



Organisation Mondiale pour L'Éducation Préscolaire
World Organization for Early Childhood Education
Organización Mundial para la Educación Preescolar

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Oral Statement

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The impact of climate shocks, conflict, and poverty force millions of families and their children to migrate to cities, now facing increased demands on social services and affordable goods. Too many migrant families live in poorly maintained urban areas, making them more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

This is in sharp contradiction with SDG 11, which affirms that inclusion of vulnerable groups in cities is essential for sustainable urbanization.

Disproportionately affected are the youngest children; in the past twelve years the number of forcibly displaced children more than doubled.

Multiple overlapping deprivations and the lack of nurturing care can affect a child's brain development, with long-term consequences on physical and mental well-being. But children are resilient, and the science is clear: when appropriate support is provided during early childhood, significant numbers of them exhibit abilities to navigate difficult situations.

In the Mayoral Declaration of Marrakech (2018), cities committed to safeguard migrants' human rights with emphasis on upholding the rights of children. Cities must play a critical role in promoting Early Childhood Education and Care, the most powerful investment a country can make for its most valuable resource: children and families. Interventions in the early years are cost-effective and can break the cycle of intergenerational poverty, setting the ground for prosperous and resilient societies, now characterized by an increasing aging population.

For these reasons, we demand that governments, especially local governments, acknowledge that:

- Migrants are a source of innovation and can be part of the response to demographic and labor market challenges.
- More disaggregated data on migrant children, mainly pre-natal-3 years, the most overlooked, must be collected.
- Implementation of Early Childhood Education and Care programs can play a critical role in building a more cohesive society, breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty.
- There is an urgent need to adapt, to the local level, the global and national legal protection frameworks for migrants, especially migrant children.