

**Safe movement of young people**

# **POSITION PAPER**

**Social reintegration of migrant and returned children and youth: preventing precarity and combating irregular migration**



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## **INTRODUCTION**

Global transformations, security crises, poverty, inequalities, and the effects of globalization push many children and youth to migrate in search of education, training, and employment opportunities. Connected to the realities of other countries, they develop aspirations that their places of origin often cannot satisfy.

The need to migrate generally arises from the absence of local opportunities for personal development. Migration then becomes a means of seeking a better future.

However, when opportunities for integration fail to materialize in transit or destination countries, the issue of reintegration for returning youth becomes crucial to prevent deeper instability, which could lead to renewed irregular migration.

## **CHALLENGES TO THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRANT OR RETURNED CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

Integration is a key driver of empowerment. For migrant children and youth, it often represents the ultimate objective of their journey: accessing education, employment, income-generating activities, or stable social reintegration.

Yet multiple obstacles hinder their integration, including:

- \* Insufficient financial means limiting access to schooling and quality vocational training;
- \* Gaps in public policies that do not sufficiently address the specific needs of young migrants;
- \* Lack of legal documents, a major barrier to accessing essential services or employment;
- \* Lack of stable reception and support mechanisms with adequate human and financial resources;
- \* Absence of reintegration systems for returning youth, although essential to preventing a relapse into precariousness.

Other constraints worsen these difficulties: lack of legal migration pathways, risks of exploitation during travel, discrimination, limited access to housing and schooling, and linguistic and cultural barriers. Existing mechanisms, often run by NGOs or reliant on external funding, lack sustainability and do not fully meet the magnitude of the needs.

## **EFFECTIVE INTEGRATION MECHANISMS: A DRIVER OF EMPOWERMENT AND SOCIAL PEACE**

Integration responds to a fundamental right to development. When a migrant child or youth gains access to opportunities in transit or destination areas, they find what they were seeking through migration: safety, livelihood, and prospects for the future.

Successful integration strengthens the autonomy and dignity of the young person and facilitates their social inclusion in the host community. It also reduces risks of exclusion and vulnerability, contributing to social cohesion and local development.