International Data Alliance for Children on the Move

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Background

Millions of children have migrated across borders or been forcibly displaced. And many children around the world are "left behind" when one or both of their parents migrate. Reliable, timely and accessible data and evidence are essential for understanding how migration and forcible displacement affect children and their families and for putting in place policies and programs to meet their needs. Currently there is insufficient data about children on the move regarding their age and sex; about where they come from, where they are going, whether they move with their families or alone, how they fare along the way, what their vulnerabilities are in their country of origin, during transit and in their destination. In many cases data are not regularly collected, shared or analysed, and data quality is often poor.

The prevalence of these data gaps is alarming because evidence simultaneously suggests that children are more vulnerable than adults. Children's vulnerability and related data demands are recognized by the international community in the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) which include multiple references to child-sensitive mechanisms and child-specific indicators. To meet the data demands and better protect migrant and forcibly displaced children, it is paramount to improve child-specific data as well as the data capacities.

The **International Data Alliance for Children on the Move**[1] is a group of experts mostly from national statistical offices, migration-relevant line ministries, international and regional organizations, NGOs, academics, and civil societies. The Alliance was conceived at an international expert workshop in March 2019 in Rabat, Morocco, hosted by the Government of Morocco. The workshop – jointly organized by IOM and UNICEF – was convened to discuss data needs and methodological challenges facing data collection, transmission, analysis, and storage in relation to statistics and research on migrant and forcibly displaced children in the context of the GCM and GCR as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Objectives

The main objective of the Alliance is to improve statistics and data on migrant and forcibly displaced children to support evidence-based policymaking that protect and empower them. The Alliance also aims to support the implementation of the commitments of the two Global Compacts on Migration and

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[1] Children on the move is a compound concept that has gained traction on the operational level in the international community. The Alliance subsumes under the term 'children on the move', child migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, children internally displaced by conflicts or natural disasters, children left behind due to migration of parent(s), children affected by migration, and child trafficking victims trafficked across international borders.

Refugees as well as the child migration relevant targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Scope of work and key tasks

The Alliance recognizes that migration and displacement are dynamic issues and that it is not possible to conclusively define the work scope and tasks of the group but that they need to be flexible and adaptable to an evolving environment. The key tasks include mapping data gaps and data needs, identifying measurement challenges and providing solutions, strengthening data systems and capacities in countries and creating a space for countries, international and regional organizations, NGOs, civil society and academics to share experiences and good practices. At a minimum the Alliance will work to achieve 3 main activities in the next 2 years:

1. Support **data capacity development** initiatives, to help countries and regions build their capacities to collect, analyse and use data on migrant and refugee children. Activities could include, for example, tools and training documents as well as projects on data ecosystem assessment and strengthening to improve data on migrant and refugee children, the production of other guidance materials and training.

2. Produce an **annual flagship report on Data on Migrant and Refugee Children** with contributions from different agencies. This state of the art report would monitor global progress in improving data on migrant and refugee children and highlight key knowledge gaps, which could contribute to the monitoring of the GCM and GCR progress on child-specific issues.

3. **Convene an annual conference and establish a global network** to facilitate the exchange of local, national, regional and international good practices on data collection, analysis and dissemination to support data initiatives between and within countries.

Membership and Composition

The Alliance is meant to create a space for experts from national statistical offices, migration-relevant line ministries, international and regional organizations, NGOs, academics and civil society to convene. There is no minimum period of membership nor is a membership rotation planned, and interested parties are encouraged to apply to join. The Alliance may invite agencies, countries or individuals to ensure regional balance and to draw on further expertise, if needed.

UNICEF, IOM, UNHCR and OECD form a joint Secretariat with rotating chair, assisted by an advisory board. In close consultation with the advisory board the Secretariat proposes the programme of work for the Alliance, organizes meetings and prepares and maintains records of discussions and agreements. The advisory board makes recommendations and provides critical support to the work of the Alliance.

The Alliance will convene annually and organize virtual meetings as needed. Participation in the face -to-face meetings is self-funded. The Secretariat will seek to secure funding for a limited number of developing country members to ensure their participation.

Duration

The work of the Alliance will be ongoing. The terms of reference will be reviewed and adapted as needed.

Partnership and Coordination with other groups and initiatives

The Alliance aims to coordinate and work closely together with other established groups and networks focusing on data in migration and displacement, such as the UN Migration Network, the UN Expert Group on Migration Statistics (EGMS), the Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGIRS), the Global Compact on Youth in Humanitarian Action and others.