



ECOSOC
YOUTH FORUM

YOUTH2030

Economic and Social Council Youth Forum

“Accelerating the COVID-19 recovery and full implementation of the 2030 Agenda with and for youth”

THEMATIC SESSION ON SDG 7
25 April 2023, 4:45 pm to 6:15 pm (NY Time)
Hybrid Event

| IDENTIFICATION | |
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| SDG theme | SDG 7 |
| Session title | TBD |
| Session co-lead UN | United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) |
| Session co-lead Youth | Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY) International Coordination Meeting of Youth Organisations (ICMYO) |
| Session co-organizers (both UN and Youth) | SDG 7 Youth Constituency of MGCY (Asma Rouabhia, David Arinze) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) |
| BACKGROUND & KEY ISSUES | |
| <p>Energy is key to addressing some of the greatest challenges humanity is facing today. Indeed, access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all is fundamental to human development and the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and a shift towards sustainable energy solutions is essential to the achievement of the Paris Agreement on climate change. The importance of energy is further emphasized by the multiple and interlinked global crises the world is currently facing – the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis and the impacts of the conflict in Ukraine and elsewhere – which are putting the very viability of achieving the SDGs by 2030 at great risk. Notably, the current slowdown of global economic growth, growing impacts of climate change and soaring energy prices are hitting hardest those most in need: least developed countries and populations all over the world who are marginalized. Realizing the potential of energy will require efforts at unprecedented levels by all relevant stakeholders</p> | |

worldwide. The [Global Roadmap for Accelerated SDG 7 Action](#) resulting from the UN High-level Dialogue on Energy in 2021 provides an invaluable guide for collective action on energy across sectors.

However, significant challenges persist: globally, 733 million people are still lacking access to electricity in 2020. Meeting the 2030 target requires increasing the number of new connections by 100 million a year. Moreover, 2.4 billion people still lacked access to clean cooking fuels and technology in 2020. In terms of renewable energy, globally there were already close to three terawatts of renewable energy capacity in 2020, representing nearly 29% of all power generation, and renewables accounted for 82% of newly installed capacity that year. However, fossil fuels still made up about 60% of global power generation capacity. In addition, the current average annual rate of energy efficiency improvement must increase from the current 0.8% to 3.0%. Notably, global annual investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency must be at least tripled. International financial flows to developing countries in support of clean energy in particular require attention, as they amounted to only \$10.9 billion in 2019. This was a decrease for the second year in a row. Financial flows were lower particularly in the Least Developed Countries which account for 20% of the world's youth according to the UNCTAD Annual LDSs Report, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States. Clearly, much more needs to be done by all stakeholders, including youth, to achieve universal energy access and a just and inclusive energy transition that would effectively support the objectives of the Paris Agreement.

Contributions of young people proved that they are an essential part of society for helping transform this world towards sustainable ways of living with low-carbon, resilient, resource-efficient, and nature-positive economies. However, youth are still facing barriers in contributing to global policies and frameworks in a meaningful way. Youth will inherit the consequences of the energy transition decisions taken today, therefore, they should be represented and, to the extent possible, be present in energy transition debates and give voices to ensure a just transition.

While youth are playing an important role in pushing the needle on SDG7, the key issues/challenges are in:

1. Amplifying the effort of youth globally;
2. Capturing the impact and contribution of youth in achieving SDG7;
3. Creating enabling environments to maximise youth contributions.

SESSION OBJECTIVES

The session will aim to highlight the contribution of youth action and youth-led initiatives in driving progress towards driving universal energy access, a just energy transition, and meeting the targets of SDG 7 in their local communities, regions and countries.

- Discuss the implementation of the UN Youth Strategy, Youth 2030: Working with and for Young People in the context of SDG 7, and how this strategy can help to accelerate recovery from COVID 19.
- Propose a set of recommendations and key messages that are critical to support young people in strengthening their engagement and work in global efforts towards SDG7.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Share and showcase success stories, initiatives, contributions, action and best practices of youth engagement in driving progress towards SDG7.
- Identify opportunities from different stakeholder groups on advancing the achievement of SDG7.
- Provide a set of actionable recommendations for UN bodies on the best practices in connecting, engaging, supporting and leveraging youth action to meet the goals of SDG7.
- Raising awareness of how renewed commitment, political support, and accelerated action towards SDG 7 is essential for accelerating the COVID-19 recovery and full implementation of the 2030 Agenda with and for youth.

APPROACH USED TO GENERATE CONCRETE CONTRIBUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The SDG 7 Youth constituency will lead a survey and virtual consultation to get youth insights, inputs and recommendations for the thematic session of SDG 7. The survey will be shared with youth from all over the world and will be available between late-March and early April. The virtual consultation will be held by early-April and will bring together youth from the SDG 7 Youth Constituency, MGCY, and other organizations.

OVERALL STRUCTURE AND FLOW

We envision the session to be an interactive discussion and intergenerational dialogue between youth representatives and senior representatives with gender and regional balance.

The session will consist of one panel of five to six speakers and one moderator. It will include Q&A in which the moderator will collect the questions raised by participants and ask them to the speakers.

SESSION DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What is the contribution of youth in the monitoring and review of SDG 7?
- What is the role of young people in post-COVID recovery and driving the implementation of SDG 7?
- What ways and means should be put in place to promote youth development and engagement in SDG 7?
- How can the youth be harnessed as a major agent of change in achieving SDG 7?
- What are the ways and means of promoting youth development and engagement?
- What are the needs and challenges of youth in the energy transition?

- How can we ensure that inputs and contributions of the youth are meaningfully integrated into energy policy decision-making processes?
- How to enhance cooperation and coordination within the UN system and beyond to strengthen youth contributions in progress towards SDG 7 and accelerate COVID-19 recovery?

NAMES OF SESSION SPEAKERS AND MODERATOR(S)

Moderator:

- **Ms. Eduarda Zoghbi**, Senior Advisor, Student Energy (Brazil)

Speakers:

- **Mr. Ismael Zahir**, Technical Team Advisor, Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)
- **Mr. Vadim Zuznetsov**, Representative of SDG7 Youth Constituency
- **Ms. Melisa Matvejeva**, Youth Delegate of Latvia to the UN
- **Ms. Aashna Aggarwal**, Strategic Alliances Associate at Scale Microgrids, and Member of the SDG 7 Youth Constituency
- **Ms. Samia Shell**, Environmental Justice and Human Rights Advocate and Law Student, St. John's University School of Law (USA)
- **Ms. Asma Rouabhia**, MENA Regional Manager with Girl Up, United Nations Foundation

OVERVIEW OF PREPARATORY EVENT/CONSULTATION

The consultation will be held virtually by early-April, organized by the SDG 7 Youth Constituency, and aims to target 200 youth attendees from around the globe who are active in the energy space, who will provide inputs and insights contributing to the recommendations of the session.

SUGGESTED READING

[Global Roadmap for Accelerated SDG 7 Action](#)

ENERGY COMPACT: SDG7 Youth Constituency

https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sdg7_yc_energy_compact_v.3.0.pdf

Youth Sustainable Energy Hub Progress Report <https://youthsehub.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/YSEH-Progress-Report.pdf>

HLDE THEME REPORT ON ENERGY ACCESS TWG 1

https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021/09/2021-twg_1-091021.pdf

HLDE THEME REPORT ON ENERGY TRANSITION TWG 2

https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021/11/2021-twg_2.pdf

HLDE THEME REPORT ON ENABLING SDGS THROUGH INCLUSIVE, JUST ENERGY TRANSITIONS TWG 3

https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021-twg_3-b-062321.pdf

HLDE THEME REPORT ON INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY AND DATA TWG 4

https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021-twg_4-062121.pdf

HLDE THEME REPORT ON FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021-twg_5-062421.pdf

UNICEF a Young Person's Guide to Sustainable Energy <https://www.unicef.org/lac/media/40516/file/A-young-persons-guide-to-sustainable-energy.pdf>

<https://www.stockholm50.report/charting-a-youth-vision-for-a-just-and-sustainable-future.pdf>

<https://www.industrytransition.org/content/uploads/2020/11/201127-leadit-brief-youth-perpectives-on-it-final.pdf>

<https://youthenergy.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Role-Youth-European-Energy-Transition-Position-paper.pdf>

https://youthenergy.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Position-Paper_Youth-shaping-the-Climate-Pact.pdf