



*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*



United Nations Development Programme

**YOUTH EMPOWERED AS CATALYSTS FOR  
SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

# **UNDP YOUTH STRATEGY 2014-2017**







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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UNDP supports policy and programming that aims to ensure that youth are informed, engaged and empowered to contribute to sustainable human development and resilience of their communities. The combination of youth and innovation has the potential to create solutions to development challenges and to transform societies.

**-Helen Clark, Administrator, UNDP**

Half of the WORLD'S  
POPULATION or  
**3** approximately  
BILLION people  
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AGE OF **25**,  
of which **87%** live  
in developing countries.

Half of the world's population or approximately 3 billion people are under the age of 25, of which 87% live in developing countries. They comprise a high proportion (60%) of the global unemployed population. While youth are often considered a cause and concern for social or political unrest, they have demonstrated both their ability and potential to help solve the problems that surround the planet's present and future. Youth can also bring fresh ideas and be proactive in identifying solutions to development challenges at the local level. They have shown their ability to build bridges of dialogue across cultures.

Youth can thus be powerful advocates for UNDP's efforts approach to seek innovative solutions to complex development challenges and in doing so, help promoting the concept of sustainable human development. UNDP, along with other development partners, government and policy makers, will strengthen its engagement with and for youth as important actors in sustainable human development. We will also support youth development as a laudible end in itself.

UNDP has extensively and substantively engaged with youth<sup>1</sup> and youth initiatives for years; some of these activities

were undertaken in collaboration with other UN agencies and external partners. In 2012, UNDP embarked simultaneously on the facilitation of consultations on the post-2015 development framework, on the preparation of its new Strategic Plan for 2014-2017 (approved by the Executive Board on 13 September 2013), and on the development of its first organization-wide youth strategy.

This Youth Strategy is the result of extensive consultations, including UNDP-led e-discussions<sup>2</sup> involving UNDP teams at UNDP Headquarters, Regional Services Centres, and Country Offices; consultations with members of the UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD) as well as discussions with young people, youth experts and youth organizations. The insights and practical recommendations received from colleagues and practitioners have been instrumental in the shaping of this first organization-wide strategy on youth empowerment for sustainable human development and has also contributed to the greater integration of youth programming into other UNDP strategies, such as the new Gender Equality Strategy and South-South cooperation strategy.



UNDP's Youth Strategy is grounded in (a) the recognition that young people, in all their diversity, make substantive contributions at the community level and beyond and (b) the belief that the participation of young men and women in community development, markets, political processes, environmental stewardship, peace-building and conflict prevention, will increasingly shape and transform the quality of and prospects for sustainable human development.

Through its Youth Strategy, UNDP will support policy development and operational activities in the three main areas of work and related outcomes of the recently adopted UNDP Strategic Plan (2014-2017):

- To adopt **sustainable development** pathways that can eradicate extreme poverty and reduce social and economic inequality and exclusion. The Youth Strategy will contribute to that by building productive capacities of youth and an enabling environment for enhanced youth employment and employability, and creation of sustainable livelihoods for the poor and excluded.

- To support **inclusive and effective engagement, voice and political participation** of young women and men from diverse backgrounds in planning and decision-making processes at local, national, regional and global levels, that promote public accountability, rule of law and sustainable development solutions to poverty, inequalities and exclusion.
- To build resilience so that countries can sustain their development gains in the face of disaster or conflict. The Youth Strategy will contribute to this by recognizing **and empowering youth as positive agents of change and identifying and strengthening youth capacities for resilience** in the development of effective emergency preparedness and response, in conflict, post conflict, and transition settings.

The UNDP Youth Strategy provides a framework for heightened engagement with youth and youth organisations. It applies a **cross-sectoral approach**, coupled with an emphasis on capacity development, mainstreaming, advocacy and thought leadership in the global development agenda.



...there are now  
**73.4** MILLION  
UNEMPLOYED young  
people globally, up from  
**70.4** MILLION  
in 2007

### INTRODUCTION

Half of the world's population, or approximately 3 billion people, are under the age of 25 and 87% of these young people live in developing countries<sup>3</sup>, where they may represent up to 80% of the population<sup>4</sup>. Young people make up 37 percent of the global working-age population but 60% of the total unemployed. As a consequence of the global financial crisis, there are now 73.4 million unemployed young people globally, up from 70.4 million in 2007.<sup>5</sup> While in developed countries youth unemployment has reached disturbingly high levels exceeding 15 percent in two thirds of the advanced economies, their precarious working conditions in the informal economy and poverty wages continue to plague many developing countries.

Youth unemployment, underemployment and poverty wages can have long term

adverse impacts on human and social capital triggering a vicious cycle of intergenerational poverty and vulnerability that can adversely impact on human development. Economic hardship coupled with lack of opportunities to meaningfully participate in the society puts youth at risk of long-term social exclusion which compromises countries' social cohesion and can lead to political instability.

UNDP's Youth Strategy seeks to address the aspirations of youth and to create opportunities for their perspectives to be brought into development discussions, formal planning, programming, decision-making processes, etc. This includes (a) the availability of formal and informal platforms that young people – including the most vulnerable, marginalized or excluded - can use to voice their perspectives, opportunities for young women and



Civic education radio campaign (Cambodia, 2012)



men to engage in political and decision-making processes and institutions, and (b) new forms of capacity development to equip young people with the employability and entrepreneurial skills they need to contribute to economic growth, prosperity and development. UNDP has already learned from its engagement with young people and this strategy reflects a corporate effort to apply that learning to make our programming more agile, adaptive, innovative and effective.

Young people, their aspirations, knowledge, experience and solutions should be central to the development agenda. From a development perspective, the involvement of young men and women in participatory processes and planning and policy making at all levels plays a pivotal role in ensuring that youth rights are promoted, youth voices are heard, inter-generational knowledge is shared, and **innovation and critical thinking** are encouraged from a young age, to support **transformational** change in their lives and communities. Exclusion or insufficient engagement of young men and women in formal decision making processes or institutions, means valuable resources that could contribute to the advancement and quality of development are lost or under-utilised. Efforts to create an enabling environment for inclusive and meaningful engagement and participation of young men and women are therefore a key element of the youth strategy. Underpinning all these efforts is a human rights-based approach, recognising the universal human rights of all young men and women, without any form of discrimination.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), a development agency on the ground in 177 countries and territories, seeks to empower lives and help build resilient nations. Achieving sustainable human development would remain an aspirational

concept without the inclusion of all segments of society in a holistic, consultative and participatory way. Young men and women need to play a key role in this process.

To this end, UNDP is heightening its level of engagement **with and for youth** for the purpose of both enhancing the role of youth in development planning and policy making and in harnessing innovative development solutions, as well as supporting youth empowerment through skills building and leadership development. The goal is to **engage the talents and potential of young men and women** to ensure that development policy and programming works with and for young people.

### **“Nothing about us without**

**us”** was the key message

at the *“Empowering Youth*

*for Sustainable Human*

*Development”* Meeting in

New York in February 2013

convened by the Government

of Benin and UNDP on the

occasion of the 51<sup>st</sup> Session

of the Commission for

Social Development.

The priority areas of the Youth Strategy are aligned with the UNDP Strategic Plan for 2014-2017. Moreover, they reflect UNDP’s commitments as part of the first-ever UN System-wide Action Plan on Youth and UNDP’s active engagement more broadly in activities undertaken by the UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD).

## UN ENTITIES COMMITTED TO GREATER COHERENCE AND COORDINATION IN THE AREA OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

On 25 January 2012, the UN Secretary-General outlined his Five-Year Action Agenda, which laid out five generational imperatives to be addressed by the United Nations, requiring the mobilization of all the human, financial and political resources available to the Organization. Working with and for young people is one of these imperatives. The United Nations system is called on to address the needs of the largest generation of young people the world has ever known by developing and implementing an action plan on youth. In response to the Secretary-General's Action Agenda and the requests from Member States, the IANYD negotiated and prepared a System-wide Action Plan on Youth (Youth-SWAP)<sup>6</sup>, involving 27 UN entities (UNDP is one of them), with inputs from 22 others. The IANYD also conducted a global online survey in all official UN languages in the Summer of 2012. Over 13,000 respondents – youth and other relevant stakeholders - from 186 countries participated.

The Youth-SWAP was adopted by the UN-CEB in April 2013, as the framework to guide youth programming and enhance coherence and synergy of UN system-wide activities in key areas related to youth development, as a way to also implement the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) adopted by the General Assembly in 1995. The Youth-SWAP focuses on the following thematic areas: Employment, Entrepreneurship, Political inclusion, Civic engagement and Protection of rights, Education, including comprehensive sexual education, and Health. It aspires to improve the situation of young people in both peace and conflict-affected settings. Gender equality is mainstreamed and ICTs are seen as an enabler throughout the Youth-SWAP.

Given that the definition of young people varies by country context, the Youth-SWAP may also apply to young people older than 24 (regarding political participation in particular).

The Youth-SWAP core group meets on a regular basis. UNDP is called to support coordination and reporting essentially on two main areas of the Youth-SWAP: **(a) Employment and Entrepreneurship** (thematic area led by ILO), in line with UNDP Strategic Plan Outcome 1; and **(b) Political inclusion** (thematic area co-led by UNDP and UN-Habitat), in line with UNDP Strategic Plan Outcomes 2, 4 and 6 essentially. UNDP's Youth Strategy is also fully aligned with these roles and responsibilities.

It is expected that the implementation of UNDP's Youth Strategy will contribute to the implementation of the Youth-SWAP, and vice versa.

### I. DEFINING YOUTH

UNDP acknowledges the UN General Assembly definition of youth as between the ages of 15-24<sup>7</sup>. However, considering how individual countries define youth by taking into account a broader range of social-construct issues - rather than being purely confined to age range – UNDP's youth strategy proposes a more comprehensive and

flexible definition of youth. Such flexibility in the definition of youth allows for country-specific policies and programming, takes into account the heterogeneous nature of the youth population, and recognizes that different age groups within the younger population may have different needs in different contexts, in particular in crisis (conflict or disaster) or post-crisis settings where years of "childhood" and "youth" may easily be lost<sup>8</sup>.





By “youth”, UNDP refers to young women and men, in all their diversity of experiences and contexts, taking into consideration the existing definitions of youth used at the country and/or regional level(s). In terms of programming, UNDP proposes to focus *principally* on young women and men aged 15 - 35 years old.<sup>9</sup>

UNDP advocates for an approach whereby the collection and analysis of sex and age disaggregated data (SADD) on young women and men wherever possible would heighten the understanding of challenges facing younger populations in various age categories and enhance the relevance and specificity of youth programming, policy analysis and development at all levels.

## II. THE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

The life experiences and perspectives of young people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century differ greatly. In some cases, youth are the creative digital innovators in their communities and participate as active citizens, eager to positively contribute to sustainable development. In other settings, young people are both the victims and perpetrators of violence in the context they live in.

Today, 87% of young women and men living in developing countries face challenges brought about by limited and unequal access to resources, healthcare, education, training, employment and economic, social and political opportunities.<sup>10</sup> Youth, in many parts of the world, face poverty, hunger, barriers to education, multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, violence, and limited opportunities for growth and employment prospects. More than 600 million youth live in fragile and conflict affected countries and territories. Hence, the life experiences and perspectives of young people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century differ greatly.

The complexity of today’s social, economic, political and environmental development issues presents a significant challenge but also an opportunity to today’s generation of young men and women, given their consciousness and potential for innovation. Youth are also a potentially strong self-organising force that can influence change, and advocate for youth perspectives/targets and indicators to be included in the post-2015 agenda and related development processes.

**UNDP recognizes that several groups of young men and women require specific attention as they face particular challenges such as exclusion, inequality and multiple forms of discrimination.** These groups include young men and women from indigenous, ethnic and minority groups, migrants, refugees and IDPs, LGBT, those living with HIV, young people with disabilities or living in conditions of poverty and/or conflict, young sex workers and drug users, the digitally



Youth 21, Nairobi, March 2012

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 in **2012**.

excluded, those facing religious discrimination or suffering from domestic and sexual violence, widowed young women as well as young people entering forced marriages or being victims of human trafficking into slavery or the sex industry.

The extent to which young women are excluded is significantly heightened due to gender biases and discrimination faced in educational, cultural, and political contexts as well as in the labour market, access to health services and in the private sphere. Young women may be expected to take on unpaid domestic care responsibilities or may marry early. They may face a broader range of challenges preventing them to actively engage in the public sphere.

In the 2011 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS,<sup>11</sup> UN Member States expressed grave concern that young people still have limited access to high-quality education, decent employment, and sexual and reproductive health programmes, skills, services, and commodities they need to protect themselves. There is a need for a new wave of community and political advocacy, led by young men and women, to scale up the demand and supply of youth-friendly HIV programme and

services for all, regardless of HIV status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.<sup>12</sup> Although significant progress has been made during the past thirty years, still an estimated 780,000 youth aged 15-24 were newly infected with HIV in 2012. Moreover, there is also a gender divide as young women are 50% more likely to acquire HIV than their male peers.

Success in addressing these multiple challenges will depend on finding ways of fighting poverty and inequalities, discrimination, deepening inclusion and reducing conflict, without compromising the human rights of young people and inflicting irreversible damage on environmental systems. As recalled in the Outcome Document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), *“poverty eradication, changing unsustainable and promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development are the overarching objectives and essential requirements for sustainable development.”*<sup>13</sup> **Sustainable human development (SHD) reinforces this approach by emphasizing the importance of the capabilities and wellbeing of people and their relationship with their environment.**

**GREATER JUSTICE FOR DISADVANTAGED GROUPS**

In Moldova, a UNDP-supported project mobilizes and links diverse vulnerable groups of youth around access to justice and fundamental human rights, in line with national objectives for better social and economic opportunities for youth, justice and social inclusion. It builds on opportunities presented by the planned expansion of the state’s guaranteed legal aid system into non-criminal areas. The project involves at least 10 advocacy groups working with vulnerable youth, including youth who are unemployed, members of the Roma community, living with HIV have disabilities, or are migrants or refugees. Young people learn strategic advocacy skills that they can apply to address their key concerns and are receiving support from the project in connecting to legal aid providers and support networks, including the National Legal Aid Council. The project also ensures links with related initiatives that aim to develop the capacities and empowerment of disadvantaged youth.



Regional programme on Arab youth volunteering for a better future

### Demographic shifts and sustainable development pathways

Within the next decade, the world population will increase by over 400 million, posing additional pressures on the labour markets in developing countries, where the share of young persons is higher.<sup>14</sup> Already today, nearly 70 percent of the population of Africa is under 30; and this figure reaches 75 percent in many of the least-developed countries. High levels of youth populations are also observed in the Arab States, South-East Asia and the Pacific Region, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Under the right conditions, countries undergoing demographic shifts characterised by

a large youth cohort and declining fertility rates are able to accelerate their development due to a declining dependency ratio and subsequent larger national incomes. However, this 'youth dividend' cannot be realized if new entrants to the labour force cannot find decent employment opportunities or if those already in the labour market work for poverty wages.

Unfortunately, employment statistics are not encouraging. Latest estimates show that as much as two-thirds of youth in developing economies are either without work, not studying or engaged in irregular informal employment.<sup>15</sup> According to ILO data, 28.3 percent of young people in the Middle East and 23.7 percent of young people in

North Africa cannot find work. The employment situation of young women in particular requires specific attention.

In other regions, e.g., East Asia (9.5 percent), South Asia (9.3 percent) and sub-Saharan Africa (11.8 percent), low youth unemployment figures mask high rates of vulnerable employment characterized by long working hours, insecure work arrangements and overall low job quality.<sup>16</sup> A lack of viable employment alternatives, coupled with weak access to social protection, forces young men and women to work for poverty wages or to perform subsistence jobs on their families' farms or in enterprises. In fact, young people are more prone than adults to be working poor. Today, about 152 million young workers

live in households that are below the poverty line (US\$1.25 per day), comprising 24 percent of all working poor.<sup>17</sup>

Although unemployment rates at the global and regional levels are similar for young males and females (with the exceptions of North Africa and the Middle East), lower women's participation rates reveal their disadvantage with respect to the labour market. For example, in the Middle East, only 13.2 percent of young women are active participants in the labour market, compared to 46.5 percent of their male counterparts. In North Africa, the female youth participation rate stands at 19.7 percent vis-à-vis 46.8 percent for young males.<sup>18</sup>





This gender gap reflects not only traditional gender roles, but also systemic issues, such as the difficulty in combining work and family responsibilities or the fact that women often receive lower wages than men for the same work. If not addressed, these barriers to employment, as well as existing inequalities, will persist into the next generation. The creation of decent jobs, the reduction of discrimination in the workplace, and the creation of a basis for fair wages are all imperative, as is the need for quality education and training that provide graduates with the skills that employers seek.

Yet, in many countries, schools and vocational training centres lack the relevance and quality to prepare potential new entrants for currently available jobs, let alone for future jobs, requiring more high-technology skills, innovation, adaptation, and flexibility. In particular, transition to sustainable development models will imply new sets of skills and retraining programmes.

The tenth Education-for-All Global Monitoring Report, *Putting Education to Work*,<sup>19</sup> reinforces the urgent need to invest in skills for youth that will enhance their employment opportunities. In developing countries, 200 million people aged 15 to 24 have not even completed primary school and need alternative pathways to acquire basic skills for employment. Although there has been progress toward achieving gender parity in educational enrolment, girls in many developing countries are still disadvantaged in secondary and tertiary formal education, which are key determinants to employability and to equalization within societies. Barriers that deny disadvantaged youth access to jobs that demand highly specialized skills can be a long-standing consequence of entrenched inequalities and exclusion from quality education, healthcare, and other factors of human capital.

At the other end of the spectrum, many university graduates cannot find employment commensurate with their qualifications, especially in the developed and the middle-income countries of the ECIS region or the Middle East. Whether caused by under- or over-education, skills mismatch has long-term adverse impacts on the human and productive capacities of young people and hampers a country's economic development.

Many young people in developing countries turn to self-employment because there are simply no jobs elsewhere. While the principal goal of entrepreneurship is the reduction of youth unemployment and poverty, youth entrepreneurship also produces desirable residual socio-economic outcomes. Young entrepreneurs not only create their own work and possibly employ others, but also gain experience, marketable skills, responsibility, self-esteem, and linkages to local communities while contributing to overall social cohesion. Today's young entrepreneurs might become future employers and leaders who contribute to the economic development and change in their countries.

Unfortunately, young entrepreneurs in developing countries face daunting challenges that make the above-mentioned objectives difficult to attain. In the least-developed countries (LDCs), most owners of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) are likely to just barely sustain themselves and many would prefer to take on salaried employment, which is scarce.<sup>20</sup> In middle-income countries (MICs), compared to adult-run businesses, young entrepreneurs' efforts to grow beyond the micro-levels are thwarted by the unavailability of credit, weaker business networks and inadequate know-how.

Without job prospects at home, young people are often forced to leave their families, communities and countries behind in search

Of the **1.6**  
**MILLION**  
 PEOPLE WHO  
 PARTICIPATED in the  
**“MYWORLD”**  
 SURVEY CONDUCTED as  
 part of the consultations  
 on the post **2015**  
 development agenda  
 consultations, MORE  
 THAN HALF were below  
 the AGE OF **30.**

of job opportunities abroad or in urban centres. Involuntary and unregulated migration is accompanied by various benefits, including skill acquisition, remittances, professional opportunities and higher wages. But job migration among young people also brings specific development challenges, including sex industry trafficking, crime, drug abuse, increased vulnerability to HIV and other health-related challenges, and weak migrant worker protection.

In particular, marginalized youth who lack economic livelihoods and employment opportunities are prone to become attracted to illicit sectors, organized crime, and gang associations (e.g. Latin America) or piracy (e.g. Somalia). The growing dissatisfaction with political leadership and livelihood opportunities is attracting increasing numbers of youth towards ideologically driven groups associated with radicalization, violence, and extremism. Efforts undertaken under the UNDP Youth Strategy in this regard are geared towards the social, political, economic, and, in some cases, cultural reintegration of youth back into the fabric of their societies.

### **Civic engagement and participation in decision making and political processes**

In a survey conducted by the IANYD in August 2012, a majority of 13,000 respondents from 186 countries highlighted that the main challenges for youth were limited opportunities for effective participation in decision-making processes. With limited opportunities and exposure to meaningfully participate in decision-making processes, young men and women feel excluded and marginalized in their societies and communities. The need for participatory structures and greater trust between youth and institutions and for increased capacity development were also stressed. Efforts should focus primarily on

the most vulnerable of young people, and on specific actions targeting young women.

Of the 1.6 million people who participated in the “MyWORLD” survey conducted as part of the consultations on the post 2015 development agenda consultations, more than half were below the age of 30. The priorities identified through that survey (education, health, jobs as well as honest and responsive governments are thus for a large part to be attributed to that age group.

In order to respond to the needs of young people, and to guarantee that their basic human rights are recognized and enforced, young peoples’ active and meaningful participation in their societies and in democratic practices and processes is of crucial importance<sup>21</sup>. Meaningful youth participation and leadership require that young people and youth organizations have opportunities, and capacities, and benefit from an enabling environment and relevant evidence-based programmes and policies at all levels<sup>22</sup>.

Throughout history and in diverse contexts, young men and women have participated, contributed, and even catalysed the change of political systems and power-sharing dynamics for a better world. In recent decades there has been a sense that young people are becoming less interested in civic and political activities. Youth voter rates and memberships in civic associations in high-income countries have consistently declined, while globally young people are less likely to vote than adults.<sup>23</sup> This has been attributed in part to lack of trust among young people in governments and political systems.

At the same time, this lack of trust, frustration with increasing levels of poverty and unemployment, and sense of profound political and social injustice and inequality have manifested themselves through youth mobilization, particularly through social media channels.



There is clearly a need to better understand the perceptions and disposition of young people towards civic engagement and youth activism, the degrees of engagement through informal and formal political structures, and the reasons behind which young people are not engaging more in formal political structures. In this respect, it will be important to better understand the capacities of youth-led organizations and networks to support civic engagement and participation of young people; of political parties as an important pathway towards formal political structures for youth political engagement; and of other stakeholders (e.g. policy makers, academia, civil society organizations, media and private sector) to establish inclusive policies and mechanisms that support civic engagement of young people.

Hence, the focus on youth, in terms of their engagement in the political arena, is a relatively new priority but extremely timely, particularly in light of recent events and democratic transitions, in the Arab States as well as other regions. Opportunities for youth to participate in decision and policymaking processes that impact their lives depend largely on the political and cultural contexts. Social norms in many parts of the world result in multiple forms of discrimination against youth, and young women in particular. A society that abides by democratic principles is usually more favourable to participation in general, which does not mean that youth are mechanically participating or being heard. Both formal and informal engagement can be understood as political participation, and both are beneficial for a vivid and resilient democracy and should be supported.<sup>24</sup>

Promoting youth participation in formal processes, platforms and institutions should aim for achieving levels comparative to those of the rest of the population. There is strong evidence that the participation of young people



Youth 21, Nairobi, 2012

in formal political processes is relatively low when compared to older citizens across the globe. This challenges the representativeness of the political system and leads to the disenfranchisement of young people. Age-related exclusion typically reaches beyond 24 years. People under the age of 35 are rarely occupying formal political leadership positions. In one third of all countries, eligibility for the national parliament starts at 25 years or higher and it is common practice to refer to politicians as 'young' if they are below 35-40 years of age.<sup>25</sup> Overall, youth -in particular young women- are not represented adequately in formal political institutions and processes such as parliaments, political parties, elections, and public administrations (at all levels).

Youth empowerment is not possible without guaranteeing their rights to participate in government decision-making and processes at the national, sub-national and local levels. Youth should be accepted as partners in decision-making and invited to express their views and make specific contributions, without those being limited to youth-related issues.

## FOSTERING AND SUSTAINING INNOVATION IN YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

In 2011, the UNDP Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund (DGTTF) issued a call for proposals from UNDP Country Offices in support of innovative and potentially catalytic projects on youth to inform public policy-making, training youth as effective leaders, extending access to justice, opening space for youth empowerment and democratic governance. 37 proposals were accepted, out of which 9 are in Africa, 8 in the Arab States, 5 in Asia and the Pacific, 8 in Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States, and 7 in Latin America and the Caribbean. In a number of project countries, youth exclusion was strongly evident, often crossing with other forms of marginalization linked to gender, location, culture and/or community. Across the projects, activities include strengthening youth advocacy groups, providing quality research to interact with public authorities, and fostering the creation of national youth councils and plans. Several projects place a strong emphasis on social media and information technology as platforms in support of accountability and feedback mechanisms on service delivery.

Project results include:

- The establishment of a Youth Studies Centre in Armenia with staff capacitated to conduct surveys, undertake research, analyze data, facilitate participation of youth groups in policy formulation and implementation processes.
- The development of a results based monitoring and evaluation framework for the State Programme on Azerbaijani Youth, and the establishment of a legal framework for internships for young people in civil service in AZERBAIJAN
- Strengthened regional network of youth leaders against corruption through youth integrity camps spearheaded by youth leaders in Cote d'Ivoire Mechanisms and a blueprint established for data collection on youth, validated by the National Institute of Statistics in Madagascar
- The first innovation camp on youth and local governance in Jordan, with strong emphasis on electoral candidacy preparedness

This unique group of projects is also helping to inform organizational learning in terms of the design and implementation of youth-centred initiatives, taking into particular consideration the development of appropriate and realistic youth indicators; institutional and contextual analyses during the programme design phase; and partnership building.

*For more information on youth projects being supported under the DGTTF, please refer to [http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/democraticgovernance/projects\\_and\\_initiatives/dggyouth](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/democraticgovernance/projects_and_initiatives/dggyouth)*

### Resilience building

Fostering social cohesion and trust through an inclusive and participatory peace-building process during and after a transition or conflict, or a recovery process after a crisis

is a challenging task. Many stakeholders remain on the margins or excluded from the processes. In particular, the potential contribution of young people to effective peace-building and reconstruction has





received little attention and support. Yet, young people's leadership and roles in preventing and resolving conflict, violence and extremism, or in the recovery process after crisis is a rich resource essential to building sustainable peace and stability. Young people can play valuable roles as innovators and agents of change, and their contribution should be actively supported and seen as part of building peaceful communities and supporting democratic governance<sup>26</sup> in crisis and post-conflict settings.

The international community has increasingly focused attention on young people in the context of its conflict prevention and recovery programming efforts. It is said that young people face the major burden of war and violence. *"These young people often face the additional barriers of a lack of sufficient education, health care, protection, livelihood opportunities, recreational activities, friendship, and family support"* (Youth and Peace building, USIP). Crisis, conflicts and wars will remain unavoidable if we do not engage youth constructively in the shaping of the social contract<sup>27</sup>. The rationale for these interventions is often linked to preventing violence and/or reinforcing peace, based on the underpinning assumption that youth can be both a *threat to peace and a force for peace*.<sup>28</sup> In times of conflict, young people are particularly affected by the collapse of education and employment opportunities; they are the segment of the population that is most likely to be recruited into fighting forces, and are the most vulnerable to increased risk of HIV and other sexually-transmitted diseases and sexual violence. On the other hand, violent conflict often brings about rapid changes in social norms, and opens up opportunities to renegotiate relations and hierarchies based on age and gender. During periods of conflict, alternative political structures might emerge that are more inclusive of women and/or youth. After conflict, youth are often



Youth-at-Risk Skills Training, Bosasso

a lost generation, hard to demobilize, disarm and reintegrate in civilian peaceful life.

In our world of globalization, few societies are untouched by the effects of climate change, ozone depletion, loss of biodiversity and protected areas, rapidly depleting fish stocks in international waters, and a need for renewable energy technologies. Young men and women are playing an active role in protecting and improving the environment, by adopting environmentally friendly practices at home and in the community.<sup>29</sup> Young women are contributing as managers of natural resources in rural economics and this in turn impacts both diagnostics and solutions towards resilience building.

Yet, the increasing politics surrounding key environmental issues has resulted in growing concern that the world may face irreversible ecological crisis in future generations. Supporting young men and women in formal processes and platforms where they may advocate for sustainable utilization of environmental resources will contribute to national efforts to become greener and reduce the environmental carbon footprint while still continuing to grow and deliver goods, services and jobs to their populations.<sup>30</sup>

## ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP – CARING FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

The UNDP Small Grants Programme (SGP) of the Global Environment Facility considers the participation of children and young men and women essential, as they are the bearers of future commitments and efforts towards global environment and sustainable development. Inter-generational knowledge transfer over the long term is important particularly in the context of climate change, where it is the next generation that is likely to suffer the impacts. SGP projects with environmental education and raising awareness components involve children and youth who actively participate in campaigns to protect species and local habitats, tree planting, creating home and community gardens, and renewable energy initiatives that provide solar power.

Low income and high unemployment among youth often pose great challenges to community welfare. SGP projects work with youth to enhance their professional skills and provide alternative livelihoods that contribute to global environmental achievements. For instance, in Lithuania, an SGP project engaged unemployed youth to participate in eco-friendly tourism activities including involving the unemployed youth to provide tricycle services to tourists. In Mauritius, an SGP project involved school children in the cultivation of indigenous/endemic medicinal plants at Britannia Government School. School children, their parents, teachers and all inhabitants interested were involved in converting a neglected plot of land at the school into a greenhouse and a conservation area. Revenues generated by the selling of the seeds and plants were used for the maintenance and further expansion of the conservation area. Children were involved in identification and propagation of medicinal plants, which helped them to develop a love for conservation and prepare for future economic activities related to conservation.

*The GEF SGP was established in 1992 and embodies the essence of sustainable development by “thinking globally and acting locally”. Details of youth-centred SGP projects may be found at <http://sgp.undp.org>*

### III. UNDP YOUTH STRATEGY OUTCOMES

UNDP’s mandate is to partner with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain growth that improves the quality of life for everyone.

To this end, **UNDP advocates for and supports an enabling environment where human rights are respected, protected and promoted - where vulnerable and marginalized groups of young men and women are empowered to develop their**

**full potential to lead dignified lives in societies where their voices are heard and valued.** UNDP continues to advocate the human-rights and gender-based approaches across policy and programme development, and to advocate for the elimination of all forms of discriminatory practices, including gender-based violence.

Through its Strategic Plan for 2014-2017, UNDP will focus on three substantive areas of work, towards which the UNDP Youth Strategy will directly contribute: (1) sustainable development pathways; (2) inclusive and effective democratic governance and (3) resilience.

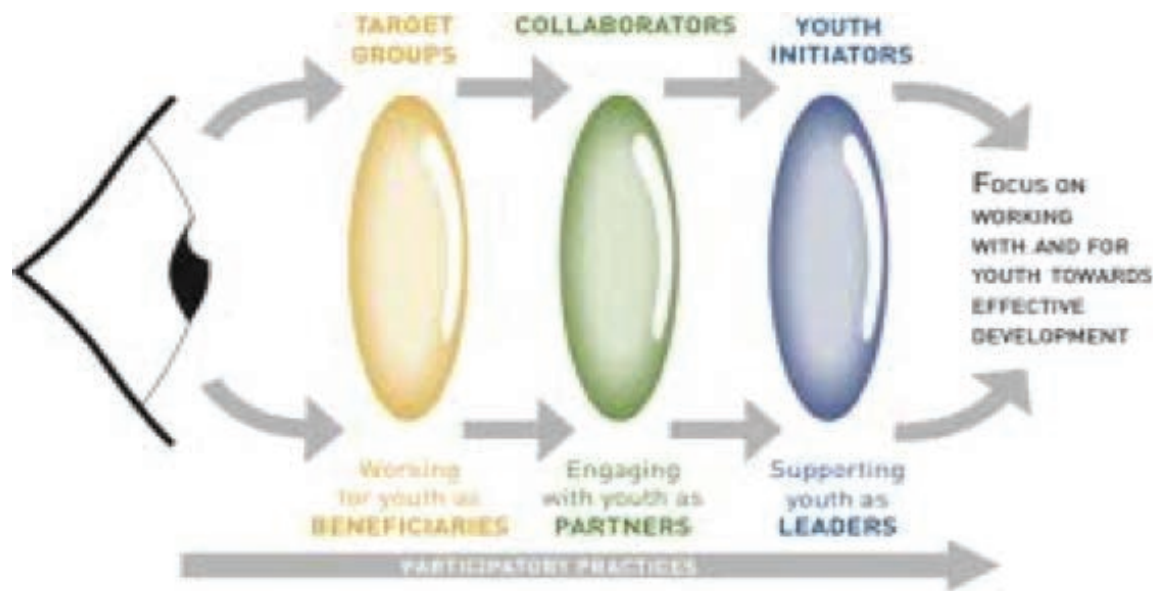


UNDP's Youth Strategy recognizes the intrinsic and internationally recognized human rights standards and principles pursued through the human rights-based approach. The Strategy thus aims for the fulfillment of young women's and men's civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights, which are also central to UNDP's human development framework. UNDP also recognizes that young people have the potential to respond positively to life challenges and be positive agents of transformational change. As illustrated below, a three-lens approach is taken: (a) working for youth as beneficiaries (target groups), (b) engaging with youth as partners (collaborators), and (c) supporting youth as leaders (initiators).<sup>31</sup>

UNDP's added-value to the development landscape and UN system's work on youth lies mainly in its multi-disciplinary approach towards development which considers the

nexus among development challenges in the areas of employment, gender equality, democratic governance, environment, crisis prevention HIV and health, (historically, UNDP's core 'practice areas'), in its policies and programming. Along these lines, the UNDP Youth Strategy aims to empower youth in three priority areas, along four main approaches, and following key principles.

The Youth Strategy Outcomes have been designed to align with the UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017 and to ensure the mainstreaming of youth throughout the implementation of the different outcomes and outputs of the Strategic Plan. Each of the Youth Strategy Outcomes will contribute to one or more outcomes in the UNDP Strategic Plan. Each Youth Strategy Outcome is also expected to contribute specifically to Outcome 4 of the Strategic Plan on gender inequality and promoting women's empowerment.



# UNDP YOUTH STRATEGY

## Contributing to UNDP Strategic Plan (SP) Areas of Work



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS

### Enhanced economic empowerment of youth

Adapting sustainable development pathways to eradicate extreme poverty and reduce socio-economic inequality and exclusion through building productive capacities of youth and an enabling environment for enhanced youth employment, employability and entrepreneurship.

### Civic and political empowerment of youth strengthened

Inclusive and effective engagement and participation of young people and youth organizations in planning and decision-making processes and platforms at local, national, regional and global levels that support sustainable development solutions to poverty, inequality and exclusion.



INCLUSIVE AND EFFECTIVE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

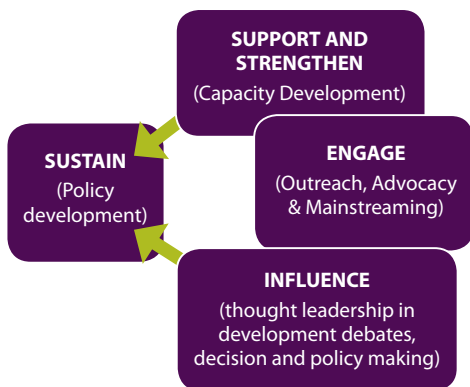


RESILIENCE

### Resilience-building strengthened

Breakthrough approaches for both sustaining and enhancing development gains, particularly in the face of shocks through youth engagement and preparedness in crisis, conflict and post-conflict contexts.

## The "How"



## Guiding Principles in Line with UNDP's Strategic Plan (2014-2017)

- **By, with and for young people:** Engaging with youth as initiators, collaborators, and target groups, UNDP will further integrate youth into UNDP programming and policy development in programme countries, focusing on creating and applying mechanisms for youth empowerment, engagement through accessibility, inclusive participation of young women and men with specific focus on vulnerable and marginalized youth groups.
- **Human rights based:** Recognizing the intrinsic value of the body of economic, political, social, civil and cultural rights established by the United Nations that are pursued through the human rights-based approach, as well as other commitments made through multilateral agreements; programmes and policies will further the realisation of human rights as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments.
- **Reflecting the pivotal significance of gender equality and women's empowerment,** understanding that sustainable human development will not be fully achieved unless women and girls are able to contribute on an equal basis with men and boys to their societies.
- **Sustainable human development:** UNDP's work will be guided by processes that enlarge young people's choices by expanding their capabilities and opportunities in ways that are sustainable from the economic, social and environmental standpoints, benefiting the present without compromising the future.
- **Being guided by national ownership,** whereby national governments hold primary responsibility for their countries' development, drawing upon national development actors and capabilities while coordinating all forms of external assistance, yielding a nationally owned development trajectory.
- **Prospective and innovative:** UNDP and partners will invest in the development of new and innovative tools and approaches, and consider throughout, the potential replicability and scalability of successful experiences
- **Advancing South-South (SS) and triangular cooperation (TC)** for development, thereby promoting exchange of knowledge and resources between governments, organizations and individuals between developing countries (SS) or involving two or more developing countries in collaboration with a third party
- **Optimizing youth volunteerism for development:** volunteerism is a powerful means of engaging people in tackling development challenges, and it can transform the pace and nature of development. It benefits both the individual in terms of real-life skill building, and society at large by strengthening trust and solidarity, and by purposefully creating opportunities for participation.<sup>1</sup>
- **Inter-generational:** the two-way transfer of information and experiences between younger and older generations is essential to promoting sustainability of efforts and preparation for the future. This is particularly needed in contexts where dialogue between traditional community leadership, elders, and young people is weak, as well as in conflict and post-conflict contexts.

<sup>1</sup>The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the UN organization that contributes to peace and development through volunteerism worldwide. UNV embraces volunteerism as universal and inclusive, and recognizes volunteerism in its diversity as well as the values that sustain it: free will, commitment, engagement and solidarity.



The UNDP Youth Strategy development is guided by key principles embedded in internationally agreed outcomes, regional frameworks and conventions and other important documents. The World Programme of Action for Youth (A/RES/50/81 and A/RES/62/126), the Millennium Declaration<sup>32</sup>, the Outcome document of the High Level United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20): the report on “The Future We Want” (A/RES/66/288), the United Nations Volunteers Programme (A/RES/31/131), the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the African Youth Charter, the Ibero-American Convention on Youth Rights, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women have guided the principles for this strategy. It also draws from the UNDP Corporate Strategy on Civil Society and Civic Engagement and the UNDP Strategy of Response to Transformative Change Championed by Youth in the Arab Region. The outcome of the global survey on the Post-2015 Development Agenda: “A million Voices - The World we Want” (September 2013) has also inspired the approach.

### Youth Strategy Outcome 1: Strengthened Sustainable Development Pathways through Enhanced Economic Empowerment of Youth

*(References to SP Outcome 1: Growth and development are inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor; Outcome 4: Faster progress is achieved in reducing gender inequality and promoting women’s empowerment; Outcome 6: Early recovery and rapid return to sustainable development pathways are achieved in post-conflict and post-disaster settings; Outcome 7:*

*Development debates and actions at all levels prioritise poverty, inequality and exclusion, consistent with our engagement principles.)*

Sustainable human development cannot be achieved without decent work and living wages. Income losses and joblessness diminish human and social capital, are associated with poorer health and educational outcomes, and contribute to long-term and intergenerational poverty and inequality, weaker resistance to shocks, and weaker social cohesion.

Considering the above, UNDP, in its development policy and practice concerning youth, sees decent work and livelihood creation as chief determinants of socio-economic empowerment of youth and a contributor to the achievement of sustainable human development. UNDP Youth Strategy Outcome 1 takes a two-pronged approach that works, on one hand, toward increasing **quantity of jobs** for young persons and, on the other hand, toward enhancing **quality of jobs** by increasing their productivity, facilitating movements of young persons to more productive sectors, and increasing access to social protection.

In addition to its incomes and livelihoods dimension, the economic empowerment of youth has other important societal benefits. Jobs give a sense of identity, dignity and respect for societal values and norms. Thus, they increase social cohesion and re-establish trust in political systems and institutions.

To improve the outlook for youth employment in developing countries, UNDP’s programming on youth employment focuses on factors affecting **labour demand** and supply as well as on a **policy environment** conducive to job creation for young persons and improvements in the general quality of employment.

References to SP Outcome 1: **GROWTH and DEVELOPMENT** are inclusive and sustainable, incorporating **PRODUCTIVE CAPACITIES** that **CREATE EMPLOYMENT and LIVELIHOODS** for the poor



Youth demonstration against corruption, Thailand

UNDP’s strategic entry points for promoting economic empowerment of youth include:

a) From the **perspective of demand for labour**:

- Support youth entrepreneurship and enterprise development, including young persons’ access to finance, markets, finance, and other resources that will increase their productive capacities and competitiveness. This will also encompass skills-building, establishing business services or business incubators, or facilitating the access of small producers to existing value chains. Particular attention will be given to young women entrepreneurs and to other disadvantaged youth.<sup>33</sup> (Output 1.1, 4.1)

- Support social enterprises,<sup>34</sup> by building capacities of youth to help communities, solve social problems, increase employment for youth, reduce poverty, and give back dividends to the community. (Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 4.1)
- Work with the private and public sectors to encourage youth employment opportunities through internship and apprenticeship schemes and incentives for private and public employers to hire young people or contract their services. (Outputs 1.1, 1.1, 4.1, 4.3)
- Work with governments in crisis and post-crisis contexts to design, implement, and monitor public employment schemes targeted at youth as a way to secure



livelihoods and reintegration; include young persons in peace-building efforts and reduce the risks that unemployed youth will (re)join armed and/or criminal groups. (Output 6.1)

b) From the **perspective of supply of labour:**

- Work toward increasing employability of young persons through the development of skills, capacities, and knowledge as well as the promotion of non-formal forms of education. Such initiatives will seek to support the training of low-skilled and disadvantaged youth in an effort to upgrade their skills so that they might be better able to find work in more productive sectors, including in the green economy. (Outputs 1.1, 4.1, 4.3)
- Promote internship, apprenticeship, and volunteering schemes in support of young persons' transition from school to work or their reintegration into the labour market after long-term unemployment spells and as means to the acquisition of skills. (Output 1.1)
- Address skills mismatch through support for job centres and job market information systems. Efforts will also be directed at greater coordination among businesses, policy makers, and education and vocational training bodies in designing curricula based on labour market assessments and forecasts. Other efforts will be directed at strengthening labour information systems and making job market data easily available to youth. (Outputs 1.1, 4.3).

c) From the **perspective of the policy environment:**

- Support the development and implementation of institutional and policy frameworks conducive to youth employment and entrepreneurship. Specific attention will be directed at structural

barriers that young women and other disadvantaged youth groups face in the labour market. (Outputs 1.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3)

- Continue to provide policy support for the development of national strategies that prioritize the generation of youth employment, particularly for women and disadvantaged groups and that consider youth-sensitive budgeting. (Outputs 1.1, 4.3, 7.3)
- Promote investment in sectors with the potential for growth in youth employment, such as the service sector (e.g., in tourism or ICT-based services); include measures to support the development of regional and local economic development agencies that incorporate youth-specific initiatives. (Output 1.1)

To ensure a cohesive, comprehensive approach to the economic empowerment of youth, UNDP will collaborate to the extent possible with ILO and other UN agencies and partners working on youth issues by leveraging on the expertise of each agency.



Volunteers inspire peers on social innovation and volunteerism for MDG achievement, Uzbekistan

## YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

### Regional Programme for Social Cohesion and Youth Employment for Sub Saharan Africa (YERP)

Youth employment and social cohesion are key for development to be sustainable. Together with its partners, UNDP has been engaged in developing holistic approaches to youth employment such as through the implementation of YERP. The aim of this regional initiative has been to make employment central to economic growth policies by raising the demand for labour; to support the provision of relevant information on labour markets to influence legislation; to promote education and vocational training; to foster enterprise and job creation; and to facilitate strategies for social cohesion and decent work.

Key results achieved include:

- Strategic partnerships established with the African Union and ECOWAS in supporting the harmonization of legal frameworks and strategies that can facilitate regional integration, as well as guarantee linkages between job creation, food security, peace and inclusive development
- In Sierra Leone: a National Youth Commission created, capacitated and operational; 400 young farmers trained in agricultural business development, 300 youth trained in life skills (critical thinking, conflict management, leadership, etc.)
- In Senegal: capacities strengthened within the Ministry of Youth, and two institutions promoting youth employment (Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi des Jeunes, Fonds National pour la Promotion de la Jeunesse) for results based management and implementation of youth employment programmes
- Training provided to over 125 officials of statistical and employment institutions to strengthen the national Labour Market Information System in Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea and Guinea Bissau
- The value chain approach now institutionalized as a strategy for creating youth employment under the on-going youth employment programme in Kenya, with strong demonstrated commitment from the government in the context of 'green job' promotion and procurement of 128 greenhouses to increase youth employability.

### Youth-In Project – English and Dutch Caribbean project

Youth-IN has successfully conducted entrepreneurship training with over 1700 youth through business labs and online seminars. Regional and national partners work with Youth-In to facilitate training. e.g. through Youth-IN funding, the CARICOM Secretariat has been piloting the Creativity for Employment and Business Opportunity (CEBO) initiative (which aims to motivate entrepreneurial action amongst youth) in Jamaica, Belize, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Dominica and Bahamas. Beyond that Youth-IN hosted the Caribbean Innovation Challenge, a competition and business start-up accelerator for CARICOM; Twenty new entrepreneurs with selected. The challenge incorporated an Eco-Challenge" to encourage youth enterprise in environmental conservation and protection. Now Youth-IN is building a CIC support system and working with YABT have launched a mapping exercise that will assess current entrepreneurial programmes throughout CARICOM and offer an evidence-based platform for national interventions.





## Youth Strategy Outcome 2: Civic Engagement and Political Empowerment of Youth Strengthened

*(References to SP Outcome 2: Citizen expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance; Outcome 3: Countries have strengthened institutions to progressively deliver universal access to basic services, Outcome 4: Faster progress is achieved in reducing gender inequality and promoting women's empowerment; and Outcome 7: Development debates and actions at all levels prioritise poverty, inequality and exclusion, consistent with our engagement principles).*

Youth Strategy Outcome 2 recognizes the need to support young men and women in understanding their rights and the channels through which they may exercise their civil and political rights and contribute to decision making processes that impact their lives.

Strategic entry points for promoting civic and political empowerment of youth:

(a) Strengthen youth political participation in formal political processes, platforms, and institutions (elections, constitutional processes, political parties, parliaments) to ensure that more young people are positioned to exercise spheres of influence in formal decision and policy making contexts.

- At the local government level, youth advisory boards or other institutional forms are outlets for youth to express views on local agendas; their perspectives can then be incorporated in community-based development planning. (Output 2.4, 3.2)
- At the national level, participation in decision-making bodies could come

through the creation of a permanent national youth parliament/council and by ensuring the adequate presence of youth representatives in national youth policy coordination and monitoring bodies comprising government and other stakeholders<sup>35</sup>. Youth caucuses in parliament and youth branches in political parties are also important vehicles to channel youth collective action within and across political parties (Outputs 2.1, 2.4, 4.3, 4.4)

- At the global level, young people should continue to participate in UN negotiations through an official system such as the Major Group system set out in Agenda 21 to ensure that young people are able to contribute constructively, and have a voice in the decision making consultations as they are the implementing generation. (Output 7.1)
  - Identify cultural, societal, institutional bottlenecks that hamper youth participation from formal decision making platforms and explore approaches toward mitigating these bottlenecks (Outputs 2.1, 2.3 4.3, 4.4)
- (b) Promote civic awareness and engagement through rights education, media and increased integration of volunteerism into programming as a means to facilitate more inclusive participation of youth. This includes deepening an understanding of the disposition of youth toward civic engagement and youth activism, the degrees of engagement through informal and formal political structures, and the reasons why young people are not transitioning from civic engagement to engagement in formal politics and political structures. (Output 2.4)
- (c) Promote youth access to and preparedness for civil service (Outputs 2.1, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4)

References  
to SP Outcome 2:  
CITIZEN EXPECTATIONS  
for voice, development,  
the **RULE OF  
LAW** and  
accountability ARE MET  
BY STRONGER SYSTEMS  
of democratic governance



Youth21 breakout session

- (d) Support youth initiatives aimed at government transparency and accountability, with focus on mitigating sectoral corruption, social audits and enhancing government accountability for delivery of public services (Outputs 2.2, 2.4)
- (e) Support awareness and promotion of human rights of youth, implementation of existing human rights instruments and promotion of access to information. (Output 2.3, 4.3)
- (f) Better understand capacities of stakeholders (e.g. policy makers, academia, civil society organizations, media and private sector) to establish inclusive policies and mechanisms that support civic engagement of young people. (Output 2.4)
- (g) Support legal reform to fight discrimination against marginalized segments of the population, promote access to justice and security, as well as support a youth-friendly legal framework that embraces engagement of youth participation in

politics and decision-making. UNDP shall work with national government and parliaments, civil society organizations and other electoral assistance providers to review and discuss legal frameworks on youth and for youth participation, identify and address context-specific legal barriers to youth participation (e.g. barriers to registration and financing of youth-led organizations). (Outputs 2.4, 2.6, 3.4, 3.5, 4.2, 4.4)

- (h) Support strengthening of governance structures of youth organizations and networks of youth organizations at the grassroots level (Output 2.4)
- (i) Explore the role of social media and ICT in enabling access to information and fostering political participation, in particular those voices of historically marginalized youth.<sup>36</sup> Examine how to mitigate the 'digital divide' and promote more inclusive approaches towards information dissemination, sharing and networking. (Output 2.4)
- (j) With regard to national youth policy, UNDP shall support processes for review or implementation of youth policies; advocate for youth sensitive budgeting to accompany policy implementation; continue to support the development of evidence-based instruments such as youth political participation indexes and National Human Development Reports on Youth to inform youth policy (Outputs 2.4, 4.3, 7.3)
- (k) Given advances in ICT and the rise of 'Big Data', UNDP will also explore innovative technologies and approaches for engaging youth in data collection and analysis, decision making, and monitoring of public policies and youth initiatives.<sup>37</sup> (Output 7.6)



## TOOLS FOR INFORMING YOUTH POLICY

Youth analytics as facilitated through national youth reports, youth inclusiveness assessment mechanisms for example, may serve as evidence-based tools to inform youth policy development. National Human Development Reports on Youth may be used as an instrument for advocacy as well as policy development, as the production process engages all relevant stakeholders in the country as well as the target group.<sup>38</sup>

The first *Human Development Report* in 1990 opened with the simply stated premise that has guided all subsequent Reports: “People are the real wealth of a nation.” By backing up this assertion with an abundance of empirical data and a new way of thinking about and measuring development, the *Human Development Report* has had a profound impact on policies around the world. Since 1998, UNDP has contributed to the development of **National Human Development Reports (NHDRs) focusing on youth**. So far, more than 20 national reports have been developed -among the latest in Egypt, Somalia, Qatar, Guatemala, and Nicaragua- as well as a sub-regional report covering the Caribbean and the South Cone in Latin America

Youth NHDRs are based on participatory processes, they aim to involve youth organizations and are informed by target group surveys, consultations or focus group discussions. They provide in-depth analysis of the situation of youth in the country as well as existing barriers and opportunities, providing guidance to UNDP programmes as well as youth policy development.

Several NHDRs have been pioneering youth indices with the objective to measure the progress of youth development. An index can be used as benchmark to monitor the impact of programme interventions on youth well-being, empowerment or the variety of barriers they are facing – depending on its construction. An index is also a powerful communications tool that can raise awareness of issues and generate a debate within a country or region.

In its 2010 HDR, Egypt proposes a Youth Well-being Index, which measures various dimensions of progress, such as education, employment, poverty, security, gender aspects, participation, ICT access etc.<sup>39</sup> The Kenya HDR 2009 constructed a Youth Development Index, based on the Human Development index but adjusted to its definition of youth.<sup>40</sup> The 2012 Somalia HDR suggests a Youth Frustration Index, which includes social aspects as lack of family support, drug abuse or feelings of humiliation, gathering this data for the first time through a survey.<sup>41</sup> Challenges in disaggregating data on youth according to sexes or age groups maintain. However, NHDRs have been successful in innovating human development measures. Developing and establishing a youth index that is usable by National Statistics Offices and for monitoring of programme progress can be one objective of future youth NHDRs and a starting point for the set-up of youth programmes.<sup>42</sup>

UNDP can seek partnerships with CSOs, educational institutions and media to encourage continuous youth participation and civic education in schools and universities; design training programmes as incubators for new projects; support youth-led community

development and volunteering organizations; provide flexible support to innovative, small-scale youth projects; provides capacity building for young members of political parties in a multi-partisan setting. During the electoral period, UNDP can partner with

electoral management bodies and CSOs to ensure youth involvement in all phases of voter education campaigns and include youth as election observers. During the post-electoral period, UNDP can encourage parliaments, governments and advocacy-oriented CSOs to make the voices of youth heard in parliament and government, facilitate youth-led national youth councils and/or parliaments, promote youth based organizations, invite youth groups to visit national parliaments, initiate internship schemes for students in parliaments, initiate and support youth councils at the local level, train and support young members of parliament.

### Youth Strategy Outcome 3: Resilience-building strengthened

*(References to SP Outcome 2: Citizen expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance; Outcome 4: Faster progress is achieved in reducing gender inequality and promoting women's empowerment; Outcome 5: Countries are able to reduce the likelihood of conflict and lower the risk of natural disasters, including from climate change; and Outcome 6: Early recovery and rapid return to sustainable development pathways are achieved in post-conflict and post-disaster settings.*

Recognizing that early recovery and a return to sustainable development in post-conflict and post-disaster settings should start as early as possible, entry points for mobilizing and empowering youth as positive agents of change include:

(a) In crisis affected settings, it is essential to support livelihoods stabilization of young men and women as early on as possible as an important building block for resilience and support social cohesion. Critical

entry points include emergency employment and entrepreneurship (see also Youth Strategy Outcome 1) and recovery of critical livelihoods assets, including skills development and access to finance. These are also important for conflict prevention (i.e. reducing risks of youth (re) joining armed or criminal groups, through providing them with alternative/ diversified livelihoods opportunities). Positive engagement from youth through engagement in recovery efforts (e.g. rehabilitation of social and socio-economic community infrastructure) is also essential to support a more positive image of youth at risk in reintegration efforts. (Outputs 6.1, 6.2, 6.4)

(b) Mobilization of youth in disaster preparedness, education, and post disaster efforts that focus on creation of emergency employment, community infrastructure rehabilitation and local governance. It is essential that as a part of relief and recovery work, development partners adequately identify local capacities, engage with them and build on them, recognizing the contributions and potential of young people in emergency response, community renewal, reconstruction and development, particularly in environmentally vulnerable locations. Young women as managers of natural resources in rural economies may impact diagnostics and solutions toward building resilience. Climate change is a threat to development, the stability of countries and economies, and the health of the planet. Extreme weather has a cost of trillions of dollars and endangering lives and livelihoods all around the world. As adaptation and mitigation are the central approaches in the international climate change process, UNDP will support adaptation and mitigation actions and enhance effective participation of youth in climate change policy decision-making processes,



Students in solidarity at NEST+m school in New York

bringing innovative perspectives to this pressing global issue. (Outputs 5.2, 5.4, 6.1)

(c) Mobilization of youth to engage in peace-building, lead non-violent transitions, and use new technologies to mobilize communities and society to bring about change. Young people have demonstrated the potential to build bridges across communities, working together, helping to manage conflict and promote peace. Young people are vital stakeholders in conflict and in peace-building, and can be agents of change and provide a foundation for rebuilding lives and communities, contributing to a more just and peaceful society. Transforming conflict

into a constructive dialogue and positive outcome involves empowering people or groups to gain new awareness and understanding of goals, options, skills, resources and channels of decision-making, which makes it possible for them to use these new insights in mediation and negotiations.<sup>43</sup> UNDP will support initiatives that work with youth to form their visions for their countries, strengthening capacities of youth for peace-building through focused skills-based training and soft skills, training that will enable youth to make positive contributions to minimize factors that contribute to violence, increase global security, and prevent further armed conflict. (Outputs 5.5, 5.5, 5.6, 6.4)

...UNDP  
will **SUPPORT**  
through CAPACITY  
DEVELOPMENT,  
**ENGAGE**  
through advocacy and  
MAINSTREAMING,  
**INFLUENCE**  
through thought  
LEADERSHIP and  
**SUSTAIN**  
through SUPPORT to  
national policy  
DEVELOPMENT  
and IMPLEMENTATION.

- d) State-building is not synonymous with peace building but represents an integral part of it. State-building interventions seek to develop functioning and self-sustaining state structures that re-establish the social contract between the state and citizens, and promote state legitimacy.<sup>44</sup> State building is intimately connected to the political processes through which social/political relations and power relationships between holders of state power and organized groups in society are negotiated and managed.<sup>45</sup> It is here that UNDP shall support youth and youth organisations to play a pivotal role in helping to re-establish relationships, including a renewed social contract between the state and its citizens, addressing the root causes of violence, exclusion, conflict in order to avoid recurrence. (Outputs 2.1, 2.3, 5.6, 5.6, 6.2)
- e) Analyze and support gender-sensitive resilience and violence reduction strategies –in particular in conflict, post conflict, militarization and humanitarian crisis contexts- involving the transformation of societal norms and changes in sexuality patterns, which result in violence including gender-based violence, sexual violence, violent assertion of male roles and masculinity. (Outputs 4.2, 4.3, 4.3, 6.4)

While the Youth Strategy offers strategic entry points as outlined above for UNDP’s work in each of the three strategy outcome areas, the strategy recognizes the distinct needs and priorities within each region. Implementation of the strategy at the regional level will be informed through the Annual Business Plans for each Regional Programme<sup>46</sup>. Implementation of the strategy at the country level will be informed through the Country Programme Document and Country Programme Action Plan.

#### IV. A FOUR-PRONGED APPROACH

In working towards the afore-mentioned outcomes, UNDP will **SUPPORT** through capacity development, **ENGAGE** through advocacy and mainstreaming, **INFLUENCE** through thought leadership and **SUSTAIN** through support to national policy development and implementation.

#### SUPPORTING capacity development

Capacity development of young people and youth organizations to equip them to effectively engage in local and national development processes, as promoters of social accountability and innovative development solutions, will be essential. When working with youth organizations, the aim of UNDP interventions will be to support capacity assessments, strengthen organizational capacities for advocacy and networking, and develop institutional capacities (e.g. decision-making processes; degree of participation, knowledge and transparency, accountability, leadership, organizational linkages and coordination, conflict management capacity).

The next tier of capacity development of young people and youth organizations would focus on **leadership development**, involving leadership training, including training in negotiations, mediation and advocacy. It will be essential to promote South-North and South-South exchange of youth leadership practices through inter alia, electronic platforms, fora, innovative and leadership camps, or young leader exchange programmes. Convening local, national, regional and international youth fora on a diversity of development issues will also strengthen youth leadership skills and contribute to the development of a new cadre of young leaders. Central to this initiative will be the



participation of young people from marginalized communities with specific attention paid to gender equality.

Through the process of engaging youth and youth organizations in leadership development, UNDP will develop an evidence-informed understanding of the correlation between youth leadership, participation in policy and programme development and participation in local, national, regional and global decision-making bodies, and *actual* sphere of influence.

When working with youth and youth groups in the context of capacity and leadership development, UNDP will continue to work closely with local and national governments

and civil society groups in order to develop and nurture the appropriate platforms for young men and women to have the 'space' for expression, to be heard and to have the opportunity to meaningfully contribute. An enabling environment is critical as the nature of the dynamics and experiences among youth organisations, civil society organizations and government is diverse, depending largely on the nature of the state and governance characteristics. In this regard, UNDP shall support capacity strengthening within governments -including but not limited to ministries of youth and higher councils of youth- in addition to decentralized bodies that support youth engagement and participation. Youth peer-to-peer training will be strongly encouraged.

## GROOMING YOUNG LEADERS

### Asia

Recognizing young people as key stakeholders in the national and global development agenda, the UNDP Asia-Pacific Regional Centre in Bangkok implemented the **Asia Young Leaders for Governance (AYLG)** initiative over the period 2005-2009. The project strategy was based on creating a critical mass of leadership for good governance in the region by investing in key change makers with a sphere of influence on governance outcomes. The training courses involved young leaders working in government or in areas of leadership in good governance and were between the ages of 25 – 35 years. The project partnered with LEAD international, an international NGO, to produce a set of customized leadership resource kits, hold 5 national and 2 sub-national leadership courses, train 29 leadership trainers and produce 187 leadership fellows trained in leadership skills. The programme was largely successful with stakeholders and beneficiaries replicating many of the techniques and adapting the approaches in their own countries in local languages.

### Latin America

The New Youth Leaderships initiative has been implemented by the Spain-UNDP Trust Fund and RBLAC since 2009, with the objective of contributing to strengthening youth political and social leadership of Indigenous People (Afro-descendants were also included at a later stage) and their organizations.

The New Youth Leaderships initiative organized 9 Seminars (7 at the national level and 2 Dialogues at the regional level, of those 5 at a national level and one regional were focused on Indigenous People) that trained 661 young indigenous leaders from 5 countries (Guatemala, Mexico, Ecuador, Paraguay, and Colombia).

**ENGAGING through outreach, advocacy and mainstreaming of youth issues in all spheres of development planning**

In countries or contexts where systems/networks for youth information exchange and dissemination do not exist or are weak, investment in developing and implementing such mechanisms in collaboration with state and non-state actors, should be a priority. Partnerships will aim to devise appropriate mediums and channels of communication and information dissemination that will garner, maintain and develop youth interest and participation in sustainable human development planning and solutions. Youth information mechanisms shall take into consideration the diversity of young people and their access to communication tools, information technology and social media. Special consideration shall be given to digitally excluded youth groups including young people living in rural areas, young people in areas of conflict, young people

with disabilities and illiterate young people. Identification of Youth Goodwill Ambassadors who are prominent figures in the national, regional or global context may support this effort to engage those without access to ICT, particularly if information may be channelled through sports, music, art or culture.

Mainstreaming of youth perspectives and youth-related issues in development planning processes will entail working with a range of government and non-government actors, and other actors in the development field. Identifying entry points for advocating and integrating youth into policymaking, budgeting and implementation processes at national, sector and sub-national levels, is envisaged as a multi-year, multi-stakeholder process aimed to address and change in many cases, the very nature of a country's decision-making norms and practices. UNDP will work with practitioners and champions of youth mainstreaming in development planning, to support engagement of young men and women in planning and design, implementation, measurement and engagement alongside governments on policy and programming that contribute to sustainable human development planning, solutions, and innovation.

UNDP has the unique advantage of infusing youth voices and ensuring inclusion of youth issues within the development priority areas of poverty reduction, democratic governance, crisis and recovery, environment and energy, health and HIV and women's empowerment as a model for effective youth engagement. Within the Post-2015 paradigm, UNDP will contribute to youth mainstreaming in all relevant areas, participation in national consultations and in global conversations, but also in the subsequent phases, by providing evidence and insight on the development of relevant indicators and targets on youth.



Juventud con voz





## REGIONAL COOPERATION IN YOUTH ADVOCACY IN ASIA

The N'Peace Network (UNDP, Search for Common Ground, and Institute for Inclusive Security) is facilitated by the UNDP Asia Pacific Regional Centre and recognizes the leadership of women in conflict prevention, dispute resolution, reconstruction and peace. The N'Peace Awards initiative includes a category for emerging peace champions, targeting young women between 25-35 years old. Young women who receive the award and become part of the N'Peace network get opportunities to present and highlight their work at the regional level and access to training, forums and advocacy opportunities. The role of the regional office is to organise trainings and events, facilitate knowledge-sharing, and provide advocacy opportunities at the regional level. Regional governmental forums such as ASEAN and SAARC are potential spaces for UNDP to advocate for more youth involvement and for integrating youth issues into policy dialogues.

Mainstreaming youth voices in development policy and programming will be complemented by establishment of 'youth-sensitive' organizational mechanisms and structures within UNDP at the global, regional and national levels, including the formation of youth technical advisory board(s); formation of a youth engagement task team to oversee the degree of youth inclusivity in organizational planning processes; the development of a communications and outreach strategy for youth mainstreaming; and reform of the existing UNDP internship programme and professional entry-level recruitment requirements to enable contributions of young men and women in all their diversity and particularly from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds.

Advocacy for the empowerment and engagement of young men and women in development processes shall take various forms including:

- Development, facilitation and advocacy of a global platform on knowledge exchange to facilitate North-South, South-South, South-North and triangular exchanges, as well as public-private partnerships.
- Mainstreaming and advocacy, in partnership with the UN Inter-Agency Network on

Youth Development, and specifically, the implementation, monitoring and reporting and communication on the UN System Wide Action on Youth (Youth-SWAP). In collaboration with partner UN agencies and the UN Special Envoy on Youth, UNDP shall advocate for more inclusive policies and mechanisms at the multiple levels where it operates and will identify greater synergies for heightened collaboration and visibility of joint programming within the UN system.

- Mainstreaming and advocacy in cooperation with governments- UNDP will continue to contribute to strengthening youth participation in governance through legislative reviews, youth advisory councils, production of and support to youth sensitive reporting, advocacy for issues of high interest of young men and women, and policy-makers including sustainability and climate change, the role of youth as active agents for social transformation, employability and entrepreneurship, ICT for youth gender sensitive services (use of cell-phones for information, medical and justice related services). UNDP's solid positioning vis-à-vis governments should be leveraged with regard to youth

policy advocacy or increased participation and representation of young people in decision-making processes.

- Mainstreaming and advocacy in cooperation with CSOs and state support to youth-led organisations –informed by youth organisations’ assessment, contribute to their capacity building in advocacy for youth issues at the local and national levels. Specific approaches to youth advocacy skills training are needed in contexts of conflict and post-conflict.
- As social media and ICTs have proven to be effective tools for advocacy and constituency building<sup>47</sup> - reaching out to young men and women through innovative campaigns and media will be essential in order to advocate for youth and youth-relevant issues.

The networks created among young men and people, institutions, civil society groups, media, private sector, sister UN agencies, etc. will be a strong impetus for generating new ideas and taking ideas forward into action.

## Developing and exercising spheres of INFLUENCE

As the MDG framework comes to a close in 2015, thought leadership on completion of the MDGs and in the advent of the post-2015 agenda and sustainable development goals is critical. Youth have a critical role to play in participating in, leading and influencing development debates and policy discussions where stakeholders will examine lessons learned from the MDG framework, and incubate forward looking development solutions that may optimally address the nexus of complex challenges facing our world. Emphasis will be made to bring in youth who have historically not been brought into such development debates and to support linkages among youth, youth organizations and networks in order to strengthen collective impact on the dynamics of public policies. UNDP will support today’s and tomorrow’s youth leaders in defining and maximizing space for thought leadership on data collection, measurement and analytical systems that will be necessary to be put in place to monitor the progress of the post-2015 agenda.

### YOUTH AND COUNTRIES IN TRANSITION

#### LIBYA: MONITORING TRANSITION AND REPORTING ON GOVERNANCE

Young men and women have a significant role in supporting governance in transition countries.

At a time when Libya is redefining its social contract, and revising core social and economic policies, reliable data is critical to informed decision-making, including on youth priorities. Young people’s voices need to be reflected, as recognized by the Libyan Transitional Government, which has made youth empowerment a top priority. The project provides training to youth-led advocacy organizations on governance assessments. It will assist the development of an indicator framework on degrees of youth participation and the mainstreaming of youth issues in political processes —e.g. debates in the National Transitional Council, national reconciliation efforts, the negotiations on the Constitution and political party development. Youth groups learn to collect data under the framework, and disseminate it to policy-makers and the general public. The project is positioned to catalyse a Libyan Youth Observatory, a concept that has not previously existed in the country.



## IDENTIFYING GOOD PRACTICES IN YOUTH POLICIES

In Ibero-America, 25 percent of the aggregate population is between 15 and 29, youth unemployment has created significant challenges, and the basic needs of 25 percent of Latin American youth are still not met. Responses to youth-related issues have become essential.

UNDP, in cooperation with the Organisation of Ibero-American Youth (OIJ), UNFPA, ECLAC and UNESCO, launched at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government in November 2012, an innovative publication compiling 20 examples of public policies targeting and involving the most marginalized youth in Latin America and the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal. This represents an attempt to recognise all the governmental processes and its results with regards to youth development in the Ibero-American context. This was complemented by a regional survey for further policy analysis on youth. Those initiatives, designed and implemented by governments, NGOs or the private sector, propose interesting alternatives for youth development, with great potential for replicability. Many sectors/areas are included, such as entrepreneurship, microcredit, capacity building, scholarship mechanisms, health, youth information centers, etc.

The publication can be accessed at:

[http://www.oij.org/file\\_upload/publicationsItems/document/20121114001302\\_13.pdf](http://www.oij.org/file_upload/publicationsItems/document/20121114001302_13.pdf)

### **SUSTAINING through support to national youth policy development and implementation**

Every country needs effective strategies to protect young men and women from exploitation and neglect, and to support their informed and active participation in all spheres of society. Towards this end, many countries have sought to develop a long-term, consensus-based, integrated and cross-sectoral youth policy. National youth policy strategies that are effective and beneficial for youth are those that empower young people to actively influence and shape the political agenda. A progressive national youth policy obliges traditional decision-makers to work not only for young people, but with them and let their experiences inform the development of appropriate interventions and services. A national youth policy will remain purely symbolic unless it is a policy of the State, reflects an integrated, cross-sectoral and coherent approach, is

interdisciplinary, inter-ministerial and multi-departmental, sets out concrete priority areas of policy intervention as the basis for the development of specific projects, etc.<sup>48</sup> Youth-sensitive budgeting is also a critical element in the context of government fiscal planning and policy implementation. Without a coherent national policy framework, youth programmes still operate mainly in discrete sectors.

Support to policy development involves influencing legal frameworks for the implementation of policy, reviewing institutional set-up and helping to ensure that financial, human and knowledge resources are mobilized for its implementation.

UNDP is well positioned to facilitate dialogue with governments and civil society organisations and other non-state actors with regards to youth participation in decision-making and youth policy development which would entail for example, support to

the establishment of youth data baselines where such baselines do not exist, the review of legal frameworks (enabling environment), capacity development of civil servants and youth leaders in youth policy development; gathering and supporting exchange of good practices at country and regional levels; supporting the development of national youth policy reports as a basis for youth policy development as well as youth policy review; supporting assessments of existing youth policies and their implementation. Not all countries have sufficient infrastructure to support the development, implementation and reviewing of national youth policies. It will be essential to support structures at different levels including local youth councils, municipal and provincial youth councils, a national youth council and government agencies focused on youth.

It will be equally important to analyze where national youth policies stand, why some have been implemented and why others have not, and how young people can play a role in partnership with governments and other stakeholders in implementing existing policies.

## V. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

It is often challenging to evaluate and monitor policies and programmes in relation to youth policy strategies, considering inadequate frameworks, mechanisms or tools for monitoring and/or evaluation and the scarcity of resources dedicated to such exercises. It is therefore fundamental to develop indicators for youth development –in particular, sex and age disaggregated data (SADD). These indicators should ideally cascade up and down connecting the UNDP Youth Strategy to relevant youth policy and programming/project frameworks, through

which results can be leveraged at country, regional and global levels. The implementation of UNDP's Strategic Plan, Country Programmes, Regional Programmes and Global programme together with their monitoring and evaluation frameworks with an extensive indicator base provides an organizational wide framework to coherently monitor and measure the specific youth policy, and policies that have components or different strategies for young people. Several composite indexes are to be developed and used as well as specific indicators focusing for instance on youth participation in decision-making, gender equality indicators, outreach to specific groups of young men and women such as youth in conflict and post-conflict contexts, perceptions and analyses by the beneficiaries of youth services. Development of statistical systems is a UNDP corporate priority with particular emphasis on making available SADD. This would help measure not only how the UNDP Youth Strategy manifests in specific action but also the ensuing results in countries. The respective country UNDAFs and their inclusion of youth programming and associated monitoring tools by UNDP and UN sister agencies will also provide data for measurement and aid monitoring. UNDP will support an environment of greater openness and accessibility of data on development progress against key indicators, and will encourage development partners to support youth to more constructively engage with decision makers.

Traditional approaches to M&E which include quarterly reviews to assess whether pre-defined milestones are 'on track', important as they are, may no longer be sufficient or too slow to be able to influence decision-making in time. Given the rise and accessibility of ICT, explosion of "Big Data" in real time and greater accountability demanded by civil society and the public, particularly young



people themselves, it will be important to triangulate and validate results through both conventional M&E techniques as well as emerging and innovative methodologies, including for example, crowd-sourcing, participatory statistics, mobile data collection, and micro-narratives, among others<sup>49</sup>.

## VI. FORGING SUSTAINABLE AND INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS TO DELIVER

Progress towards youth empowerment depends heavily on how the organization will be able to mobilise resources and on how development partners, the UN system, regional and international organisations, government, civil society, youth organizations, non-government organizations, the media and the private sector come together to align their activities related to youth and development and mainstream youth perspectives into policy and programmes.

### Partnering with civil society and youth organisations

UNDP shall proactively engage with **youth experts and practitioners, youth organisations, civil society organisations working with young people, and expert groups on youth** in order to engage with and reach out to young people. Support to and partnership with youth organisations will aim to facilitate young peoples' empowerment and action in their areas of interest, as well as their representation and participation in youth policy-making and programming processes at all levels; and will aim to strengthen youth advocacy efforts through skills building and capacity development. UNDP shall seek expanded partnerships with global, regional and **national youth research groups and youth associations** in order to support as



The Inter-generational approach

well as be informed by recent knowledge development in the field of youth. UNDP will also involve youth researchers in consultative processes with regards to youth programming and results measurement in order to strengthen evidence-based approaches to policy and practice. As reflected earlier in the strategy, UNDP's approach towards young men and women includes working for youth as beneficiaries (target groups to be reached through social media, programme effectiveness, youth information mechanisms and other outreach mechanisms), engaging with youth as partners (collaborators) and supporting youth as leaders (initiators, ambassadors, young men and women taking action on behalf of UNDP).



Youth-at-risk training

### **Working with governments at national and sub-national levels**

As referenced above on several occasions, UNDP shall continue to work closely with **governments** as it pertains to all levels of youth empowerment, from capacity development of the youth sector, to advocacy and policy development and implementation. While doing so, UNDP will consider the unique national and local contexts and adapt innovative approaches to support meaningful youth interventions and work with governments to recognize and engage with

and better address the needs of vulnerable groups and youth at risk. UNDP shall advocate for the youth agenda in all sectors of the government in order to raise awareness across all government bodies, facilitate coordination mechanisms and harmonization of youth policies and help to ensure that government initiatives as they pertain to youth do not run against each other.<sup>50</sup> Support to integration of youth policies in national development plans for instance will also be a priority as it would help to ensure that youth policy implementation will actually be supported by a corresponding budget.



It will also be essential that UNDP partners with regional institutions and inter-governmental processes ensure alignment and complementarity with existing initiatives and strategic approaches.

### Coordination within the UN system

Within the UN system, as an active member of the **United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth and Development (IANYD)**, UNDP collaborates with members of the network to support the three-pronged action plan of the United Nations Secretary General on toward youth development, including:

- (1) Contributing to the implementation of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy's Youth's Action Plan, and strengthening the triangular partnership among the UN, governments, and the youth community to advance youth development.
- (2) Contributing to the implementation and monitoring of and communication about the first UN System Wide Action Plan on Youth endorsed by the UN CEB in 2013 (Youth-SWAP).

- (3) The establishment of a UNV trust fund<sup>51</sup> for the promotion of youth volunteerism throughout UN policy and programming initiatives. Here, UNDP will collaborate closely with UNV to further initiatives that support capacity and skill building of young volunteers and professionals, particularly in the transition of youth from school to work,<sup>52</sup> that seek to strengthen the capacity of governments to develop their own national and regional youth volunteer schemes, that contribute to peace and development of society.

### Partnerships within the development community

UNDP shall develop partnerships with **multilateral, international and regional organisations and development partners** in order to advocate on youth development issues, and promote cooperation with regard to youth mainstreaming and advocacy, policy development, technical and programmatic partnerships, youth research and information knowledge management, and impact assessment. UNDP shall proactively seek new partnerships with **philanthropic institutions,**



## UNDP AND UNV WORKING TOGETHER IN WEST AFRICA

Following technical and financial support provided by UNV and UNDP to governments and civil society organizations for the establishment of national youth volunteer schemes, five countries –Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Mali, Mozambique and Togo- now have a law on volunteerism and functional institutions that support the promotion of youth volunteerism.

The adopted laws on volunteerism contribute to an enabling environment for:

- youth development in terms of gaining and developing skills that equip youth for the employment market and for personal growth
- youth contribution to development in terms of contributing for example, to the achievement of the MDGs.



**foundations** and the **private sector** along the principles of corporate social responsibility. As young men and women face various forms of discrimination in the job market, in order to support equal opportunities for young men and women seeking jobs, partnerships developed with the private sector will in particular advocate for non-discriminatory practices and support to organizational culture changes in society and within sectors.

Addressing the mis-match between market labour needs and supply must be achieved through greater coordination among businesses, policy makers, academic institutions and vocational training bodies in designing curriculum, fostering apprenticeships,

and developing programmes that reinforce emphasis on education, skill-building which will support youth's capabilities and adaptability in the long-term.

Think-tanks and research institutions will be brought in to support SADD and other comparative data collection, research and analysis, engender in-depth research, and support knowledge generation.

These partnerships will inform UNDP's policies and programming, improve our outreach and strengthen the impact and sustainability of our action on youth-related issues and more broadly to promote sustainable human development.







## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> The term “youth” encompasses young women and men at large, youth networks, youth-serving/based/led organizations.
- <sup>2</sup> <https://undp.unteamworks.org/undp4youth>
- <sup>3</sup> <http://www.restlessdevelopment.org/who-we-are>
- <sup>4</sup> Southern Innovator, UNDP, Spring 2012
- <sup>5</sup> ILO. Global Employment Trends 2013.
- <sup>6</sup> <http://www.undg.org/docs/13099/UN%20System-wide%20Action%20Plan%20on%20Youth%20%283%29.pdf>
- <sup>7</sup> UN General Assembly, A/40/245, para. 19. 1985.
- <sup>8</sup> Pursuant to our global UNDP e-discussion
- <sup>9</sup> Resulting from the global e-discussion within UNDP (2012), involving HQ, Country Offices and Regional Service Centres.
- <sup>10</sup> Fact Sheet from International Year of Youth (2010/2011): Dialogue and Mutual Understanding.
- <sup>11</sup> [http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/document/2011/06/20110610\\_UN\\_A-RES-65-277\\_en.pdf](http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/document/2011/06/20110610_UN_A-RES-65-277_en.pdf)
- <sup>12</sup> ‘CrowdOutAIDS: Strategy Recommendations for Collaborating with a new generation of leaders for the AIDS response. Drafting Committee of the youth-led CrowdOutAIDS initiative to the UNAIDS Secretariat. Page 2.
- <sup>13</sup> Outcome Document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, paragraph 4.
- <sup>14</sup> World Population Prospect 2012
- <sup>15</sup> ILO. Global Youth Employment Trends 2013.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> Global Jobs Pact Policy Briefs, Brief No. 14, ILO.
- <sup>18</sup> ILO. Global Youth Employment Trends 2013.
- <sup>19</sup> <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002180/218003e.pdf> (2012)
- <sup>20</sup> Young people in LDCs often work as unpaid workers in the family-owned businesses and later move on to the own-account work. For example, in sub-Saharan Africa only 21.4 per cent of workers receive wages or salaries compared to nearly 50 per cent at the global level. Global Employment Trends for Youth 2013 (ILO).
- <sup>21</sup> Page XXXV, World Youth Report 2007, Young People’s Transition to Adulthood: Progress and Challenges, UN DESA, 2007
- <sup>22</sup> Participation is one of the guiding principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and young people’s right to participation has been deemed important in numerous international agreements. For instance in 1994, 179 countries recognized the importance of ensuring young people’s “integration and participation in all spheres of society, including participation in the political process and in preparation for leadership roles”.
- <sup>23</sup> World Bank, World Development Report 2007: Development and the Next Generation (Washington D.C., 2006)
- <sup>24</sup> Enhancing Youth Political Participation throughout the Electoral Cycle. A Good Practice Guide, UNDP, December 2012
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>26</sup> IANYD Guidelines on Youth Participation in Peace-building (2013)
- <sup>27</sup> A social contract is a dynamic agreement between state and society on their mutual roles and responsibilities. The social contract refers to the agreement of individuals, either explicitly or tacitly, to derogate some of their freedoms and consent to the authority of government, in exchange for the state’s protection of their universal human rights, security and the provision of public goods.
- <sup>28</sup> Programming for Youth in Conflict Prevention and Recovery, Lessons Learned from UNDP Experience, Information Note. UNDP/BCPR 2007.

- 29 UNDP(2012) Powerful Synergies: Gender Equality, Economic Development and Environmental Sustainability
- 30 UNDP/SGP. Youth Participation. [http://sgp.undp.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=115&Itemid=179](http://sgp.undp.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=115&Itemid=179)
- 31 Youth Participation in Development, a Guide for Development Agencies and Policy Makers, DFID, 2010
- 32 [www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm](http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm)
- 33 In relation to labour markets, youth might also be disadvantaged, based on their disability, ethnicity or minority status or location.
- 34 Social enterprises function as other business enterprises in economic and financial terms, but the profits and/or dividends go back to the community.
- 35 Page 132. Somalia HDR 2012
- 36 [www.juventudconvoz.org](http://www.juventudconvoz.org) is an online platform established by the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean which provides a common space for regional, information and knowledge sharing, debate, and seeks to strengthen individual and youth organizational capacities to influence public policies.
- 37 Discussion Paper, 'Innovations in Monitoring and Evaluations Results', November 2013, UNDP
- 38 National HDR Guidance Note, UNDP, 2013
- 39 <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/national/arabstates/egypt/name,20494,en.html>
- 40 <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/national/africa/kenya/name,23126,en.html>
- 41 <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/national/africa/somalia/name,25684,en.html>
- 42 In addition, a Youth Expectation Index was produced as a result of the 1<sup>st</sup> Ibero-American Survey facilitated by RBLAC.
- 43 Adapted from UNDP, Nepal Human Development Report, 2004. P. 10
- 44 Page 110 Somalia HDR 2012
- 45 OECD/DAC 2008. Addressing root causes.
- 46 [http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/operations/executive\\_board/documents\\_for\\_sessions/adv2014-first.html](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/operations/executive_board/documents_for_sessions/adv2014-first.html)
- 47 Studies on crowdsourcing and crowd funding websites indicate that young people form the majority of the population active on social media
- 48 UNESCO's contribution to Empowering Youth through National Policies. UNESCO, 2004. Page 6-7.
- 49 See for instance, UNDP Discussion Paper (2013), Innovations in Monitoring and Evaluating Results, KIGC/BDP
- 50 Contribution from Restless Development India
- 51 <http://www.unv.org/en/what-we-do/youth/doc/un-establishes-trust-fund.html> Accessed 18 November 2013
- 52 Youth-SWAP endorsed by the CEB in April 2013 and addresses the five priority issues identified by the Secretary General in his Five-year Action Agenda: employment, entrepreneurship, political inclusion, citizenship and protection of rights and education, including education on sexual and reproductive health.

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