Debunking Myths to End Xenophobia

MYTHS vs. FACTS

WHAT IS XENOPHOBIA?

Xenophobes - Fear of the Stranger
Refugees - are persons fleeing persecution and forced removal
Migrants - are persons who move for different reasons, for instance to improve their lives at work, for family reasons, for education.

Myth: “Migrants are hurting my country’s economy”

In most OECD countries migrants contribute more in taxes and social contributions than they receive in individual benefits.

- Between 1995 and 2012, European immigrants made a positive contribution of more than €45 billion (4.5 billion) to Britain, compared with an overall negative contribution of €38 billion for native Britons.
- Typically, immigrants pay a net 500-600 more in taxes during their lifetime than they collect in government services in the UK.

Myth: “Migrants are taking jobs away from citizens who need them”

Migration contributes significantly to the economic growth of many countries. In particular, it helps to fill the labor gaps in the countries of destination and attracts investments. Therefore, migration is a win-win situation and an opportunity for sustainable development.

Myth: “Keeping migrants away will ensure safety in my country”

There is no evidence that restricting migration helps in reducing crime. In fact, research suggests that countries with higher levels of immigration tend to have lower crime rates.

Myth: “With all these migrants coming in, my culture is going to disappear”

Great cities are extraordinarily multicultural. Migrants represent over a third of the population in London, New York and Sydney.

Myth: “There are too many refugees in my country”

Refugees should go back to where they come from

Over half of the world’s refugees are children. UNHCR says that Syria is one of the most dangerous places to be a child - right now, children in Syria are at risk of starvation, torture, arrest, sexual abuse, abduction, early marriage, recruitment by armed groups, and death.

WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT?

- Spread the word to break prejudicial myths. Share this with your friends and family.
- Exercise acts of solidarity in your community, school, and work. Be inclusive.
- Listen to the voices of migrants and refugees. Base your decision on facts. Be smart.