

Destination Unknown

An international campaign to protect children on the move

10 demands - A Progress Report

The 10 Demands are at the core of the Destination Unknown Campaign in Europe, Africa and Asia. But what has the Campaign done to push for these demands and what are the results reached so far?



Demand 1: Respecting the right to non- discrimination and the best interests principle for Children on the move

This demand was included in all regional and global advocacy messages of the Campaign. Due to the active contribution of the Destination Unknown Campaign, the 5 years 8 points Action Plan of GFMD Civil Society states: mechanisms should consider the best interests of children in context of migration, including their rights.

Demand 2: Offering alternatives to migration in places of origin

In all regions of the Campaign, partners have supported children and their families access to services in places of origin as an alternative to the child's migration. Services include support in accessing education, health and livelihood opportunities.



"Locally Developed Child Protection Practices" Terre des Hommes Lausanne, 2014

Demand 3: Bridging between community protection practices and national laws and policies

The study [Locally Developed Child Protection Practices](#) identifies various practices existing at local level in West Africa and considers their impact on the protection of children on the move. The study looks at such practices whether they occur before children's departure, while they are travelling or once they reach their destination.

The study gives concrete recommendation on how formal protection actors can use such practices at community level and build upon them for a better protection of children on the move. Following this study, in West Africa, DU partners supported a number of community practices, benefiting so far 5292 children on the move.

Demand 4: empowerment of children and communities and access to protection services along the migratory route

DU invests in identifying migration routes used by children and analyzing the risks and opportunities they could entail. Such information is then used at community level to inform and prepare migration related decisions by the parents and children. Campaigns on safe



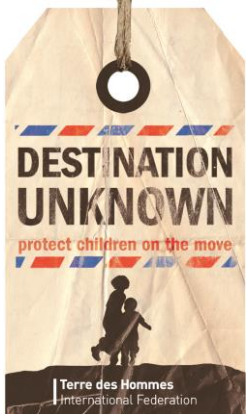
migration opportunities in a child friendly languages have been conducted in Laos, Cambodia, Togo, Albania, Thailand, etc.

DU Campaign partners are present near to various border points (Benin-Togo, Burkina-Mali, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam) to offer first hand assistance and guidance to children on the move as well as ensure that those pushed back from the border return home safely. Child friendly spaces, youth and children club are used by DU partners as places seeking protection, but also further development and empowerment of children on the move. 12.000 children on the move in West Africa have so far benefitted from such services.

Over 150.000 Syrians are assisted through intervention in Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt. We have signed various civil society calls for protection of migrants at sea, while DU members in Italy, Greece, Malta and Cyprus continue to provide legal and psychosocial assistance to the migrant children that arrive by sea. 2140 persons have benefitted so far from our services in Italy.



Reception Center in Mae Sot (Thailand)



Demand 5: bridging from local to national and then to international level

DU Campaign has supported including protection of children on the move in the national Child Protection Action Plan in Mali, Burkina Faso and Cambodia. In Thailand and Moldova this has become one of the priorities of the work of the Ministry of Social Welfare with Moldova Government issuing together with the DU Campaign a case management manual on the children returning from Russia. Exchanges, sharing of information and experiences and capacity building activities have been conducted between all members of the DU Campaign. Over 500 national actors have benefitted from such activities in West Africa. In South East Asia and Eastern Europe these activities have a transnational character as they include professionals across countries. DU members have been able to influence at the benefit of children on the move the bilateral agreements between Burkina-Mali, Guinea-Mali as well as the tripartite agreement Benin-Burkina-Togo and Togo-Benin-Gabon.

In follow up to the Day of General Discussion of the Committee on the Rights of the Child regarding the rights of children in context of international migration, DU members together with other agencies are currently investing in a study on transnational protection of children on the move. The study is expected to further influence transnational policies on protecting the rights of migrant children.

Demand 6: bring an end to detention, deportation and automatic return to community of origin

Members of the DU Campaign play a very active role in the [End Child Migration Detention Coalition](https://www.destination-unknown.org/en/coalition). The Coalition explores alternatives to the detention of children due to their migration status and urges States to adapt such alternatives instead of detention. The aim is to allow children to remain with their family members and/or guardians in non-custodial, community-based contexts while their immigration status is being resolved.



The DU partner in Malta together with other organisations within the country has succeeded in changing the Maltese government policy. Starting in February 2015, children are not anymore detained in Malta because of their migration status.

Demand 7: a case per case durable solution with a risk assessment as a must

A document produced by DU in 2012 and entitled '[What can you do to protect children on the move](#)' describes the assessments needed to be undertaken, including the risk assessment and elements to be looked at.

In India, the DU partners have been active in promoting Standards Operating Procedures, including procedures ensuring risks assessments in cases of trafficked children. Similar documents have been elaborated by partners also in South Asia, Moldova etc. The Swiss Foundation of International Social Services supported the West African Network of Child Protection to draft the [Regional standards for the protection and reintegration of vulnerable children](#).

In June 2014, a massive deportation of undocumented migrant workers and families including children and young workers from Thailand through the Poipet border among others, happened. At least 250,000 people were sent back through this border. This was considered as an emergency situation by DU campaign partners, so emergency assistance was provided. Around 627 families, 732 children and 112 pregnant women were assisted. A press briefing was conducted in Bangkok attended both by Thai and regional media to share the situation of the children that were affected by the crackdown. Media visits happened as a follow up to know in depth stories of those affected by the crackdown although the visit was only conducted in Mae Sot, where migrant workers and their families were also affected by the crackdown. Articles were published by the media, which include that from Bangkok Post.

Demand 8: Having the view of the migrant child taken into account in decisions influencing his/her future



"The added value of protective accompaniment"
Terre des Hommes Lausanne, 2014

The Committee on the Rights of the Child in its General Comment no.12 on the right to be heard speaks about the urgent need to fully implement the right of the child concerned to express his/her views on all aspects of the immigration and asylum proceedings. The Committee emphasizes that *'...children (on the move) have to be provided with all relevant information, in their own language, on their entitlements, the services available, including means of communication, and the immigration and asylum process, in order to make their voice heard and to be given due weight in the proceedings.'* (See for more [CRC, General Comment No.12](#)).

DU partners in Switzerland are starting up a project which includes capacity strengthening of State actors in building a case per case durable solution together with the migrant child concerned. Similar aims are pursued by DU partners regarding children moving within the EU (i.e. from Romania, Bulgaria to France, UK, etc). [Documents](#) produced by DU in West



Africa elaborate on how NGOs can support the agency of the child concerning such decisions.

Demand 9: Learning from the children concerned when designing policies concerning them

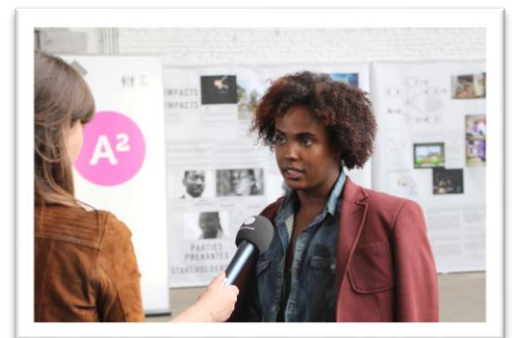
This demand has been very much at the core of DU advocacy at global and regional level. On various occasions, DU has made sure that children on the move have taken place in high level policy making meetings regarding migration. A group of 20 child and youth migrants were assisted by the DU to participate in the World Social Forum on Migration in Johannesburg in December 2014. They actively sought signatures for a declaration aiming at better recognition of the rights of children on the move and which got signed by 226 delegates. In five countries in Europe, namely Albania, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Poland and Romania, more than a 100 children concerned by migration have been supported to develop their own advocacy actions towards national decision makers and aiming at a better protection of children on the move. DU Campaign has also supported migrant children to speak out about EU migration policies at Brussels level. In October 2014, European Commissioner Cecilia Malmström hosted the seminar [“One year after Lampedusa: the journey in search of protection in Europe: Politics meets practice”](#). Together with practitioners and EU decision makers, one of the speakers was Farah Abdi Abdullahi, a youth Somali refugee living in Malta. Since then Farah has been supported by DU to participate to various policy making events, in order to share his personal story and his recommendations in terms of policy change.

Demand 10: Basing public debate on facts and stories of the children concerned

Linked to the previous demand, DU has supported the voices of the children concerned to be heard also outside experts meeting, into more public debate areas. In Germany Terre des Hommes has supported a campaign by child and youth volunteers called [‘Where is Mila?’](#) that aims at raising awareness of the reality of asylum seekers arriving in Germany. In various countries (Albania, Nepal, etc.) DU partners have supported theatre playing by children on the move explaining their reality and their demands to the general public

Moreover, DU has largely invested into research aiming at building evidence for public debate and policy making. A research on girls’ migration is supported by among others DU partners in Ethiopia, Bangladesh and Sudan. In Europe, DU has conducted a number of studies, looking at movement of children within countries and across borders. The children concerned have been largely involved in conceptualising and conducting these researches as well as in public events following their launching.

Last update 14th August 2015



Farah at the EU development Days 2015

