



Morocco

National Refugee Youth Consultation

'Summary Report'

19th - 22nd January 2016



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Global Refugee Youth Consultations

Background

The Global Refugee Youth Consultations (GRYC) were launched in July 2015 at the UNHCR-NGO Consultations in Geneva. A joint initiative of UNHCR and the Women's Refugee Commission, supported by the Youth and Adolescents in Emergencies Advocacy Group (YAE)¹, the GRYC are supported by a Coordinator, Project Officer and Advisory Committee (consisting of national and international NGOs, youth representatives and an independent youth expert).

Refugee youth are often left out of activities and programmes organised by the UN, NGOs and other organisations. Youth have skills, capabilities, aspirations and needs that often go unrecognised and are not understood. There is a need to reach out and hear from them about the challenges they face, their visions and what support they need to shape positive futures. The consultations are providing opportunities for refugee youth to discuss issues that affect them with host country youth and representatives from the United Nations, international NGOs, national NGOs and other organizations working with youth in the country. The process aims to place youth at the centre of decision making processes that affect them and to recognize their potential. The target group for this project are young refugees that fit the United Nations definition of 'Youth' which is all boys and girls, young women and young men between the ages of 15-24 years.

The consultations are taking place between November 2015 and June 2016. They will include national level consultations in Africa, the Americas, Asia-Pacific, the Middle East and North Africa. The 'National Consultations' are led by national NGOs from each country with UNHCR and an international NGO partner. Similar consultations will also be held with refugee youth in North America, Australasia and Europe. Opportunities to participate in smaller consultations and online are also being provided through a designated toolkit and a Facebook platform. The process will culminate in a global consultation in Geneva in June 2016 and participation by young people in the 2016 annual UNHCR-NGO Consultations, the overarching theme of which is Youth.

Objectives and design

Underpinning the design of the national consultations are the four core objectives of the GRYC:

1. To create structured spaces for young refugees to have a voice and engage in participatory dialogue with other youth and relevant stakeholders at local, national, regional and global levels.
2. To improve access for young refugees to local, national, regional and global youth alliances and networks.
3. To foster and support participation, leadership and empowerment opportunities for young refugees.
4. To consolidate and channel the learning from the consultations into the development of guidelines and policy recommendations on youth-inclusive programming, to improve the humanitarian sector's understanding of, and work with, young refugees.

¹ The Youth and Adolescents in Emergencies Advocacy Group (YAE Group) includes representatives from more than 15 humanitarian organizations that are committed to achieving better outcomes for young people in humanitarian situations.

A participatory approach is being used throughout. The session plans were developed by the GRYC Coordinator, in consultation with UNHCR and WRC. They were designed through a collaborative and iterative process, including:

- An extensive review of literature and other materials relating to consultations with youth, displaced populations and participatory research methods, in order to learn from previous experience and to adapt relevant pre-existing models.²
- The active input of a group of young refugees and asylum seekers during a two-day residential workshop in Malta, in October 2015, organised in partnership with UNHCR Malta and a Maltese NGO, Organisation for Friendship and Diversity (OFD). The group consisted of males and females representing the full age range of the global consultations (15-24 year olds), and five countries - Libya, Somalia, Mali, Eritrea and Palestine.
- Input into the development of the session plans and the content of the national consultations was also sought from members of the GRYC Advisory Committee - in person with the Regional Leads representing Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America during a two-day meeting in Geneva, and by email and skype with the full GRYC Advisory Committee.³
- A full pilot national consultation in Uganda that provided an opportunity to learn from the participants and adapt the approach and session plans accordingly.

Morocco National Consultation

National NGO Partner

The Morocco Consultation was organised at the national level and run by 'Fondation Orient-Occident' (FOO)⁴, in coordination with staff from the UNHCR Morocco country office. This team was supported by the GRYC team, including the GRYC Coordinator, Project Officer, and global representatives from UNHCR and WRC.

A team consisting of staff from FOO and UNHCR Morocco worked together to coordinate the logistics, recruitment of facilitators and interpreters, selection of youth, planning for the stakeholders' meeting, and preparation of materials, as well as engaging in regular Skype meetings with the GRYC team. Multiple staff were committed for the full length of the consultation which helped ensure that all consultation roles were covered and increased staff familiarity with the young people for post-consultation activities.

² Some examples of key resources accessed include: *Youth Consultations for a Post-2015 Framework: A Toolkit*. Youth in Action (2013); *A Kit of Tools for Participatory Research and Evaluation with Children, Young People and Adults*. Save the Children Norway (2008); *Listen and Learn: Participatory Assessment with Children and Adolescents*. UNHCR (2012); *Community Consultations Using Extended Dialogue Methodology*. UNHCR (2010-11); *Post 2015 Youth Engagement Event Planning Kit*. World Vision (2012); *Considering Consulting? A Guide to Meaningful Consultation with Young People from Refugee and Migrant Backgrounds*. The Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues (2007).

³ The Advisory Committee Regional Leads include: World Vision (Africa); Save the Children (MENA); RET (Americas) and APRRN (Asia-Pacific).

⁴ Since 1994, FOO have worked with refugee communities and youth, offering vocational training and employability support and advice, educational opportunities, psychosocial support, cultural activities, and legal advice - <http://www.fondation.orient-occident.org/>

Facilitators

- The Morocco national consultation was led by two young Moroccan facilitators identified by FOO (both female). Utilising local facilitators is a critical part of the overall GRYC approach, to ensure empathy and connection with the participants, to create meaningful opportunities for youth leadership and to create alliances with national youth focused organisations.
- The lead facilitators were supported by the GRYC Coordinator, the WRC Geneva representative and a team of small group facilitators from FOO and UNHCR.
- The GRYC Coordinator and the WRC Geneva representative rotated around the four groups during the small group exercises, to support as required. These small groups formed the basis of many of the activities. This format of small group work was maintained consistently to provide the refugee and national youth participants with meaningful opportunities to participate, discuss and share ideas and experiences.
- 8 small group facilitators were committed to the process during preparation, delivery and debrief, and this was very important for continuity and to ensure that they had a good understanding of the whole programme, rather than just their specific exercises. This included staff from FOO, UNHCR Morocco and UNHCR Geneva.



Interpreters

- The primary language of facilitation in Morocco was French, and an interpreter was provided for four participants (from Yemen and Morocco) who spoke Arabic.
- An additional interpreter was provided for the GRYC Coordinator. The lead note taker took responsibility for translating the flipcharts.

Venue and Accommodation

The consultation venue and accommodation were on one site in a complex called ‘Village de la Forêt’, near Ben Slimane city-center, and approximately 45 minutes by road from Rabat. Many of the young people commented that they appreciated the peaceful setting away from the city. There was also plenty of space to work outdoors when the weather allowed.

Evening social activities

The national NGO, FOO, went to great effort to organise professional entertainers for the evening activities, and three staff stayed on site throughout the consultation for that purpose. A sound and lighting system was set up in the training room to enable a dance party to be possible each evening. This was very popular with the participants and many of the youth and staff highlighted that it helped them to relax and get to know each other better, which in turn benefited the formal activities during the day. The change in group dynamics on day two, after the first evening activity, was commented upon informally by some of the facilitators and participants as different nationalities were mixing in a very relaxed way, which had not been the case on day one.

Application and Selection Process

Information about the Morocco consultation was disseminated by FOO through their Facebook group. Application forms were then distributed to those young people who expressed interest in the Facebook advert. The participants were intended to be selected based on a set of criteria determined by the central GRYC team, in consultation with the GRYC Advisory Committee, which included:

- Age (15-24)
- Willingness and ability to participate in an interactive, participatory 4-day consultation
- Proven experience as participants of an existing youth programme (for refugee youth) or national youth organization (for host country youth)
- Openness to engage on refugee issues
- A statement of motivation which included details about why the applicant was interested in being involved in the consultation, what they could contribute and what they hoped would be the results of the consultation.

Guidelines for ensuring diversity of participants were provided to the Morocco team but were not completely adhered to. This led to a number of issues with the overall balance and make-up of the participant group. The guidelines were designed to ensure that the participants were as representative of their communities as possible, with particular attention to be paid to ensuring that the chosen applicants were inclusive of persons with disabilities and represented a diverse range of gender, age, nationality, geographic locations in Morocco, education and employment background and ability, sexual orientation, marital and parental status, and a range of experiences of youth and community work. However, due to the limited scope of dissemination, only certain groups were well represented and there was a lack of diversity. For example:

- Applications were only received from youth in Rabat,
- Syrian refugees, the largest group of refugees in Morocco⁵, were not represented in the consultation.
- There was a significant gender imbalance, with 21 males and only 4 females (two refugee and two national youth)⁶

⁵ According to UNHCR Morocco statistics as of 31st December 2015 - the total number of Syrian refugees in Morocco was 2619, out of a total refugee population of 3908.

- Sub Saharan African refugees were over represented at the consultation, with 17 young people attending from Guinea (2), CAR (4), Cote D'Ivoire (7), Mali (2), and DRC (2); and three youth from Yemen.
- The Moroccan youth were not recruited according to the guidelines

The selection committee consisted of staff from FOO and UNHCR Morocco country team. In total, more than 30 young people applied to participate in the Morocco consultation and 25 were selected (several of the selected participants dropped out in the days immediately preceding the consultation, due to conflicting activities, and were replaced by other applicants).

Youth Participant Profiles

25 young people aged between 14 and 24 years participated in the Morocco consultation. All youth completed a participant application form as part of the application process, from which we obtained their demographic data. This data can be summarised as follows:

- 20 refugee youth/5 national youth
- 21 male/4 female
- 18 aged eighteen and over/7 aged under eighteen [of these, two participants were aged 14 which was lower than the age range intended for the consultation]
- Of the refugee youth, 17 identified as living in a 'large town or city', 1 as living in 'a village or very remote area', and 1 as 'other' (1 chose not to answer this question)
- 7 of the refugee youth identified as having been away from their home country for 2-5 years, 4 have been away for 1-2 years, and the remaining 7 identified as having been away from their home country for 6 months to one year (2 chose not to answer this question)
- In terms of the highest level of education the refugee youth had completed –
 - 3 identified as having completed primary school
 - 3 identified as having an undergraduate degree
 - 14 chose not to answer the question
- In terms of current education or employment status of the refugee youth, they identified themselves as follows (multiple choice was possible) –
 - 3 in formal education
 - 2 in non-formal education (e.g. vocational or skills training)
 - 1 looking for a job
 - 12 as 'other'
 - 2 choose not to answer the question
- 6 of refugee youth identified themselves as living with friends, while 13 did not specify and identified themselves as living with 'other' (1 chose not to answer this question)
- 5 of that number identified themselves as the head of their household, 1 identified a 'friend' as head of their household, and 13 chose 'other' (1 chose not to answer this question)
- None of the participants identified themselves as married

⁶ According to UNHCR Morocco statistics for the refugee population as of 31st December 2015 - the 12-17 age group includes a split of 187/239 (female/male), and the 18-59 age group includes a split of 843/1286 (female/male), and therefore 18 male refugees and 2 female refugees is not representative of the gender balance in the refugee population.

- None of the refugee youth identified themselves as parents, or as taking care of a member of their family on a regular basis
- None of the refugee youth identified as having a disability

Participants' motivation for taking part in the national consultation, as outlined in the application forms, include: A desire to learn and to share knowledge and experiences with others

- To improve things
- To learn more about refugees and their main issues
- For cultural exchange
- To collaborate with organisations and youth from NGOs
- To get help and support

Participants' expectations from participating in the consultation, as specified in the application forms, include: To learn how to talk to new people as well as to be able to share experiences

- Positive results
- Help and support
- Knowledge and understanding between different cultures
- *"to let off some steam by sharing my situation with others and to take a little break from my daily life"*

Group dynamics between youth

Bringing together host community and refugee youth

One of the objectives of the national consultations is to provide an opportunity for refugee and host country youth to meet, exchange ideas, build friendships and alliances and establish connections. It is hoped that as a result of the consultations, refugee and host country youth will gain a better understanding of the issues they face – as youth – and that there will be opportunities for refugee youth to work more closely with national youth organisations. The Morocco group were asked the question on day one, *"Why did we invite refugee and national youth to this consultation?"* The answers included the following: social cohesion, to live together, diversity, intercultural relations, to have communication between refugees.

Small group discussions provided an opportunity for refugee and national youth to get to know and understand each other better, and created space for the young people to listen to each other and ask questions. A number of the facilitators and the interpreters commented that cooperation and open discussion increased during the three days, both between the Moroccan youth and the refugee youth, and between the Sub-Saharan refugees and the Yemeni refugees. For example, on day three during the storyboard exercise, one of the facilitators noted - *"Today I noticed that the discussion between the Sub-Saharan youth and [the] Yemeni, is more open and they exchange ideas more freely."* One refugee youth participant shared the following reflection in their final written

evaluation form in response to a question about what actions they plan to take after the consultation – “To fight against my isolation by making friends with young Moroccans”

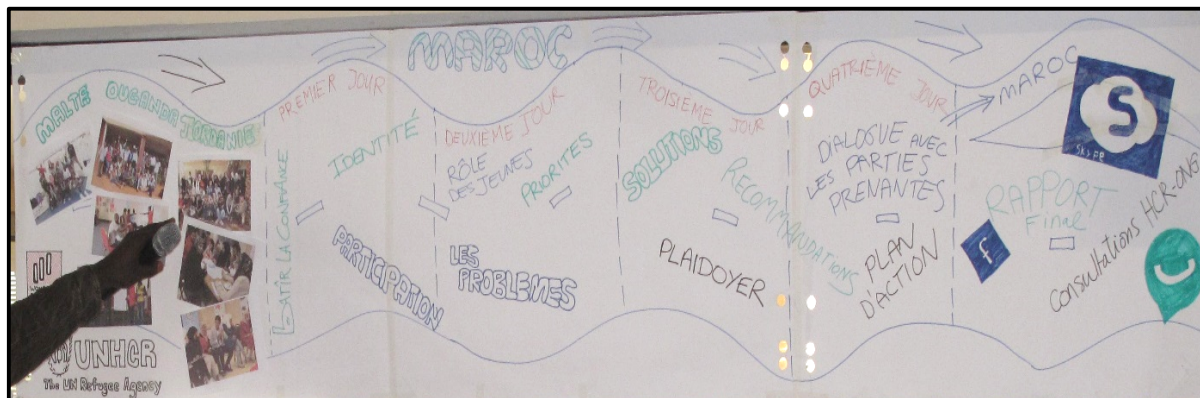
Group Profile and Representation

As highlighted in the participant profile and dissemination and selection sections, there was a significant gender imbalance at this consultation, with just 4 females to 21 males. There were a number of consequences as a result of this including the outcomes of the exercises being inevitably weighted towards the opinions and experiences of young men, and that these male participants had few opportunities to listen to, and learn from the experiences of young women from their own and other communities.

The full age range was well covered, and this group had the most representation of child (those U18 years of age) of all the consultations so far.

With the majority of the refugee participants originating from Sub Saharan Africa (17) and just another three from Yemen it is inevitable that the findings and discussion points are weighted in terms of the experiences of the majority group.

National Consultation Structure



The National Consultations have two components, with the same structure for all locations. The first component is a three-day consultation with 20 refugee youth and 5 host country youth - working together to be heard, develop ideas, build alliances and networks, and contribute to improving work with young refugees globally. The second component is a half-day ‘stakeholder dialogue’ where participants share consultation outcomes and recommendations with key local, national and international agencies and organisations and develop next steps for the post-consultation period.

Day One

- Getting to know each other, building trust and teambuilding
- Identity
- Youth Participation

Day Two

- Identifying and prioritising issues
- Analysing issues and identifying causes and impacts
- The role of youth in addressing the issues

Day Three

- Addressing the issues and developing solutions
- Advocacy/Communicating our messages and recommendations
- Stakeholder analysis Planning for the stakeholders meeting

Day Four

- Stakeholders meeting
- Group action planning – what next for this group

Main Themes from Morocco Consultation

The following is an overview and analysis of the main themes and issues that emerged during the consultation:

- **Lack of/ limited access to education:** Education was high on the list of issues for all refugee participants, but there were big differences between those faced by the Sub Saharan African (SSA) and the Yemeni refugees. The main issue highlighted by the Yemeni refugees was their inability to be able to select a specialist study area at university. The Yemeni refugees explained that they do not have to contend with the language barrier or documentation challenges faced by the Sub Saharan African refugees. The Sub Saharan African (SSA) refugees highlighted that the language barrier, cost, and lack of documentation limit or prevent their access to education. They also felt that there is a lack of information available to guide them on how to access education.
- **Lack of security and safety:** Security and safety were highlighted by the group as serious issues, in particular for the Sub Saharan African (SSA) refugees. Safety and security were also discussed in relation to integration, fear for the future, a lack of wellbeing, and in terms of poor relations with police. Many of the Sub Saharan African members of the group did not feel that the police support them with the aggression and racism they experience. This was not highlighted as an issue by the Yemenis. One young female refugee in the group highlighted sexism and sexual aggression as one of her main security concerns.
- **Racism:** A reoccurring theme throughout the consultation, racism was highlighted as affecting the Sub Saharan African refugees but not the Yemeni refugees. It was described as a daily challenge which had direct consequences on their feelings of safety, security and wellbeing. For the SSA refugees experiences of racism manifest themselves through the words and actions of people that the participants associate and mix with on daily basis, this was highlighted by them as a reminder that they are not accepted by Moroccan society.
- **Language barrier:** The language barrier was highlighted by the Sub Saharan African refugees throughout the consultation as having a significant impact on their access to education and integration with Moroccan society.
- **Lack of adequate housing:** This emerged as an issue repeatedly throughout the consultation. Refugee youth participants highlighted several challenges in relation to access to housing, including the lack of adequate housing, challenging relationships between refugees and landlords, the need for regulation of residency permits and difficulties in paying rent.
- **Resettlement:** Resettlement was discussed consistently throughout the consultation as well as being referenced by the participants' in their application and evaluation forms. Members of the group used every exercise to talk about their desire for resettlement and to request

support to make resettlement possible. The primary reasons given by the Sub-Saharan African refugees for needing resettlement were the issues discussed above; a lack of access to education, a lack of protection and personal security and racism. Increased access to resettlement opportunities was voted as the top recommendation by the youth participants.

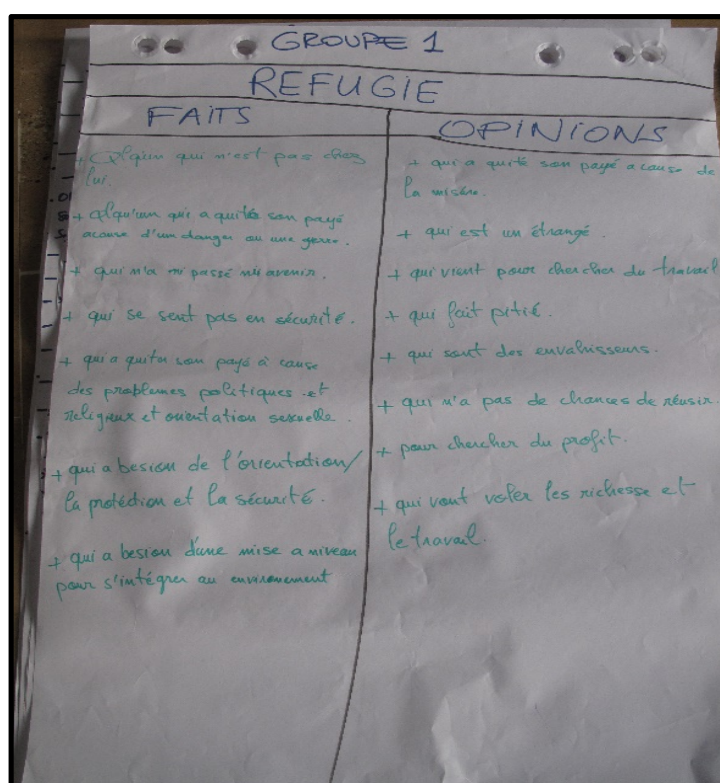
- **Isolation and uncertainty:** Linked to all the issues described above, the youth expressed overarching feelings of isolation and a strong uncertainty about what the future holds for them.

Summary of Findings

The following section provides a summary of the main points to have arisen in each session during the four-day consultation with refugee youth in Morocco. The structure of each exercise is described followed by the main findings:

Perceptions and facts about refugees and youth

This exercise provided an opportunity for the participants to discuss, in small groups, the facts and perceptions associated with the words 'refugee' and 'youth', with their ideas recorded on flipchart paper and shared with the whole group.



A great deal of discussion was generated during this exercise, and both national youth and refugee youth had the opportunity to consider each other's perspectives. As one of the small group facilitators noted: "What is striking is that the youth are gaining insight about their differences and that they constitute a new generation with which the future is being built". During the discussions about the term 'refugee', racism, a lack of security and isolation were all discussed as major issues faced by refugees in Morocco. Words such as "threatened", "discrimination" and "frowned upon", as well as "vulnerable", "alone" and "solitude" were all used. These themes recurred throughout the consultation. Discussion about 'youth' typically emphasised the reality of youth from the participants' perspective, focusing on their energy, hope, potential, courage and focus on the future, contrasted against damaging public stereotypes associated with youth including not being taken seriously, recklessness, lack of long term thinking, and selfishness. As one refugee youth highlighted: "Opinions about youth differ, they either don't take them seriously or they believe they are the only hope for the future", while another group explored what they perceived to be the manipulative role of politicians who either seek to use youth or forsake them.

Youth Participation

This exercise was structured around a set of three questions which the young people voted on and then discussed.

Question 1: Should NGOs and UNHCR listen/engage with youth in designing and planning their services and activities for refugee youth?

All participants, except two, considered that it was important for NGOs and UNHCR to listen and engage with youth in designing and planning services and activities for refugee youth. The other 2 did not disagree, but explained that they did not have an opinion. Reasons participants gave for engaging with refugee youth included: *"It is through listening to us that they will know our problems and help find solutions"* (Refugee youth, aged 17), and *"to see change you have to be change. We must be involved in NGOs"* (Moroccan youth, aged 23).

Question 2: Have you taken any steps to communicate with NGOs and the UN to talk about the issues you face?

In response to this question, 23 youth voted yes, 1 said no, and 1 was undecided.

Question 3: Do you feel it is easy to interact with NGOs and UNHCR to talk about what you face?

Responses to this question were separated with respect to interaction with NGOs and interaction with UNHCR. In terms of interacting with NGOs – 7 youth voted that it was easy, 4 that it was 'rather easy' and 4 that it was difficult. In reality the majority of the participants were referring to their interactions with FOO, when responding to this question. As UNHCR's lead community services NGO in Morocco, providing education and social services to refugee youth, FOO was the main NGO with which refugee, and even host country, youth had regular interaction. In terms of interacting with UNHCR – 4 youth voted that it was easy, 4 that it was 'rather easy' and 13 that it was difficult.

Many of the comments regarding interactions with UNHCR focused on the time it takes to see results and the necessity of patience with the current system, for example: *"To be a refugee you need courage and patience"* (refugee youth, male, aged 23), and for one participant who had experienced practical communication issues: *"It's difficult when the number you were given to contact personnel doesn't work."* Another participant also compared the ease of interacting with NGOs against interaction with UNHCR: *"For me it isn't easy; there's like a 'Berlin Wall'; normally it should be UNHCR listening to us and yet we feel more listened to at the foundation."* [FOO] (Male refugee youth, aged 19).

While the majority of the group found interactions with NGOs straightforward, for example: *"Easy, no queue"; "Easy access";* and *"Easy to find a person to talk to"*, one participant also highlighted the need for patience in relation to interactions with NGOs: *"Let's say that it's only difficult if you lack patience"* (refugee youth, male, aged 18).

Youth Visions for Participation:

In the next stage of this session, the participants had the opportunity to discuss in small groups their ideas and visions for youth participation and then to present these ideas visually through posters.

education in order to better integrate - *“Morocco is a bilingual country, and if there is no education there is a language barrier and we will not manage to communicate”*. In the same group, the Moroccan youth and refugee youth discussed security, integration and basic needs, and as a result, similar needs began to emerge. For example, a young refugee shared his opinion: *“Moroccans are closed, they carry so much violence against us; they don’t try to understand what we want from them, what they want from us or how we can live together”*, and a young Moroccan replied: *“There are just as many problems for refugees as there are for Moroccans. We need housing, education, health but not as much as them. I am as much for refugees as I am for Moroccans.”*

The needs and issues identified by youth in this exercise focused around several broad themes. These themes included food security and livelihoods, health and psychosocial support, education, security, racism and a lack of integration, protection, infrastructure and shelter, and legal status.

While all of the issues raised were considered important and many of them generated a lot of discussion and debate, lack of security and racism were major themes which dominated discussions during this exercise and the whole consultation. Many refugee youth highlighted a fear for personal safety, as these comments by two young refugees highlight: *“Daily violence is the first challenge”*; *“We don’t feel protected, if we are aggressed (sic) in the street, the UNHCR doesn’t protect us”*. During this exercise resettlement was most commonly discussed as the way to escape the lack of security and the feeling of being unprotected. On several occasions, participants expressed that they do not feel they can report their issues to the police.

Other significant themes, which were strongly linked to security and racism for youth during the discussions, were a lack of integration and feelings of isolation. Several young refugees highlighted a feeling of detachment from Moroccan society, for example - *“When they see you are black; they make you feel different”* and *“We have the right to a good life like everyone else”*. Meanwhile, one youth was clear that without integration, an improved quality of life was impossible to attain: ‘the objective of every refugee person is to be integrated, because with integration comes work, access to medical care, housing, social stability and health’.

There was a lot of discussion in every group about lack of access to education, as participants explained that they feel it affects their future, their ability to integrate, and their value to society. The specific challenges that the groups discussed varied from a basic level for those refugee youth who want to learn to read and write, to a higher education level as youth in one group discussed the need for more slots in university.⁷

Participants also discussed the need for financial support and guidance to help them to access suitable housing, as they lack experience and skills in this area due to their age and unfamiliarity with the Moroccan context. The issues of financial insecurity, integration and preparation for the future were also discussed in all groups in relation to a lack of access to employment for young refugees.

Additional issues raised were the lack of medical support or follow up, lack of official documentation, food security, protection challenges faced by LGBTI refugees and girls and the need

⁷ Please refer to page 16 for a more detailed explanation of this issue from the young refugees’ perspective.

for support to address past issues. As one refugee youth explained: ‘the past is part of the present challenge’. Although no further detail was added on this last point in the notes, the idea of struggling to come to terms with past events, and the psychological impact of that struggle, was mentioned informally and during small group discussions on other occasions during the consultation.

After identifying the main issues and needs facing refugee youth in Morocco, the participants were asked, in their small groups, to select and prioritize the top nine issues they face, through an exercise called Diamond Ranking. This activity is designed to encourage debate and deeper analysis of the issues and to teach participants about the importance of reaching consensus and compromise. The top issues chosen by the participants were: access to education, (Sub-Saharan / end of study scholarships for Yemenis); education and professional training (chosen by two groups); and sexist/sexual aggression linked to lack of security. Other issues that ranked high, and provoked the most debate included: lack of financial support; security; protection, which was specifically linked to experiences of aggression; racism and a lack of integration; fear for the future; access to healthcare; and access to housing.

Identifying causes and impacts of issues using Problem Trees:

Using the ‘problem tree’ tool, participants selected an issue from the top three in their diamond ranking charts and considered its causes and impacts.

Two of the groups chose to focus on education: ‘Young refugees do not have access to education’ and ‘Education is a right for all young refugees’; and the other two groups chose to focus on safety, security and protection: ‘Youth refugees need security and protection’ and ‘Young refugees do not feel safe in Morocco’.

Amongst the root causes identified by the youth for ‘lack of access to education for refugee youth’, were: language



barriers, lack of documentation (e.g. identity documents), limited places available in schools, issues with education levels (e.g. the level of education offered does not match the requirements of the individuals), and lack of follow up in administrative processes. At a tertiary level, participants highlighted that there is a lack of/limited choice in fields of specialisation. The impacts of lack of

access to education identified by participants included delinquency and youth becoming a ‘danger to society’, no future, ‘obscurity and ignorance’, exclusion and poverty.

The groups discussing safety, security and protection identified a number of root causes. This included racism, due to skin colour, lack of recognition of young refugees as a group of concern by the government, lack of consideration or response to the issues they face by the police, their lack of integration into Moroccan society, language barriers, physical and verbal aggression faced from the host community, lack of resources available to them, isolation and solitude, sexual harassment, and their lack of documentation. The impacts of lack of safety, security and protection on the youth included fear for the future, young refugees begging, discrimination against them, injury, impoverishment, trauma, violence and aggression including rape, lack of confidence, and feeling the need to leave Morocco (even by boat if necessary).

Identifying solutions using Storyboards

A follow on exercise on day three focused on how to tackle the root causes of these issues, finding solutions, identifying the role of youth and other stakeholders in realising solutions, and identifying the impact of solutions on the lives of refugee youth.

The facilitators, working with the group focused on youth not having access to education highlighted the high level of frustration and hopelessness that the group members seemed to experience in relation to this issue: *“There is much frustration by all group members about this issue, and they say that they don’t know what to do anymore.”* Before discussing potential solutions, the group were keen to discuss the key issues they face in relation to education, including:

- The lack of documentation excluding them from education, for example a Sub Saharan African refugee explained: *“We must receive documentation, administrative documents to be able to go to school. I went to many NGOs like Caritas to get help to go to school but they tell me that as long as I don’t have proper documentation I can’t go to school”,* and a Yemeni refugee responded: *“Let’s choose the issue of ‘birth certificates’ for the story board even if I don’t face this issue myself, it is a big problem for Sub-Saharan African refugees.”*
- Dissatisfaction with the provision of educational activities by some NGOs, for example a Sub Saharan African refugee emphasised that: *“Informal schools like at the FOO always provide the same programs each year. These programs must be reinforced.”* Members of the group also highlighted the importance of informal schools complementing the national system: *“To develop informal schools these must use the same curriculum as in public schools.”*
- Lack of governmental support, for example, a Sub Saharan refugee explained: *“Government signs treaties, there are laws, but these are not applied. NGOs can take the necessary steps to help us go to school, but [if] the government is not implicated, it will never work.”*
- High cost of education, for example, two Yemeni refugees argued that: *“NGOs should have treaties with universities and public institutions to lower the costs of education.”*
- Language barriers and other integration challenges, for example, a Sub Saharan African refugee highlighted: *“There is also an issue with language. I’m not saying it’s impossible*

to integrate public school, for me, nothing is impossible in life, but there is no integration”

The solution proposed by this group through their storyboard, was the provision of basic documentation, i.e. birth certificates. They perceived their role to be one of lobbying the government to realise this solution. They emphasized the need for cooperation between UNHCR, the prefectures in Morocco and the Government to ensure the provision of birth certificates. In terms of the impact of this solution on the lives of refugee youth, and the resulting access to education, the group were very clear, as these comments by Sub Saharan African and Yemeni refugees demonstrate: *“If these issues were resolved there would be positive change”*; *“You will manage to take control of your life”*; *“And this will encourage us to help others”*; *“When young refugees get an education, they become legal and come out of isolation”*.

The second group, focusing on the right to education, determined that their ideal solution would be schools that are designed for refugees only, set up and financed by the UN. They summarized their role in this process as organizing themselves as an NGO in order to lobby and influence the Ministry of Education to achieve this goal. This solution was agreed by both the Sub Saharan African and Yemeni participants, even though the Yemeni youth do not face the same language barrier as the Sub Saharan Africans. They perceived a key external actor in this solution to be UNHCR from a financial and advocacy perspective. The group explained that the establishment of these schools would have a positive impact on the lives of refugee youth as they would provide a sense of ‘community’ for them, and it would benefit them beyond just the provision of education as it would be set up to meet the specific needs of young refugees.

The solutions proposed by the youth requesting improved security and protection focused on the need to have their rights protected by the police. This included the enforcement of strong penalties for perpetrators of violence against refugees, as a deterrent; asking the police to take into account complaints from refugees; ensuring justice for all; education



and sensitisation against racism and discrimination via media and in schools; and joining youth organisations. They proposed that young people themselves could create sports activities, reach out to the media, become better known in the neighbourhood, invite police to socio-cultural events, contact national human rights agencies and organizations, and organize activities with older people in the neighbourhood. They indicated that the role of external actors such as UNHCR, NGOs, CNDH (Conseil National des Droits de l’Homme), and OMDH (Organisation Marocaine des Droits de

l'Homme) should focus on sensitization of the police. They also saw the value of consulting with CNDH and OMDH more generally on this issue.

The fourth group identified multiple solutions to help young refugees feel safer in Morocco. For example, they considered the importance of integration and suggested organizing events for refugees and Moroccans, sensitizing offenders and refugees, sensitization in neighbourhoods via mosques and churches, increased contact between refugees and host community, and setting up a language centre dedicated to Arabic classes. As well as improving integration, they also considered the possibility of separating refugees in a secure area for better protection. Other solutions focused on the need for better legal protection, by ensuring that offenders are punished and laws are enforced. This group perceived an active role for youth in meeting with religious leaders to discuss these issues, making videos, and lobbying NGOs for support. They considered key external actors in the realization of these solutions to be UNHCR, NGOs, the media, and CNDH. These steps would make it easier for refugee youth to make friends, go out freely, live in harmony, study freely, feel comfortable, be fulfilled and feel a sense of liberty and tranquillity.

Finding more solutions to priority issues:

The World Café exercise was used to encourage youth to identify creative solutions to the problems they face. Four issues were selected from the diamond ranking exercise, which although not ranked in the top three, were the focus of much discussion and debate. These included:

1. Isolation/loneliness
2. Sexual harassment (of Sub Saharan and Moroccan women)
3. Racism towards refugees
4. Lack of access to housing

After identifying solutions, the participants were then asked to consider what role they, the youth could take in making these solutions a reality.

Youth participants identified a range of ways to tackle isolation and loneliness. These included awareness raising in schools, religious institutions, and through the media about refugees, why they are in Morocco and what their rights are. They also identified the benefit of organising targeted, intercultural events to bring together and build better relations between Moroccans, Sub Saharan Africans and Yemenis, as well as the need for spaces for young refugees to gather. The youth felt that improved access to education and employment would contribute to reducing feelings of isolation as they would meet people through those activities. They also felt they could play a role in welcoming new arrivals, by for example identifying and highlighting opportunities for sports and other recreational activities, and by encouraging social cohesion with other youth to create a more accepting environment. They also highlighted the need for themselves to take proactive action, to leave the house, work on their own development and self-confidence, learn about the local culture and respect the laws of their host country.

Solutions to sexual harassment focused on several key areas. Firstly, in terms of law enforcement, they encouraged punishment for perpetrators; improved police presence and response and the criminalization of sexual harassment. One group also considered the need to create human rights

committees to take on the issue, and for the creation of laws that better protect women and their rights. Secondly, they considered the need for sensitization on the issue of sexual harassment, which should target younger generations and the general population, as well as offenders themselves who could benefit from psychological counselling. Thirdly, participants suggested that the role of NGOs could be to provide counselling services for women who have experienced this issue. Finally, some participants also stressed that the problem of sexual harassment doesn't only concern refugees, but also concerns Moroccans, and while the focus was largely on sexual harassment towards women, the negative experiences of the LGBTI refugees were also highlighted.

The majority of participants felt they could play an awareness raising role achieving these solutions, for example: utilising the media, such as television, radio, public signboards and social media to share key messages; by engaging Moroccan artists; by discussing the issues during leisure activities such as football matches; by engaging with head teachers to discuss these issues in schools; by speaking with the police, NGOs, neighbourhood leaders, market vendors and other young people; and by creating petitions. They also saw the value in gaining an improved legal understanding of the issue, to communicate it effectively, and suggested meeting with the Conseil National des Droits de l'Homme (CNDH).



The young people identified a range of solutions for tackling racism against refugees. These included sensitisation activities in schools, with the general public through media, and in mosques through coordination with the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The participants also stressed the importance of improved understanding and acceptance of the 'other', for example through cultural exchange events, education and consultation with NGOs. Another idea was to take stronger action on racism by criminalising it. The participants identified several roles for themselves in enacting these solutions. These included sensitisation activities in their own neighbourhoods, lobbying the media to be more actively involved in fighting against racism, and by creating theatre pieces, songs and other cultural activities to sensitize young Moroccans. There was also a sense of personal responsibility to get to know the local population better, to build connections and contact between refugees and Moroccans, and (for Sub Saharan African refugees) to learn Arabic to improve communication with Moroccans.

The participants were also able to suggest a range of solutions to address the lack of access to housing, at local and national levels. Firstly, in relation to the landlords, they felt that the government should sensitise them about refugees so that they better understand the situation. It was also felt that UNHCR should negotiate with landlords to secure better rent prices and create a

list of 'fair landlords' which would provide guidance for refugees on who to rent from. At a national level, ideas included: organising a round table with the Ministry of Housing, lobbying for rent equality between refugees and Moroccans, creating a social housing agency, and building more housing for refugees and Moroccans which would be integrated into the community. One group also considered that the creation of more jobs for youth would reduce the challenge of covering rent.

The youth decided that they had a personal responsibility to be more considerate to the rules of their landlords, not take advantage of the kindness of landlords, and to show respect to their neighbourhood. They also saw the potential of ensuring mutual support between young refugees, in both house hunting and covering rent. Finally, they suggested that they could seek the support of an older person to negotiate with landlords on their behalf.

Recommendations, Solutions and Core Actions

Youth Recommendations

During the 4-day consultation, youth were encouraged in their breaks and through formal activities to consider what recommendations they would make to a global audience that would improve the lives of young refugees. A graffiti style wall provided the informal space for them to record their ideas at any point. A further structured activity on the third day helped the youth to review their work during the consultation and to consider new ideas that they might have, or to hone the ideas that they had already shared. The group then shared their ideas and using sticky dots, voted for their top five choices. This activity resulted in the following recommendations from the Morocco youth participants, which have been categorised for ease of reference:

Education

- Facilitate getting necessary papers for enrolment in public schools (e.g. birth certificate)
- Awarding scholarships for refugees for public and private schools
- Advocating with international cooperation agencies to help refugees access universities
- Increase the offer of courses both in terms of their amount and content in informal schools
- Create committees to judge the level of education among refugees at their arrival at the FOO and improve study programs and include levelling courses
- Enable refugees to choose university study programs
- Improve integration of young refugees in public schools and improve access to language
- Improve access to professional training
- Organize trainings and outings periodically
- Resettle refugees in other host countries where education is provided

Health and Psychosocial Support

- Improve coordination between Action Urgence and the Ministry of Health when handing out necessary and prescribed medication by doctors without modifying them
- Provide psychological support
- Putting in place free medical consultations and sensitizing medical facilities
- Improve access to sports facilities

Housing

- Improve access to the right to permanent housing
- Set up lists with proprietors distributed by NGOs
- Put in place a coordination channel between the Government and the UNHCR on housing
- Set up a support mechanism by NGOs to help refugees when signing their housing contracts
- Help refugees negotiate rental prices
- Construct a residential zone (city) for refugees
- Construct housing centres for young refugees here short term and urgency rooms for those who are vulnerable

Security

- Enhance security in neighbourhoods inhabited by refugees
- As long as insecurity is present, accelerate resettlement of young refugees
- Sensitize young refugees about arrests, and in particular about their right to remain silent and not having to sign anything without the presence of a lawyer
- Set up a communication channel between the police and UNHCR when a refugee is arrested
- Adopt a law criminalizing racist behaviour

Employment/Livelihoods

- Organize a forum for employment for refugees
- Create a professional training centre to be awarded diplomas which in turn qualify refugees for employment
- Improve access to Agence Nationale de la Promotion de l'Emploi et des Compétences (ANAPEC) for refugees
- Provide financial assistance to refugees in line with the cost of living in Morocco
- Provide financial support to refugees who do not currently get any support

Dialogue/Sensitisation

- Involve refugees in decision making processes
- Organize cultural events for youth refugees and young nationals to meet
- Put in place a media platform to improve communication between refugees and Moroccans
- Sensitization against racism by the media
- Putting in place socio-cultural activities in order to improve access to dialogue, cohesion, and mutual understanding between refugees and Moroccans
- Conduct sensitization campaigns among the public and in schools to help improve integration of refugees in Morocco
- Enable individuals or families to become tutors to refugees
- Increase funding of refugee-led projects

- Fund a radio show that talks about refugee problems, created by international organizations and associations

Protection

- Resettle LGBTI refugees

Regularisation/Documentation

- Regularize refugees unconditionally
- Improve access to administrative documents
- Deliver travel documents to refugees



Stakeholders Dialogue

The Stakeholders Dialogue component of the consultation took place on the morning of the fourth day. The meeting was attended by 29 stakeholders from 18 organisations, including:

- Ministère Chargé des Marocains Résidents à l'Étranger et des Affaires de l'Immigration
- Ministère de l'Éducation et l'Académie Régionale d'Éducation Nationale
- MEN Délégation Rabat : Ministère de l'Éducation nationale
- Office de la Formation Professionnelle et de la Promotion du Travail
- Agence Nationale de la Promotion de l'Emploi et des Compétences (ANAPEC)
- Conseil National des Droits de l'Homme (CNDH)
- UNHCR
- FOO

- Plateforme Nationale Protection Migrants
- Caritas Maroc
- Organisation Internationale de la Migration (OIM)
- GIZ (Agence de Coopération Allemande)
- Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development (SDC)
- AMIDEAST
- Association Marocaine de l'Appui à la Promotion de la Petite Entreprise (AMAPPE)
- Heinrich Boell Foundation
- Expertise France, Projet Sharaka
- Freelance Psychoanalyst/author

Stakeholder dialogue structure

The dialogue ran from 10am – 1pm. Four youth participants opened the meeting with a welcome speech outlining the purpose of the consultation and provided an explanation, to the stakeholders present, of the previous three days, using the flipcharts and images that had been produced to explain the activities.

Group presentations

On day three of the consultation, the youth developed group presentations to showcase the issues they had been focusing on and explain both the actions they could take to bring solutions to their communities, and the recommendations they have for stakeholders to support and supplement these actions. They rehearsed their presentations during the evening of day 3 and on the morning of the stakeholders meeting. With the participation of all team members, presentations lasted about 5 minutes each and used role plays, music, and spoken word. The topics selected for the presentations included 'access to education' and 'lack of security'.

Round table discussions

After the presentations, the youth participants had the opportunity to engage in more focused discussions during small round table discussions which involved participants rotating from one table to another (World Café style). The purpose was to create a space that was more conducive to genuine discussion and building relationships and reducing the feeling of 'them' and 'us'. Discussion suggestions were placed on each table and then groups were divided to ensure that there was equal numbers of youth and stakeholders at each table, along with a facilitator to support the discussion if required and interpreters to translate for the four Arabic speakers.

Recommendations and Open Discussion

One youth participant from Yemen presented the group's key recommendations to the stakeholders with the support of an interpreter. Space was then provided for an 'open mic' session, allowing anyone in the room to speak in response to what they had heard or what had been discussed during the morning. Both the stakeholders and youth were free to speak.



Key Discussion Points and Outcomes

World Cafe Small Group Discussions:

- Multiple topics were discussed and many of the youth took the opportunity to express themselves and to ask direct questions of the stakeholders. The main topics discussed included education, integration, documentation, racism, security, livelihoods, language barriers, and resettlement and largely followed the themes that had been discussed during the week

Open Discussion ('Open Mic')

A stakeholder opened the discussion by raising the idea of creating a refugee association as a tangible outcome of the consultation. *This idea would allow the youth to communicate with the government with one voice, and to have a more official approach.*

- Although two young people had questions about how such an organisation might be useful or relevant to them, the majority of youth who spoke expressed their interest in such a project, and saw the merits of it. Other stakeholders from the government, donors and the UN also expressed their support for the idea, to streamline communications with the government, to assert the rights of refugees, and to involve young refugees in finding solutions to the issues they face given their first-hand knowledge and experience.

Education was the other key topic raised during the 'open mic' discussion, by several youth and stakeholders. Several young people highlighted their desire to resume their education, and to have more control over their education. They expressed an awareness of the work that has already been done to support them, but they emphasised that more must be done. *Several stakeholders highlighted the need for improved cooperation between agencies and governments to resolve this issue at national and global levels, given that an isolated approach to the problem is not going to address such a complex issue experienced by so many young refugees globally.*

Next Steps/Future Action

Key action points and next steps were discussed with the partners in the final debrief meeting on the last day, and include some of the following points:

The in-country partners – FOO and UNHCR Morocco - have committed to sustain the momentum created by the consultation, and to follow up directly with the stakeholders. They will also be managing the process of selecting youth representatives for the global youth consultation which will be held in Geneva in June 2016. Examples of ideas for action discussed since the consultation include: supporting the youth in the creation of an organisation or Association for refugees, organising regular meetings with the youth to discuss implementation of the recommendations and to involve other youth in that process, maintaining follow up with stakeholders and partners to build on the day 4 meeting, encouraging the youth to access online educational opportunities such as Khan Academy and MOOC classes, and internal lobbying to improve the services provided by each of the partners.

During the final debrief meeting with youth on day four and in their final written evaluation forms, many of the participants expressed an interest in future engagement, including: utilising social media to coordinate future action; engaging with FOO's programmes and community activities; organising awareness raising activities; coordinating with FOO and UNHCR to establish a refugee 'association' to better represent the needs and ideas of refugee youth with stakeholders.

After the final debrief meeting a short certificate ceremony was held, during which each participant received a small gift of a personalised photo mug from the FOO.

Evaluations

Daily Youth Evaluation

A different evaluation tool was used at the end of each day to capture ideas, learning and recommendations from the participants. Aside from collecting feedback, we also wanted to be sure that the youth were recognised as active participants in the consultation process, with the power to directly influence it. Targeted questions and interactive exercises facilitated the collection of feedback on what they liked, didn't like, what they had learned and new skills they had acquired, and what they would recommend to the facilitators for the next day or for future consultations. Some examples of participant feedback mechanisms used include:



At the end of day one, participants were asked to express what they enjoyed, what they did not enjoy, and what they would recommend for the next day by sharing comments

anonymously on a prepared flipchart sheet. The results showed that the majority of participants had enjoyed the day, in terms of - the atmosphere, the diversity in activities, games, the exchanges and discussions, getting to know each other and engaging in dialogue with people of other nationalities, drawing and artwork, and sharing opinions. The negative comments included the length of the day, the cold, and feelings of tiredness, as well as a request to increase the length of the consultation. Meanwhile the constructive recommendations focused a request for more time to develop their ideas, a request for improved timekeeping, a request for more dialogue between refugees and national youth, and time to be allocated for sport and more games.

At the end of day two, participants were asked to share their answers verbally to two questions: 1) One word to describe the day, and 2) One thing they learned today? Everyone in the group answered the questions in turn around the circle. Examples of responses include:

| One word to sum up Day Two | What I learned today |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great • Great • Super • Extraordinary • Fraternal • Excellent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing • Team building • Sharing of problems with others • Integration with refugees • Creativity • Speaking in public |

| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good • Concrete • Appreciable • Good • Touching • Top • Creative • Hope • Motivating • Nice • Great • Amusing • Enlightening • Fantastic • Emotional • Formidable • Magnificent • Touching • Not bad | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone’s energy • God/strength and denouement • Going beyond other’s emotions • Being a facilitator • Channelling of everyone’s potential • Synthesis/ creativity/ discovery • Understanding well the suffering of refugees • Diamond ranking • Tolerance for others • Different means to express a message • Group work • Public speaking • An animal can dance to music • How to get by alone • Talents of others • Discovery of hidden talents |
|--|--|

Final Participant Evaluation

At the end of day four, participants had the opportunity to share their opinions of the consultation, what they had learned and their suggestions and recommendations for future consultations through a written evaluation form. This was an important tool for participants to provide anonymous, individual feedback at the end of the consultation.

Facilitators were available to discretely support participants with limited literacy skills. Forms were completed in either French or Arabic to ensure that youth felt as comfortable and confident to express themselves as possible. The forms were translated after the event.

The written evaluation forms also provide targeted feedback on how well the participants felt they had contributed to the core GRYC objectives and outcomes. Participants were given the intended GRYC outcomes and asked to comment accordingly: completely agree, mostly agree, partially agree, do not agree. They were also given space to comment on each outcome. The results from the 24 completed forms were as follows:

Outcome 1: Through my participation in this consultation, I had the opportunity to identify and discuss issues that are important to me and my community, and to develop and suggest solutions.

- Completely agree - 19 participants
- Mostly agree - 5 participants

“I completely agree and not only that but I have also become more self-confident”

"I have had the chance to speak on behalf of all refugee youths and to give my opinion and make proposals"

"Because thanks to this consultation I have been able to share everything I have experienced whilst living in Morocco. I also hope that, as a result of this consultation, I will find solutions to both my own problems and those of other refugees"

"I fully agree, for I have managed to identify our issues and I have learned ways to fulfil our needs"

Outcome 2: Through my participation in this consultation, I have developed and improved my leadership and advocacy skills

- Completely agree - 22 participants
- Mostly agree – 2 participants

"Yes, I feel strengthened and that I have managed to open my mind as well as to broaden my knowledge"

"I have learned to advocate and to talk in front of an audience"

"I have actively participated in the last four days in this Morocco consultation. I have learned many new things, such as: public speaking, advocacy, telling my own story, team spirit, synthesise, trying to talk about key points"

"I am really very happy, because I have both developed and improved my leadership skills through managing to speak in front of people"

Outcome 3: Through my participation in this consultation, I am more aware of organisations that I can engage with at a local and national level

- Completely agree – 14 participants
- Mostly agree – 6 participants
- Partially agree – 1 participant

"I already knew them, but I think thanks to the meeting we have held this morning we can now communicate better"

"I am now more aware of which organisations I need to get in touch with both at local and national levels, such as CNDH and ANAPEC"

"Through my participation in this consultation I have met stakeholders and learned who I need to address or partner with depending on the subject (such as NGO's or governments)"

Outcome 4: Through my participation in this consultation, I have more opportunities to develop relationships with youth groups and organisations locally, nationally and globally.

- Completely agree – 15 participants
- Mostly agree – 4 participants
- Partially agree - 2 participants

[Yes,] “especially at an international level because some organisers came from abroad. I feel they have unveiled our talents, especially in my case”

“By the end of this consultation, I felt I had more possibilities to establish relationships with young people from here and elsewhere”

“Yes, through this consultation I have had the chance to develop relationships with young Moroccans and our Yemeni brothers and I think all this has allowed us to develop a good relationship”

“I came up with the idea of creating an advocacy association as young refugees and to keep permanently in touch so we can keep on working to become our values”

Outcome 5: Through my participation in this consultation, I understand more about the experiences of other refugee youth and national youth.

- Completely agree - 19 participants
- Mostly agree – 2 participants

“I have managed to have an exchange with refugees from different nationalities and young people from the country”

“Because we have had the chance to meet other young people, both Moroccan and refugees, who have many talents and a lot of experience”

[Yes because] “we are all refugees but we don't all have the same life and the same experiences”

The other questions in the written evaluation concentrated on a more in depth review of the consultation process and outcomes for youth, and requested recommendations for future consultations and ideas for individual or group action after the event. Some of the comments from participants are captured below:

Do you feel that you have been listened to at this consultation? Please explain your answer:

“Of course, I felt the stakeholders listened to us, as they said they will take our advocacy into account and that we indeed have the right to make our claims. Also, they were moved”

“I have felt listened to and that my input has been taken into consideration. I also have obtained positive and constructive feedback”

What specific ideas do you have for action based on your involvement in this consultation?

“Creating a network between us and the organisations in order to carry out and apply our ideas and projects”

“To create a non-governmental organisation managed by young refugees”

What suggestions do you have for future National Consultations?

“To form ideas and carry out little projects during the consultations in order to materialise what we have suggested”

"I suggest that the next consultation should include an exercise about the meeting between the youths and the stakeholders"

Did this consultation meet your expectations? Please explain your answer:

"Yes and I hope that everything that has been said does materialise"

"Yes, the exercises have helped me improve my skills and find direction"

What learning are you taking away from this consultation?

"It is better to show solidarity between Moroccan and refugee youths in order to find solutions"

"A lesson of hope. Before the consultation I was sunk in despair and I thought to myself "it is all over". Yet, the last four days have brought hope back to me and I know now that it is possible"

The challenge now will be to maintain the momentum created during the national consultations and work with the youth towards achieving tangible change in their lives.

Main Observations and Learning from Morocco

Lessons Learned

The lessons learned from each national consultation inevitably inform the next consultations. Below is a summary of the main strengths and challenges encountered in Morocco:

Challenges

It is crucial for the Global Refugee Youth Consultations – national Consultations that there are strong and experienced facilitators in the lead roles, and this was not the case in Morocco. The two facilitators selected did not have sufficient experience for a consultation on this scale. The impact of this was a heavily increased workload for the global GRYC team, who had to support the lead facilitation heavily. As the two lead facilitators, were female, this exacerbated the gender imbalance amongst the participants (21 male/4 females). The group in attendance at this consultation were unfortunately not representative of the refugee population in Morocco, and certainly did not reflect the level of diversity that was hoped for. As a result, the consultation must be considered to be limited to representing the majority groups in attendance.

Also, due to cold temperatures and the accommodation, many of the participants and staff became unwell. In future, a more detailed overview of the venue and a kit list for facilitators and participants will be requested to ensure that we are better prepared for the climate and the facilities. Finally, nearly half of the group did not give permission for the project to use their image, either photograph or video, meaning that capturing images of consenting participants became complicated. The only option to save time, and to ensure accuracy, was to take photos as normal and then to sort them after the event.

Strengths

Two days of preparation with the team was very important to ensure that the team was prepared and to finalise logistics details. An agenda was prepared for the preparation days of this consultation, based on learning from previous consultations and this made a significant difference to ensuring that all topics were covered. A new item was added to the agenda for the preparatory days, allowing space for the partners to share an overview of the context in relation to refugees and youth. Previously this had been done in an ad hoc way. One of the learnings from Morocco was that dedicated time needs to be set aside for this to ensure the GRYC team have a good contextual understanding prior to meeting the youth and starting the consultation. UNHCR shared their briefing pack for Morocco, which will also be requested during the first set up call for each location moving forwards.

The session plans were translated into French and shared with the facilitation team prior to the consultation, which was critical for a better understanding of the content. The format was well received, and all of the facilitators agreed that it was logical and easy to follow. Utilising the small group facilitators to capture notes during the smaller discussions was crucial to the information capture process, and the structure established by the lead note taker worked well. Youth photo sheets were also prepared for the first time at this consultation, to assist accurate note taking, and for the facilitation team to learn names quickly. This was well received by the team, and will certainly be utilised at all future consultations.

Conclusion

The Morocco consultation brought together a group of dynamic and engaged youth, who are committed to striving for positive change in the lives of refugee youth. Their intensive work over the four days generated many ideas to address the issues of most significant concern, and with the new connections made with key individuals and organisations as a result of the stakeholders meeting, there is great potential for change. The way that the group bonded during the consultation and have continued to support each other since the consultation is a testament to the process and the power of youth to join together to overcome common challenges. As such, the consultation in Morocco highlighted the importance of providing space and opportunity for refugee youth to share their experiences, voice their opinions and ideas, and to be recognised as active and crucial partners.