7th Economic and Social Council Youth Forum
CONCEPT NOTE

Thematic Breakout Session
"Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable"

30 January 2018
3:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Room 11
United Nations Headquarters, New York

Background and Context

Almost half of the total global population is under the age of 25 and around 1.8 billion people are between the ages of 18 and 24. The vast majority of these youth lives in urbanized areas, especially in the cities of the developing world that account for over 90% of the world's urban growth. With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda, 2018 is the seminal year on the road to achieving sustainable urban development. If sustainable urban development is the foundation for sustainable future, young people are at the forefront of this collective endeavor.

The UN system embraces youth as a positive force for transformative change. Empowering youth to become agents of change within cities has the power to transform youth into a positive and productive driver for the overall national socio-economic development. Ad-hoc strategies and innovative solutions that account for larger youth populations living in and migrating to urban areas are necessary to enhance young people's participation in the creation of sustainable cities. At the same time, addressing socio-economic barriers, reducing social isolation of neighborhoods and communities, and allowing youth to access opportunities can help cities become more inclusive.

In order to promote sustainable urban development and address the root causes of poverty and inequality, urban regulations and policies need to be reflective of the realities affecting young people. Ensuring youth have an institutional space to voice out their needs and are recognized as stakeholders in legislative frameworks allows young people to meaningfully engage and contribute to the cultural, social, economic, and political aspects of the society.

Objectives

The objective of the thematic breakout session is to:

- provide a platform for Member States, young leaders and youth entities to identify innovative solutions and policy objectives in order to enhance young people's participation in the creation of sustainable cities.
- discuss strategies to support the role of youth in the implementation and monitoring of the SDG 11, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the New Urban Agenda; and provide inputs to the ongoing deliberations of the of the HLPF, Habitat Governing Council, World Urban Forum, World Urban Campaign, and Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Conversations

The thematic breakout session will be divided into four thematic conversations, reflecting today's urban challenges faced by young people. These themes have been identified according to their relevance to the SDG Goal 11 and the New Urban Agenda.

1. Youth Livelihoods and Decent Work
2. Youth and Gender-Responsive Cities
3. Youth Migration and Peacebuilding in cities
4. Urban Youth Empowerment: participation, representation, and engagement in the local governance

Expected results

The breakout session aims to produce a set of recommendations and action points conducive to improve urban strategies, policies, and practices that promote inclusive and sustainable livelihoods for young women and men in urban settlements. By sharing critical analysis and relevant experiences of young people, the session will determine gaps and opportunities for young people's participation in the creation of sustainable cities in order to inform future deliberations and renew the commitment from partners.

Organization

The session is led by UN-Habitat, and co-organized by UN MGCY with the support and active engagement of other interested UN entities and youth organizations, including UNESCO, UN Volunteers, UN Women, ICMYO and TEJO.

Session structure and format

Opening - 5 minutes
Ministerial opening and general introduction on the role of youth in building inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities by UN-Habitat

Thematic conversations - around 20 minutes each
The conversations will be conducted using an open discussion format. Each thematic conversation will be introduced by a short presentation on the related key emerging issues made by an UN entity (no more than 5 minutes each) and will be facilitated by MGCY H3WG on the basis of the guiding questions.

1. Youth Livelihoods and Decent Work (UN-Habitat, facilitator ICMYO)
2. Youth and Gender-Responsive Cities (UN Women, facilitator MGCY)
3. Youth Migration and Peace-building in cities (UNESCO, facilitator MGCY)
4. Urban Youth Empowerment: participation, representation, and engagement in the local governance (presenter UNV, facilitator MGCY)

Conclusions on emerging issues and way forward - 20 minutes
Presentation of the key messages and recommendations emerged in the discussion by the presenters of each session.

Closing remarks - 5 minutes
Closing remarks by UN-Habitat

Issues at stake

Youth livelihoods and decent work
- National and international regulations for youth work and entrepreneurship
- Supporting ecosystem, training, and capacity development
- Access to finance for youth
- Quality work (need for clear rights and work recognition)

Youth and Gender-Responsive Cities
- Addressing violence against women in public spaces
- Youth and Gender responsive budgeting
- Youth and gender-responsive infrastructure
- Mobility and accessibility

Youth Migration and Peace-building in cities
- Youth migration policies and programs
- Investment of migrants in productive sectors
- Peace and security with youth migrants and human trafficking
- Culture of peaceful coexistence between host communities and mobile populations
- Culture, as a source of identity, driver of peaceful coexistence, and youth engagement

Urban Youth Empowerment: participation, representation, and engagement in the local governance
- Youth representation in urban decision-making, planning and monitoring processes
- Youth engagement with security, law and justice actors in urban environments
- Spaces for youth-led civic and community action (politics, volunteering, activism)
- Youth innovations for cooperation and collective action in urban environments (water/sanitation/basic services/etc)

Questions for the audience

Youth livelihoods and decent work
- What are some of the contributing factors related to young women and men entering and remaining in the labour market?
- How can local governments play a better role in providing smooth transition from school to the world of work for young women and men?
- What is the responsibility of private sector in supporting young people to be skillful workers in the labour market?
- What should positive youth livelihoods and decent work interventions look like?
- How can governments create an enabling ecosystem for Micro, small and medium-sizes businesses to continue and expand their local business?

Youth and Gender-Responsive Cities
- What role can cities play in addressing the gender gap in economic development for youth?
- How can urban infrastructure prevent sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence in public spaces?
- How can public transportation policies take into account the accessibility, mobility, and safety needs of young women?
- What role can youth play in transforming social norms for promoting respectful gender relationships and safety in public spaces?

Youth Migration and Peace-building in cities
- How can youth migration policies and programs make cities more sustainable?
- What investments should migrants undertake in the productive sectors for the development of cities?
- How can peace and security be guaranteed in cities with young migrants, while also fighting human trafficking?
- How can the culture of peaceful coexistence between host communities and migrant or transient populations help create inclusive, safe and sustainable cities?
- How should youth engage in initiatives, to promote the protection of cultural heritage, and in empowering young people to become responsible citizens and active agents of social change?

Urban youth empowerment: participation, representation, and engagement in the local governance
- How are youth getting their voices heard in decision-making processes in urban local governance?
- How are young people working to improve experiences with security, law and justice actors in their urban environments?
- What are some of the forums and spaces that young people are using to shape and create the cities that they want? (politics, volunteering, activism)
- How are young people working with others to develop community or collective solutions to urban issues such as basic services in informal settlements?

Suggested reading material

1. **Youth Livelihoods and Decent Work**
Quito declaration on Decent Employment:
https://eulacfoundation.org/sites/eulacfoundation.org/files/files/Quito%20Declaration%20%20Final%20english.pdf

UN Envoy on Youth page on entrepreneurship
http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/tag/entrepreneurship/

Investing in Youth Entrepreneurship and Employment
https://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/labour/youth_employment/Invest_Youth_Entrepreneurship_Employment.pdf

Entrepreneurship for development Report of the Secretary-General
http://unctad.org/meetings/en/SessionalDocuments/a69d320_en.pdf

Youth Employment in Developing Countries
https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/study-background-paper-youth-employment-2013_en_0.pdf

Global Employment trend for Youth 2013
http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_212423.pdf

Youth Employment transitions in Latin America
https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1736868

Child & Youth Finance International and UN-Habitat (2015). *Advancing Economic Citizenship For Children And Youth In Sub-Saharan Africa.* United Nations Human Settlements Programme

Cities Alliance and UN-Habitat (2016*). Youth and the City: Lessons From 13 Innovative Projects Funded by the Cities Alliance Catalytic Fund and the UN-Habitat Youth Fund*. United Nations Human Settlements

Programme

Youth-led Economic Empowerment - Lessons from the Urban Youth Fund
http://bit.ly/economic_empowerment_youth

Cities of Youth: Cities of Prosperity
http://bit.ly/Cities_of_Youth

2. Youth and Gender-Responsive Cities

UN-Habitat (2015). *Youth and Their Needs Within Public Space.* United Nations Human Settlements
Programme

3. Youth Migration and Peace-building in cities

UN-Habitat (2016). *Refugee Youth. Good Practices in Urban Resettlements Context*. United Nations Human
Settlements Programme

Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action
http://bit.ly/Compact-for-Young-People-in-Humanitarian-Action

Youth and migration frameworks :
- http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5718e.pdf
- http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-migration.pdf
- http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ed_emp_msu/documents/publication/wcms_219635.pdf
- http://www.globalmigrationgroup.org/system/files/23._Key_Messages_and_Policy_Recommendations.pdf
- http://www.mdgfund.org/sites/default/files/YEM_Thematic%20Study.pdf
- http://www.globalmigrationgroup.org/system/files/15._Chapter_12.pdf
- http://www.globalmigrationgroup.org/system/files/9._Chapter_6.pdf
- https://www.du.edu/korbel/hrhw/researchdigest/africa/YouthMigration.pdf

Youth and migration reports :
- http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/wyr/2013/report.pdf
- http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/publications/world-youth-report.html
- http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/labour-migration/news-statements/WCMS_329298/lang--en/index.htm

Peacebuilding reports :
- http://unoy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/UNOY_Post-2015Report_Revised.pdf
- http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002170/217098e.pdf
- http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002474/247430E.pdf
- http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001913/191341e.pdf
- http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002171/217106e.pdf
- http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pbso/pdf/Final%20Report%20-%20Global%20Forum%20on%20Youth%20Peace%20%20Security%2011.11.2015.pdf

Peacebuilding frameworks :

- http://www.youthpolicy.org/blog/participation-global-governance/a-post-2015-development-agenda-for-young-peacebuilders/
- https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ci_youth-english-web-20150616-082128118.pdf
- http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002177/217786e.pdf
- http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0025/002529/252971e.pdf
- https://eccnetwork.net/wp-content/uploads/IIEP-Youth-Education-and-Peacebuilding.pdf
- https://eccnetwork.net/wp-content/uploads/IIEP-Youth-Education-and-Peacebuilding.pdf
- http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pbso/pdf/Practice%20Note%20Youth%20&%20Peacebuilding%20-%20January%202016.pdf

4. **Urban Youth Empowerment: participation, representation, and engagement in the local governance**

UN-Habitat (2015). *Youth Led Development: A Case Study From The Mathare Slum, Kenya.* United Nations Human Settlements Programme

The Right to participate
http://bit.ly/The-Right-To-Participate

Global Youth-Led Development Report Series
http://bit.ly/Global-Youth-led-Development-series

State of Urban Youth Reports
http://bit.ly/State-of-Urban-Youth-Reports

UNESCO Global Report 'Culture: Urban Future'
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002459/245999e.pdf

#Unite4Heritage campaign
http://www.unite4heritage.org/

World Heritage Youth Forum
http://whc.unesco.org/en/youth-forum/

UNESCO Creative Cities Network
Website https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities/
Leaflet https://fr.unesco.org/creative-cities/sites/creative-cities/files/creative%20cities%20for%20web.pdf

Partners for the Youth
https://www.unv.org/sites/default/files/UNV%20Success%20Stories_FINAL_ws.pdf

Young Person's Guide to saving the world
https://www.unv.org/sites/default/files/Young_Persons_Guide_Changing_the_World__FINAL.pdf