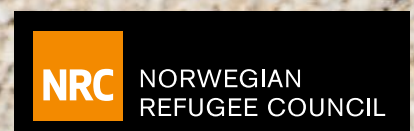




# DON'T FORGET US

VOICES OF YOUNG  
REFUGEES AND  
MIGRANTS IN GREECE





# HERE WE ARE LOSING THE TIME AND CHANCES **WE ARE LOSING THE TIME OF OUR YOUTH**

Female youth in Moria, Lesvos



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 2015 over one million people fleeing war, poverty and natural disaster in the Middle East, South Asia and East and West Africa have made the dangerous journey across the Mediterranean in the hope of finding peace and a dignified life in Europe. At the height of the influx in 2015, the people of Greece showed exceptional solidarity. The heroic work of Greek volunteers saved lives and provided a safe space for thousands of people arriving on Greek shores.<sup>1</sup> As time has passed, these people face new challenges. With policy regulations, border closures and the introduction of the EU-Turkey deal on 20 March 2016, over 60,000 people are now stranded in Greece. Many refugees and migrants endure inadequate living

conditions, face extremely slow asylum application procedures, and a lack of reliable information about their futures.<sup>2</sup>

Of the 7.3 billion people in the world today, approximately 1.8 billion are adolescents and youth between 10-25 years old. At no other point in history has the world been so demographically divided with older people concentrated in richer countries and youth in developing countries. Never again is there likely to be such potential for economic and social progress.<sup>3</sup> In Greece, this young cohort represents over 30 percent<sup>4</sup> of the refugees and migrants stranded there. Navigating a critical and consequential phase of their lives,

<sup>1</sup> In 2016 Greek volunteers received the UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award

<sup>2</sup> More than Six Months Stranded – What Now? Joint Policy Brief on the Situation for Displaced Persons in Greece (2016)

<sup>3</sup> The Power of 1.8 Billion: Adolescents, Youth and the Transformation of the Future, UNFPA (2016)

<sup>4</sup> UNHCR (2016) own calculation



these young women and men demonstrate immense potential to contribute positively but their needs are often overlooked. Stressful conditions and the complex policy environment have resulted in a growing sense of uncertainty and concern amongst young refugees and migrants, who are at risk of engaging in negative coping behaviours and losing all sense of hope.

Often overlooked in humanitarian action, these adolescents and youth rarely have access to educational and skill-building opportunities, or to adequate healthcare and protective environments. They also have no voice and very little agency in the provision of international assistance, despite being motivated, ambitious and keen to contribute positively to help overcome or improve the difficult reality they face. Unless their voices are heard and their capacity and willingness to participate in this endeavour acknowledged these young people will continue to be left behind.

In September 2016, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and Mercy Corps conducted a joint assessment of the needs, vulnerabilities, protection risks and capacities of female and male adolescent and youth refugees and migrants transiting through Greece. The goal was to reflect their voices in order to better inform relevant policy and programme design.

### **KEY THEMES VOICED BY THESE YOUNG PEOPLE DURING FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS WERE:**

- 1 Overwhelming interest in continuing education
- 2 A desire to engage in income-generating activities and willingness to learn new skills to meet market demands
- 3 Disappointment and concern over lack of attentive, professional healthcare
- 4 Profound stress and decreased psychological well-being
- 5 Strong sense of care and concern for others
- 6 Desire for acceptance and connection, despite sense of discrimination
- 7 Disillusionment with human rights principles
- 8 Safety concerns and gender-based violence



# METHODOLOGY

## DEFINING TERMS

The UN defines youth and adolescents as persons aged between 15-24 and 10-19 respectively. Definitions and age ranges vary from one context to another depending on socio-cultural, institutional, economic and political factors. Within a country or culture, there can be different ages at which an individual is considered sufficiently mature to be entrusted by society with certain responsibilities and tasks. In emergency situations, adolescents have needs and contributions to make that are different from those of young children and adults.<sup>5</sup>

## FOCUS GROUPS

To better understand the capacities, vulnerabilities, and protection risks that female and male adolescent and youth refugees and migrants face, NRC and Mercy Corps conducted 17 focus group discussions (FGD) in Greece (7 F/10 M) from 9 to 16 September 2016. The aim was to learn about their experiences and to give voice both to their concerns and aspirations for the future.

The assessment covered a sampling of adolescents and youth (ages 14–25) residing on Greek islands,

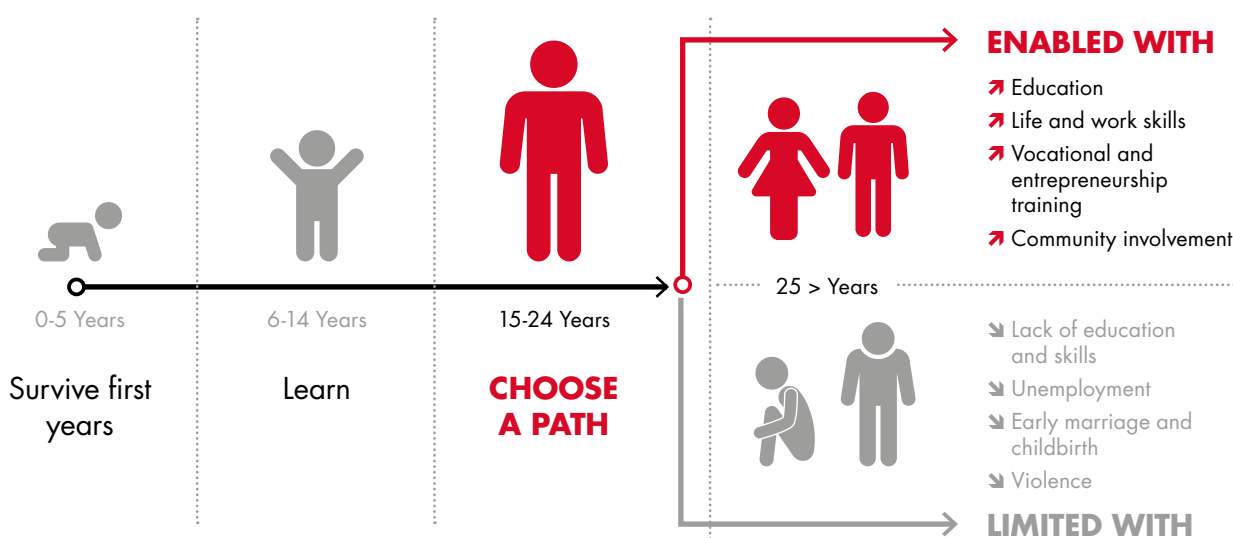
in mainland camps, and in urban settings in Athens. These participants experience different legal contexts based on where they are located. A small number of young people (ages 25–30) were also included in the discussions to gain their insights into the situation. A total of 45 youths from the islands and 75 from the mainland participated in the FGDs (Table 1). To ensure representative sampling of all refugees and migrants, the assessment included male and female youth from Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, Eritrea, Burkina Faso, Mali, Cameroon, Nigeria, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. To elicit greater candour from female respondents separate FGDs were held with female youth and conducted by women using a female interpreter where possible.

## LIMITATIONS

The short timeframe, assessment fatigue and challenges in outreach to female youth resulted in a higher percentage of male over female participants (Table 1) and a relatively small sample size, which affected the extent to which generalisations could be made due to an absence of quantitative data.

Table 1. Focus Group Participants

Gender	Island	Mainland	Total
Female	10	33	36%
Male	35	42	64%

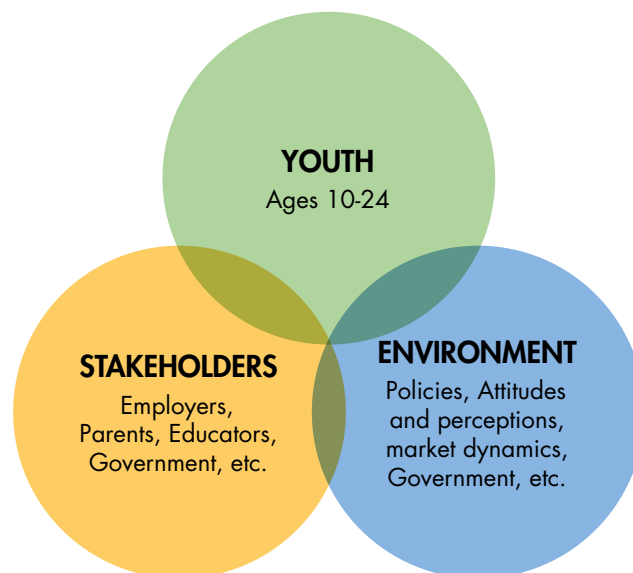


<sup>5</sup> Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Terminology Bank



## SKYLS METHODOLOGY

The discussions with youth were facilitated by using an adapted Skills and Knowledge for Youth Leaders (SKYLS) methodology developed by Mercy Corps. This tool sets in motion a participatory game-based, interactive card activity using imagery to facilitate discussions that reveal underlying causes of issues affecting young peoples' lives, and identifies the skills and actors that can address them. Mercy Corps and NRC chose to use this methodology given the prevailing sense of assessment fatigue among displaced populations in Greece. Another benefit of this tool is its ability to facilitate interactions among youth to generate information, rather than using a more traditional researcher-led discussion model. The methodology enables youth to reflect on their strengths and capacities, rather than solely on vulnerabilities, challenges and needs. The last activity aimed to empower youth by facilitating a discussion about how they can make changes in their current reality.



# FINDINGS

## OVERWHELMING INTEREST IN CONTINUING EDUCATION

Youth respondents voiced a strong desire to continue learning, often in the context of contributing to cultural understanding, engagement and integration, employment and overall well-being. As part of the SKYLS methodology, participants had the opportunity to select three themes they considered as most important to their lives. Notably, all focus group participants selected education as an important theme warranting further

“Without education you do not have future development in your life. A well educated person knows how to go ahead in her life.”

Afghan Female youth, MELISSA Network, Athens

discussion. “Education” was described by respondents as a term which inspired in them a sense of “motivation”, “learning” and “satisfaction”. Deeper reflections on the value of education prompted statements such as, “It’s the most important thing in life,” or “It represents the future.” Youth respondents perceived education as the entry point to a new culture and that it gives a sense of purpose and a structured routine. The lack of language skills was considered a huge barrier to connecting with new people, whether in Greece or in other European countries. Youth shared a desire to connect education to real-world experiences, encouraging interaction with the local community and skills for life development, and demonstrated a sense of agency and willingness to play a role in their education, rather than remain idle.

While some informal educational activities exist, adolescents and youth asserted that consistency was central to quality education and expressed their concern about the lack of structured and

coordinated educational initiatives. Focus group participants also explained that despite good intentions, the lack of a structured system of training, support and remuneration to teachers undermined the quality of classroom learning. In addition, participants noted that classes are often not regular or properly organised.

“We want to be in education but not inside the camp. In society. How will we feel connected if we will not be part of the society? Now I can only dream of it”

Afghan Male adolescent in Malakasa, Athens

Furthermore, the psychological state of adolescents and youth makes it extremely difficult for them to concentrate on any educational activities. For youth who had experienced traumatic or psychologically wounding events, various stress reactions were apparent such as dwelling on feelings of guilt, signs of depression, discussions about withdrawal tendencies, sleeping pattern changes, vague aches and pains, and preoccupations with past events. The uncertainty of their situation weighs heavily on their minds and they showed signs of acute distress about their futures. Youth emphasised the importance of well-being for retention in schooling and for the learning process.

The education levels of respondents ranged from none to technical, vocational and university level certification and degrees. The time the youth had been out of education ranged from eight months to seven years, with some youth having accessed education in Turkey prior to their arrival in Greece. Some male youth from Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq had never attended school.

“Usually I’m a decision maker; I move forward, I learn fast. Here my brain is dead. My mind is not settled here. I can’t learn anything. I went twice to the Greek class, but my mind is not there. I’m stuck. I’m dead.”

Eritrea, Nigeria Female youth in Moria, Lesbos





**WHEN ONE IS EDUCATED  
HE TAKES STRONGER STEPS;  
MORE SURE OF HIMSELF.**

Pakistani Male youth in Kos

“In Africa, compared to Europe, we tend to neglect education. Yet it’s on education that you build good and moral behaviours.”

Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Republic of Congo, DRC, Mali  
Male youth in Moria, Lesbos

Across all nationalities, access to formal education in countries of origin had been halted due to displacement, military attacks on education institutions, forced conscription at a young age (including for women), high education costs, and theoretical teaching rather than practical application. Many respondents said that their desire to receive an education was among the factors that prompted them to migrate.

“When you reach university it costs a lot of money and there is no material. For example, I’m a ship engineer and there was no adequate material for my education. How can I learn? If you are studying science for example how do you? When I did my first internship I had no idea because I had never seen such tools or materials”

Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Republic of Congo, DRC, Mali  
Male youth in Moria, Lesbos

Table 2. Percentage of focus groups that selected priority themes

Location	Education	Jobs	Healthcare	Safety	Social capital	# respondents
Island	100%	57%	43%	57%	14%	45
Mainland	100%	40%	60%	30%	50%	75
Combined	100%	47%	53%	41%	35%	120

## A DESIRE FOR INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITIES AND WILLINGNESS TO LEARN NEW SKILLS TO MEET MARKET DEMANDS

“*Work is not everything in life, but it is the key to open other things such as money, helping others and others helping us too, meeting new people and seeing new faces.*”

Syrian Female youth in Veria, Thessaloniki

Refugees and migrants who have completed the asylum application process and received the International Protection Applicant Card can seek employment. However, due to slow asylum application processes, irregular access to the job market, language barriers and the legal context, many young people currently stranded in Greece are unable to pursue their employment goals.

Both female and male focus group participants included “jobs and employment” in their top-three priorities, associating jobs with “success”, “a productive routine”, and “pride and respect in society”. Adolescents and youth demonstrated a keen awareness of Greece’s struggling economy and the scarcity of jobs. Many expressed empathy towards the Greek people, explaining that they had not come to Greece to “take their jobs”, but to escape dire and dangerous conditions in their home countries. These young people want to utilize their skills, provide for their families, and participate in a life they have reason to value.

Participants expressed a sense of despondency, hopelessness and impossibility during the conversation about employment and jobs. Most face significant barriers including the lack of legal papers or formal tax and healthcare identification, and limited language skills. Youth expressed the need to learn the local language and culture to connect with the Greek people and the outside world. They also believed that developing skills is critical to obtaining employment. Stated educational needs centered on technology and

computer skills, vocational training and hotel management. Adolescents and youth in some areas said that the lack of regular sources of income had driven them to engage in illegal exploitive work.

Across nationalities and genders, adolescents and youth viewed education as a driver for opportunity. Girls and young women regarded employment as a major priority in their lives. In discussions, 57 per cent of female focus group participants identified jobs as a priority, compared to 40 per cent of male focus group respondents. Some mentioned that women in Afghanistan are often not allowed to participate in education or employment and hence see migration as a way to access equal opportunities.

## DISAPPOINTMENT AND CONCERN OVER LACK OF ATTENTIVE, PROFESSIONAL HEALTHCARE

“*If doctors show indignity about giving all sorts of pills to anyone we are scared that they might harm the babies if they treat them.*”

Syrian Female youth in Oreokastro, Thessaloniki

Adolescents and youth included healthcare in their top-three priorities, with 60 per cent of male youth identifying it as a major priority, compared to 43 per cent of female focus group participants. This is extremely important because this age group rarely cites health as a primary concern.

Participants were frustrated with the lack of professionalism among doctors and by what they perceive as careless diagnoses. More than half of respondents shared stories of doctors issuing paracetamol (pain reliever and fever reducer) for any ailment, regardless of symptoms or other health concerns. Other cited barriers to healthcare include strict clinic hours, the lack of specialised services and translators at hospitals, and slow response. Interestingly, some youth in Athens centres cited the availability of better information on access to medical examinations. However, they suggested implementing referral mechanisms to assist high priority health needs at processing centres.



## THE THUNDER MAKES ME TERRIFIED AND I THINK ABOUT THE WAR.

Syrian Male adolescent  
in Oreokastro, Thessaloniki

A perceived lack of dignity and attentive care in available healthcare services was a consistent theme throughout the discussions. Youth felt that doctors did not treat them or their families with dignity. Several used the word “animals” to illustrate the perceived lack of dignified and attentive care. In response to the absence of permanent medical assistance in the camps, some youth expressed a desire to receive first aid training, which they felt would make them better equipped should health complications arise.

“We feel safety here compared to the bombs. At least here you can walk around late and not be afraid for your life. But here there is so much uncertainty.”

Syrian Female youth in Veria, Thessaloniki

## PROFOUND STRESS AND DECREASED PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

Focus group discussions with adolescents and youth revealed that displacement has increased their stress, negatively affecting their well-being. Their anxiety and distress do not arise from any single event, but are the result of accumulated traumatic experiences that persistently affect their lives. These young people have fled war, endured long and dangerous journeys to arrive in Greece, and now find themselves trapped in an extremely difficult and often unsafe environment. Youth expressed feelings of uncertainty, isolation, boredom, despondency, fear and hopelessness. Uncertainty about their future is a key concern for young people.





## LIFE STORY NARRATIVE

*I am 28 years old and grew up in Benin City, Nigeria. I completed my BSC level in Mass Communication in 2014. I chose this study because I like knowing about the world around me and I believe in the power of communication. This can be through social media, through radio and advertising. I noticed changes in myself after attending education. I now know the dos and don'ts. I feel strongly about the issue of privacy. Importantly, I have learned how to communicate with people. Even now in this situation I find myself in I have been helping people by talking to them about how they are feeling; counselling in a way.*

*Life here in the camp is stressful. The young people in this situation spend time being bored. We have never lived this life before; this prison life. There is no freedom. We as young people are trying to master the situation and just lying low. You just have to cope and manage. The only activities we have is to go swimming in Chios and to play some football, but slowly people are not doing this anymore. Some people try to work, but this is impossible. Papers are the key to freedom here. I have also tried to start offering to teach some people in the camp by organizing English lessons open to all nationalities. We are trying, but we feel handicapped.*

*Young people in this camp need help with the health of their minds. If we had some things like table tennis or volleyball this would be good for our bodies, but also for our minds. Exercise is good for these things".*

Nigerian Male youth in Vial, Chios

Nigeria is experiencing some of the highest youth unemployment rates in the world with 25% of young people not being able to find work.

Stress appears to affect youth's ability to make decisions, to focus on educational activities, and to make plans for their future. In many focus groups, females and males had difficulty identifying future aspirations, or even generating ideas on how to improve their current situation.



*We are bored of our empty time.  
Can you give us something?  
I would like to learn language and  
then helping others. Even if I have no  
salary I will participate and I will support.  
Just let our time be full with something"*

Syrian Male youth Oreokastro, Thessaloniki

This stressful environment manifests itself in different ways among adolescents and youth. Many reported sleeping during the day due to boredom which they said stems from the lack of organised activities such as education, sports and exercise. One male noted that he has been sleepwalking since the war in Syria began, while some young women said they do not sleep at night because they feel unsafe. Others mentioned that youth within the camps turned to substance abuse as a way to escape their own thoughts.

Adolescents and youth across locations emphasised the need for psychosocial support through psychological treatment and recreational activities. Many proposed creative ways to use their skills and talents to stay active and interact with their peers. However, they feel that no one is interested in engaging with them and that they lack the necessary resources to independently initiate activities. Assessment teams also noted that while young women often appeared to have social support networks around them such as family members or other women, young men tended to be more isolated and were not reaching out to each other for solace and support.



*You saw me laugh,  
but I am tearing inside."*

Syrian Male adolescent in Oreokastro, Thessaloniki

## CARE AND CONCERN FOR OTHERS

“*I want a world where there is no racism, no caring of who you are and where you come from.*”

Syrian Male youth in Dipethe, Chios

The young women and men demonstrated a strong sense of care and concern for others, regardless of nationality. They expressed an understanding and respect of the challenges facing Greece, particularly those linked to their presence. Young people wanted to understand the local culture and to show respect to the local population. This could be seen through their wanting to learn Greek, not just to find jobs, but to better understand the culture, communicate with the local community, and combat negative perceptions in order to demonstrate their value to society. Youth volunteered their time to helping out within the community; they offered services to work in education and organise social activities, and some assumed the role of mentoring their peers. A pervasive sense of altruism characterized youth interaction. Some youth expressed a desire to become doctors or nurses [to help others]. Many proposed solutions which demonstrated a human kindness such as wanting to share their talents, expertise and time with others if only they had the space and resources to do so.

## DESIRE FOR ACCEPTANCE AND CONNECTION, DESPITE DISCRIMINATION

“*Perhaps the Greek people have the wrong impression for us, so when we will learn the language we will achieve to get to know each other.*”

Syria, Iraq male youth, Greek Forum of Migrants, Athens

Despite demonstrated unity and kindness, participants also spoke of tensions between nationalities. This tension also exists between the host community and refugee and migrant populations. In Athens, youth felt distressed when they saw discriminatory street posters against

refugees. Young Afghans were particularly concerned about the disrespectful relations between Afghans and Syrians. Although youth recognise the tensions between nationalities, however, they do not believe that physically separating people within camps is the right solution. Instead, they advocated for more sports and recreational activities to bring people together. Youth appreciated the social connections that resulted from their participation in sports, especially when a mix of nationalities participated. Youth crave connection with the world outside of the camps, partly to feel freedom but also to break down the barriers of discrimination.

## DISILLUSIONMENT WITH HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES

“*For 7 months no one has asked us how we are.*”

Afghan Male youth in Vial, Chios

Adolescents and youth appeared surprised, discouraged, saddened and frustrated by their experiences with human rights standards in the Greek camps, as they had expected that standards would be higher in Europe. Some described shock over their reception and restriction of movement. Others felt disappointed with what they perceived as the low level of western morals and standards of protection and humanitarian services.

Many of these young people fled war, but still do not feel safe or supported in their new situation. They expressed concern regarding the lack of authorities' accountability for their safety and often viewed police as a barrier to safety and social cohesion rather than a source of protection. Youth explained that the police do not intervene when fights break out in the camp, and claimed that camp management practices often increase tensions rather than mitigate them. Youth in Veria were concerned with the breakdown of security procedures such as the lack of monitoring of who enters and exits the camps.

Both young women and men also expressed frustration with the way they were received on arrival in Greece and with the standard of services offered.



# LACK OF HUMANITY

WHEN WE LOOKED TO EUROPE WE ALWAYS THOUGHT HUMAN RIGHTS. NOW I SEE NO HUMANITY HERE.

Afghan male in Vial, Chios

In this regard, youth questioned the encampment policy, housing conditions, and what they perceive as actors’ limited accountability.

While some participants appreciated taking part in the assessment because it provided an opportunity to socialize with peers and make friends, many mentioned that previous suggestions did not lead to any meaningful, practical changes. A young woman in Moria, Lesbos declared, “NGOs come and ask so many questions, but nothing changes.” An Afghan male in Athens stated, “We attend all the time these kinds of discussions about planning and nothing is moving after that.”

Table 3. Priority themes selected by gender

Gender	Education	Jobs	Healthcare	Safety	Social capital	# respondents
Female	100%	57%	43%	57%	29%	43
Male	100%	40%	60%	30%	40%	77
Combined	100%	47%	53%	41%	35%	120

## SAFETY CONCERNS AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

“ Here we sleep a lot more than before during the day because it is safer.”

Syrian Female youth in Oreokastro, Thessaloniki

Young people are fearful of the fighting in the camps within and between nationalities. According to adolescents and youth, much of the fighting is caused by the tensions arising from the extremely difficult living conditions and the stress experienced by refugees and migrants.

Findings from the group discussions reinforced the widely acknowledged contention that gender is an important determinant of safety: 57 per cent of female FGDs selected safety as a priority theme, compared to 30 per cent of male FGDs (Table 3).

All female focus groups on the mainland maintained that it was not safe to use camp toilet facilities. They explained how toilets were initially unsafe because they had no walls for privacy. However, subsequent construction of walls appears to have made the girls even more unsafe because “no one can see what happens behind the walls”. Young girls and women are too frightened to use the toilets at night and require a family member (if they have one) to accompany them. They have changed their sleeping patterns because they are too fearful to sleep at night, preferring instead to sleep during the day. Young boys and men also reported changing their sleeping patterns: “It is too difficult to sleep with tensions arising all the time.” Girls and young women also expressed fear of being aggressed in the camps.

“ They want to attack me just because I’m a woman...”

Afghan Female youth in Moria, Lesbos





## FINAL REFLECTIONS

Meeting the immense needs generated by what has developed into the biggest refugee and migrant crisis in Europe since World War Two represents one of the most challenging humanitarian tasks faced by European policymakers and aid agencies in modern times.

Greece, as one of the main gateways into Europe for people fleeing numerous war-torn and chronically unstable countries, is on the frontline of this crisis which shows little sign of ending as conflicts rage on in the home countries of many refugees and migrants landing on its shores.

Coping with this crisis is not proving easy and its outcome remains uncertain, not least due to its magnitude stoked by ongoing conflicts, the diverse refugee and migrant policy regulations adopted by different European countries, border closures, and the EU-Turkey agreement concluded last March.

Despite its limitations for reasons mentioned above, this study nevertheless has the merit of giving voice to some of the main concerns and aspirations of many young refugees and migrants now stranded in Greece. These voices are in many cases a resounding appeal for help. But more often than not they crave the opportunity to acquire the education and skills to make a positive change to their lives and to connect with and contribute to the outside world. The recommendations above reflect the substance of what these voices are saying. In the meantime, these young people are stranded in 'limbo' in inadequate living conditions, and are confronted with extremely slow asylum application procedures, and a lack of reliable information about their futures.

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGE

Mercy Corps and the Norwegian Refugee Council offer the following policy and programmatic recommendations based on the assessment findings. These recommendations are addressed to various stakeholders: 1) Government of Greece, 2) Non-governmental Implementing Organisations, and 3) Donors.

## GOVERNMENT OF GREECE & HUMANITARIAN ACTORS

### INCREASE ACCESS TO FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH

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- Continue to build and strengthen coordination between Ministry of Education, Greek civil society and INGOs.
- Support initiatives to improve the quality of structured and coordinated education in accordance with Greek law and the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Minimum Standards.
- Provide access to formal and non-formal educational opportunities for youth aged 15+, including Technical and Vocational Education and Training.
- Provide Greek language training for youth in formal and non-formal educational settings.

### IMPROVE ADOLESCENT AND YOUTH ACCESS TO WORK OPPORTUNITIES

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- Ensure an enabling legal environment to facilitate access for refugee and asylum seekers to employment opportunities.
- Provide training to adolescents and youth that includes transferable and life skills.
- Identify and expand pathways to employment for refugee and vulnerable youth.
- Link refugee and migrant youth to market-driven accredited training programmes and work opportunities.

### PRIORITISE INVESTMENTS IN PROGRAMMING AIMED AT IMPROVING THE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING OF ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH

---

- Organise and support orientation and training for government and humanitarian actors focused on the psychosocial needs of adolescents and youth.
- Ensure that psychosocial support is integrated into activities for adolescents and youth across all sectors.
- Support sport and recreational activities to improve psychological well-being and social cohesion.
- Expand healthcare provision for refugee and migrant youth to include psychological support.

## FACILITATE MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT OF REFUGEE AND MIGRANT YOUTH IN HOST COMMUNITIES

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- Build networks and partnerships to create dialogue between young people, civil society, and local government.
- Support initiatives that address injustice and inequalities, build tolerance and trust, and engage adolescents and youth in their host communities.
- Encourage and facilitate the participation of host community youth alongside refugee and migrant youth in sports and recreation activities.

## PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION OF ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

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- Involve adolescents and youth in the identification, design, and evaluation phases of programmes.
- Share assessment findings with participants to improve accountability.
- Provide opportunities for adolescents and youth to take on leadership and volunteering roles within the community.
- Foster young people's ability to assert their own voices and participate in decision making which affects them.

## IMPROVE ACCOUNTABILITY OF RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS TO PROMOTE ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH SAFETY

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- Engage communities in identifying adolescent and youth protection risks, prevention, and response strategies across all sectors including education, site management, shelter and protection.
- Engage girls and young women explicitly in the design phase and evaluation of programmes.

## DONORS

Increase and earmark funding for holistic youth programming addressing well-being, educational, economic and civic engagement aspirations of youth in 2017 funding portfolio

## ELEVATE THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUTH MAINSTREAMING ACROSS ALL SECTORS

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- Require humanitarian actors to collect data on adolescent and youth beneficiaries disaggregated by sex and age.
- Fund programmes that prioritise youth engagement in cross-sectoral work, such as education, cash programming and urban response.
- Allocate funding to programmes targeting and specifically tailored to the needs of young people, especially in education and protection.
- Support the Government of Greece and humanitarian actors in significantly scaling up funding for formal and non-formal education, especially for youth over the age of 15.



# ANNEX

## COMPACT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Participants of the High-Level Special Session on Transforming Humanitarian Action with and for Young People gathered in Istanbul to ensure the priorities, needs and rights of young women and young men, girls and boys affected by disaster, conflict, forced displacement and other humanitarian crises are addressed, and that they are informed, consulted and meaningfully engaged.

Drawing on the Doha Youth Declaration on Reshaping the Humanitarian Agenda, the Global Refugee Youth Consultations, the UN Security Council resolution 2250 on youth, peace and security and the outcomes of other processes led by and involving young people, all actors have been called upon to take the following actions:

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**ACTION 1:** Promote and increase age- and gender-responsive and inclusive programmes that contribute to the protection, health and development of young women, young men, girls and boys within humanitarian settings.

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**ACTION 2:** Support systematic inclusion of engagement and partnership with youth, in all phases of humanitarian action through sharing of information and involvement in decision-making processes at all levels, including budget allocations.

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**ACTION 3:** Recognise and strengthen young people's capacities and capabilities to be effective humanitarian actors in prevention, preparedness, response and recovery, and empower and support local youth-led initiatives and organisations in humanitarian response, such as those targeting affected youth, including young refugees and internally displaced persons living in informal urban settlements and slums.

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**ACTION 4:** Increase resources intended to address the needs and priorities of adolescents and youth affected by humanitarian crises, including disasters, conflict and displacement, and identify ways to more accurately track and report on the resources allocated to young people in humanitarian contexts.

Mercy Corps and NRC are members of the Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action.



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STRESS **SAFE** LOST TIME  
STUCK DISILLUSIONED  
MISTRUST **CARE** DESPONDENT  
**LANGUAGE** UNCERTAINTY **VOICE**  
FAMILY **DESPERATE**  
RESILIENT  
MOTIVATED **BORED**

