



**ECOSOC
YOUTH
FORUM**

#YOUTH2030

8th Economic and Social Council Youth Forum

DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE

AFRICA

8 April 2019
CR 5, 1.45-3.45 p.m.
United Nations Headquarters, New York

IDENTIFICATION	
Session focus	Africa
Session title	“The Empowerment and Inclusion of Young People in Africa: Towards Durable Solutions for Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons in Africa”
Session lead	Juliet Wasswa-Mugambwa, UN-OSAA
Session co-organizers	Qamer Uddin Jatoi, UNDP Lawrence Muli, Commonwealth Youth Programme, Bubacarr Singhateh, Gambia Youth Red Cross Aya Chebbi, AU Youth Envoy
Session moderator	Gogontlejang Phaladi, Founder and Executive Director of the Gogontlejang Phaladi Pillar of Hope Project (GPPHP), Botswana
Rapporteur	Aya Chebbi, African Union Youth Envoy
Session note-taker 1	Daniel Malin
BACKGROUND & KEY ISSUES	

The 2019 Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum will take place on 8-9 April 2019 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The Youth Forum will serve as a platform for young leaders from around the world to engage in a dialogue among themselves and with United Nations Member States and to share ideas for advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the Paris Climate Agreement.

Globally, there are an estimated 65.6 million people who have fled their homes either as refugees (22.5 million), internally displaced persons (40.3 million) or asylum seekers because of conflict and persecution. Forced displacement causes immeasurable human suffering and loss of lives and livelihoods, to which is added the exacerbation of vulnerabilities. This suffering is particularly acute for the extremely poor and vulnerable including youth, women and children. Children under the age of 18 years constituted 51 per cent of the refugee population in 2016, compared to 31 per cent of the global population. Forced displacement is mostly centered in developing countries, which host the bulk of the forcibly displaced. Statistics from 2018 show Uganda hosting 940,800 and Ethiopia 791,600 refugees, making them among the top six refugee host countries worldwide.

According to the African Union, over one-third of the world's forcibly displaced persons are in Africa, including 6.3 million refugees and asylum seekers and 14.5 million internally displaced persons. The African Union states that forced displacement in Africa is generated by conflict, poor governance, human rights violations and environmental issues.

The significant economic and social impacts on the displaced include limited social capital and few or no assets, coupled with the uncertainty of displacement. Such impacts make it impossible to plan, find livelihoods or be equipped for a demanding job market with poor access to basic services. On top of this are the difficult and traumatizing xenophobia and discrimination that the displaced face at times.

As a means to amplify the voices of young people to achieve inclusivity and equality on the continent, the focus of this year's Africa Breakout Session is on the duality of empowerment and inclusion as well as the issue of refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons. The session will create a conducive environment to address the root causes of forced displacement and to achieve durable solutions while strengthening the capacity of both State and non-State actors to address the challenges of forced displacement on the continent.

The theme of the Africa Breakout Session is in line with the Secretary-General's emphasis on the peace, security and development nexus, as well as finding durable solutions to the humanitarian situation of the displaced through the lens of development. In this respect, the issue of displaced persons needs to be addressed as both a humanitarian and development problem where solutions are sought both for the displaced and the host communities. Host communities tend to be largely lower-income themselves and are therefore faced with the challenge of pursuing their own development goals while accommodating an unplanned and large number of displaced persons and a strain on existing services and infrastructure.

SESSION OBJECTIVES

The Africa Breakout Session aims to craft recommendations on the roles of African youth towards the empowerment and inclusion of young people in Africa to find durable solutions for refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons. It will serve to garner input towards the implementation of SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17, which are the SDGs under review by the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in 2019.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The Africa Breakout Session will provide a platform to discuss harnessing the empowerment and inclusion of the continent's young people to contribute to finding durable solutions for refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons in Africa. It will aim to shift the lens from crisis responses to prevention and risk mitigation to support host communities and regions, geared towards social and economic inclusion.

It is expected that concrete policy recommendations will be agreed, and these will be used to engage African and global decision makers for further action. The innovative ideas generated by youth on this topic will help to advance the implementation of the SDGs and the African Union's Agenda 2063 while also feeding into the HLPF process.

Furthermore, the deliberations and inputs from young people will contribute to the yearlong series of events around the African Union's theme for 2019, "Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa".

The key messages of the event will be published, and communications materials will be developed to highlight the role of African youth in ensuring equality, inclusivity and empowerment, as well as their role in attaining SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17.

APPROACH USED TO GENERATE REGIONAL NEEDS ANALYSIS & CONTRIBUTION

The Africa Breakout Session will be, as in previous years, an open and interactive session, guided and moderated by a youth representative from Africa. With the use of a number of discussion questions, the moderator will endeavor to define the needs in the Africa region. Namely, what actions do all stakeholders need to undertake to enhance the empowerment and inclusion of young people in Africa that would facilitate their ability to find solutions for the displaced?

With an expected robust participation from African youth representatives and other parties, the session will generate a wide array of contributions, which will be distilled by the moderator and session lead and co-organizers.

OVERALL STRUCTURE AND FLOW

The event will be structured as an interactive session, featuring youth representatives from Africa and beyond and shall be moderated by a prominent youth representative. It will have a preambular part where progress registered on the theme addressed in 2018 will be reviewed. It will be webcast to allow a wide range of participants to participate even remotely.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

To maximize the contribution of all participants in the Africa Breakout Session, participants are encouraged to consider the following guiding discussion questions:

- How can peace, justice and strong institutions be the drivers to addressing the root causes of forced displacement?
- How can host communities be supported to manage the arrival of large numbers of the forcibly displaced to ensure the attainment of the objectives of Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063?
- How can quality education help youth combat xenophobia in their communities and support the forcibly displaced integrate?
- What are some policy measures to prevent the negative impacts of forced displacement and support those forcibly displaced?
- How can host communities be supported to reduce inequalities and increase access to basic services including education, promote access to jobs and create opportunities through private sector investment?
- How can the Paris Climate accord be effective in stemming forced displacement?
- How can social protection systems be better structured to accommodate humanitarian contexts?
- How can African youth support the ratification of the African Union Kampala Convention on the Internally Displaced Persons, by all African States?
- How can African youth support the effective implementation of the four key objectives of the UN global compact on refugees?

SUGGESTED READING

- The African Youth Charter
http://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/pdf/au/african_youth_charter_2006.pdf
- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf>
- The African Union Agenda 2063
<http://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/pdf/au/agenda2063.pdf>
- Agenda 2063-First Ten-year Implementation Plan 2014-2023
- <http://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/pdf/au/agenda2063-first10yearimplementation.pdf>
- African Continental Framework on Youth Development (2015)
<http://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/pdf/nepad/youth-development-framework-2015.pdf>
- The African Union Convention for the protection and assistance of Internally Displaced persons in Africa (Kampala Convention)
https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/7796-treaty-0039_-_kampala_convention_african_union_convention_for_the_protection_and_assistance_of_internally_displaced_persons_in_africa_e.pdf
- The Paris Agreement on Climate Change
https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf
- The Global Compact for Migration
<https://www.un.org/pga/72/wp-content/uploads/sites/51/2018/07/migration.pdf>