective monitoring and evaluation of implementation of commitments over time.”*

Data gaps and inconsistencies and incomparable indicators seriously impact the ability of countries and international organizations to effectively protect migrant and forcibly displaced children. As spelled out in the United Nations document *A World that Counts: Mobilising the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development*, poor quality data can mislead; a lack of disaggregated data can make invisible entire population groups, and delayed data lead to missed opportunities for protection and prosperity.¹ If data are not disaggregated according to age and gender, it is difficult to assess children’s needs and ensure their protection, care and access to essential services and education. To give all children an equal opportunity to exercise their rights as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, implementing agencies, offices and ministries must have timely, high-quality data to define evidence-based resource planning and mobilization.

With the aim of enhancing coordination and strategic partnerships, the Ministry Delegate in Charge of Moroccans Living Abroad and Migration Affairs (MDCMREAM), the Kingdom of Morocco, IOM, UNICEF and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark convened this expert workshop. The event sought to jumpstart the development of a global approach to improve data on children on the move. It also sought to launch a concerted and cooperative effort to meeting and sharing the minimum data required to understand the needs and ensuring the protection of migrant and forcibly displaced children. The workshop brought together over 95 representatives from leading civil society organizations, national governments and intragovernmental organizations, as well as researchers and academics to identify priority areas and pilot solutions to the data challenges currently hampering activities intended to protect children on the move, as well as to meet and measure progress towards the goals and commitments laid out in the GCM, the GCR, and the 2030 Agenda.

¹ United Nation’s Secretary General’s Independent Expert Advisory Group on a Data Revolution for Sustainable Development (2014). *A World that Counts: Mobilising the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development*. New York: United Nations Global Pulse. Available from: <http://www.undatarevolution.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/A-World-That-Counts2.pdf>.

The participants convened to:

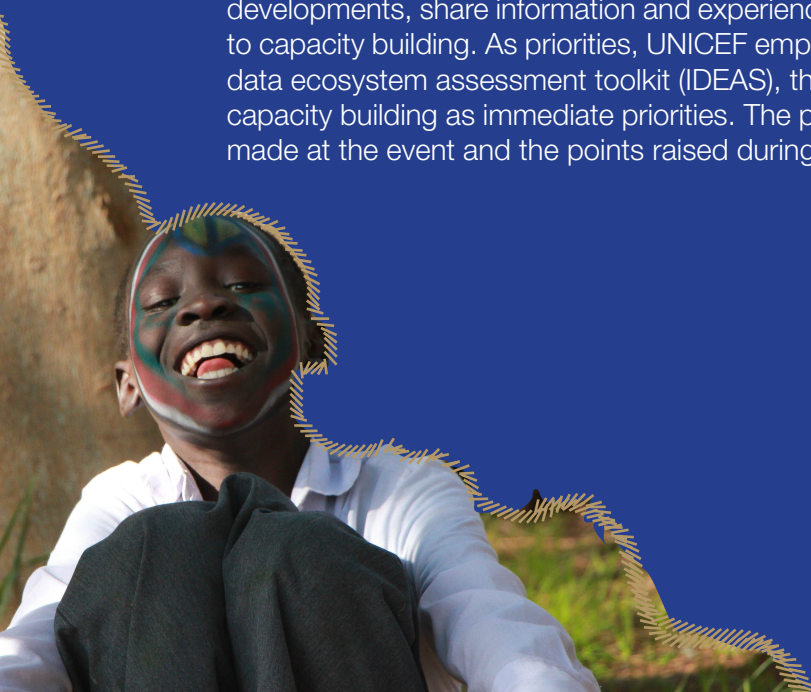
1. Identify critical data and evidence gaps to be addressed as a means for the international community to better protect children on the move.
2. Propose strategies to fill key cross-sectoral data gaps and to support policy initiatives informed by evidence, relying on proven methods and good practices
3. Collect inputs for a global approach to improve data on children on the move to be developed in the post-workshop phase.
4. Exchange local, national, regional and international good practices on data collection analysis and dissemination
5. Build a network of champions for data on children on the move to drive the data and evidence agenda forward across fields/organizations and collaboratively.

Experts in attendance emphasized that data alone will not lead to better migration outcomes: data instead are a critical enabler of them. Data support decision-making and informs policy options, facilitate the implementations of policies directing interventions to where and when they are most needed, and allow for the evaluation of policy outcomes. To date insufficient attention has been paid to data capacity-building, and there is a lack of focus on building capacities for policy makers to use data, largely as a consequence of the lack of migration data strategies. The workshop therefore, was a step towards making the strengthening of data capacities and in so improving data on migrant children a priority.

At the conclusion of the event, UNICEF outlined a series of key areas that need to be worked on to improve data for children on the move. These are:

- The mapping of data gaps and challenges
- Proposing indicator frameworks for migrant and displaced children
- The identification of measurement challenges and the articulation of solutions
- The development of a data-specific research agenda
- Sharing national experiences and best practices
- Strengthening capacities at all levels.

The event closed with a call to continue the conversations jumpstarted at the workshop through the formation of a network where participants can contribute to methodological developments, share information and experiences, advocate for quality data and contribute to capacity building. As priorities, UNICEF emphasized the need for the development of the data ecosystem assessment toolkit (IDEAS), the development of indicator frameworks and capacity building as immediate priorities. The present report summarizes the presentations made at the event and the points raised during group discussions.



Setting the scene: Data on Children on the Move

The inaugural panel involved a discussion of the efforts to improve data on children as outlined by the GCM and GCR. This included a description of the joint Call to Action for better data on Children on the Move ² by UNICEF, IOM, UNHCR, Eurostat and OECD. The Call includes five action points:

- The disaggregation of data by age and sex
- Covering key issues related to children affected by migration and displacement
- Make better use of existing data and share it
- Coordinate data efforts within countries and across borders
- Make special efforts to collect and analyse data on children

The Call is an appeal to Member States to prioritize actions to address the gaps in knowledge that leave many children and adolescents bereft of the protection and services they need, and to include the child-specific considerations present in both the GCM and GCR. The panellists explained how while reliable, timely and accessible data and evidence are essential to understand how migration and forced displacement affect children and their families, we still lack significant knowledge on the conditions faced by children on the move, despite their increase in numbers. ³ Data gaps make it difficult to get a real sense of the scale and patterns of global migration, not to mention data are often not collected regularly or systematically, and their quality are poor. These gaps particularly impact the understanding of the dynamics faced by migrant and forcibly displaced children, who are often invisible given the focus on adult migration, the competing and varying definition of “child” and “childhood,” ⁴ and the wide range of laws, rights and entitlements concerning children which ultimately hamper comparisons. Data are even more limited in the case of undocumented, displaced, or stateless children, children left behind by migrant parents, and those who have gone missing or lost their lives in the context of their journeys.⁵

The panellists outlined the need for improved data on children’s movement and welfare, as well as for better norms and practices to ensure data quality and to facilitate their use and sharing. Efforts to devise better policies, track progress, and monitor the impact and implementation of measures (including the SDGs and Global Compacts) can only be achieved by investing on improved data on migration and displacement with a specific focus on children. In line with the Call, panellists in the first session also highlighted the need for disaggregated data according to age categories and factors like disability, education level and immigration status.

Data and evidence are important, indicated Danzhen You (UNICEF’s Division of Data, Research and Policy), for they guide coherent and evidence-based policy making. They also support evidence-based programming and responses, as well as efforts to achieve solutions. Data allow for effective monitoring and evaluation, and are fundamental at crafting a well-informed public discourse. But there are also challenges. There is a lack of uniform, international definitions and measurement standards; populations are constantly on the move; many continue with their journeys and change status by virtue of crossing

² UNICEF, IOM, UNHCR, Eurostat, OECD (2018). A Call to Action: Protecting Children on the Move Starts with Better Data. New York: UNICEF. Available from: https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Migration_advocacy_Feb20.pdf

³ In the 2015-2016 there were at least five times more children migrating alone than in the 2010-2011 time period. Furthermore, half of all refugees are children. UNICEF (2017). A Child is a Child: Protecting Children on the move

from violence, abuse and exploitation.

New York: UNICEF. Available from: https://www.unicef.org/publications/files/UNICEF_A_child_is_a_child_May_2017_EN.pdf.

⁴ In referring to children this report adapts the definition expressed in Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (everyone under the age of 18). The terms ‘youth’ or ‘young person’ were also used in the workshop by panelists to identify people between the ages of 15 to 24.

⁵ See Laczko, F., Black, J., and Singleton, A. (2019). Fatal Journeys 4: Missing Migrant Children. Global Migration Data Analysis Centre. Berlin: International Organization for Migration. Available from: https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/fatal_journeys_4.pdf.

borders. It is also difficult to capture data concerning household practices. Data are not systematically disaggregated, shared or utilized; many organizations and member states have no incentive to collect them, or lack the capacity to do so. Paradoxically, there are unprecedented demands for data and statistics for effective monitoring of SDGs.

For Frank Laczko (IOM's GMDAC), collecting better data on migrant children allows for the development of improved protections against risk. He too recognized data's importance for monitoring global targets under the Global Compacts, but also in the evaluation of the impact of projects and programmes (including those carried out by IOM and UNICEF). Assessing the implications of migration policies for children's integration, and understanding drivers of future migration so to allow states to build migration capacities can only be accomplished through the collection of quality data.

In sum, both panellists emphasized the need to increase the interest and the demand for the collection and use of migration-related data, to strengthen data capacities, and for new technology and sources of information to be deployed. Together these actions can lead to opportunities to work collaboratively to ensure high quality, timely and reliable data, which can then help monitor the SDGs and the implementation the GCM and GCR.

You further emphasized the need for collaboration as a way to strengthen data standards, support data collection mechanisms, improve protection response, and allow for the improved protection of children's rights. Data alone, Laczko stated, will not lead to better migration outcomes, but are a critical enabler of them. Data support decision-making and inform policy options, facilitate the implementation of policies, direct interventions to where and when they are most needed, and allow for the evaluation of policy outcomes. To date insufficient priority has been paid to data capacity-building, mainly as a consequence of the lack of migration data strategies. The workshop therefore, was a step towards the strengthening of data capacities and in so making data on migrant children a priority.

Data for governance: how to use data for programmes and policies

This panel sought to emphasize the importance of evidence-based policymaking to protect children on the move and addressing key data governance challenges. It included presentations by IOM on ethics, data privacy and protection, the creation of unified migration data analytical systems, and the compilation of data on migrant children in Europe and Central Asia.

Christine Adam from IOM emphasized the need for privacy and protection mechanisms that are specific to children in migration contexts. Research based on sound ethical principles is critical to ensure the protection of children throughout their journeys. But it should also be relevant, useful and valid to children themselves. For this reason, research projects must also engage children in a way that is appropriate and respectful, and that is cognizant of power relations. Engaging children in the development and implementation of research can further research and may in fact allow for the analysis and interpretation of the data.

Since the conditions under which children's journeys often occur are often extreme and precarious, it is also fundamental that the potential harms and benefits related to the research are well identified in advance. Failure to do so could negatively impact the short and long-term safety and wellbeing of the children and their communities. For this reason securing consent, and especially maintaining privacy and confidentiality are key.

Nino Ghvinadze, from the Secretariat of the State Commission on Migration Issues of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia, shared details on the Georgian Unified Migration Data

Analytical System (UMAS). The project's goal is to build the migration data governance framework of Georgia. UMAS, a national infrastructure for migration data analysis, combines immigration-related administrative data stored by different ministries and state-agencies involved in migration management in Georgia, and makes said data available and suitable for risk analysis and forecasting. Georgia decided to bring together migration data as they were widely dispersed, often not comparable, and frequently published in different formats. The move in UMAS include death and birth certificates, residence permits, school and university registries, asylum claims, and border crossings. With UMAS, the Georgian migration authorities have advanced their capacity to develop sound migration policies based in advanced data analysis in line with new technologies and standards.

Tsvetomira Bidart, from UNICEF's Europe and Central Asia Regional Office described the gaps and challenges concerning data in the region. Data on age, gender, nationality, and family status are for example not disaggregated in national statistics. Bidart also expressed concerns over what she referred to as "sensitive" data –the kinds involving detention, return and deportation cases– , as well as those concerning acts of violence, abuse, exploitation against children (including child marriage). Capacity, timeliness and public availability of data also constitute pressing challenges throughout Europe and Central Asia. However, attempts to obtain different and more coherent data have also been launched. For example, national and regional administrative data systems provide important information on asylum and migration, child protection, education, health, and social protection. The use of qualitative data and research have also advanced knowledge in the region. Enhanced data collection and provision at the EU-level would enable an effective assessment of gaps in protection systems, and the fulfilment of children's rights. They would also support evidence-based EU policy analysis and development to address the key protection and integration-related issues concerning children in migration. ⁶

Toolbox and data and capacity systems in states

Claus Folden and Claus Hansen from UNICEF presented and discussed the Integrated Data Ecosystem Assessment and Strengthening Tool (IDEAS). As an instrument, IDEAS was developed to build the capacity of states to collect, manage, analyse and use data on children on the move. IDEAS brings together UNICEF, IOM, UNSD and UNHCR, as well as national statistical offices and relevant ministries of participating member states to map existing data. It seeks to identify data and knowledge gaps and make recommendations allowing for their reduction. It does not intend to collect a specific kind of statistical data. Instead, it maps data already available through a questionnaire developed to gather information on data collection, sharing and hosting.

The IDEAS questionnaire is divided in two parts. The first one identifies basic statistics on international migration, data needs for national and international migration policy, and information related to the migration data strategy of member states. It does so by relying on traditional data sources: population census, surveys and administrative sources. The second part maps new data management, data dissemination and communication, interagency coordination (via international child migration statistics) and data exchange practices existing among countries. The questionnaire is supplemented by a series of specific modules that identify and address data gaps and needs on migrant and forcibly displaced children. The questionnaire is currently being administered in Thailand and Jordan and is available for implementation in other countries. Once findings are analysed, the project will generate a series of lessons learnt and provide recommendations to strengthen national data systems and capacities, and create a roadmap for follow-up activities like trainings and technical support.



⁶ See as well UNHCR and UNICEF (2018). Strengthening Current Data on Refugee and Migrant Children at the EU-Level. Available from <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/65408>.

Innovative approaches: exploring new methodologies to improve data on children in the move

This section involved the presentation of projects concerning new methods to address the gaps in data on migrant children. Ilgi Bozdog from the World Food Programme (WFP) presented a case study involving the refugee population in Turkey: their inaccessibility (in particular, that of those people who are not officially registered) had led refugee data to be limited and not reflective of the dynamics of the refugee population. There were also significant data gaps concerning other topics like refugee children's coping strategies, education, health and labour practices. The research team developed therefore a dual stage methodological approach aimed to identify largely inaccessible, previously unidentified refugee families. A first round of sampling was based on a spatial survey method (spatially representative). On a second stage respondents themselves drove recruitment through their own referrals (a combination of snowball sampling with an algorithm to calculate the probability of being sampled). The combined sampling strategy allowed WFP to reach difficult to survey, 'hidden' populations.

The study, which involved the completion of face-to-face household surveys that included detailed information health, education, labour and income, is now the first representative survey of refugees in Turkey. It revealed that unregistered refugee households were more frequently forced to use livelihood- coping strategies involving children (e.g. begging, early marriage, child labour, dropping out of school) than their registered counterparts. The study revealed that the main reason for children not to attend school was their need to work to help their families –a reason reported by 35 percent of all households. At least 31 percent of all boys had to work to contribute to household finances.

Researchers concluded that the combination of the two sampling methods allowed for the configuration of a representative sample. Statistically representative data concerning registered and unregistered refugees (including children) allowed for the identification of specific needs, and for the gathering of evidence to inform programme and policy decisions.

Wolfgang Stojetz from the International Security and Development Centre (ISDC) reported the findings of a study on the measurement of exposure to extreme adversity, carried out also through the administration of household surveys. The study specifically measured displaced persons' experiences, behavior and welfare under situations of violent conflict, but the methodology can be easily applied to other adverse contexts. Data on persons' experiences, behavior and welfare under adversity can be matched --based on spatial and temporal markers--with other types of data (including political data, such as "objective" measures of collective violence; weather data like drought spells, and economic data, such as local productivity). Together the data help understand why children on the move migrate, their experiences and how these affect their behaviors, wellbeing and development. ISDC research has produced data on children of at least three kinds: **1)** data on the experiences of children within households; **2)** data on household-level outcomes, such as household migration histories; and **3)** child-specific data derived from interviews and measurements, such as anthropometric information.

Shengjie Lai, from WorldPop Minder presented work on the use of mobile phone data in the preparation of national migration estimates. Traditionally, data to measure population movements have included census data, cross-border and traffic surveys, and household

travel history surveys, which allow to measure long term, sporadic, seasonal and even daily mobility patterns. WorldPop's methodology relies on new sources of data: air and shipping statistics, personal GPS data, social media, and more specifically, anonymized mobile phone records. Mobile phone call detail records (CDRs) –a registry of call records made and received and registered by specific cellphone towers and owned by providers of mobile phone services –can be used to determine mobility trends related to specific populations. WorldPop carries out this analysis under the supervision of service providers, and the raw data (the kind that could allow for the identification of callers and call-receivers) never leave the cell phone operator's system in order to protect the privacy of those carrying out calls. Analyzed, these anonymized data provide aggregated mobility estimates, which are then made accessible to the public for analysis. Anonymized, individual-level records of cellphone billable events located to cell towers provide measurements and subnational detail of short-term movements and internal migration. Data are however difficult to access and share in an unbiased manner. Yet the integration with other traditional and new sources of data can overcome some of these methodological challenges.

Data Gaps and Capacity Needs to improve the evidence base

This panel involved presentations of local and national-level data systems and good practices highlighting attempts to address data gaps on migrant children.

Irene Schoefberger from IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre described the experience of the project *Capacity Building for Governments in West and North Africa*. She explained how in the region, administrative data on children on the move could provide important information to create regional strategies and action plans. And yet, the data are underutilized, of varying quality and scattered across various ministries and agencies. Furthermore, they are often not disaggregated, and are difficult to compare and integrate within and between countries.

The project therefore aimed to identify relevant sources of administrative data, and to strengthen data collection and analytical skills in order to provide evidence-based policy making. It also sought to improve data disaggregation by age and other indicators to facilitate the protection of children on the move. The project followed a three-step approach: it started through a series of national data assessments and consultations, followed by the facilitation of targeted data training, to then promote reporting and dissemination of data at the national level.

It is expected that upon completion the project will result in a strengthened cooperation between data stakeholders and policymakers, improve the knowledge of administrative data sources and other existing data on child migration, as well as data collection and analysis. Improved data access and data interpretation skills on the part of policymakers, sharing of good practices among relevant actors, and improved data disaggregation capacities are also expected to eventually allow for the development of evidence-based protection policies.

Victoria Prieto, from the Social Sciences Faculty at the University of Uruguay, shared insights from her research project documenting the experiences of a South-South migration. Titled *Ethnosurvey on Recent Immigration* (ENIR), the project aimed to map Dominican, Venezuelan and Cuban families' migrations to Uruguay. The project – an adaptation of

Princeton University's *Mexican Migration Project*⁷ to a migratory context in the global South – sought to capture contemporary international movements (multi-country routes), the complexity of hazardous labour trajectories among South-South migrants (for example, informal economies at origin and destination), and transnational family arrangements. Combined these data yielded information concerning the number of children living in the country of origin or in a third country, as well as who they live with. The project also collected data on whether migrant children had travelled accompanied or not; health conditions and access to health services; school attendance and full schooling by year and country to examine the impact of migration on education trajectories; and children's participation in sports and other recreational activities. Detailed trajectories for adults and children in the household were also considered.

The implementation of the project yielded important observations. First, communities responded differently to the survey. People also had varying immigration status and educational levels which impacted their mobility strategies and timelines. Furthermore, the project was carried out by referrals, which altered the research timeline –since recruitment was beyond the control of the researchers, the time spent in the field doubled the initial projection. In the phases that followed that realization, researchers incorporated the communities in the research development, which allowed to develop a strategy to speed up recruitment. A decision was made to hire Dominican and Peruvian interviewers whose shared background with respondents facilitated recruitment and rapport. Lastly, WhatsApp worked as a useful and low-cost way to contact participants. Empowering respondents by allowing them to define and communicate relevance of the study for their community ultimately facilitated recruitment and the implementation of the project, while fostering social trust.

Data Gaps and Capacity Needs to improve the evidence base: breakout group


As a follow up to the panel described in the prior section, the entire group of attendees was split in small groups to identify and discuss:

1. The critical data gaps and capacity needs in local and national data systems;
2. Best practices in local and national level systems;
3. Building the capacities of states to collect better data for policy.

Critical gaps and capacity needs in local and national data systems

This question involved identifying the most critical data gaps and challenges in collecting data on children on the move, the challenges faced in data sharing, and what was needed for sustainable solutions. Almost all participants identified the lack of disaggregated data as a top concern. Data specific to age and gender are often unavailable. If at all available, data also have a tendency not to be the domain of a particular agency or ministry. Instead, they are scattered and of varying quality. Different bodies have different indicators, and so it is often difficult to compare data, and/or to integrate them into the development of strategies or programming.

The group stated that data disaggregation by age and sex can further allow for the identification of child migrants, identify the risks they are exposed to, and the specific vulnerabilities they face. Disaggregation was repeatedly identified as an essential step towards effective national protection policies and their sustainability.

 ⁷ The Mexican Migration Project “is a unique source of data that enables researchers to track patterns and processes of contemporary Mexican immigration to the United States. The project is a multi-disciplinary research effort that generates public use data on the characteristics and behavior of Mexican migrants.” For a description of the project, see <https://mmp.opr.princeton.edu/>.

The groups also raised concerns over the ability to implement practical and ethical considerations for data governance. The need for consent and assent in data collection processes, and the inclusion of assurances for anonymity and confidentiality were also highlighted.

Best practices in local and national level systems

Participants from Morocco described a recently launched data reform to create a unique social registry that allows for the centralization of various national databases (namely, those from the Ministries of immigration, health, education, and child protection) and facilitate the analysis of data related to registered national, foreign and migrant populations.

Another aspect of the data reform involved the development of the national strategy on child protection, which aimed to fully integrate all children into the national child protection system regardless of their immigration status. A report describing the reform was in the process of being finalized at the time of the workshop and was expected to be available from IOM/UNICEF country offices in the coming months.

In Romania, UNICEF supported an initiative seeking to provide protection to children left behind by migrating parents. The country's law for the protection and promotion of child rights was amended to include a specific section related to the protection of these children, establishing a procedure to monitor child rearing and care and to determine which services children could receive. The goal was to improve the legal framework and socio-educational policies targeting the children of migrant parents. Technical support and inputs on data harmonization, social assistance and socio-cultural integration were also put in place to identify children's experiences and mobilize resources.

Participants also brought up the importance of incorporating ethical guidelines, considerations and dimensions into data collection practices. They re-affirmed the 'do no harm' principle and identified in this context the systemic absence of protection protocols that regulate data collection processes –given the precarity of children's migrations, they are likely to face risks. While these may be identified, children often lack viable alternatives or paths to protection.

Enhancing capacity building – the transference of best practices

There were also discussions concerning the transferring of best practices from one context to another. Participants emphasized the need to keep legislative frameworks and cultural specificities in mind, as well as to consider capacity and the potential for (and lack thereof) collaboration among national authorities. Identifying partners on the ground who are committed to the process and who can dedicate time and effort to see a project to fruition was also identified as key. Participants emphasized the importance of keeping in mind that many countries may already have good practices in place, and that the introduction of new ones should not take place before understanding these already-existing systems –in other words, attempts to bring about new experiences must have prior consideration of what already works well, and identify what can be improved and why.

What are good data? Defining targets and indicators in key thematic areas

This panel involved presentations of key data challenges, and the sharing of research findings on specific thematic areas—including regular migration, migrant children in irregular situations, and refugee and internally displaced children.

Eliza Galos presented a series of data and research insights from the project “*Child Trafficking Globally: what do we know?*” carried out by IOM. Existing research shows that migrant, refugee and internally displaced children are particularly at risk of trafficking and exploitation. Trafficking of children for sexual exploitation, forced labour and other forms of exploitation can happen anywhere in the world, and are therefore not unique to children on the move. However, data sources, key statistics and studies specifically exploring the migrant children and trafficking nexus are limited.

IOM partnered with other organizations to combine data on victims of trafficking in what is now known as the *Counter-Trafficking Data Collaborative*,⁸ a global data portal on human trafficking with primary data contributed by organizations around the world. The Portal contains information on more than 90,000 individual cases. Data are disaggregated by age, sex and type of exploitation. An anonymized version of the data is available to the public in an effort to break down information-sharing barriers and allowing access for counter-trafficking efforts of up-to-date, reliable data on human trafficking, including the kind impacting children.

While data sources are valuable to understand the scale of trafficking and children, they also have important limitations. For example, Galos explained that while the quantity of operational data available through the project is large, it is not necessarily a synonym of the higher prevalence of trafficking. In other words, large numbers may not reveal the true scale of trafficking for children, but rather be reflective of the counter-trafficking response. Quantifying and identifying trafficking cases is challenging. There is insufficient access to context where trafficking and forced labour may prevail, like countries experiencing conflict or natural disasters. Data collection requires time and investment. Also, data are not available for all countries/locations, and where available, they are not always comprehensive.

Certain countries may only criminalize trafficking for sexual exploitation, transnational trafficking or child trafficking, therefore their data is not comparable/compatible with that of other countries with different criminal legislation. Data on boys and men are often absent, perhaps given the perception that only women and girls can be the target of sexual exploitation.

Children’s experiences are generally underrepresented in research. When present, they are primarily of qualitative nature and tend to involve small samples. There are also ethical concerns connected to carrying out research with children who have experienced violence and victimization—for example, some researchers may opt to altogether skip data collection in an attempt to avoid revictimizing respondents. Data on trafficking are less available than in other contexts—they are missing, or not interpreted as trafficking. Lastly, there is limited information on perpetrators, and criminal convictions for their actions are still scarce.

Shannon Hayes, who coordinates the UNICEF/IOM Children on the Move *Project for the Displacement Tracking Matrix* (DTM), also spoke about data challenges. The DTM is designed to regularly and systematically capture, process and disseminate information to provide

 ⁸ See <https://www.ctdatacollaborative.org/>.

a better understanding of the movements and evolving needs of displaced populations, whether on site or en-route. The DTM is a methodological framework that captures and monitors displacement and population movement. This is accomplished by monitoring flows, carrying out surveys on return intention, community perceptions, displacement solutions and migration flows, and by looking at registrations (rapid emergency registrations, registration verifications and biometric data). Not all DTM components are rolled out in every country: they are implemented according to need.

There are advantages associated with the data utilized for the DTM framework. The data provide a high-level snapshot of humanitarian needs, gaps, risks and trends. They also have broad geographic coverage. DTM is applied on multiple rounds to analyse and capture trends, and it is also multi-sectoral (that is, monitors populations or locations, in addition to some sector-specific data). It is also carried out mostly through key informant interviews and observations, and triangulated to increase its validity.

There are however, some challenges related to its implementation. For example, DTM relies on a needs-analysis approach that looks for evidence rather than for risks. Key partners often do not know how to use the data. The DTM has a vast number of indicators, many of which are only used sparsely. There are also concerns over the reliability of some indicators (for example, key informants access to the population may be limited or their responses reflect individual and/or personal biases). Lastly, there is not always a thorough following of the information-management process. For these reasons, DTM cannot yield information that requires specific sectoral knowledge. It cannot provide statistically representative information. It does not replace in-depth assessments or monitoring tools and is not intended to monitor programmes.

Aina Helen Saetre spoke about the engagement of UNHCR with tools and platforms to collect data on people on the move. She highlighted the work of the Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGRIS), the Demographic Projection Tool (DPT) and the Refugee Education Management Information System (REMIS). EGRIS was established in 2016 in response to the growing numbers of forcibly displaced people worldwide, and in response to the need for better evidence-based policy and practice. EGRIS's participants were concerned about the persistent challenges to generate statistics, and emphasized the need for a country-led, experience-informed process to develop solid reporting with realistic and tangible recommendations. Under a mandate from the UN Statistical Commission to develop international recommendations on refugee and IDP statistics, EGRIS became an opportunity to develop improved statistics for enhanced policy and practice. In March of 2018 EGRIS released a series of international recommendations on refugee statistics, which constitutes a reference guide for national and international work concerning data on refugees and asylum-seekers. This publication calls for the inclusion of children and unaccompanied and separated children in statistics, and for them to be distinguished from adults from the onset of any analysis stage.

The Demographic Projection Tool (DPT) is based on the existing demographic projection tool already customized for UNHCR needs, into which users can enter their own data, using standard patterns from other UNHCR sites. DPT does include age-disaggregated data. REMIS is a sector specific, school-based data collection system, which can be used in instances when national data do not include schools for refugee children, and in so mending the gap on refugee-education data. It is intended to promote the inclusion of refugee children and adolescents in national education systems. REMIS enrolment data are disaggregated by gender, refugee/ host community and numbers of children with special needs.

What is good data? Defining targets and indicators in key thematic areas—breakout groups

For this panel participants were separated in three groups. They discussed key data challenges in selected thematic areas: regular migration and regularized migrant children, irregular migration, trafficking and smuggling of children, and refugee and internally displaced children. There was an emphasis on the gaps created by the visibility of some experiences (namely, trafficking and irregular migration) and of how they obscure other experiences while oversimplifying rather complex phenomena.

Regular migration and regularized migrant children

Despite their ability to move legally, the experiences of regular and regularized migrant children, including the process leading to their integration into destination societies, are not really known. They have not been the subject of much empirical research, and therefore knowledge concerning the ways they access services and education or navigate integration processes, to cite a few dynamics, is scant.

Participants described examples from their countries, where consolidation of databases, data disaggregation and assessments concerning child care agreements have generated some insights into the experiences of migrant children. There was a reference among participants to a project in Greece, concerning capacity building. The technical support provided to the National Centre for Social Solidarity allowed for its database to process and analyse data concerning refugee children for more effective case management and speedier placement into the caregiving system. Improved access to data allowed for two laws –one on care arrangements and one on guardianship –to be implemented.

Participants also reflected on how the European Commission has called on member states to improve measures on the protection of children on the move through the improvement of national statistics. UNICEF and UNHCR have developed specific recommendations based on key issues and data needs for advocacy, policy and programming.

Irregular Migration, trafficking and smuggling of children

Participants shared their experiences conducting research on migrant children in irregular situations. They all agree that children's lack of authorized immigration status makes them vulnerable to exploitation and victimization. Yet participants also acknowledged the need for a critical analysis of the existing data beyond victimhood. Approaches to analyse and collect data on trafficking and smuggling should be refined. The emphasis on documenting the experience across the Mediterranean into Europe has left vast gaps on data concerning other migration cartographies globally.

Better guidance on ethical obligations was also emphasized, as well as the need for improved data protection. Data collection methods should emphasize child participation, but in an ethical and safe manner. Researchers could do a better job at identifying and employing alternative methods of data collection to document children's experiences in smuggling and trafficking –participatory research methods stand as an option that could be adapted to different contexts and research approaches.

There is also a need to improve researcher's access to children who may be in detention and detention-like settings, who might have been targeted by exploitative smuggling practices, or who might have endured trafficking and trafficking-like situations. Yet these interactions must also keep in mind the outcomes for the children, and ways to ensure they also benefit from the research.

Refugee and internally displaced children

Participants agreed that reliable, timely and accessible data and evidence are essential to understand how forcible displacement affects children and their families. Yet they also recognized there are still not enough data concerning forcibly displaced and refugee children. There are limited data on who they are, where they were, where they are going and why. Some populations and geographic corridors have been more targeted for data collection efforts (for example, Syria and the experiences of Syrian children) leading the experiences of other groups to remain under the radar.

There are no global numbers on family reunification following separation due to migration or displacement. This is also because families many times must rely on multiple legal and clandestine mechanisms for their mobility, which results in them using different visa categories that may classify them or not as people on the move. The lack of recognized or legal status heightens the vulnerability of children. There is therefore a need for cross-border cooperation and partnerships among member states to provide migrant and refugee children and young people with essential services, and that allow for children to transfer and maintain their rights as they travel.

In sum, participants highlighted the need to improve data in terms of disaggregation, comparability and timeliness. Asylum and migration statistics, especially those concerning age, gender, immigration, nationality and family status are urgently needed. Participants also expressed the need to strengthen data collection and reporting on vulnerable children –in particular, those in migration detention, unaccounted for, outside reception systems, and those impacted by acts like violence, abuse, trafficking and child marriage. Improved numbers on missing and dead migrant children at a global scale would also improve the ability to understand the risks children face during their journeys, and to improve the level of response member states and organizations provide to their families.



Conclusions: Toward a global approach for improving data on children on the move

The closing section was led by Ann Singleton, Senior Advisor to IOM's GMDAC, and Danzhen You from UNICEF. Singleton explained how for many, improving the quality and coverage of migration data may only be a small contribution towards improving policy. Nonetheless, it constitutes a necessary task – one complicated by the under-reporting of three variables: childhood status, immigration status and age. None are easy to define for they are articulated differently across the globe and over time. Furthermore, data sources are often not compatible, and fail to provide comparable or reliable data. Singleton also stated much more can be achieved with sufficient resources, cooperation, collaboration and knowledge exchange. For data to be improved and better understood efforts towards these goals must inform future data collection efforts.

Danzhen You called for the adoption of a global approach for improving data on children on the move based on the demands and needs of member states, and as expressed by the participants during the meeting. She highlighted the existence of significant data gaps and the urgent need to strengthen data specific to children. She also recognized the fact that many actors are already conducting significant efforts to generate quality data on children on the move, like UN agencies, intergovernmental organizations, member states representatives, and other organizations –including EGMS and EGRIS, for example. There is a need however to bring them together.

At the conclusion of the event, You outlined a series of key areas that need to be worked on to improve data for children on the move. These are:

- The mapping of data gaps and challenges
- Proposing indicator frameworks for migrant and displaced children
- The identification of measurement challenges and the articulation of solutions
- The development of a data-specific research agenda
- Sharing national experiences and best practices
- Strengthening capacities at all levels.

The event closed with a call to continue the conversations jumpstarted at the workshop through the formation of a network of champions whose participants can contribute to methodological developments, share information and experiences, advocate for quality data and contribute to capacity building. As priorities, UNICEF emphasized the need for the development of the data ecosystem assessment toolkit (IDEAS), the development of indicator frameworks and capacity building as immediate priorities. The present report summarizes the presentations made at the event and the points raised during group discussions.







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