KING WITH AND FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

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UN Youth Strategy

1. Context

The world today is home to the largest generation of young people in history, 1.8 billion[1]. Close to 90 per cent of them live in developing countries, where they constitute a large proportion of the population.

Connected to each other like never before, young people want to and already contribute to the resilience of their communities, proposing innovative solutions, driving social progress and inspiring political change, in urban as well as rural contexts. Young people constitute a tremendous and essential asset worth investing in, opening the door to an unparalleled multiplier effect.

At the same time, young people are also facing incredible challenges and even life-threatening risks, disproportionately carried by girls and young women in many parts of the world. These arise when accessing their rights, including to quality education, healthcare or decent work. They also arise in situations of conflict, or when young people flee home in search of survival, or move for better opportunities. Young people also suffer interpersonal violence, are affected by the slow onsets of climate change or frontline impacts of disasters. They experience intersecting forms of marginalization, and struggle with the brunt of a global erosion of human rights and impeded access to justice.

The way in which the shifting demographics in the world are leveraged, and how young people navigate their transition into adulthood, are critical for the progress of humankind and the health of the planet. With this large and increasing number of young people across the globe, it is abundantly clear that it is only by engaging and working with them, supporting them in standing up for their rights and creating the conditions allowing them to progress and play an active role, that the international community will be able to achieve peace, security, justice, climate resilience and sustainable development for all.

[1] Aged 10 to 24 years. Noting that there is no universally agreed international definition of youth and while recognizing that the UN Secretariat for statistical purposes defines 'youth' as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years, this Strategy considers other definitions in use by Agencies, Programmes and/or Member States without prejudice.

2. Role of the UN

Building on its unique global convening role, its

5. Strengthening the foundations for a UN that delivers with and for young people

Young people's empowerment, development and engagement is an end in itself, as well as a means to build a better world. The UN recognizes

	Youth-led innovation: Provide targeted and enabling support to youth-led organizations and initiatives to pilot new models and interventions. Disseminate results widely (tiv)17 (es)6. 583.150150 1n6s150 12.536 1.579Pold en (tio

FIRST PRIORITY:

Engagement, Participation and Advocacy - Amplify youth voices for the promotion of a peaceful, just and sustainable world

The UN will:

Mainstream: Incorporate across all entities of the UN and work relating to all UN pillars, the need to meaningfully and sustainably engage and partner with young people and their organizations, networks and movements, through formal and informal mechanisms and platforms to realize universal rights-based youth participation;

Expand: Review, improve and widen existing UN modalities for cooperation, dialogue and partnerships with youth-led organizations, networks and movements, as well as young people outside of organizations, with a view to ensure concerted efforts to engage those representing most marginalized young people, at international, regional, national and local levels;

Assist: Provide guidance and technical support to UN entities for the establishment (where absent) or strengthening of youth engagement mechanisms (building on lessons learned);

Engage: Advocate for expanded and meaningful youth participation in intergovernmental forums at the global and regional levels, particularly those related to the SDGs, including through extensive and streamlined support to youth delegates and representatives;

Set standards: Advocate for governments to transform the way in which they engage young people nationally and locally, and apply the principles of meaningful and sustainable youth participation;

Connect: Enhance how the UN reaches out, communicates with, listens to and responds to young people, including through a strategic use of its convening capacity and partnerships with tech and communications companies for expansion of large-scale, multi-media outreach and campaigns relevant to young people;

Strengthen: Reinforce and expand the UN's capacities and resources to identify, value and showcase contributions of diverse young people;

Amplify: Partner with young people who globally, nationally or locally advocate for the values of the UN to amplify and reinforce their voices and increase the reach and impact of global youth movements they are building, including in the context of major UN Summits such as the HLPF under the General Assembly, the Secretary-General's Climate Summit, the 75th anniversary of the UN in 2020, etc.

SECOND PRIORITY:

Informed and Healthy Foundations - Support young people's greater access to quality education and health services

The UN will:

Advocate for quality education: Engage Member States and other partners to ensure universal access to quality education; develop and deliver quality and inclusive education for young people that is learner-centered, adopts a lifelong learning approach, is relevant to their lives and the social,

economic and environmental needs of their communities, promotes sustainable lifestyles and sustainable development;

Promote non-formal education: Support and advance youth policy frameworks that include support to non-formal education and its role in the development of young people's knowledge, skills and competencies;

Ensure accessible and youth-responsive health services and healthy environments: Incorporate an approach that is inclusive of young people in the UN's support to strengthening national health systems, and promote efforts to provide universal health coverage while addressing social determinants of young people's health and wellbeing;

Support youth-friendly mental health services: Ensure accessibility of youth-friendly mental health services, within the greater context of universal health coverage;

Support sexual and reproductive health and rights: Leverage the UN's advocacy and programmatic capacities to expand young people's access to youth-friendly and rights-based sexual and reproductive health services, comprehensive sexuality education and information.

THIRD PRIORITY:

Economic Empowerment through Decent Work - Support young people's greater access to decent work and productive employment

The UN will:

Uphold global commitment: Renew and strengthen efforts toward decent work for young people by focusing on evidence-based, scalable and innovative solutions and alliances, that translate into positive outcomes for all, locally and globally, including in fragile situations;

Advocate for a balanced approach: Engage Member States and other partners to advocate for a balanced approach to stimulate the youth labour demand and prompt improvements in skills development systems, with the objective of easing the school-to-work transition and reducing the youth NEET[7] rate, particularly among young women and disadvantaged youth;

Guide and support: Support Member States and other partners in their efforts to create youth-enabling employment and self-employment ecosystems and to develop and operationalize strategies that prioritize the improvement of both the quantity and quality of jobs for young people through, e.g. public and private investments, economic and labour market policies, skills development, transition to the formal economy, social protection, youth rights at work, and active youth engagement;

Promote access to services and productive assets: Ensure access of young people - who are navigating a school-to-work transition in an increasingly dynamic context - to integrated and adequate services as well as productive resources, such as land, finance, digital and other technology related resources, both in rural and urban areas;

[7] Not in education, employment, or training

Foster a just transition to a low-carbon and green economy: Engage Member States and other partners to accelerate the transition towards green and climate friendly economies through mitigation and adaptation strategies that improve energy efficiency and limit greenhouse gas emissions; and similarly, support Member States and other partners in enhancing the capacity of the green economy to create more and better employment opportunities for young people, in wage and self-employment.

FOURTH PRIORITY:

Youth and Human Rights – Protect and promote the rights of young people and support their civic and political engagement

The UN will:

Protect and promote young people's human rights: Prioritize advocacy, policy development and programming to safeguard the human rights of young people and prevent and address widespread and grave human rights violations experienced by young people and ensure a strengthened focus on young people experiencing intersecting forms of discrimination and abuse, as well as young people's access to justice;

Raise awareness about the specific situation of young people's rights: Promote a deeper understanding of the youth-specific barriers and challenges young people face in accessing their human rights; use this information to identify and advocate for actions that could facilitate young people's access to their rights;

Mainstream human rights: Promote the

environment conducive to young people's actions (including through reintegration, recovery and resilience activities for youth affected by conflict);

A successful implementation of the UN Youth Strategy will directly depend on effective and efficient collaboration between UN entities as well as ingenious synergies among the priorities and actions outlined in the Strategy and its Action Plan.

The implementation of the UN Youth Strategy will benefit from the strategic guidance of a High-Level Steering Committee composed of:

a) The Secretary General's Envoy on Youth
b) The IANYD co-chairs
c) a select number of biennially rotating UN Entities (one or two per priority area whose work is central to the Strategy (at ASG level)
d) 2 biennially rotating representatives of a global youth-led platform/organization.

The High-Level Steering Committee will be chaired by the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth (as the Secretary-General's representative on youth issues).

The High-Level Steering Committee will also seek to ensure alignment with other UN processes and the UN reform, guide effective linkages and synergies at all levels, and guide the efforts to mobilize resources and leverage partnerships in support of the strategy. The High-Level Steering Committee will identify a suitable arrangement for its interactions with and reporting to the

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