



## Advocacy Brief

# Youth Rights in the Global Compact on Refugees

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### MYAN Australia

MYAN Australia is funded by the Government of Australia to provide a coherent and nationally coordinated approach to policy, programming and advocacy for young people from refugee, asylum seeking and migrant backgrounds. MYAN is committed to ensuring that the rights, needs and voices of refugee youth are included in dialogue and decisions in the development of the GCR, and that their rights and particular needs are addressed in the Programme of Action.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN Australia) has prepared this advocacy brief to support the inclusion of youth<sup>1</sup> rights and needs in the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR). UNHCR's Global Youth Advisory Council (GYAC) has provided input and endorsed the brief in December 2017. The GYAC has also prepared a paper presenting recommendations on the GCR. The GYAC paper and MYAN brief are complementary and should be read alongside each other<sup>2</sup>.

This brief is intended for use by young people, civil society and others in advocating for the recognition and inclusion of refugee<sup>3</sup> youth rights in the GCR - to ensure that refugee youth are adequately protected and empowered. It includes a comprehensive set of recommendations - intended to be used by UNHCR and others in drafting the GCR Programme of Action and also by all stakeholders in the consultation process on this draft, that will take place in early 2018.

It provides context for the focus on youth rights in the GCR and draws on the outcomes of the Global Refugee Youth Consultations (GRYC), including the seven Core Actions for Refugee Youth (Core Actions) - developed through the GRYC - as an important 'roadmap' for strengthening the protection of and empowering refugee youth in the GCR.

MYAN is committed to ensuring that the rights, needs and voices of refugee youth are included in dialogue and decisions in the development of the GCR, and that their rights and particular needs are addressed in the Programme of Action.

### Summary of Recommendations<sup>4</sup>

- That the **specific rights, needs and capacities** of refugee youth (as distinct from children and adults) are recognised, protected and responded to in the **Programme of Action** as well as the CRRF **preamble** and **concluding paragraphs**.
- That the Programme of Action **create circumstances** that allow young people to **exercise their rights and utilise their capabilities**.
- That refugee youth are **meaningfully engaged** in the development and implementation of the GCR – as important actors in its **design, implementation and monitoring**.
- That host states, UNHCR, civil society, third countries and countries of origin invest in:
  - **Building the capacity of stakeholders and institutions** to: (i) meaningfully engage and empower refugee youth and (ii) provide targeted (age and needs-specific) support to refugee youth; and
  - **Building the capacity of young people and youth-led initiatives/organisations** to actively participate and contribute (including building their skills, knowledge, confidence and networks and providing platforms to influence decision-making).
- That a **mechanism is established**, such as an expert group, to **support, advise, and monitor** the implementation of the Programme of Action to ensure youth-specific policy and programming. Such a mechanism should include refugee youth representatives and work in consultation with the GYAC.

<sup>1</sup> 'Refugee youth' refers to young people aged 15-24 years (including children and adolescents), and includes young people who

<sup>2</sup> The GYAC and MYAN papers should be considered complementary, with the MYAN paper providing context for the focus of youth rights in the GCR as well as youth-specific recommendations, and the GYAC paper presenting recommendations developed by young people and including examples of good practice. GYAC paper - <http://www.unhcr.org/en-au/events/conferences/5a3bbdb97/unhcr-global-youth-advisory-council-recommendations-programme-action-global.html>

<sup>3</sup> The term 'refugee' when used throughout the paper refers to both refugees and asylum seekers

<sup>4</sup> Comprehensive recommendations for each of the CRRF four pillars are detailed in Section 3.4

## 2. CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

### 2.1 What is the Global Compact on Refugees?

In September 2016, United Nations Member States unanimously adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (NY Declaration). The NY Declaration sets out important commitments to address the challenges in relation to large-scale movements of refugees and migrants, all of which have particular relevance and application to youth and adolescents. They include:

- Protect the human rights of all refugees and migrants, regardless of status. This includes the rights of women and girls and promoting their full, equal and meaningful participation in finding solutions.
- Ensure that all refugee and migrant children are receiving education within a few months of arrival.
- Prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence.
- Support those countries rescuing, receiving and hosting large numbers of refugees and migrants.
- Work towards ending the practice of detaining children for the purposes of determining their migration status.
- Strongly condemn xenophobia against refugees and migrants and support a global campaign to counter it.
- Implement a comprehensive refugee response, based on a new framework that sets out the responsibility of Member States, civil society partners and the UN system, whenever there is a large movement of refugees or a protracted refugee situation.
- Find new homes for all refugees identified by UNHCR as needing resettlement; and expand the opportunities for refugees to relocate to other countries through, for example, labour mobility or education schemes<sup>5</sup>.

The NY Declaration aims to improve the way in which the international community responds to large movements of refugees and migrants, including protracted refugee situations, through the creation of two Global Compacts:

- Global Compact on Refugees; and
- Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

The Global Compact on Refugees will include two complementary sections:

- The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), as agreed by Member States in Annex I to the NY Declaration.
- A Programme of Action that sets out actions that can be taken by all member states and by other relevant stakeholders, to support the implementation of the CRRF in the four key areas of: reception and admission, support for immediate and ongoing needs, support for host countries and communities, and durable solutions.

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<sup>5</sup> UN General Assembly (2016) *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants: resolution / adopted by the General Assembly, 3 October 2016, A/RES/71/1*. Available at: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/71/1](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/71/1)

Member States have called upon the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to develop the Global Compact on Refugees for consideration by the General Assembly in 2018. UNHCR has developed a 'Road Map' to guide the development of the CRRF (and Programme of Action). This process<sup>6</sup> includes:

- Thematic discussions in Geneva (July, October and November 2017)
- High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges (December 2017)
- Consultations on a draft Global Compact on Refugees planned for February to July 2018.

## 2.2 Why include the rights of refugee youth?

### 2.2.1 Global refugee youth numbers

There are 65.6 million people reported as forcibly displaced worldwide in 2016, the highest figure ever recorded. This included 21.3 million refugees, more than 51% of whom were under the age of eighteen years<sup>7</sup>. In the absence of current data on how many of the 21.3 million were aged between 15 and 24, we know that in 2013 approximately one third of refugees are between 10 and 24 years old<sup>8</sup>.

### 2.2.2 Specific rights and needs of refugee youth

The rights and needs of refugee youth are distinct from children and adults due to their age, developmental stage and role within their family and community. The definition of youth as aged from 15-24 encompasses various development stages as well as legal definitions of both children and adults. Children (those aged under 18 years) are afforded specific protection through the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), binding international law which requires the best interests of the child as a primary consideration in all actions concerning them<sup>9</sup>. The CRC is the most widely ratified international human rights treaty in history and provides a critical protection framework for those aged between 15 and 18.

Inherent within the concept of youth is the developmental stage of adolescence, which in various ways across cultures marks the transition from childhood to adulthood. It is a critical and distinct stage in a young person's life, characterised by significant developmental milestones:

- Identity development and formation
- Negotiating interdependence with/within family, peers, community and broader society
- Emotional, physical and cognitive development, and sexual maturation.

It is a time where young people are expected to determine and plan for life goals, including education, training and employment, and when many take on more adult roles and responsibilities. Regardless of how it is marked or expressed across cultures, it is a universal developmental stage that is commonly compounded and/or disrupted by forced displacement. Refugee youth are navigating the complexity of forced migration alongside the developmental tasks of adolescence, which can increase vulnerability. As UNHCR has noted:

<sup>6</sup> UNHCR (2017) *Towards a global compact on refugees: a roadmap*. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/58e625aa7.pdf>, p.1.

<sup>7</sup> UNHCR (2017) *Figures at a Glance*. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-au/figures-at-a-glance.html>

<sup>8</sup> UNHCR (2013) *A Global Review: UNHCR's Engagement with Displaced Youth*. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/513f37bb9.pdf>, p.9.

<sup>9</sup> Bhabha, J. & Dottridge, M. (2017) *Child Rights in the Global Compacts: Recommendations for protecting, promoting and implementing the human rights of children on the move in the proposed Global Compacts*, p.10.

*‘Protracted displacement presents obstacles for young people in ‘being able to map out a future’ or ‘develop a life plan or strategy for themselves.’ This is qualitatively different from being an older person, who has already achieved adult status.’<sup>10</sup>*

### 2.2.3 Capabilities and strengths

The rights and needs of refugee youth should not just be understood as problems of protection, or through a risk and vulnerability lens. Refugee youth and adolescents have enormous capabilities and potential. These capabilities include resourcefulness, multi-lingual and cross-cultural skills and knowledge, entrepreneurship, motivation to engage and succeed educationally, technological expertise, aspirations for the future, supporting family and community, and contributing to and engaging in civic life<sup>11</sup>. They can be critically important actors in identifying and implementing solutions that address the circumstances that create or perpetuate vulnerability and enhance protection.

As the GRYC identified, young refugees bring hope for the future and:

*‘self-organise, form groups, provide peer-to-peer support, and provide vital community services in formal and informal ways.’<sup>12</sup>*

In looking to the future, refugee youth bring particular hope and insight and it is important to include and engage them in contributing to both their own, and their community’s future needs and aspirations. Excluding young people from participating in and contributing to shaping their future, even when this can be characterised by uncertainty, can lead to disengagement and impact adversely on identity and belonging (to family, peers and community).

### 2.2.4 Recognition of refugee youth rights

Alongside the formal UNHCR process, there has been formal and informal consideration of refugee youth issues in a number of relevant UN forums in the past few years, including:

- Amman Declaration on Youth, Peace and Security<sup>13</sup>
- UN Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015)<sup>14</sup>
- UNGA Sustainable Development Goals (2015)<sup>15</sup>
- Global Refugee Youth Consultations (2016)
- Executive Committee of the High Commissioner’s Programme conclusion on Youth (October 2016)<sup>16</sup>

<sup>10</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2013) *A Global Review: UNHCR’s Engagement with Displaced Youth*. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/513f37bb9.pdf>, p.22.

<sup>11</sup> UNHCR (2002) *Refugee Resettlement: An International Handbook to Guide Reception and Integration*, Part 3.3 Investing in the Future: Refugee Children and Young People. Geneva: UNHCR. Available at <http://www.unhcr.org/4a2cfe336.html>, p. 264.

<sup>12</sup> UNHCR and Women’s Refugee Commission (WRC) (2016) *We Believe in Youth: Global Refugee Youth Consultations Final Report*. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-au/protection/globalconsult/57e1126e7/final-report.html>, p.11.

<sup>13</sup> Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security (2015) Amman Declaration on Youth, Peace and Security. Available at: <http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pdf/AMMAN%20YOUTH%20DECLARATION.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> UN Security Council (2015) *Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) [on youth, peace and security], 18 March 2016, S/RES/2250 (2015)*. Available at: <http://unoy.org/wp-content/uploads/SCR-2250.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> UN General Assembly (2015) *Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. Available at: [www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/](http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/)

<sup>16</sup> UNHCR (2016) *Youth, 31 May 2016, EC/67/SC/CRP.17*. Available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5800cdea.html>

- *The Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action* agreed at the World Humanitarian Summit: Transforming Humanitarian Action with and for Young People (2016)<sup>17</sup>
- Engagement of refugee youth in the High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Protection Challenges (2016)
- Outcomes of the UN General Assembly International Youth Day, August 2017<sup>18</sup>
- Policy forum on the role of young people in the Global Compacts on Refugee and Migration (September 2017), hosted by the International Peace Institute (IPI) and UNFPA<sup>19</sup>
- Engagement of refugee youth in the Global Compact on Refugees thematic discussions two and three (October and November 2017)
- Launch of UNHCR’s Global Youth Advisory Council (GYAC) and engagement of refugee youth at the High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Protection Challenges (2017)

### 2.2.5 Global Refugee Youth Consultations

Led by UNHCR and the Women’s Refugee Commission in 2015/16, the Global Refugee Youth Consultations (GRYC) were an ambitious global project designed to hear directly from young refugees about the challenges they face, how they can play constructive roles supporting one another and their communities, and what support they need to shape positive futures<sup>20</sup>.

Engaging with 1,482 refugee youth in 23 countries through 65 consultations the GRYC identified the key challenges facing refugee youth and developed Core Actions (see appendix 2) to address the specific challenges. These actions and recommendations provide a ‘road map’ to guide youth rights in the GCR.

### 2.2.6 Challenges

Refugee youth face particular challenges, risks and increased vulnerability across all refugee situations when safe pathways to protection are not available. These have been well documented, most recently through the Global Refugee Youth Consultations (GRYC), which noted that:

*‘although the context of each country is specific, and the dynamics of displacement are regionally distinct, the challenges that refugee youth identified are remarkably consistent.’<sup>21</sup>*

The complexity of forced displacement means that refugee youth are at high risk of exploitation or abuse. They face the risk of being trafficked, forced into gangs, or other mistreatment. This may also be complicated by earlier experiences of being forced conscription into armed groups or armed forces, sexual or physical violence, in the labour market.

Refugee youth are commonly expected to take on roles and responsibilities to support their family and this means they take on adult roles and responsibilities at an earlier age or level of maturity than may be usual in their society. Young refugees commonly assist in accessing services, navigating durable solutions and helping in the settlement process<sup>22</sup>. While this may result in accessing

<sup>17</sup> World Humanitarian Summit (2016) *Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action*. Available at: <https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/initiatives/3829>

<sup>19</sup> High level policy forum on the role of young people in the Global Compacts on Refugee and Migration was sponsored by the International Peace Institute (IPI) in partnership with UNFPA.

<sup>20</sup> UNHCR and WRC (2016) *We Believe in Youth: Global Refugee Youth Consultations Final Report*. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-au/protection/globalconsult/57e1126e7/final-report.html>, p.12.

<sup>21</sup> UNHCR and WRC (2016) *We Believe in Youth: Global Refugee Youth Consultations Final Report*. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-au/protection/globalconsult/57e1126e7/final-report.html>, p.5.



opportunities, it can also commonly result in increased vulnerability and risk due to high levels of insecurity and danger<sup>23</sup>. This risk is particularly high for refugee youth who have self-settled with their families in urban areas, are not receiving protection and assistance and also for those young people whose parents have died or families that have become separated in flight. Refugee youth face further challenges when they are separated from families and face restrictions and complications related to family reunification.

Access to services is a significant challenge facing refugee youth, with barriers commonly existing to accessing health, education and livelihoods support. Young people particularly site poor access to health care including youth-specific physical and psycho-social services, and reproductive and sexual health education and support. Barriers to accessing services include cost, distance, safe passage or local eligibility rules<sup>24</sup>.

Refugee youth report a lack of access to opportunities for employment and lack of support for livelihoods. This includes significant barriers to education and livelihoods training<sup>25</sup> (both formal and informal), including lack of adequate infrastructure, incomplete education, teaching and resources, overcrowding, transport availability and the arbitrary exclusion of young women and young people with disabilities.

There are a number of groups of refugee young people requiring special attention, or facing particular vulnerabilities, including:

- Stateless young people
- Unaccompanied and separated children including children and youth-headed households
- Youth with a disability
- LGBTI refugee youth
- Those previously engaged in armed groups
- Young women and adolescents who face heightened vulnerabilities such as sexual and gender based violence, unplanned pregnancies, early/forced marriages, and the risk of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections
- Those from social, ethnic, and religious minorities
- Young people who are trafficked for sexual exploitation or labour
- Young people of diverse sexes, sexualities and genders, and particularly victims of sexual and gender based exploitation and violence.

### *Challenges identified through the Global Refugee Youth Consultations*

The following ten challenges were identified through the consultations with youth during the Global Refugee Youth Consultations in 2016 (see appendix 1):<sup>26</sup>

#### 1. Difficulties with legal recognition and obtaining personal documents

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<sup>22</sup> UNHCR (2013) *A Global Review: UNHCR's Engagement with Displaced Youth*. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/513f37bb9.pdf>, p.9.

<sup>23</sup> UNHCR (2013) *A Global Review: UNHCR's Engagement with Displaced Youth*.

<sup>24</sup> UNHCR and WRC (2016) *We Believe in Youth: Global Refugee Youth Consultations Final Report*. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-au/protection/globalconsult/57e1126e7/final-report.html>, pp. 17-19.

<sup>25</sup> UNHCR (2015) *Age, Gender and Diversity, Accountability Report 2014*. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/548180b69.pdf>, p. 24.

<sup>26</sup> UNHCR and WRC (2016) *We Believe in Youth: Global Refugee Youth Consultations Final Report*. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-au/protection/globalconsult/57e1126e7/final-report.html>, p.6.



2. Poor access to youth-sensitive healthcare, including psychological support
3. Difficulty in accessing quality learning, education and skill building opportunities
4. Lack of safety, security and freedom of movement
5. Discrimination, racism, xenophobia and 'culture clash'
6. Specific challenges for unaccompanied youth
7. Few youth employment and livelihood opportunities
8. Lack of opportunities to participate, be engaged or access decision makers
9. Gender inequality, discrimination exploitation and violence – including for LGBTIQ youth
10. Lack of information about asylum, refugee rights and available services – both for refugees and those seeking asylum, as well as host communities.

Young people face significant barriers to navigating the process of seeking protection, including accessing durable solutions. These barriers include a lack of information about asylum and refugee rights, lack of access to legal support, difficulty in obtaining personal documents to support claims, other legal issues associated with corruption, fraud and fair treatment in the justice system. They are also at risk of the harmful and long-term impacts of immigration detention.

Refugee young people report discrimination, racism, xenophobia, culture clash including institutional hostility from host country governments. This can have a significant impact on self-esteem, personal identity, security and safety<sup>27</sup>.

Refugee youth also face a lack of opportunities to engage with and influence decision-makers. This is particularly important given the leadership role that refugee youth often take within their families and the skills they develop to navigate their own pathways. Empowering refugee youth as key actors and partners is a critical component to addressing the challenges they face.

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<sup>27</sup> UNHCR (2013) *A Global Review UNHCR's Engagement with Displaced Youth*. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/513f37bb9.pdf>, p.28.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 3.1 What needs to be done?

The specific protection rights, needs and capabilities of refugee youth need to be recognised, strengthened and operationalised in the Global Compact on Refugees. The voices and rights of refugee youth, as recorded in forums outlined in Section 1.1, need to be embedded in the Programme of Action.

We commend UNHCR for engaging refugee youth in the thematic sessions and for establishing the Global Youth Advisory Group (GYAC). This is an important mechanism for ensuring that young people's perspectives are considered in the work of UNHCR and that youth-specific protection rights, needs and capabilities are recognised and operationalised in the GCR Programme of Action.

#### 3.2 What are we broadly asking for?

- That the **specific rights, needs and capacities** of refugee youth (as distinct from children and adults) are **recognised, protected and responded to** in the **Programme of Action**<sup>28</sup> as well as the CRRF **preamble and concluding paragraphs**<sup>29</sup>.
- That the Programme of Action **create circumstances that protect refugee youth rights** and allow young people to **exercise their rights and utilise their capabilities**.
- That refugee youth are **meaningfully engaged** in the development and implementation of the GCR – as important actors in its design, implementation and monitoring.
  - Meaningful engagement:
    - Recognises the capabilities and expertise of young people;
    - Takes young people's perspectives seriously as a group with particular needs and rights distinct from children and adults;
    - Values young people as interlocutors and actors; and
    - Builds young people's agency and capital (skills, confidence, networks, knowledge) to determine and implement solutions (in both policy and programming).
  - Meaningful engagement requires:
    - Investing in building the capacity of all stakeholders (civil society organisations - CBOs, INGOs - states and UNHCR), to equip staff with relevant skills and knowledge;
    - Investing in building the capacity of young people and youth-led initiatives/organisations to actively participate and contribute (including building their skills, knowledge, confidence and networks); and
    - Providing platforms and opportunities for young people to have their voices heard and influence decision-making.

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<sup>28</sup> See section 3.4 for detailed recommendations under each of the CRRF four pillars

<sup>29</sup> See section 3.3 for more detail

- That host states, UNHCR, civil society, third countries and countries of origin invest in:
  - **Building the capacity of stakeholders and institutions** to (i) meaningfully engage and empower refugee youth and (ii) provide targeted (age and needs-specific) support to refugee youth; and
  - **Building the capacity of young people and youth-led initiatives/organisations** to actively participate and contribute (including building their skills, knowledge, confidence and networks and providing platforms to influence decision-making).
- That a **mechanism is established**, such as an expert group, to **support, advise, and monitor** the implementation of the Programme of Action to ensure youth-specific policy and programming. Such a mechanism should include refugee youth representatives and work in consultation with the GYAC.

### 3.3 CRRF preamble and concluding comments

For the CRRF to genuinely reflect and respond to the rights and needs of refugee youth, the preamble and concluding comments should include these specific references:

#### Under Reception and Admission:

- Persons in need of international protection in **5. (a)** to include ‘youth, including unaccompanied and separated youth’
- **5. (e)** to rephrase as;

“Use the registration process to identify specific assistance needs and protection arrangements, where possible, including but not exclusively for refugees with special protection concerns, such as women at risk, children **and youth**, especially unaccompanied children **and youth**, and children **and youth** separated from their families, child-headed and single-parent households, victims of trafficking, victims of trauma and survivors of sexual violence, as well as refugees with disabilities and older persons;”

- Psychological support in **5. (c)** to rephrase to include ‘psychosocial support, including child and adolescent/youth specific psychosocial programming’
- Legal safeguards in **5. (g)** to rephrase as;

“Put in place measures, with appropriate legal safeguards, which uphold **all** refugees’ human rights, **including those of children and youth**, with a view to ensuring the security of refugees, as well as measures to respond to host countries’ legitimate security concerns”

#### Under Support for Immediate and Ongoing Needs:

- Education in **7. (b)** to refer to ‘access to education for all refugee youth (including youth at risk), with a focus on increasing access to secondary and tertiary education’

- **7. (c)** to rephrase as;

“Encourage and empower refugees, at the outset of an emergency phase, to establish supportive systems and networks that involve refugees and host communities and are age- and gender-sensitive, with a particular emphasis on the protection and empowerment of women and children **and youth** and other persons with specific needs;”

#### Under Durable Solutions:

- Under **12.**, paragraphs referring to reintegration of returnees to mention ‘a focus on specialised education and employment transition programs for young people and including the special needs of youth who have experienced exploitation or youth engaged in armed conflict’
- **12.(e)** to rephrase as;
 

“Facilitate the participation of refugees, including women **and youth**, in peace and reconciliation processes, and ensure that the outcomes of such processes duly support their return in safety and dignity”
- Sharing of best practice include ‘including youth programs and initiatives, in particular those that are youth-led’
- Durable solutions section to refer to developing ‘tailored, age-specific assessments for refugee youth and adolescents related to identification of a durable solution and providing information to refugee youth, specifically to unaccompanied and separated youth and adolescents on durable solutions’.

### 3.4 Programme of Action

The development of the Programme of Action should recognise the rights, needs and capacities of refugee youth as distinct from children and adults. The areas of concern identified by the Global Refugee Youth Consultations should be addressed within the Programme of Action through implementation of the Seven Core Actions<sup>30</sup>. These are:

1. Empower refugee youth through meaningful engagement
2. Recognise, utilise, and develop refugee youth capacities and skills
3. Ensure refugee youth-focused protection
4. Support the physical and emotional wellbeing of refugee youth
5. Facilitate refugee youth networking and information sharing
6. Reinforce refugee youth in their role as connectors and peace builders
7. Generate data and evidence on refugee youth to promote accountability to youth.

These actions recognise young people as key actors and partners in the development and implementation of policy and programming, seeking their ideas and recommendations for what is needed and supporting them to analyse, understand, and advocate on issues of importance to themselves and their communities.

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<sup>30</sup> UNHCR and WRC (2016), *We Believe in Youth: Global Refugee Youth Consultations Final Report*. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-au/protection/globalconsult/57e1126e7/final-report.html>, pp.7-8

The GRYC also articulates specific recommendations for the range of humanitarian actors (States, multi-lateral organisations, international and national civil society organisations, traditional and non-traditional donors, and community and youth groups) to take the Core Actions forward<sup>31</sup>.

### *Specific Recommendations for the Programme of Action*

The following recommendations are categorised under the four pillars of the CRRF, with recommendations for host states, UNHCR and civil society. These have been developed drawing on the GRYC Core Actions, recommendations developed by youth delegates at the CRRF thematic discussions in Geneva in 2017, and the work of Mercy Corps<sup>32</sup>. They also reflect the four domains (Economic, Social and Civic Participation and Personal Well-Being) and indicators set out in MYAN's *Youth Settlement Framework*<sup>33</sup> to support young people's active participation in and contribution to their communities and broader society.

Across all pillars, young people should be engaged in mechanisms for ongoing monitoring of the Programme of Action – with investment in supporting the development of young people's skills to undertake this work.

#### 3.4.1 RECEPTION AND ADMISSION

##### **Host States should:**

- Recognise youth as a social group/life stage with particular needs that are distinct from those of younger children and adults, while also acknowledging the diversity within the vast category of youth.
- Provide for safe, respectful and appropriate reception conditions for adolescents and youth; including establishing community-based protection networks and safe spaces for young people (that address their specific needs and circumstances – including preventing/responding to sexual and gender-based violence).
- Ensure that reception services:
  - Are efficient, accountable and do not place unnecessary burden on refugees to keep retelling their stories, and allow refugees to access the information that is recorded<sup>34</sup>.
  - Have staff trained in: understanding forced displacement and the particular circumstances for young people, as well as youth-specific engagement.
  - Do not create, perpetuate or increase circumstances of vulnerability.
- Disseminate youth friendly information on access to national services in relevant languages used by refugees, including on equitable access to quality formal and non-formal education and training at all levels.

<sup>31</sup> UNHCR and WRC (2016), *We Believe in Youth: Global Refugee Youth Consultations Final Report*. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-au/protection/globalconsult/57e1126e7/final-report.html>, pp.4-5, 8-9

<sup>32</sup> Mercy Corps (2017) *Young people in the global compact on refugees: how the global compact on refugees can protect young refugees and provide their potential*. Available at: [https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/Mercy%20Corps\\_Young%20People%20in%20the%20Global%20Compact%20on%20Refugees\\_Oct%202017.pdf](https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/Mercy%20Corps_Young%20People%20in%20the%20Global%20Compact%20on%20Refugees_Oct%202017.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN) Australia (2016) *National Youth Settlement Framework*. Available at: [http://www.myan.org.au/file/file/Youth%20Settlement%20Framework%2031%20March%202016\(1\).pdf](http://www.myan.org.au/file/file/Youth%20Settlement%20Framework%2031%20March%202016(1).pdf)

<sup>34</sup> Youth Delegates Recommendations, Thematic Discussions Quality of Service Provision 3

- Ensure that Refugee Status Determination is a transparent process with a right to appeal and free legal representation.<sup>35</sup>
- Ensure that claims for refugee status are processed in a timely and dignified manner, and that when claims are rejected, both the country of asylum and the country of origin refrain from the use of detention and provide support and follow up on readmission and reintegration.<sup>36</sup>
- Process all asylum applications without delay and in high standards without making any differentiation based on the mode of entry (i.e. regular and irregular entry).
- Involve refugee youth in decision making through establishing consultative youth bodies to provide feedback on reception and admission conditions delivered by the host state to meet gaps in service delivery.
- Ensure collection and verification of Sex, Age, Disability and Diversity Disaggregated Data to ensure that an evidence-base is developed for policy and programming and to monitor if and how the particular needs of young people are met over time.
  - This data should include age, gender, disability, special needs and information specific to young people such as education, training, employment status, family context, health, sexual/reproductive health needs, and psychological needs.
- Ensure that all refugees, including youth, are registered and issued with legally recognised personal identification documents that are widely accepted and renewed in a timely manner.
- Ensure equal access to services across public and private sectors and facilitate free movement throughout the country of asylum.<sup>37</sup>

**UNHCR should:**

- Recognise the many cultural and contextual definitions of youth and their prominence in numbers and as agents for ensuring peace and reconciliation, and social change.
- Ensure that Refugee Status Determination is a transparent process with a right to appeal and free legal representation.<sup>38</sup>
- Ensure that claims for refugee status are processed in a timely and dignified manner.<sup>39</sup>
- Acknowledge youth as a social group/life stage with particular needs that are distinct from those of younger children and adults, while acknowledging the diversity within the category 'youth' (including differences between young men and women, younger and older youth,

<sup>35</sup> Youth Delegates Recommendations, Thematic Discussions Two and Three, Justice and Legal Protection 2

<sup>36</sup> Youth Delegates Recommendations, Thematic Discussions Two and Three, Justice and Legal Protection 4

<sup>37</sup> Youth Delegates Recommendations, Thematic Discussions Two and Three, Freedom of Mobility 1

<sup>38</sup> Youth Delegates Recommendations, Thematic Discussions Two and Three, Justice and Legal Protection 2

<sup>39</sup> Youth Delegates Recommendations, Thematic Discussions Two and Three, Justice and Legal Protection 4

those in and out of school, married and unmarried, those with disabilities, cultural and religious minority groups, stateless young people, LGBTI young people and, unaccompanied and separated youth and adolescents. This will enable better knowledge and understanding of the various perspectives and experiences of different groups of young people and will ensure that the needs of certain groups are adequately addressed in UNHCR's programmes.<sup>40</sup>

- Engage youth from the reception and admission stage through facilitating volunteer programs directly and/or through civil society partners in recognition of their strengths and agency.
- Involve refugee youth in advocacy efforts with host states through establishing consultative youth bodies to provide feedback on reception and admission conditions to meet gaps in service delivery.
- Disseminate guidelines and provide training for UNHCR staff to better work with and meet the needs of displaced youth and adolescents (as distinct from children and in recognition of the diversity of needs within the youth cohort), and in conducting youth-specific assessments.
- Ensure collection and verification of Sex, Age, Disability and Diversity Disaggregated Data to ensure that an evidence-base is developed for policy and programming and to monitor if and how the particular needs of young people are met over time.
  - This data should include age, gender, disability, special needs and information specific to young people such as education, training, employment status, family context, health, sexual/reproductive health needs, and psychological needs.
- Advocate with host states for implementing alternatives to detention for all refugees, especially for refugee youth, and monitor places of detention used for detaining refugees, especially those where refugee youth is kept.

**Civil Society should:**

- Recognise youth as a social group/life stage with particular needs that are distinct from those of younger children and adults, while also acknowledging the diversity (of experiences, rights and needs) within the category of 'youth'.
- Build their capacity to understand the rights, needs and capabilities of young people.
- Work with refugee young people as partners to:
  - Design, implement, monitor and evaluate programs including health, education and training and sport/recreation (including giving particular attention to supporting the contribution of girls and young women).
- Build young people's knowledge and skills to deliver on the above.

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<sup>40</sup> UNHCR (2013) *A Global Review UNHCR's Engagement with Displaced Youth*. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/513f37bb9.pdf>, p.61.



- Develop youth-specific policies and programs to ensure that young people receive targeted support.
- Advocate with host states for implementing alternatives to detention for all refugees, especially for refugee youth, and monitor places of detention used for detaining refugees, especially those where refugee youth is kept.

### 3.4.2 SUPPORT FOR IMMEDIATE AND ONGOING NEEDS

#### Host States should:

- Ensure all refugee services and supports are available and appropriate for young people, with tailored services to meet the specific needs and challenges of refugee youth (including targeted services to groups with particular needs, e.g.: young women, those identifying as LGBTIQ, those with disabilities, religious or cultural minority groups, stateless youth, unaccompanied or separated youth and adolescents).
- Allocate and account for funding and resources for comprehensive programming and service delivery targeted to the needs of young people in the areas of education, livelihoods, sport/recreation, health care (including physical, mental and sexual/reproductive health).
- When applicable, allocate resources for rehabilitation initiatives for refugee youth who were recruited and/or were involved in combat situations and/or were forced to use violence against other people in conflict zones for their reintegration into the society.
- Work with UNHCR and civil society to ensure that young refugees have access to education – at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, including sufficient language education, as well as scholarships to access education at all these levels.
- Ensure recognition of educational qualifications, including recognition by countries of asylum, countries of destination/resettlement and countries of origin – streamlining processes to expedite this.<sup>41</sup>
- Consult with young people about their needs and capabilities and engage them as key actors in meeting the needs of young people, their peers, families and communities.
- Grant the right to work to all refugee youth to ensure that they are able to access an income through safe and equitable work opportunities, and utilise their skills and capabilities, build relationships with host community and financially support their family and community, and contribute to local economies.
- Consider the views of the youth or consult with youth in planning for national education and employment services.
- Design programmes or initiatives to support and empower youth and their families to prevent underage and/or forced marriages, as well as underage labour.

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<sup>41</sup> Youth Delegates Recommendations, Thematic Discussions Two and Three, Education 3

- In determining needs, incorporate youth specific best interest assessment and best interest determination (BIA and BID) processes for unaccompanied and separated youth and adolescents who are under host state's protection.
- Develop and/or strengthen general vocational certification for refugees that recognise literacy, language, communications, teamwork, and critical thinking skills.
- Invest in initiatives (including youth-led joint-initiatives) that bring together refugee children and youth with the host community, such as through sports, cultural and recreational activities for to support their wellbeing, to promote understanding, tolerance and integration, and prevent/address xenophobia.
- Engage with the private sector as an important actor in responding to the needs of refugee youth (including support for education programs, sport/recreation opportunities and employment/training); and support industries and businesses to provide opportunities for internships, traineeships and jobs for refugee youth.
- Ensure that refugees have access to travel documents that facilitate international travel. These documents should be easily attained, machine readable and valid for a minimum of five years.<sup>42</sup>
- Refrain from detaining refugees, and avoid detaining refugee youth and adolescents completely, especially those who are unaccompanied and separated, and use detention only as an exceptional measure following an assessment of individual circumstances, which includes a consideration of alternatives to detention.
- Allow regular monitoring of places of detention used for detaining refugees by human rights bodies and organizations, civil society organizations, and international organizations.

**UNHCR should:**

- Work with civil society, states and donors to support programs that build young people's agency and social capital – utilising youth networks and working with young leaders as partners.
- Invest in youth-specific programming and develop/adapt guidelines to support this targeted approach.
- Share methods and implementation models amongst UNHCR operations and partners and, invest in capacity building with staff and partners<sup>43</sup> such as through developing briefing materials and conducting trainings on youth-specific assessments.

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<sup>42</sup> Youth Delegates Recommendations, Thematic Discussions Two and Three, Freedom of Mobility 2

<sup>43</sup> UNHCR (2013) *A Global Review UNHCR's Engagement with Displaced Youth*. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/513f37bb9.pdf>, p.61.

- Work with and support host states and civil society to ensure that young refugees have access to education – at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, including sufficient language education, as well as scholarships to access education at all these levels.
- Work with and support host states and civil society to ensure that young refugees have access to healthcare, work rights to ensure livelihoods and recreational opportunities.
- Ensure collection and verification of Sex, Age and Diversity Disaggregated Data to ensure that an evidence-base is developed for policy and programming and to monitor if and how the particular needs of young people are met over time.
  - This data should include age, gender, disability, special needs and information specific to young people such as education, training, employment status, family context, health, sexual/reproductive health needs, and psychological needs.
- Advocate with host states for implementing alternatives to detention for all refugees, especially for refugee youth, and monitor places of detention used for detaining refugees, especially those where refugee youth is kept.

**Civil Society should:**

- Invest in programs/initiatives that build young people’s agency and social capital (skills, knowledge and networks, including with host communities) to be active participants in and contributors to their community.
- Invest in youth-specific programming - provide targeted services and support for the education, training, protection, recreation, health (physical, mental, sexual and reproductive) and well-being of adolescents and youth. This includes:
  - Reviewing and adapting existing services to ensure they are targeted to the specific needs and circumstances of young people.
  - Delivering services in a manner that acknowledges and is informed by the strengths and capabilities of refugee youth.
- Invest in youth-led initiatives – work with young people as partners to design and deliver initiatives/programs that meet their needs (in the areas of protection, education, employment, health and recreation).
- Work with states and UNHCR to ensure that young refugees have access to education – at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, including sufficient language education, as well as scholarships to access education at all these levels.
- Engage with the private sector as an important actor in responding to the needs of refugee youth (including support for education programs, sport/recreation opportunities and employment/training).

- Advocate with host states for implementing alternatives to detention for all refugees, especially for refugee youth, and monitor places of detention used for detaining refugees, especially those where refugee youth is kept.

### 3.4.3 SUPPORT FOR HOST COUNTRIES AND COMMUNITIES

#### Host states should:

- Recognise and build on young people's existing capacities and the valuable contributions that they are already making to their family and community's wellbeing. This includes engaging with youth as community leaders and activists and developing stronger partnerships with youth-initiated organisations.
- Engage with international organizations, civil society organizations and other states to look for best practices in this field, especially to ensure harmony between the local and refugee communities.
- Engage media for positive messaging and correct information provision to both host and refugee communities about the rights of and services provided for refugees by the host country.
- Facilitate and engage education system to promote positive views and harmony between youth from the host and refugee communities, to prevent discrimination, xenophobia and bullying.
- Invest in initiatives (including youth-led joint-initiatives) that bring together refugee children and youth with the host community, such as through sports, cultural and recreational activities to support their wellbeing, to promote understanding, tolerance and integration, and prevent/address xenophobia, discrimination and bullying.
- Support the design and implementation of peer-to-peer mentoring programs (among refugee youth and, between refugee youth and host community youth) as a particularly effective model to support skills development across education, social/recreation and employment and in psycho-social support.
- Recognize the importance incorporating of the views of both host and refugee communities, including youth from both communities, in planning and programming for responding to the needs of refugees.
- Consider the needs of youth from both host and refugee communities in planning and programming for initiatives targeting refugee youth, to prevent situations where youth from the host communities would be left at a disadvantageous position compared to the refugee youth due to the amount of supports provided to refugee youth.

**UNHCR should:**

- Recognise and build on young people’s existing capacities and the valuable contributions that they are already making to their family and community’s wellbeing. This includes engaging with youth as community leaders and activists and developing stronger partnerships with youth-initiated organisations.
- Prepare/contextualise guidelines for UNHCR staff and partners on how to effectively engage refugee and local youth as partners in community support, protection and advocacy activities.
- Share methods and implementation models amongst UNHCR operations and partners.<sup>44</sup>
- Ensure collection and verification of Sex, Age, Disability and Diversity Disaggregated Data to ensure that an evidence-base is developed for policy and programming and to monitor if and how the particular needs of young people are met over time.
  - This data should include age, gender, disability, special needs and information specific to young people such as education, training, employment status, family context, health, sexual/reproductive health needs, and psychological needs.
- Support the design and implementation of peer-to-peer mentoring programs (among refugee youth and between refugee youth and host community youth) as a particularly effective model to support skills development across education, social/recreation and employment and in psycho-social support.
- Engage media for positive messaging and correct information provision to both host and refugee communities about the rights of and services provided for refugees in the host country and about the support provided to the host country by UNHCR.
- Invest in initiatives (including youth-led joint-initiatives) that bring together refugee children and youth with the host community, such as through sports, cultural and recreational activities to support their wellbeing, to promote understanding, tolerance and integration, and prevent/address xenophobia, discrimination and bullying.
- Recognize the importance incorporating of the views of host and refugee communities, including youth from both communities in planning and programming for responding to the needs of refugees.
- Consider the needs of youth from both host and refugee communities in planning and programming for initiatives targeting refugee youth, to prevent situations where youth from the host communities would be left at a disadvantageous position compared to the refugee youth due to the amount of supports provided to refugee youth.

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<sup>44</sup> UNHCR (2013) *A Global Review UNHCR’s Engagement with Displaced Youth*, March 2013, Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/513f37bb9.pdf>, p.61.

### Civil Society should:

- Recognise the essential role of refugee-led organisations and initiatives (including youth-led/driven initiatives by youth from both refugee and host communities) and support them to best meet the needs of both refugee and host communities.<sup>45</sup>
- Ensure the involvement of refugee young people in the development of support (programs) and in building relationships with communities of host countries. This includes giving particular attention to engaging/supporting the contribution of young people who may experience circumstances that create additional vulnerabilities or from more marginalised groups (including young women, those with disabilities, from minority groups, unaccompanied/separated young people, or LGBTI).
- Support the design and implementation of peer-to-peer mentoring programs (among refugee youth and between refugee youth and host community youth) as a particularly effective model to support skills development across education, social/recreation and employment and in psycho-social support.
- Support the delivery of education programs with a priority on primary and secondary level – e.g. through more informal or ‘out of school’ hours education programs (homework groups or additional language classes).
- Recognize the importance incorporating of the views of host and refugee communities, including youth from both communities in planning and programming for responding to the needs of refugees.
- Engage media for positive messaging and correct information provision to both host and refugee communities about the rights of and services provided for refugees in the host country by the civil society.
- Consider the needs of youth from host communities in planning and programming for initiatives targeting refugee youth and develop targeted programmes for local youth, to prevent situations where youth from the host communities would be left at a disadvantageous position compared to the refugee youth due to the amount of supports provided to refugee youth.
- Invest in initiatives (including youth-led joint-initiatives) that bring together refugee children and youth with the host community, such as through sports, cultural and recreational activities to support their wellbeing, to promote understanding, tolerance and integration, and prevent/address xenophobia, discrimination and bullying.
- Support the development of (youth-friendly) safe spaces for refugee young people where young people (both refugee and host community) can build relationships, identify common priorities, develop shared conversations, and promote their voices across groups and within host communities.

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<sup>45</sup> Youth Delegates Recommendations, Thematic Discussions Two and Three, Quality of Service Provision 4

### 3.4.4 DURABLE SOLUTIONS

#### Host states should:

- Develop youth-specific assessment tools for use in determining durable solutions, including youth-specific assessment for use in the Best Interest Assessment and Best Interest Determination processes.
- Facilitate youth specific best interest assessment and best interest determination processes before taking any decision on any of the durable solutions.
- Ensure that refugee youth and their families can benefit from unrestricted family reunification, acknowledging the importance of family in a young persons' life and in their development.
- Develop and disseminate youth-specific information to support young people in accessing/engaging with durable solutions. This includes streamlining/simplifying family reunification processes and procedures to enable families to be more easily and quickly reunited.
- Engage with the private sector to facilitate access to durable solutions through innovative models, such as reaching tripartite agreements between employers, labour unions and the government to improve the labour market integration of refugees<sup>46</sup>, while specifically seeking young people's input on initiatives.

#### On local solutions;

- Engage with other states, as well as international organizations and civil society organizations to look for best practices in relation to finding local solutions.
- Consult with refugee youth in designing local solutions, which ensures access to education, including language education, health care and employment, with a prospect of long term or permanent settlement in the host country.

#### On voluntary return, repatriation and reintegration;

- Facilitate youth-specific best interest assessment and best interest determination processes before taking any decision on return, and take measures according to the outcomes of this process, including facilitation of alternative ways of stay in the host country when return is not an option, especially for unaccompanied and separated youth and adolescents.
- Engage with countries of origin and UNHCR to ensure informed, dignified and documented return with the support for reintegration upon arrival to the country of origin.

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<sup>46</sup> OECD/UNHCR (2016) *Migration Policy Debates: Hiring refugees - What are the opportunities and challenges for employers?* Available at <http://www.unhcr.org/en-au/594b824a4>, p.7.



On resettlement;

- Create specific resettlement programmes for unaccompanied and separated children and youth.
- Increase the size of the annual resettlement programmes to better meet the annual total of global resettlement needs as identified by the UNHCR, and initiate programs allowing complementary forms of admission while providing equal supports to refugees who arrive to third countries through these programs as those refugees who are resettled throughout their settlement processes.
- Put adequate mechanisms in place for providing assistance and ongoing support to the refugees to ensure good settlement outcomes in resettlement countries or third countries admitting refugees under complementary ways of admission. This support should include access to education at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, as well as language education; access to healthcare; work rights and meaningful employment opportunities for all refugees, especially for refugee youth, and other supports, such as opportunities for recreational activities.

**UNHCR should:**

- Continue to work with states to find durable solutions for all refugees, including new homes for all those determined to be in need of resettlement.
- Promote issues of concern to and rights of refugee youth when advocating access to durable solutions with states.
- Advocate for specific resettlement programmes for unaccompanied and separated refugee children and youth.
- Work to ensure that Tripartite Agreements between countries of asylum, countries of origin and the UNHCR take into account the special needs of refugee youth and in particular reintegration needs in relation to education, employment and health needs.
- Develop youth-specific assessment tools for use in determining durable solutions, including youth-specific assessment for use in the Best Interest Assessment and Best Interest Determination processes.
- Develop briefing materials and ensure that UNHCR staff is trained in conducting youth-specific assessments.
- Engage the private sector and global businesses to facilitate access to durable solutions through innovative models<sup>47</sup>, while specifically seeking young people's input on initiatives.

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<sup>47</sup> UNHCR (2018) *Private Sector Engagement*. Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-au/private-sector-engagement.html>.

**Civil Society should:**

- Recognise the essential role of refugee-led organisations and initiatives (including youth-led/driven initiatives) and support them in advocating for durable solutions.
- Recognise and support the critical role of refugee young people in peace and conflict resolution, community building and integration.
- Support efforts for family tracing and family reunification, in cooperation with International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.
- Support durable solutions through involvement in community sponsorship schemes being implemented by various third countries, as part of complementary forms of admission.
- Engage in initiatives with the private sector to facilitate access to durable solutions through innovative models, such as talent registries linking refugee employees with employers from the private sector<sup>48</sup>, while specifically seeking young people's input.

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<sup>48</sup> UNHCR (2017) *Global Trends in Forced Displacement in 2016*. Available at <http://www.unhcr.org/5943e8a34.pdf>, p. 29.

## APPENDIX 1: GLOBAL REFUGEE YOUTH CONSULTATIONS: TEN CHALLENGES FOR REFUGEE YOUTH

### TEN CHALLENGES for Refugee Youth



#### Difficulties with legal recognition and obtaining personal documents

Youth stressed the challenges, complexities, and delays in the processes to obtain asylum and related legal documents from UNHCR and/or local authorities, and the serious implications of not having them.



#### Difficulty in accessing quality learning, education, and skill-building opportunities

Young refugees consistently identified the difficulty of obtaining recognition for their existing qualifications and accessing quality learning, formal education, and skill-building opportunities as a serious challenge.



#### Discrimination, racism, xenophobia, and "culture clash"

Young refugees noted discrimination, racism, and xenophobia across all regions and emphasized how it can leave them feeling isolated and marginalized.



#### Few youth employment and livelihood opportunities

Refugee youth emphasized they would rather work than depend on humanitarian aid and expressed frustration at the limited employment and livelihood opportunities available to them.



#### Gender inequality, discrimination, exploitation, and violence—including for LGBTI youth

Young refugees highlighted concerns about gender inequality and discrimination as challenges in and of themselves, but also as underlying causes of sexual exploitation and gender-based violence (SGBV), including domestic violence, child and forced marriage, sexual assault, and rape.



#### Poor access to youth sensitive health care—including psychosocial support

Refugee youth highlighted a lack of access to quality health care as a major concern and particularly noted the need for youth-sensitive sexual and reproductive health care and psychosocial support.



#### Lack of safety, security, and freedom of movement

Refugee youth expressed concerns about safety, security, and freedom of movement linked to xenophobia and difficulty with documents. In some locations, they also highlighted police harassment as well as arrest and detention.



#### Challenges for unaccompanied youth

Refugees stressed the specific protection and practical challenges for unaccompanied youth, including the difficult transition and a lack of preparation for those who turn 18, "age out", and are no longer afforded additional protection and support, but often still need guidance and assistance as well as access to rights and protection.



#### Lack of opportunities to participate, be engaged, or access decision makers

Youth identified a lack of empowerment and engagement opportunities as factors that limit youth involvement in decision making. They have few opportunities to analyse issues, devise solutions, share their ideas with decision makers, and be heard.



#### Lack of information about asylum, refugee rights, and available services

In all the consultations, young refugees highlighted challenges related to the lack of relevant, honest, and transparent information about the asylum process, refugee rights, available services, and the society and culture of their country of asylum.

**APPENDIX 2: GLOBAL REFUGEE YOUTH CONSULTATIONS - SEVEN CORE ACTIONS FOR REFUGEE YOUTH**

