



WATCHDOG

#CPD46

Featured Articles

Addressing the Vulnerabilities of Young Migrants

Revisiting the Adoption of Migrants' Rights

Oral Statement on Behalf of the International Progressive Youth Caucus

The 46th session of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development (CPD) started on Monday. Since the Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights (YCSRR) emerged as an organization out of the ICPD+5, we are particularly dedicated to the work of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action and thus, the CPD.

The theme of this year's Commission, 'New trends in migration: demographic aspects', is very close to young people since approximately 10-15% of the world's undocumented migrant population is under the age of 15. These young people flee their countries of origin for various reasons ranging from searching for employment, escaping violence and discrimination, including persecution due to their sexual orientation and gender identity, and others.

These 25 to 32 million undocumented young migrants worldwide are often unable to obtain access to equitable services they need, particularly

sexual and reproductive health services, which are vital for young people to stay healthy, contribute effectively to the economy, and achieve their life goals.

We urge governments and the representatives at the CPD to affirm that all young people have the right to health services, including their sexual and reproductive health services, regardless of immigration status.

In addition to their limited access to health care services, young migrants' sexual and reproductive rights are often violated in the absence of a social protection mechanism for them. Immigrant girls, for example, are twice as likely as their non-immigrant peers to experience recurring incidents of sexual assault. Also, young women are more likely to seek undocumented work, such as domestic work, and therefore receive no legal protection for employer labor abuses.

We encourage governments and the representatives at the CPD to protect young migrant women and girls from violations of their human rights including their sexual and reproductive rights and ensure that protection plans are in place and available to migrants regardless of their documentation status.

The young advocates sitting here at Vienna Café at the UN building today would like to present to the delegates here this compilation of voices of young people from around the world who are concerned or affected by how migration is managed and how young migrants,

especially adolescent and young girl migrants, are affected by migration laws and policies that do not offer a human rights-based approach to the issue.

Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights Delegation in New York

Youth and Migration

- **By mid-2010, 12% (27 million) of all international migrants were between the ages of 15 to 24. One-third to one-half of all migrants are between the ages of 20 and 29. (Estimates from Population Division of DESA)**
- **Young migrants, especially young women, run a high risk of sexual and reproductive ill-health and violence. Young migrants are often afraid to access health services for fear of discrimination, detention or deportation because of their migratory status.**
- **Many young migrants who get pregnant or acquire a sexually transmitted infection (STI), such as HIV, face imprisonment or deportation.**
- **It is critical that young migrants can play a meaningful part in policy- and decision-making processes concerning the issues they face.**

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Addressing the vulnerabilities of young migrants

This article was submitted by an anonymous author

“When people migrate from one place to another, they will also bring their sexuality and it needs to be addressed with a rights-based perspective. The access to information and services related to sexual and reproductive health and rights must be available widely.”

Reflecting to what I have experienced, it's really important for governments to address young people's needs in a migration context. Government needs to enable access to decent work to ensure the chance to get a job not only to the adult but also to young people. Beyond that, government must ensure that young people's rights must be fulfilled and not limited by restrictive or exclusive legal system.

Hi, I am a 25 year old male, coming from a developing country in Asia. Once upon a time in my life I was living by myself as a young undocumented migrant worker moving to a developed country nearby my country in Asia. I was getting a job from an organization stating that I will be a part of their organization to work on specific project. When I got the announcement I was so happy because it was the first time in my life to move and live in another country. All by my self.

I asked the organization about the visa process and they said that they will arrange for it once I arrived. At that time I was just following the process and believed that as an organisation they would arrange it for me. On the other hand they said that since I can use a 30 day visa as a tourist to enter the country there shouldn't be a problem with it. I was then packing my stuff and going with a lot of expectations. Then I started working and found out that that they couldn't provide me with a work visa. After 30 days using a tourist visa I was told to go back to my home for a while and work from home.

I was then working from home and asked to go back to them again. This time they said that they were working on the work visa for me. Once I arrived I found out that it's almost impossible for me to

get a work visa, mainly because I am still young. Regulation in the host organization's country mention that if they want to hire young people there are two ways:

1. As an expatriate worker. If they apply for this for me they have to pay for my salary higher than the local staff and provide me with some benefits such as relocation costs, health insurance, and pension fund. Since I was still under 25 years old at that time, there's no way for them to provide me with this. Meanwhile at that time I was only getting monthly pay.
2. As a blue collar worker. Since the job that I got was mainly on office matters and not touching clerical work at all, there's no way I can apply through this scheme.

They couldn't give me either option and then I would have to go out of the country every 30 days to renew my visa. At that time, I was vulnerable because I couldn't get the work visa to make my stay legal and viable. The consequence was I couldn't open a bank account and also get health insurance. I was a bit lucky because as a male I am relatively easy to get contraception. However for female, it will be harder to get for example emergency contraception and safe abortion access.

Migration has been happening since the beginning of human civilization. Migration if it's done either planned or unplanned must be seen as a social phenomenon in which the people uphold their rights to have a decent life. Migration, if it's maintained well will benefit not only the migrant itself, but the country to which they come. We have to acknowledge this fact and uphold the government to protect the rights especially sexual and reproductive rights of migrants, especially young migrants. When people migrate from one place to another, they will also bring their sexuality and it needs to be addressed with a rights-based perspective. The access to information and services related to sexual and reproductive health and rights must be available widely. By responding the needs and protecting the rights of young migrants, migration can be an empowering thing for young people to develop its potential to its fullest.

REVISITING THE ADOPTION OF MIGRANTS' RIGHTS

December 18 1990 marked a milestone in the crusade towards the promotion of the rights of migrants and their families with the adoption of International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families by the UN General Assembly.

Consequently, December 18 was subsequently set aside as the International Migrants day. However, 22 years down the line, not much success has been recorded in the global efforts aimed at promoting migrants' rights.

My observation during a migration awareness campaign in Nigeria organized by CAFSO-WARG in partnership with Coventry University, UK in 2009 revealed many human rights abuses experienced by irregular migrants who desire to travel to Europe in the course of their trips. Today, these abuses are on the increase.

As a matter of fact, many nations have still not either ratified or give full consent to the Convention, simply because such ratification will place certain obligations on their nations. The UN Secretary General remarked last in December 2012,

"We are seeing austerity measures that discriminate against migrant workers, x-

nophobic rhetoric that encourages violence against irregular migrants, and proposed immigration laws that allow the police to profile migrants with impunity".

Such shocking revelation only x-rays many discriminatory and punitive atrocities being perpetrated against migrants. It equally suggests that it is unlikely that most nations will be willing to assent to this without any form of sanctions.

Abuse of rights of any living being, including irregular migrants should be viewed alongside other crimes against humanity like genocide and nations who engage in such inhuman activities ought to be sanctioned.

Interestingly, nations ordinarily will chose not be bound to take certain decisions except forced to do so. If nations could be mandated to end activities like Slavery and other inhuman practices, sanctions against perpetrators is highly recorded.

Finally, abuse of the rights of every living creature whether an irregular migrants or any other person is a crime to humanity, the punishment of which should be not subjected to the offender's willingness to be punished or other wise.

BAMGBOSE, Oludayo John, 29, is the Secretary, Civil Society Coalition on Migration and Development (CIS-COM-D), Nigeria.

High Five!

To the Governments of Ghana and Finland for including young people on their delegations!



For more info about the linkages between SRHR and Migration, check out this great article by our friends at ARROW "Labour Migration, Gender and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights"
<http://arrow.org.my/>

Oral Statement on Behalf of the International Progressive Youth Caucus

Thank you Mr. Chair for the floor. I share this statement today on behalf of a coalition of young advocates and activists present here to highlight issues related to young people with respect to this year's theme of migration.

In the last year, we have seen remarkable progress for youth around the world. This includes the resolution produced at last year's CPD on adolescents and youth as well as the outcome document from the Global Youth Forum held in Bali last December. These two documents reaffirm the fundamental human rights of all young people, including our sexual and reproductive rights. Last year's CPD and the Global Youth Forum were both instrumental examples of the UN and governments providing the space for young people to participate in and take leadership of decision-making that affects our lives. We congratulate the Ghanaian and Finnish governments for including young delegates this year and encourage Member States to include young

members in the years to come. Many governments here are, understandably, very concerned about the economic impacts of migration. However, migration is not only an economic issue but also a youth and human rights issue. Young people, aged 15-24, make up the largest proportion of migrants worldwide and one third to one half of all migrants are between the ages of 20 and 29. To empower young migrants, governments must ensure their access to quality education and decent work so that they can exercise their rights and realize their full potential.

Many young migrants face an increased risk of violence and discrimination in their country of destination due to their sex, ethnicity, HIV status, and sexual orientation or gender identity. Sadly, these same factors are often times the cause of their migration. Every individual has fundamental rights. This is affirmed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These rights should not be violated simply because a person chooses or is forced to change location.

The right to health is one of the most basic human rights. Sexual and reproductive health and rights are of critical importance to young migrants. In many countries, however, young migrants are unable or afraid to access sexual and reproductive health services for fear of facing discrim-

ination, detention or deportation due to their migration status. This lack of access is directly linked to poverty, poor health, and social inequality. Protecting these rights will enable and empower young migrants to make informed decisions about their bodies and lives.

Migrant girls and young women are more likely to experience recurring incidents of sexual violence and abuse than their non-migrant peers. Without access to health services and social protections, they are placed at increased risk of violence, sexually-transmitted infections, unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortion. This exacerbates their already difficult situation. You can change this.

This is an important week for our future. In the coming years, millions of young people will cross borders both voluntarily and involuntarily, in search of safety, better opportunities, or to escape persecution.

We therefore urge governments to recognize young migrants and respect, protect and fulfill their rights and take action by:

- Meaningfully engaging young migrants, especially girls, at every decision-making level.
- Providing comprehensive sexuality education in both formal and non-formal settings.
- Ensuring access to comprehensive, quality, youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health

services, regardless of migration status.

- Eliminating punitive laws that violate the rights of young people on the basis of their sexual orientation and gender identity.

Thank you Mr. Chair for providing this platform so the voices and concerns of young people can be heard. We hope that the United Nations and Member States will continue to support us in shaping the policies that affect our lives.

Special Thanks to the Organizations who Endorsed the Statement:

Advocates for Youth
 Alianza Latinoamericana y Caribeña de Juventudes rumbo a Cairo+20
 ASTRA Youth
 Choice for Youth and Sexuality
 Dance4life foundation
 Elige Red de Jóvenes por los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivo
 Education as a Vaccine
 Espacio Iberoamericano de Juventud
 Ponton Group of Sex Educators, Poland
 Red Latinoamericana y Caribeña de Jóvenes por los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos
 RESURJ
 Rutgers WPF
 World Young women Christian Association Sri Lanka
 World Young women Christian Association Benin
 Y-Fem Namibia
 Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights
 The YP Foundation