

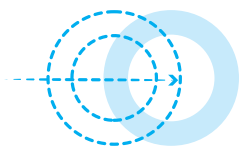
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2





PREPARING TO MIGRATE



A young person's decision to migrate can be influenced by different factors, such as by the desire for a better life or by the need to escape poverty, political persecution, or family/community pressures. Translating plans into action requires a substantial amount of preparation.

This chapter examines the motivating factors behind young people's migration decisions, the importance of information in preparing for and reducing the risks associated with migration, and the cost of migration and how it influences the choice of migration routes. Key characteristics of migration decisions are also explored, with attention given to factors such as distance and duration, whether the intended move is internal or international, and whether youth migrants are to be accompanied or unaccompanied. The chapter concludes with an overview of the challenges potential youth migrants face and a set of recommendations for various stakeholders.

FACTORS INFLUENCING YOUTH MIGRATION

The role of the family

There is considerable research on the role of the family in decisions relating to youth migration. Some researchers argue that it is an individual's characteristics (such as life-cycle stage, attachment to place, social capital and environmental values) and the rational expectation of being better off elsewhere that drive migration decisions. This approach implies that the decision to migrate is a personal rather than a collective decision. Other researchers argue, however, that the individualist model is unrealistic, considering the complexity of migration and the potential role of social networks in reducing the costs and risks of migration. In the collectivist model, the family is recognized as the primary decision-making unit. This is true

whether young people plan to migrate alone, with their parents, or with others inside or outside their kinship group.

In many cases, young people lack the financial resources to bear the full cost of their migration and must rely on their families for monetary support. Where family members provide financial or moral support for a young person's decision to move, migration and its benefits are considered a family gain rather than a personal gain. Remittances are often the central feature of the self-enforcing social contract between migrants and their families. The family helps the potential migrant move with the expectation that the young migrant will remit funds periodically in return. Sending a family member elsewhere allows the family to diversify their assets and resources against the risk of bad outcomes at home. For student migrants, the benefits of migration are expected to accrue upon return.

Youth participants in the online consultation noted that parents and close relatives were largely supportive of migration decisions and in some cases indicated their expectation of remittances to ensure family financial security. The responses suggested that a number of parents supported

temporary migration abroad but not permanent settlement.

The role of others

Although families constitute the main source of support for potential young migrants, social networks of friends, peers and community members can have a significant impact on young people's migration decisions as well. Some youth are even influenced by casual acquaintances or strangers.

Thoughts of migration may originate from young people themselves or from a multitude of external sources. Distant relatives or friends living abroad may share their own first-hand experiences or provide (possibly inaccurate) information on migrant prospects. Young returnees are often highly respected by family members and society at large, which can be a motivator for others. Young people participating in the consultation reported having been positively or negatively influenced by television programmes, social media or other information sources featuring successful or unsuccessful migration experiences. The stories highlighted below reflect the diverse circumstances surrounding young people's migration decisions.

Youth perspectives: the influence of family, friends and others on migration decisions

**TOME AND ELIZABETE,
LABOUR MIGRANTS
PORTUGAL -----> FRANCE**

As a young, unmarried couple, we sought stability and the chance to start a life together. However, in Portugal, there were no prospects for the near future. Elizabete worked in a hotel, and I was unemployed and living with my parents. We were searching for a better life, and there came an opportunity to migrate. The proposal came from relatives who were living in the south-west of France.

**MOHAMMED,
CURRENTLY A LAWYER
EGYPT -----> ITALY**

When I was 27 years old, I got to know this man whom I'd met several times. We became friends, and he asked me if I wished to travel to Italy, as he could make arrangements with someone who could facilitate my travel. I replied unhesitatingly that sure, I wanted to travel.... (continued on page 44)

**ZUNIRA,
GRANTED POLITICAL ASYLUM
PAKISTAN -----> UNITED STATES**

I was born and raised in Lahore, Pakistan, as an Ahmadi Muslim. The political and security situation in Pakistan was dire, and after considering the impending threats, my family came to the U.S. and I came with them. We were hoping to stay here for a few months until the situation improved. However, soon after we came we realized that it was not going to get better anytime soon, so we decided to apply for political asylum. Our application was accepted in January of 2011, and I have been living in the U.S. ever since.

**REBECA, THIRD-GENERATION
INTERNAL MIGRANT
RURAL -----> URBAN BRAZIL**

I am pretty much a city girl. I was born at a hospital in the city centre of Brasilia, the capital of Brazil. Nevertheless, my urban life would never have been possible if my dad had not migrated from a little rural town called Pires do Rio to the newly constructed capital Brasilia in the 1970s. Filled with the hope

of better opportunities and a better life, my grandparents were among the millions of Brazilians who left rural areas during that period and established themselves in rapidly growing cities. Now, I see that my dad's rural-urban migration influenced my own migration story—one that actually changed my own feelings about the agricultural sector and made me realize that HOPE for the future is actually in the rural areas.

**IRINI, FEMALE, AGE 27
CYPRUS -----> TANZANIA**

I believe the family environment is very important, both in relation to the acceptance of a young person's decision to migrate and in terms of the specific 'culture' created within the family and immediate social environment in which migration is acceptable or unacceptable.

**LAZ, MALE, AGE 30
PHYSICIAN/STUDENT MIGRANT,
NIGERIA -----> UNITED STATES**

My friends who were already in the U.S. greatly influenced my migration decision. My family felt good [about it] and had no reservations

whatsoever. However, I am sure my parents would not have supported a decision to settle permanently in another country. Thus, I have plans to return to my country of origin after school.

**YASMYN, FEMALE, AGE 25
-----> PARIS**

I have always had my mother's support [when it comes] to travel. She is the one who passed on the love of travelling [by introducing me to] TV programmes that showed me the good things one could expect abroad.

Other factors influencing migration decisions

During the consultations relating to the pre-migration phase, participants engaged in active discourse on the various push and pull factors motivating youth migration. Employment and education were identified as the top reasons for youth migration followed by marriage and family reunification to a limited extent. Overall reasons young people gave for migrating included expectations of 'greener pastures' (economic prosperity), professional or educational opportunities abroad

while only a few left home in search of adventure or a sense of belonging. Various young participants noted that internal migration from rural to urban settings typically offered improved access to basic public and social services for their family or better work opportunities. Youth in developing countries often migrated to their country's capital prior to undertaking international migration to a more developed country.

Among the respondents to the Survey on Youth Migration and Development, some noted that they had migrated because of environmental changes in their country of origin. Environmental change is rarely the direct cause of migration, but its impact on a country's economic, social and political circumstances can drive migration decisions.

Some youth decide to migrate because of perceived injustices in their countries of origin. There may be a high incidence of corruption, chronic political instability, or serious human rights violations. Those who are not members of mainstream society may fear discrimination or persecution. In one of the migrant stories below, a young woman writes that her sexual

orientation and her local society's failure to protect her rights within this context were central to her migration decision.

Youth perspectives on factors influencing migration decisions

JOSEPH, MALE, AGED 20-29

LABOUR MIGRANT

UNITED STATES -----> ITALY

I left my hometown because even with a university degree I could not find work. I later earned an advanced degree and left my home country because—again—I could not find work.

LORRAINE, FEMALE, AGED 26-29

LABOUR MIGRANT

IRELAND -----> AUSTRALIA

Irish skills and education are highly regarded in Australia; there is a shortage of workers in my skill area. I also had over five years of experience in my area, and this was highly regarded. The pay in Australia is much higher than in Ireland.

LIAAM, FEMALE, AGED 19-25

-----> UNITED STATES

Persecution based on my sexual orientation and gender identity was a deciding factor [for me] as a transgender woman. My country of origin did not provide the guarantees necessary [to protect] my life.

PREPARING TO MOVE

The need for information during migration planning and preparation

Information is essential for youth planning to venture, quite literally, into unknown territory. At the pre-migration stage, young people need to know how to obtain a visa, choose and secure a means of travel, and make accommodation arrangements in transit and destination countries. Nowadays, many potential youth migrants have access to mobile phones, the Internet and other ICT tools to obtain travel-related information, to communicate with others in destination societies, and to acquire important information about the socio-economic conditions and lifestyle in the areas where they plan to live.

Research shows that family members

are the principal sources of information for many young migrants. These sources may be reliable or unreliable. Inaccurate information and a lack of awareness about the legal and administrative requirements for migration can delay or complicate the process and may put youth migrants, especially young females, at risk.

Migration information and training

It is becoming increasingly clear that initiatives developed to disseminate reliable migration information to prospective youth migrants and appropriately train migration counsellors can significantly reduce the negative effects and enhance the positive outcomes of migration (see box 2.2).

Youth-friendly information campaigns in countries of origin can change common misconceptions about migration among potential youth migrants, providing them with the knowledge and tools they need to make informed decisions. Campaigns in countries of destination can also influence public opinion about migration and the contribution, rights and responsibilities of migrants. These

campaigns may discourage illegal or irregular migration among youth, make young migrants aware of their rights and responsibilities abroad, and foster dialogue and action on a wide range of youth migration challenges. Reliable information is also critical for raising awareness on the possibility of voluntary return among young migrants.

Accessing electronic information on migration

The Internet and other ICT resources offer young people fast and easy access to a wealth of migration information (see box 2.1). Youth can familiarize themselves with visa requirements, immigration regulations, transportation options, and information about transit and destination societies. They can also communicate directly with individuals already living in their desired locations via social media networks such as online blogs, Facebook or Twitter.

For those with access to electronic resources, self-education has become relatively simple and straightforward; however, youth are often faced with the challenge of ascertaining the reliability of information from these sources. It has been argued by some that limitations

stemming from the digital divide and the poorer trustworthiness of virtual connections can create a number of hazards for youth migrants. In some respects, migrants who rely on social media resources are at a relatively high risk of becoming victims of certain form of abuse, or of serving the personal interests of the information provider. Virtual connections (weak ties) may often be more information-rich, but personal connections (strong ties) are often more trustworthy.

Many Governments publish lists of registered and approved businesses and may have information on how to verify offers of employment in destination countries. Although embassies and consulates are considered reliable sources of information, most of the consultation and survey participants report that easily accessible and verifiable information on safe migration is unavailable in certain languages. Below are a number of comments relating to the availability of information for migrants.

**ZAIN, MALE, AGE 26,
FAMILY MIGRANT
-----> DENMARK**

Zain is a young man—age 26. His

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

ICT tools empower youth with information relevant to all stages of the migration process

ICT resources: empowering youth with information on the migration process
Information and communication technology (ICT) can offer young migrants access to valuable support at every stage of the migration process, from planning and preparation at home to integration at destination.

Pre-departure planning and preparation

Once youth have decided to migrate, ICT resources are often central to their pre-departure planning. They might search for online information about their desired destination or contact people already living there. In some cases, youth must use the Internet for their pre-migration preparations, particularly when they need to obtain a visa. Many embassies now require online appointment scheduling and visa application submission.

Transit

The use of ICT tools may reduce travel risks. While in transit, youth migrants can maintain regular contact with family members back home or in destination societies using mobile phones or other portable electronic communication devices.

Arrival and integration in destination societies

Upon arrival, youth migrants can use ICT to familiarize themselves with their new environment. Some might use the Internet to find jobs or housing or to access government services. ICT can also serve as a means of empowerment;

youth migrants can establish links with other members of their diaspora community in the host country, and with greater collective bargaining power, they may be in a better position to demand their rights and to protest discrimination or mistreatment.

Maintaining connections with places of origin

With the multitude of ICT options available, most youth migrants can maintain regular contact with their home communities. Cheap communication provides the 'social glue' for transnational connections.^a These links have implications on two levels. First, young migrants who are able to stay in touch with family members and friends back home may find the transition to a new society less difficult and the overall migration experience less emotionally taxing, as feelings of distance and separation are not as acute as might otherwise be the case. Second, young migrants who become part of home-based virtual communities can join their compatriots in lobbying for political change or reform in their places of origin.^b

family migrated to Denmark thirteen years ago. The main purpose was to gain access to better opportunities. They were partially aware of migrants' rights, and they learned about them mainly through news and social networks. Denmark is a welfare state, so his family was provided with all their basic needs, and it has become like home.

RALUCA, FEMALE, AGE 26
ROMANIA -----> BELGIUM

The European Youth Portal provides a lot of useful information on work and volunteer exchanges. Indeed, the Internet remains the best option for ensuring awareness of migrant rights [and opportunities].

Technology is rapidly becoming a key component of the migration process for many young people. ICT resources can streamline migration planning and facilitate integration. They can be used to reduce bureaucracy and reach larger numbers of potential young migrants. One suggestion provided by a participant in the online consultation process relates to the creation of smartphone-friendly applications and websites for government institutions dealing with migration issues. Of

course, online resources such as these would only benefit those with access to the necessary technology and equipment.

RIMA, FEMALE, AGE 29
-----> DUBAI

Technology should be able to streamline these processes. The world is at our fingertips. If each country's ministry of interior produced a smartphone app or website for potential youth migrants, this could simplify the process and ensure that fewer people fell prey to untrustworthy travel agents.

The cost of migration

Young people planning to migrate must have sufficient funds to cover pre-migration expenses, travel-related costs and settlement requirements. Many migrants consider international migration more lucrative than internal migration, but the costs of the former are significantly higher. Expenses for international migration may include official fees for travel documents and clearance, payments to intermediaries, travel expenses, and in some cases the payment of bribes. Evidence suggests that migration costs are often high for

unskilled workers—especially those on temporary contracts—relative to their wage expectations abroad.

Distorted perceptions or insufficient information about economic and social realities in the desired destination country can lead to poor decisions among young migrants. The online consultations and survey results suggest that young migrants who lack information on legal migration procedures are more likely to travel without the proper documentation. Some rely on 'travel agents' who may charge exorbitant fees for services never (or only partially) rendered and who may deliberately lead migrants into forced labour or trafficking situations. This issue is explored in some depth later in the chapter.

Millions of young people have the desire to migrate, but only those who secure the necessary funding can realize their dreams. Some youth are unable to obtain the required legal documents to move and may or may not choose to attempt irregular migration. It is the lack of financial resources that may constitute the largest obstacle to young migrants, however. In addition to travel costs, young people must be prepared to cover their expenses when they arrive, often for an extended period. Labour migrants

FIGURE 2.1

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FEES

Country	Annual student fees (US dollars)
Australia	25 375
United States	25 226
United Arab Emirates	21 371
United Kingdom	19 291
Canada	18 474
Singapore	14 885
Japan	6 522
China	3 983
Russian Federation	3 131
Spain	1 002
Germany	635

Australia	25 375
United States	25 226
United Arab Emirates	21 371
United Kingdom	19 291
Canada	18 474
Singapore	14 885
Japan	6 522
China	3 983
Russian Federation	3 131
Spain	1 002
Germany	635

Source: HSBC (2013).

Note: The research was conducted in 13 countries around the world.

Fees represent the average tuition cost for international students based on the top 10 largest institutions in each relevant country (sourced from individual institution data).

need to support themselves until they find employment, and international students must be able to pay their school and living expenses. As shown in table 2.1, tuition and fees for foreign students can be quite high, and many youth are unable to study abroad without a scholarship or grant assistance.

There is agreement among most respondents to the Survey on Youth Migration and Development that moving abroad is an expensive undertaking. This is especially true for migrants who have no immediate source of income on arrival.

**LAZ, MALE, AGE 30
PHYSICIAN/STUDENT MIGRANT,
NIGERIA -----> UNITED STATES**

Financial dependence among young people significantly affects their migration decision. Some young people ... make the choice of using a cheaper but illegal route to move to another country when they are faced with the... paucity of funds.

Prolonged application processes, the cost of engaging travel intermediaries (see figure 2.1), and the payment of bribes for routine services in some

countries can make applying for vital records and basic travel documents very expensive. There are often major differences between government-approved fees and the actual cost of migration, reflecting the existence of several tiers of rent-seeking intermediaries located in both countries of origin and places of destination.

Intermediaries are engaged to provide potential migrants, including youth, with travel-related information and assistance. They may familiarize clients with visa requirements and help arrange travel accommodations, and some even offer short-term loans to cover the initial costs of the move. Many of these 'middlemen' afford genuine support, but some are untrustworthy and may be involved in smuggling and/or trafficking syndicates. There are numerous cases of fraud and abuse, where the potential migrant pays high fees for travel arrangements or an employment contract but is ultimately denied a visa or finds that the promised contract does not exist. In such cases, youth migrants may be unable to seek legal redress because of their inability to trace the whereabouts of the middleman or to obtain documentation that lays out the terms and conditions of work and monetary transactions. When intermediaries offer assistance with

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION

IOM migrant training and pre-departure orientation programmes: making migration-related information available for youth

Programme overview

+ The migrant training programmes developed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) provide targeted, practical guidelines for practitioners assisting migrants preparing to travel to a new country. Between 2001 and 2010, more than 350,000 migrants benefitted from the briefings. The training programmes have evolved over a period of 60 years to meet emerging needs. IOM works closely with Governments and relevant institutions on training design and undertakes regular reviews and assessments to improve services for migrants.

+ In terms of programme methodology, IOM promotes an interactive, learner-centred approach that encourages participation and creates a sense of ownership and belonging among participants. Interaction with peers and experts and space for self-expression are vital components of the training. Psychosocial well-being is a priority of the training programmes; treating young people with dignity and compassion increases their confidence and their chances of successful integration.

Programme content

+ Pre-departure training is designed to help migrants with the logistical aspects of their travel abroad. Migrants learn about the required documentation and what to expect at each stage of their journey (departure, transit and arrival).

+ Cultural orientation is provided to educate migrants about the cultural norms and values of the host society and to acquaint them with the positive and negative aspects of living in a particular country. Young migrants often

experience culture shock, and the training teaches them coping mechanisms that can facilitate their cultural adjustment.

+ Migrants are given practical information about the host country so that they are better prepared to deal with the requirements of daily living. Areas of focus within this framework include physical geography and the environment, legal rights and responsibilities, education and training, employment, banking and budgeting, housing, health care and transportation.

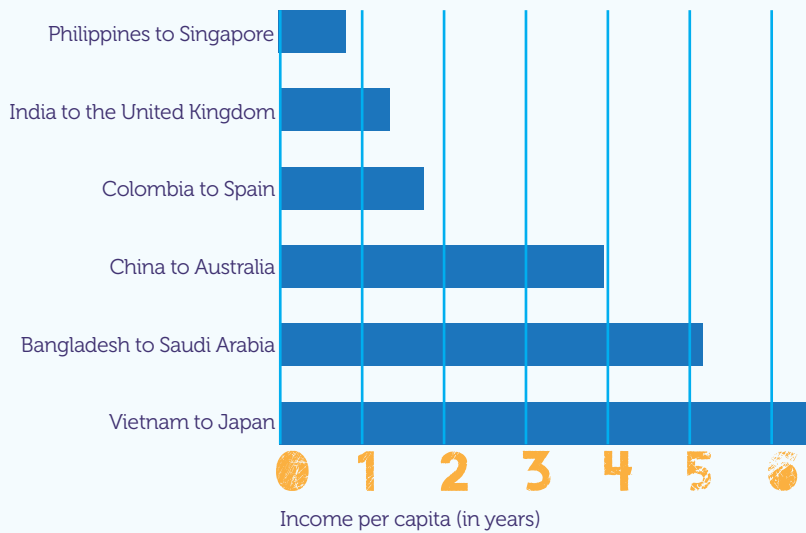
+ Prior to their departure, migrants are informed about the services they might expect to receive from (re)settlement agencies in their host countries.

+ The migrant training guide published by IOM includes additional guidelines for trainers addressing the needs of special groups of migrants, including youth, children, parents, the elderly, non- or less-literate individuals, women and escorts. The section relating to youth focuses on issues such as dating and sex, fashion and consumerism, illicit drugs and alcohol use, employment, education and family relations.

FIGURE 2.1

COST OF INTERMEDIARIES

The cost of intermediaries for selected migration corridors in terms of annual income per capita, 2006-2008



Sources: Adapted from the United Nations Development Programme 2009 Human Development Report (Bangladesh to Saudi Arabia: Malek (2008); China to Australia: Zhiwu (2009); Colombia to Spain: Grupo de Investigación en Movilidad Humana (2009); Philippines to Singapore: TWC (2006); Viet Nam to Japan: van Thanh (2008).

illegal or irregular migration and fail to deliver the services promised, migrants have virtually no legal recourse.

MOHAMMED,
CURRENTLY A LAWYER
(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 37)
EGYPT -----> ITALY

The man told me he would act as a 'mediator', and that I needed to

give him 5,000 Egyptian pounds. I arranged to pay him the money, and he did arrange a meeting with the intended person, who wanted 15,000 Egyptian pounds in order to help me travel to Italy. Of course, I paid the amount as agreed. The date of travel was set at two weeks after the payment day, then the date and the venue were selected and I was informed of those details. We travelled on a

fishing boat to the [sea] border of Italy, then we were requested to get out in the middle of the sea and ... swim to reach the Italian shores. I reached the shore with God's help; I was the only survivor from that illegal immigration trip. Because I was a good swimmer, I arrived in Genoa, Italy.

Mohammed was fortunate to have survived and reached his destination after the perilous journey and the fraudulent actions of the intermediaries. Young people such as Mohammed are often sought out by travel intermediaries or actively engage their services at the migration planning stage. Migrants in irregular situations, in particular, are often compelled to seek help through unofficial channels, and because they have little recourse against dishonest middlemen, they are in an extremely vulnerable position. The ignorance or desperation that drives the decision to rely on unknown intermediaries can literally cost some young migrants their lives.

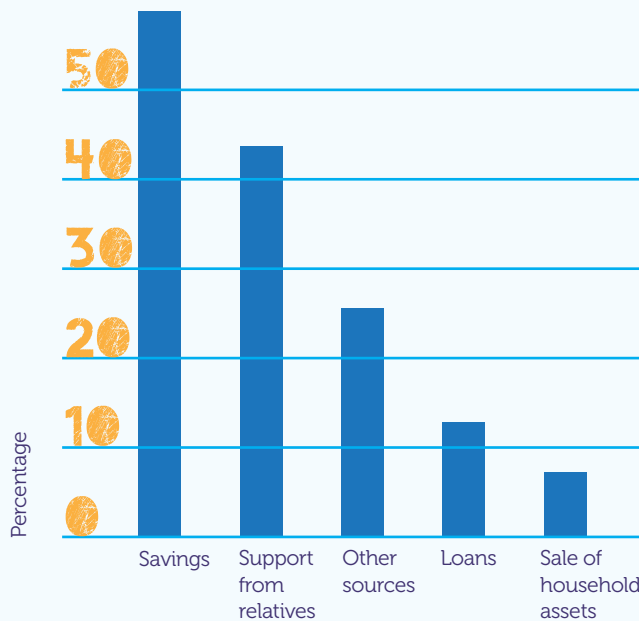
Financing migration

Youth migrants finance their travel and resettlement in a number of different ways (see figure 2.2). Almost 60 per cent of the respondents to the Survey

FIGURE 2.2

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Sources of financial support for migration



Source: United Nations (2013b).

Note: Totals exceed 100 per cent because respondents were asked to select all options that applied.

on Youth Migration and Development indicated that their main source of funding was their savings, while about 42 per cent received support from their relatives. Nearly 6 per cent of the respondents sold household assets to defray the cost of their move. Other sources of funding were often tied to the type of migration undertaken; student migrants were sometimes able to secure scholarships from their Governments or universities, while

many young labour migrants relied on financial support from their employers or personal savings from their income.

The gap between migration dreams and reality

Gallup conducts ongoing surveys to provide up to date data on potential migrants worldwide. A recent study indicates that potential migrants are often young, educated, single,

underemployed and relatively financially well-off (Esipova, Ray and Pugliese, 2011). Findings from the studies reveal wide gaps between those who express the desire to emigrate, those who are planning to move within the succeeding 12 months, and those actively engaged in preparations to migrate.

A 2011 Gallup World Poll carried out in 146 countries estimated the number of individuals dreaming of permanently leaving their countries at a staggering 630 million. However, out of that total, only 48 million were planning to move within the year, and only 19 million were actively preparing to emigrate (see figure 2.3).

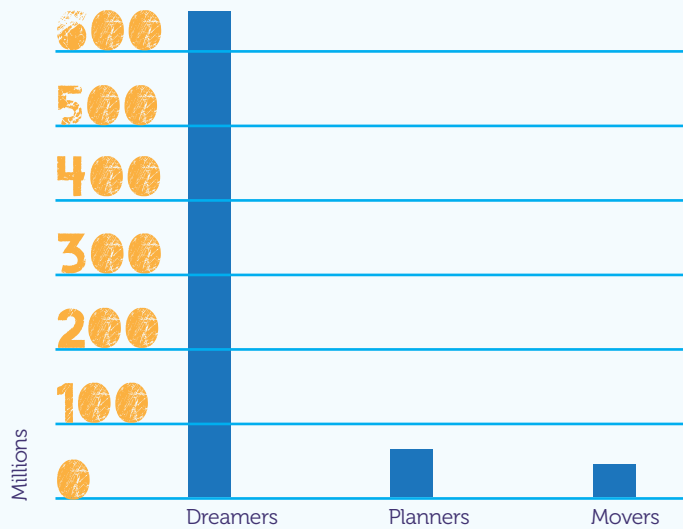
Features of young migrants' mobility

Once youth migrants have secured the necessary travel resources, there are different ways they can proceed. Their move may be short or long in terms of time or space; some may choose to move internally before migrating abroad. They may use legal or illegal channels. Young migrants may travel by air, on water or on land, arriving after a comfortable one-day flight or an arduous months-long journey.

FIGURE 2.3

DESIRE TO REALITY

Global migration: the gap between desire and reality



Source: Esipova, Ray and Pugliese (2011). Based on interviews with 401,490 adults in 146 countries (96 per cent of potential global migrants) between 2007 and 2010.

They may migrate accompanied or unaccompanied. The migration journey significantly influences the extent to which they are vulnerable to or protected from risk. There is some evidence that young men often migrate alone, whereas many young women try to migrate with one or more friends or family members to limit their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse or due to cultural norms.

Depending on social and economic circumstances in the place of origin and the motive for migration, potential youth migrants may choose to relocate within their countries before moving across national borders. Young migrants who opt for temporary internal migration may be able to build social and financial capital that will support their international migration efforts.

There is some evidence that poor youth may be more likely to move shorter distances, as the costs tend to be lower. Consequently, those with limited financial resources often engage in internal (rural-rural, urban-urban or rural-urban) migration.

Age is another factor influencing the distance young people are willing to migrate. Younger migrants, particularly girls, tend to remain closer to their places of origin, while older ones often move farther away.

CHALLENGES FACING YOUNG MIGRANTS**Challenges at the pre-migration stage**

Many young people are excited at the prospect of leaving home to settle in another place. However, the period leading up to their departure may present a variety of challenges.

One of the challenges cited most often by participants in the online consultations and survey was the difficulty youth faced in obtaining accurate information about their

intended destination. One refugee offered her views on what could be done to improve the pre-migration process for youth.

**PAWSER, FEMALE, AGED 26-29
REFUGEE**

-----> **UNITED STATES**

Young people have no options [in terms of where they move]. It is the parents' [choice], and they follow their parents. There is no education ... to teach them the process. There is no information ... to [help them] make a decision. Some time in the future, I think the United Nations should have a program only for youth, if they really want to support them, to teach them about the country they are going to. Not just a few weeks, but a lot [more, so they can learn about] the history [and] the people, and [they can take] people outside the camp so they can learn more. I want them to do that for refugee camps around the world.

Fulfilling practical requirements—obtaining the necessary documents, engaging a travel agent or intermediary, and making arrangements for travel and accommodations—can be expensive and time-consuming. Young

people trying to complete travel-related paperwork are often faced with delays; these may be caused by bureaucratic red tape but can also be linked to the payment of bribes for document processing. Young people who feel the need to engage a third party to provide migration assistance may be taking a huge risk, as there are numerous intermediary scams being perpetrated against vulnerable youth. Irregular migrants are particularly susceptible to fraud; they have little legal recourse if they are cheated or placed at risk, and many are unaware of the potential consequences of 'unofficial' migration—including increased vulnerability to human trafficking and criminal attacks, sexual and labour exploitation, the inability to secure decent work, deportation, arrest, low self-esteem, insecurity and deprivation.

Along with the practical challenges, young migrants must deal with the emotional anxiety of leaving their families and communities to face new responsibilities and unknown risks—often alone.

**RALUCA, FEMALE, AGE 26
ROMANIA -----> BELGIUM**

The first challenge young migrants

need to face before starting their journey is to be prepared to adapt to a new culture, within a different environment from what they were used to, and to continually be informed about their rights and obligations as 'newcomers'.

Once young migrants have overcome pre-migration obstacles and embarked on their journey, they face a new set of challenges in transit and at destination. Nicholas, a former child soldier forced to migrate, shares some of the challenges he faced and highlights some of the dangers and risks associated with migration. He also makes some useful suggestions to help migrants in similar irregular or forced migration situations.

**NICHOLAS, MALE,
REFUGEE
LIBERIA -----> GHANA -----> PHILIPPINES**

I faced unique challenges migrating as a young person. I was vulnerable to any situation at that time. People took advantage of me. I [travelled] with a former female child soldier named Sarah. Life for her was really difficult, and [I heard later] that she was murdered. From my experience, I would advise youth, if they have family, to get some

RECOMMENDATIONS BY YOUTH

“Life does not necessarily get better when we migrate. The conditions surrounding us that make us want to leave may get better only if we try to improve them”. – Rueben, Aged 30, Ghana

The recommendations below—offered by youth participating in online consultations and a survey undertaken in support of the World Youth Report—are intended to help other young people, youth organizations, and relevant stakeholders address the challenges associated with youth migration.

- + Readiness assessment tools need to be developed to facilitate decision-making and planning among young people considering migration. Potential youth migrants should complete a self-assessment to determine whether migration is the right option for them. During the pre-migration stage, they should take time to think through the entire migration process, developing plans for travel, settlement and (in some cases) return to their countries of origin. A pre-departure checklist might be developed for youth to support safe migration.
- + Youth-centred initiatives should be developed to ensure migration readiness. These might include peer-to-peer initiatives, pre-departure orientation programmes, and awareness-raising campaigns that inform potential youth migrants about the challenges and opportunities associated with regular and irregular migration. Information on international migrant rights and human rights should be integrated in such initiatives.
- + Potential youth migrants must carefully research all aspects of the migration process applicable to their particular circumstances so that they can make informed decisions. Any information they obtain should be verified with organizations dealing with migration or relevant government institutions.
- + Youth feedback indicates a general lack of knowledge about what youth organizations are doing in any given country to raise awareness about safe migration. If such organizations are to be effective in reaching youth, further research on migration trends and effective outreach methods must be conducted globally, as youth comprise a diverse group. Rueben, a 30-year-old respondent from Ghana, suggested that youth become part of the solution in addressing the challenges of youth migration, noting that “life does not necessarily get better when we migrate. The conditions surrounding us that make us want to leave may get better only if we try to improve them”.

advice from them concerning their decision to migrate. Also, reading some books and searching on the Internet to know more about the country you want to migrate to can help. If any citizens of that country are [available], try to reach out [to them] and ask them about migrants in their country and the laws about migration there—how life [is for] migrants and how are they coping. Make sure to have the cash and documents you need [for] that country, and try your best to stay there legally.

Young people relocating within their own countries, internal migrants, may face many of the same challenges as youth migrating abroad. Internal (especially rural-urban) migrants must often deal with the high cost of living in cities, increased noise

and congestion, the unavailability of affordable and decent housing, and the lack of employment and economic opportunities. Female migrants may be subject to socio-cultural norms that interfere with their migration or settlement abroad. Once they migrate, they may encounter special constraints with regard to their movement or abuse in the workplace.

**RAKESH, MALE, AGE 23,
INTERNAL STUDENT MIGRANT
EASTERN INDIA -----> DELHI**

Many [Indian] youth who migrate from rural to urban areas for a better education or employment ... face problems such as a lack of decent accommodations and food. Some [of my friends who have come] from north-eastern parts of India to Delhi [have faced] sexual as well as racial

harassment. Small living quarters usually cost \$30-\$40 per month, but as a young migrant you have to pay more than \$100. Many times students ... who come from rural areas of the country need to pay illegally for basic [services such as] electricity or an Internet connection.

Recommendations for addressing the challenges facing youth migrants

The participants in the online consultations and Survey on Youth Migration and Development highlighted many of the challenges faced by young migrants, but they also offered a number of useful suggestions and recommendations for future action (see box 2.3).

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

- Barker, K. M., et al. (2013). *Girls on the Move: Adolescent Girls & Migration in the Developing World*. The Population Council, Inc. Available from http://www.popcouncil.org/pdfs/2013PGY_GirlsOnTheMove.pdf (accessed 10 Jun 2013).

This report examines migration trends among adolescent females, highlighting some of the unique challenges they face and proposing solutions. The primary focus is on establishing policies and programmes that are essentially aimed at building the protective assets of female youth throughout the migration process so that they remain safe and are able to benefit from the opportunities migration presents.

- Haug, S. (2008). *Migration networks and migration decision-making*. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, vol. 24, No. 4, pp. 585-605. Available from <http://crcw.princeton.edu/migration/files/library/Migration%20Networks%20and%20Migration%20Decision-Making.pdf> (accessed 10 Jun 2013).

This journal article explores the role of social capital in the migration process, highlighting the importance of social networks during the pre-departure and return phases of migration. One finding is that social capital in the destination society is positively correlated with migrants' decision to return, while there is a negative correlation between social capital at the place of origin and return migration.

- *Youth migration: challenges and opportunities of migrant youth in destination countries: Summary of Week 1 Online Discussions: Preparing to Migrate. 2013 UN World Youth Report-Youth Migration and Development.*

These discussions were part of a series of online consultations undertaken by the United Nations Focal Point on Youth to gather input for the 2013 World Youth Report. The summary includes the views and perspectives of youth worldwide on the factors influencing pre-departure migration decisions.

- Zohry, A. (2006). *Egyptian Youth and the European Eldorado: Journeys of Hope and Despair*. DISS Working Paper No. 2006/18. Available from http://www.diis.dk/graphics/Publications/WP2006/WP2006-18_web.pdf (accessed 10 Jun 2013).

This working paper illustrates the challenges and risks associated with irregular migration. It highlights the experiences of Egyptian youth travelling illegally to Europe, showing how dangerous irregular migration can be—especially when the costs are high and migrants search for the least expensive routes. These experiences form the basis of recommendations on improvements that may be introduced at the pre-departure stage to minimize irregular migration and its attendant risks.

- Siddiqui, T., Rashid, R., Zeitlyn, B. (2008). *Information Campaigns on Safe Migration and Pre-Departure Training*. Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation & Poverty. Available from http://www.migrationdrc.org/publications/research-reports/Information_Campaigns_and_Pre-Departure_Training.pdf (accessed 10 Jun 2013).

This publication suggests various measures that could be undertaken at the pre-departure stage to reduce the risks and challenges associated with migration. It emphasizes the importance of information campaigns and explores how awareness-raising and information sharing might be useful at this stage.