

# Youth Strategy 2021-2025

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**International Organization For Migration  
Mission to the Arab Republic of Egypt**



# Foreword by Chief of Mission of IOM Egypt

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*“Young people are the common wealth of the entire world and the torchbearers to bring positive changes to their societies.”*

Youth are a major source of human capital and key agents for socio cultural, economic, and political growth and progress.

Indeed, youth are key partners in migration governance. Today, young migrants make up more than 10 per cent of the overall 281 million international migrants. In light of this context, it is key to highlight the importance of integrating young people into societies, as well as empowering them by promoting their access to education, health, freedom of speech, modern technology, as well as guaranteeing that they remain aware of the dangers of addiction, human trafficking, and the environmental risks to the mental health.

Through its Country Strategy 2021 – 2025, IOM Egypt seeks to achieve a balance in the process of integrating young people into societies, with the support of the Government of Egypt to achieve the Egypt Vision 2030, in line with the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM). IOM Egypt’s Youth Strategy builds upon the commitments made in the IOM Country Strategy and provides details on the steps taken by IOM to mainstream migration into the youth development agendas.

At the cornerstone of promoting the welfare of young people is the importance of ensuring that a whole of government and a whole of society approach is followed. The Strategy gives an overview of the current context in Egypt and outlines IOM Egypt’s key priorities in supporting youth through 2025, in line with the strategic priorities of the Government of Egypt and other national and international, governmental, and non-governmental frameworks

I believe that youth are a synonym of progress and future to achieve our global Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 and bring this change we all want to the world.



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# Strategic Priorities

## Pillar 1: Resilience

### The overall objective:

To ensure that the Government of Egypt, young migrants and host communities in Egypt have increased capacities to prepare for, mitigate and respond to risks and shocks.

The objective of this pillar is to support young people in tackling the current socioeconomic problems they are facing and to build their prospects and their resilience to respond to future shocks, whilst maintaining a protection and do-no-harm approach. Early, proactive action to build the resilience of young people empowers them as catalysts for peace, security, and positive changes in their communities and beyond. Educated and empowered young people can also more effectively assist their communities in responding to conflict, disaster, and other social issues.

### 1. Quality education for all

Egyptian youth have had their resilience tested since the onset of the pandemic. A snapshot study conducted by UNICEF outlines how the closure of schools has affected an estimated 25.3 million students in the country by disrupting their education and depriving them of peer interaction, which can hinder their social and behavioral development, in addition to the loss of learning opportunities[1]. Additionally, the socioeconomic downturn caused by the pandemic is causing a living crisis which is forcing many young people out of education and into any available employment to sustain themselves and support their families.



#### IOM priorities in supporting youth education are:

- **Education grants:** In some circumstances, migrants in Egypt may sometimes be required to pay more than Egyptian citizens to enter the formal education system[2]. This creates an additional financial barrier to entry, on top of language and cultural barriers. In response to the growing demand for education grants, and in a move to encourage young people back into education, IOM is committed to increasing the provision of education grants so that young migrants can access quality education.

[1] UNICEF: Data snapshot "COVID-19 in Egypt": UNICEF efforts to protect children and youth during the pandemic

[2] Joint Platform for Migrants and Refugees – Report on Education and Health



- **Refurbishment of registered community schools:** Community schools are an invaluable education resource for young migrants and can be a valuable social and learning community hub for migrants of all ages. IOM will refurbish community schools that have registered with the Egyptian government, equipping them with the facilities and resources to provide a higher standard of learning opportunities to young migrants who cannot access formal education.
- **Supporting global education initiatives:** IOM is committed to working collaboratively with UN agencies and other partners to contribute actively towards a whole-of-system approach to recovering pandemic-related learning losses and contribute towards ensuring quality education is accessible for all. In line with the focus of the Transforming Education Summit 2022, recommendations from UNESCO publication “Reimagining our futures together: a new social contract for education”[3] will be mainstreamed into future IOM projects. This will revitalize national and global efforts to achieve SDG-4 and to reimagine education systems for the world of today and tomorrow.

Developing the capabilities of youth through education is one of the core commitments made by Egypt under the “Shabab Balad” national platform, the Egyptian version of the UN global initiative “Generation Unlimited”. The platform aims to unite the private sector, civil society and youth to achieve the country’s development goals as part of Egypt Vision 2030 and contribute to the overarching goal of “Generation Unlimited”: to have every young person in the world to have a chance to go to school: learning, training or having an appropriate job by 2030[4].

## 2. Technology as a tool for resilience

The growing role of technology in our society is well recognized, as is the potential it holds to help mitigate the impact that global, national, and local crises can have on communities, including education, employment, and social cohesion. In contrast, technology also opens avenues for new methods of abuse and exploitation, especially for the most vulnerable and those who have not been educated in safe internet usage.

“Use and Abuse of Technology” was the theme chosen for World Day Against Trafficking 2022, drawing attention to the increasing use of technology and the internet by traffickers to find and exploit vulnerable people[5]. With an additional 782 million people coming online in just two years since the onset of the pandemic[6], it is imperative that migrants are educated in safely using technology and in building their resilience through knowing how to access online tools for education, trainings, employment, and the coordination of crises response.



[3] UNESCO: [Reimagining our futures together: a new social contract for education](#)

[4] Generation Unlimited: [The Egyptian version of the UN Global initiative "Generation Unlimited"](#)

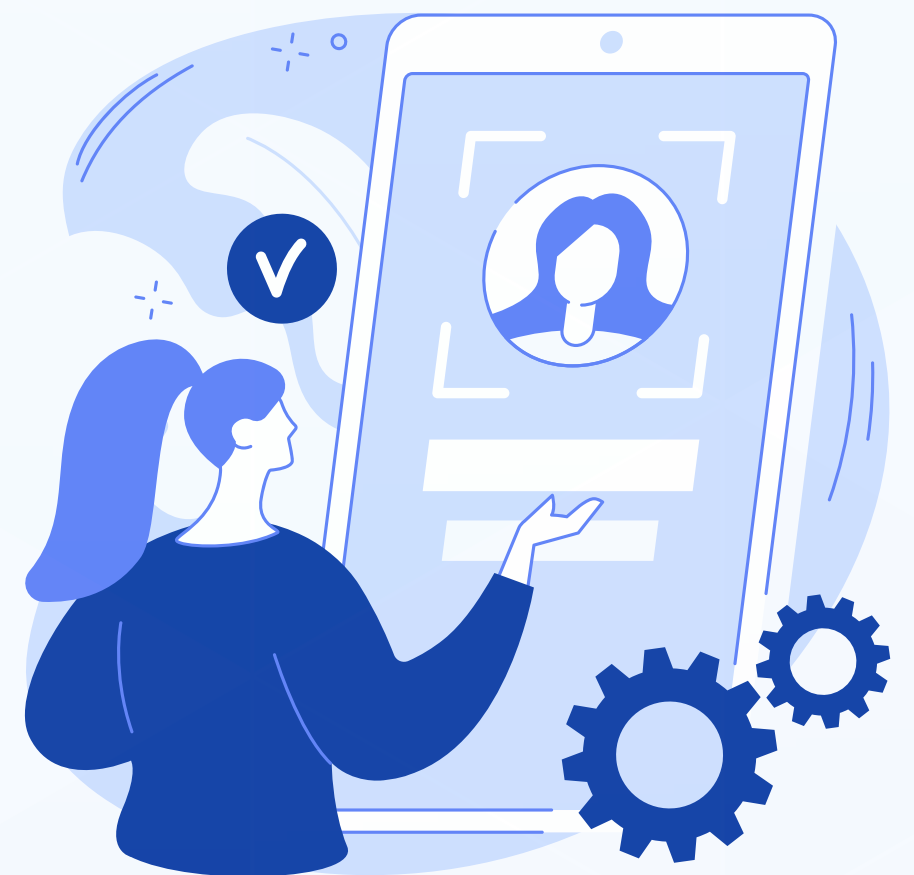
[5] UNODC: [World Day Against Trafficking in Persons 2022](#)

[6] UN: [As Internet user numbers swell due to pandemic, UN Forum discusses measures to improve safety of cyberspace](#)



## IOM priorities in ensuring enhanced, safer access to technology are:

- **Increasing access to technology:** Approximately 2.9 billion people remain without internet access, with 96 per cent of these individuals living in developing countries[7]. A distance learning feasibility survey conducted by IOM Greece found that whilst 99 per cent of migrant survey respondents owned a phone, only 15 per cent owned or had regular access to a computer[8]. With health and education services, employment opportunities and other information being moved online, there is a need to increase internet access and access to computers for vulnerable groups. To this end, IOM will continue to equip community centres and vocational training centres operated by the Ministry of Manpower with computers, other technology, and internet access.
- **Increasing safety online and digital literacy to build resilience through technology:** IOM publication “The Power of Digitalization in the Age of Physical Distancing” sheds light on the growing issue of migrant exploitation through false job opportunities posted online, leading to fraud, exploitation, human trafficking or smuggling[9]. The publication highlights the need for “accurate and reliable online information sources” and education in safety online.



Accordingly, IOM will launch a digital platform that will consolidate important information and opportunities for migrants in one safe, accessible space, from available services to online trainings and trustworthy job vacancies. The platform will be supplemented by a comprehensive mapping exercise of service providers, detailing available services and allowing direct referrals between IOM and partners.

To increase digital literacy, IOM will support computer literacy classes at refurbished community centres and advocate for migrant inclusion in Government digital literacy programmes. To minimize instances of exploitation online, IOM will partner with the National Scouts Association to lead campaigns (including awareness sessions, community events and trainings of trainers) on protection against the risks of irregular migration-related crimes that could originate from the misuse/ abuse of social media and cyber communication.

With so many services, opportunities and information outlets online, increased digital literacy, access to technology and education in online safety for young people in Egypt directly or indirectly contributes to all eight pillars of the Youth Strategy of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Activities under this priority area will directly contribute to Pillars 1, 4 and 5, as well as promoting knowledge and innovation in accordance with Section 4 of the Egypt Vision 2030.

[7] UN News: [Despite COVID-19 connectivity boost, world's poorest left far behind](#)

[8] IOM: [The Power of Digitalization in the Age of Physical Distancing](#)

[9] IOM: [The Power of Digitalization in the Age of Physical Distancing](#)



### 3. Health

Mentally and physically healthy young people are better positioned to make the most of education and other opportunities available to them and to respond effectively to shocks. On the other hand, inadequacy of these critical support systems can cause permanent shortcomings in an individual's capacity to contribute to their own and larger societal well-being. The COVID-19 pandemic has put a substantial strain on already limited public health services and many of the healthcare needs of migrants require specialist support that is not necessarily available under any public healthcare institutions in Egypt.

#### IOM priorities under this section include:

- **Pandemic response:** To minimize vulnerability to pandemics, IOM will incorporate necessary precautions in all activities, disseminate information about prevention and the importance of vaccination and the vaccination process in Egypt. Whilst cases of (COVID-19) pandemics are usually mild in young people, there is the potential that cases can become serious, and the time required to isolate and recover can deprive young people of education or employment.
  - **Increasing access to healthcare assistance:** Since 2019, Egypt is in the process of rolling out its new Universal Healthcare Insurance project (UHI) to ensure inclusive healthcare coverage and provision of quality health services. Whilst it has been indicated that migrant populations will be included, the plans and mechanisms for their inclusion is progressive. IOM will continue to advocate for the inclusion of migrants in the UHI along with the development of migrant inclusive policies towards high quality migrant health, including policies that support the mental health of young migrants.
- Additionally, IOM will collaborate with other international and national partners to provide comprehensive healthcare assistance, including expanding the availability of services dedicated to the health issues that are prevalent amongst young migrants, including mental health issues, sexual and gender-based violence and female genital mutilation.
- **Awareness raising:** Raised awareness of available healthcare services and of prevalent health issues in migrant populations can contribute to improving the resilience of migrants. IOM will spread awareness of sexual and gender-based violence amongst migrant communities, including female genital mutilation, and empower young people to identify and actively tackle gender-based violence in their communities.



# Child Protection

Children and youth are at the heart of IOM global mandate on migration. As there is no one coherent profile of a migrant child, IOM strives to address children's individual needs which encompass, among others, access to education, health care and psychosocial support as well as family unity and various protection measures to ensure children's safety. IOM supports facilitating children's access to protective and assistance services that address their specific needs regardless of their migratory status.

IOM Egypt works to promote and uphold migrants' rights and supports migrant children through direct assistance such as Non-Food Items (NFIs), food vouchers, education grants, medical and psychosocial assistance, legal assistance, refurbishment of schools and referrals to specialized child protection actors as well as through its Assistance Voluntary Return and Reintegration programme (AVRR). If an unaccompanied child wishes to return to his/her home country and it is in his/her best interest, a detailed programme is tailored for the child and his/her family, such as financial support for education or support for the family to set up a business in the country of origin. If the child is unaccompanied and 15 years old or younger, he/she will always be escorted by an IOM staff.

IOM Egypt also conducts awareness-raising in a child-friendly manner on issues such as counter-smuggling, counter-trafficking, child labour rights and more to enhance the knowledge of migrant children, so they can identify protection risks and learn more about their rights. IOM Egypt is looking into expanding its awareness-raising component to include integration and social cohesion in public schools to limit discrimination of migrant children.

Lastly, IOM Egypt cooperates with National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) and The National Coordinating Committee for Combating and Preventing Illegal Migration and Trafficking in Persons (NCCPIM & TIP) for the operationalization of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the Protection and Assistance of Child-Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Victims of Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons to relevant actors together with UNICEF and UNHCR.





## Pillar 2: Mobility

### The overall objective:

To enhance existing and develop new, efficient, rights-based, and safe mobility pathways, and engage and empower young people as agents of change.

Under this pillar, IOM seeks to enhance the knowledge and skills of migrants so that they can make informed decisions about migration and are better positioned to make use of safe mobility pathways available through IOM and initiatives from governments and private sector and other organizations. This pillar contributes towards transformative and inclusive economic growth through facilitating mobility and supporting regional integration.

### 1. Youth Empowerment

In order to achieve the SDGs, as laid out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the meaningful and active participation of all young people in decision-making processes related to migration governance is imperative. Young migrants and potential migrants must be informed on the issues facing them, their communities and the world, and be equipped with the skills to improve their livelihoods and the prospects of themselves, their families and their communities.



#### **IOM priorities for youth empowerment focus on two key areas:**

- **Awareness-raising:** For migrants to be able to make informed, free migration-related decisions, IOM uses innovative awareness raising approaches to engage young people and their communities into dialogue about the risks of irregular migration; provide information on regular migration options and available support services; and promote social cohesion between returning migrants and their communities, and current migrants and their host communities.

Community engagement through outreach sessions and community events are an effective way of informing migrant communities directly. Events marking days such as World Day Against Trafficking in Persons and World Day Against Child Labour and regular outreach sessions are invaluable opportunities to raise awareness on current issues whilst also promoting IOM and the government services.

- **Employability:** Quality education effectively builds the resilience and prospects of young people and is most effective when supplemented by skills-building trainings focused on employability, and the creation of jobs that match the skills of migrants.

IOM will contribute to reducing lack of employability as a driver of migration through increased support for vocational training centres in governorates reporting high levels of irregular migration of youth and the facilitation of enhanced cooperation between private sector, civil society and the government, to aid the employment opportunities for youth.



The overarching Objective of the Youth Strategy of the Ministry of Youth and Sports includes the engagement and empowerment of young people in Egypt. This is consistent with the promotion of positive participation from all segments of society and the issues of empowerment, equality and social justice as core issues outlined under Pillar 2 of Egypt Vision 2030.

## 2. Labour mobility

Labour mobility protects the rights of migrant workers and optimizes the benefits of labour mobility for both the countries of origin and destination, and for the migrants themselves. Both countries of origin and destination benefit from labour migration, which can cater for labour market needs in terms of supply and demand of skills, and foster skills upgrade.



### IOM labour mobility priorities are:

- **Advising and supporting skills mobility partnerships:** Skills mobility partnerships are an effective, mutually beneficial partnership between migrants or potential migrants and businesses in third countries, whereby specific trainings that match current labour shortages are provided by a business in return for recipients undertaking a certain period of formal employment with the organization. IOM supports the facilitation of these partnerships and sets up employment opportunities for recipients upon the return of migrants to Egypt.
- **Enhancing ethical recruitment practices and promoting labour protection mechanisms:** With young migrants predominantly reliant upon informal employment, IOM continues to take steps towards enhancing protection mechanisms already in place through the development of ethical recruitment tools and new, complementary protection mechanisms to supplement existing formal ones, i.e. building the capacity of local authorities, service providers and non-governmental counterparts. In addition, IOM will support the Government in increasing migrant workers awareness of their rights and options regarding social safety nets, along with supporting policy dialogue with countries of destination on the portability of social benefits.
- **Volunteerism:** Volunteering provides individuals with opportunities to learn new skills, network and gain valuable experiences that can progress their careers. Volunteers are a key part of the structure of the United Nations, with around 8,000 volunteers supporting missions in-person for a duration of at least six months each year, and an additional 18,000 volunteering online[10]. IOM will continue to facilitate volunteering opportunities through the United Nations Volunteer network and will explore new partnerships with other organizations.

Pillar 1 of the Youth Strategy of the Ministry of Youth and Sports asserts the Government's goal to support efforts to prevent irregular migration through integrated economic interventions to enhance the youth entrepreneurship ecosystem. IOM priorities under this Pillar directly support the Government to this end.

[10] [UN Careers: Volunteer Programme](#)



## Pillar 3: Governance

### The overall objective:

To encourage the active participation of youth in decision-making and enhance government capacities to integrate migration and considerations of young people into improved policies, legal frameworks, institutions, practices and international cooperation mechanisms through improved data collection and analysis.

Under this pillar, IOM will work closely with the Government of Egypt to actively promote the participation of youth in policy dialogue and good governance to identify long-standing, sustainable solutions that consider the views and situations of young migrants in Egypt. IOM will also incorporate inputs and feedback from various stakeholders, including young migrants, to enhance the structures of Government engagement and ownership for Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR).

### 1. Active participation of youth in decision-making


Youth engagement in decision-making benefits from the varied backgrounds and experiences of those involved and tends to be beneficial to all groups. However, it remains the case that youth are largely underrepresented in formal political institutions and are rarely consulted on the decision-making processes that impact them[11].



**IOM priorities will actively promote the involvement of youth in decision-making by:**

- **Involving young migrants in capacity-building government initiatives:** IOM will work with the Government of Egypt, especially the Ministry of Youth and Sports, to include young migrants in capacity-building events and give them a voice in the development of solutions to the current issues facing different communities and groups in Egypt. In addition to financially supporting these events, IOM will also be providing expert trainers and facilitators to lead discussions on migration-related issues and will identify interested migrants and facilitate their attendance.
- **Development of a Youth Advisory Board (YAB):** Consisting of 20 young migrants, the YAB will equip those involved with the knowledge and resources to discuss collective experiences in advocating for migrant rights and community development in Egypt. When operational, the YAB will be consulted in the development of future IOM projects and their inputs will help shape the future youth priorities of the organization.

[11] UN Youth Envoy: #YouthStats: Public and Civic Participation

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- **Involving young migrant perspectives in the design of IOM activities:** The Migrant Community Council is regularly consulted, ensuring that IOM activities meet the current needs of beneficiaries. IOM will encourage community leaders to include inputs from young members of their communities. IOM Egypt has a dedicated youth focal point who will keep up to date with the needs of migrant youth and reflect this in the design of projects.

Engaging the active participation of young people is a priority outlined throughout the Ministry of Youth and Sport's Youth Strategy. It commits to the adoption of a participatory planning methodology as well as listening to Egyptian youth through all available channels. IOM will work with the Ministry to achieve greater active participation of young people as well as promoting the fair representation of young migrants in this methodology.

## 2. Environment-Migration Nexus governance

As the leading intergovernmental agency working on migration, IOM recognizes the necessity to step up national, regional and international efforts to address human mobility challenges associated with environmental factors and climate change.

**IOM Egypt priority areas to combat the impact of climate change on migration are:**

- **Developing climate outreach programmes:** by working with migrant community leaders and migrant community youth groups, such as the IOM-facilitated YAB, IOM will raise public awareness of the risks posed by climate change and adaptive opportunities.
- **Mainstream environmental considerations into IOM programming:** IOM Egypt Environmental Policy represents an ongoing learning process whereby IOM adopts green practices in a flexible and innovative manner. IOM internal Environmental Working Group meets regularly to operationalize green practices and ensure that IOM projects adequately consider the environmental impact of activities.
- **Greater employment within the green economy:** The green economy is growing rapidly and migrants with the appropriate skillset can access new employment opportunities in a rapidly growing field. IOM will work with new and existing partners to enhance the creation of green jobs in Egypt, such as waste recycling, renewable energy, hydroponic agriculture systems and green tourism, and provide young people with the skills to work effectively in the green economy.

## 3. Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR)

The steep increase in movement of young people across the Middle East and North Africa has resulted in a similar increase in the number of young migrants who have become stranded in third countries. AVRR is widely recognized as one of the sustainable solutions for irregular migrants in need and as a cost-effective, humane and sustainable alternative to forced return.





### IOM priorities for enhancing AVRR services are:

- **Supporting the Government of Egypt in taking ownership of reintegration of Egyptian nationals:** Egypt engaged with IOM to develop a national framework to govern and manage the reintegration and provision of needed protection services to returnees. The need for minimum standards including how to measure sustainable reintegration only add to the challenges faced in managing the sustainable reintegration of returned Egyptian nationals. IOM is responding to calls from the Government to assist in developing a national reintegration framework and will continue to support the government in taking greater ownership of the reintegration process, with a specific focus on youth.
- **Improving and expanding AVRR services:** Ongoing review and evaluation will ensure that the system remains fit for purpose and changes are made that match the, changing needs and vulnerabilities of beneficiaries and the current situation in the country and region. IOM will continue supporting the Government of Egypt in developing their capacities and systems to manage the reintegration of Egyptian migrants at the national level, including ensuring specific considerations are made for different categories of migrants such as women, children and young people.

As part of its National Strategy, the Government of Egypt remains committed to improving its provision of reintegration assistance to returning migrants and continues to express its commitment to developing an effective national reintegration case management system with support from IOM. IOM will continue to manage the reintegration of Egyptian nationals in coordination with the Government of Egypt, specifically through youth-tailored actions.

## Partnerships

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The IOM Youth Strategy 2021-2025 reiterates IOM dedication to strong cooperation and collaboration with the Government and its national and international partners, to meet common objectives and move forward the youth agenda in the country and beyond. IOM will continue to work and coordinate closely with the Government of Egypt, supporting Government youth programmes, advocating for the inclusion of migrant youth in national policies, and assisting in achieving the goals of global initiatives, such as Shabab Balad.

As part of the UN Country Team in Egypt, IOM Egypt ensures that its Strategy falls within the UN overall priorities for development cooperation in the country outlined in the United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework(UNSDPF). These dialogues will facilitate the promotion of youth migrants' contribution to the development agenda.

IOM Egypt co-chairs a series of Groups, such as the Information Working Group of the UN Country Team, with UNIC, the Mixed Migration Working Group, with UNHCR, as well as the Development Partner Group on Migration and Protection, along with Save the Children and the European Union Delegation in Cairo.

Many aspects of migration are of interest to various stakeholders including governments, civil society and the private sector. The multidimensional nature of migration makes the involvement of the private sector an essential component of a coherent and comprehensive approach. IOM Egypt will continue to invest in its private sector engagement and partnerships.





## Final Words

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This strategy seeks to protect and empower young people through direct actions taken by IOM and partners under the three pillars of resilience, mobility and governance, as well as advocating for the development of more comprehensive policies that include young migrants and provide them with support and opportunities.

With young people across the world facing complicated socioeconomic challenges, it is essential that actors across all sectors coordinate closely and take a unified approach towards improving the livelihoods, safety, and prospects of young people. IOM also recognizes that youth must be active contributors to the decision-making processes that will impact their future and must be empowered to become agents of positive change in their families, communities and beyond.

By supporting and empowering the youth of today, we tap into their unlimited potential and build a brighter future for us all.



The World Day Against Trafficking in Persons 2022, photo credit goes to Mohamed Elkoossy, UNIC.





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