



ECOSOC
YOUTH
FORUM

#YOUTH2030

Economic and Social Council Youth Forum 10th Anniversary

CONCEPT NOTE

Arab region

IDENTIFICATION	
Session title as per programme	Arab States Region: Youth as the drivers to Build Forward Better
Session co-lead UN	UNFPA, UNV, UNESCO, UN ESCWA
Session co-lead Youth	AYPSD
Session co-organizers	Arab Youth Platform for Sustainable Development (AYPSD)
	UNFPA, UNV, UNESCO, UN ESCWA
Session moderator(s)	General Moderator : Samir Anouti (UNFPA) Moderator Focus group 1: Ghida Krisht, Lebanon (UNESCO) Moderator Focus Group 2 : xxxxx (ESCWA) Chatbox Moderator : (AYPSD through application)
Session note-taker(s)	Introduction and 3 stories session: Eliane Assy (UNESCO)
	FOCUS Group Innovation for Inclusion : Yara Ouda (AYPSD)

	FOCUS Group Solutions : Anan El Boseily (AYPSD)
	Recommendations : UNFPA/UNV- Narendra Mishra
	Closing Remarks : Abdul Rahman Ibrahim - AYPSD
	Simultaneous translation arabic/english (UNESCO to provide translation)
Chatbox Manager	IFMSA Egypt will lead on behalf of AYPSD

BACKGROUND & KEY ISSUES

Young people are drivers of positive change for the society, however too often, the influence of young social leaders that possess valuable local knowledge, that are the most active within their communities and bring innovative solutions is underestimated.

During the COVID 19, Youth groups volunteered and were the first responders to provide support to their communities. They engaged in strengthening capacities of local health systems, in protecting women and elderly people from isolation, in supporting socio-economic response due to cessation of local economies. Often in times of crisis and also recovery, Youth groups demonstrate how crucial their interventions are to support Governments led efforts. The Regional Session will explore the lessons learned of the role of youth in responding to COVID-19 and more generally in building back more inclusive societies.

In the Arab countries, more than 60% of the total population are under 30 years old, making the region hold an extreme youth power that could be utilized for sustainable development. The Arab states' current context is challenging, but youth are still working towards the SDGs and demonstrating an unyielding resistance. They create their businesses, advocate for free speech, engage in political dialogues, and improve social services.

Young people in the Arab region are currently experiencing educational challenges such as illiteracy, drop-outs, gender disparities with enrollment, and long gaps between completing school and finding employment. While the global unemployment rate is roughly 5.7%, in the Arab Region, it is 10.7%.

This session will elaborate on the challenges that face the Arab youth to enhance their capacities to be able to lead social impact in their communities and inspire them to start their region-wide influence.

The session will be an opportunity to demonstrate that Youth contribution to bring positive change in the socio economic sphere is undeniable and requires adequate space and

representation. Youth need to have a voice in decision making processes as they bring relevant solutions and ideas. The session will also be an opportunity to reflect on challenges faced by Youth groups, including Volunteer Involving Organization and propose concrete suggestions to overcome them.

SESSION OBJECTIVES

- Sharing of good practices, including youth leadership, civic engagement and volunteers in action in responding to COVID-19
- Highlight the potential of youth to drive inclusive crisis response and sustainable development
- Raise awareness of the need to improve youth representation and participation in development by proposing solutions;
- Promote Youth civic engagement and volunteerism as a key pillar in post-pandemic recovery and the achievement of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- Highlight the importance of having innovative mechanisms designed by young people to inform and support building back better in post COVID 19;
- Foster collaboration between stakeholders to the session but also audience;

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Youth led initiatives to fight COVID 19, to support SDGs, to ensure inclusion (including of marginalized groups) will be showcased and it will demonstrate the importance of providing adequate space for youth actions to build back better.

We will provide visibility to impactful initiatives which can be replicated by the network on involved stakeholders to the session but also by the audience.

Two Member States will have reflected on the testimonies and bring their perspectives on feasibility of suggested solutions and /or recommend the best way to frame them to be included at the ECOSOC Call to Action.

Participants will recommend policies and strategies to Member States to harness the power of youth volunteerism as a means of achieving post-pandemic recovery, social impact, and pursue the sustainable development agenda in the Arab region to build forward better.

We will also explore the need to strengthen knowledge transfer and e-learning to enable more young people to access opportunities to participate, build skills and strengthen youth-led action to build back better in the post-COVID era.

APPROACH USED TO GENERATE CONCRETE CONTRIBUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We will ensure initiatives, success stories and good examples of impactful youth actions /leaders/volunteers will provide a set of good practice for possible replication and adaptation in other relevant contexts. These youth-led inclusive approaches are thought to provide solutions to challenges faced for the realization of the SDGs.

Therefore the session will bring together relevant youth groups but also Member States from the Region who will listen and reflect on the stories as well as solutions suggested by Youth.

The 2 segments covered by the session will have pre-consultations through surveys to engage as many youth groups as possible. The results will be taken into considerations during the discussions.

A set of concrete recommendations will come out of the session. This can inform priorities for UN agencies, Governments and other partners to work towards to promote youth as drivers to build back better post COVID 19.

OVERALL STRUCTURE AND FLOW

1:00 -01:20pm (20min)

Opening :

- Mr. Hatim Aznague; SDG 5 Regional Focal Point of the MENA Region at the UN Major Group on Children & Youth 4''
- Welcome (UNV) 4''
- Remark from Member State – Egyptian Minister of Youth and Sports HE Dr Ashraf Sobhy) 4''

Pre-consultation restitution:

Read out of the AFSD Youth Roundtable consultation (UNFPA/ESCWA) 5''

Presentation of the Survey Results 4' (Sameh Kamel - AYPSP) and short Introduction of discord app that participants will be able to use to engage with speakers 1'

1:20 -1:30 (10 mins) : 3 stories from Youth: Examples of Youth Initiatives during the COVID-19 Pandemic

- Youth Civic engagement / volunteerism (Karen Kordab from Youth Leadership Program) 3'
- Support to Health systems/socio economic (Menna Zohny - IFMSA Egypt on behalf of AYPSP) 3'

- Response to GBV - Stephanie BOU CHALHA, ABAAD (Lebanon) 3'

1:30- 2:20pm (50 min) : Two Focus Group Discussions

Focus group Innovation for Inclusion 25' (all speakers have 4'): Name of the Moderator

- Speaker 1 : Youth from Emirates foundation
- Speaker 2 : Abdelaziz Bousleh (Tunisia -- ESCWA)
- Speaker 3 : Samer SFEIR, Founder of Proabled / Social Entrepreneur (Lebanon)

Reflection from a Member State- Minister of Youth UAE - H.E Shamma (also President of the Arab Youth Centre)

Intervention for Chat Moderator if any between each intervention

There will be a refresher between the 2 focus groups for 3 min : suggest showing a video or music from the region which showcase the actions of Youth in the field. We can also have an online Kahoot to play with the audience ⇒ AYPSP (Sameh Kamel)

Focus group Solutions 25' (all speakers have 4'): Name of the Moderator xxxxx

- Speaker 1 : Samya Hussien - Arab Voluntary Union
- Speaker 2 : Ahmed - UNV from the Nahno Platform in Jordan
- Speaker 3 : Minassati Platform : Mr. Amr Dawood

Reflection from a Member State – Palestine - Ms. Hala Haj Hasan (Head of Aid coordination- Planning and Aid coordination Unit) PMO, which just launched their National Volunteer Platform for Youth in support to community development

Intervention for Chat Moderator if any between each intervention

2:20- 2:25 (5 min)- Outcome: Recommendations to be submitted to the Forum.

During each focus group specific recommendations will be identified. A "Recommendation's Note Taker" will be in charge of identifying them throughout the discussions and list them in a slide deck to be screened. The Recommendations need to be as specific, targeted as possible.

2.25 -2.30 Closing remarks and way forward (Abdul Rahman Ibrahim - AYPSP) 5'

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Focus Group Innovation for Inclusion :

How can innovative, digital youth led practices support Inclusion and therefore community/national development?

How can we support the creation of informal virtual spaces where innovative ideas for sustainable development can be shared by diverse stakeholders, including volunteers, policymakers, practitioners, academia and the private sector to accelerate all types of knowledge-sharing ?

Focus Group Solutions:

How can Governments/ country leaders in the Arab States benefit from formal and informal structures of youth mechanisms, including Youth Volunteer Involving Organization (VIOs), to support the realization of the SDGs?

What are the limitations Youth movements, VIOs, encounters which require dedicated solutions to better mainstream them into the national development efforts? What could be those solutions?

PREPARATORY EVENTS

AFSD (Arab Forum on Sustainable Development) Youth Forum Roundtable - March 2021

Pre-Consultations on the two segments through surveys facilitated by the Arab Youth Platform for Sustainable Development (Sameh Kamel - AYPSD).

SUGGESTED READING

Report of the AFSD 2021

Report of the 2019 Edition of the Youth Forum in the Arab Region

UN Global Youth Strategy

Regional Policy Paper on COVID-19 and Youth - ESCWA 2020

<https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/uploads/impact-covid-19-young-people-arab-region-english.pdf>

UN IANYD STATEMENT ON COVID- 1 9 & YOUTH, 2020

UNV Global Technical Meeting on Re-Imagineering Volunteerism Arab regional breakout session report

[Global Call to Action - Volunteering in the Decade of Action](#)

<https://knowledge.unv.org/evidence-library/measuring-the-economic-and-social-contributions-of-volunteering-anthology-of-papers-from-the-plan-of-action-innovation-challenge>

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

UNESCO will kindly support providing simultaneous translation (english-arabic).

Social media engagement will be supported jointly by all co-leads.