United Nations

YOUTH2030

A Global Progress Report

2021

YOUTH 2030

Youth2030: Progress Report 2021

Youth2030: Progress Report 2021 is the first report on the status of implementation of Youth2030, the United Nations (UN) system-wide Youth Strategy. ↗ The report highlights how the UN system is responding to the needs of youth during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and how it is working with Governments and young people to realize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including updates on the impact of the ambitious UN reform process on youth programming by UN Country Teams (UNCTs). The report outlines how global governance, technical leadership and system-wide coordination structures and actions are improving the effectiveness of implementation efforts and promoting transformative change.

About the Sustainable Development Goals

On 1 January 2016, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — adopted by world leaders in September 2015 at an historic UN Summit — officially came into force. Over the next fifteen years, with these new Goals that universally apply to all, we must all mobilize efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind.

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The Secretary-General

Foreword to Youth2030: Progress Report 2021

Across the world today, young people are disproportionally affected by multifaceted crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, protracted conflicts, gender discrimination, racial injustice and entrenched inequalities.

In 2020 alone, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 168 million students lost access to almost all in-person learning, one in four young people were out of work, and the mental health of hundreds of millions of children and young people risked deterioration. Young women were particularly affected by the increased burden of care work, lost economic opportunities and were at greater risks of violence.

At the same time, on many issues, it is young people who are showing the world the way forward – developing youth-led solutions and demanding that those in positions of power either rise to the challenges of the moment or give space to those who will.

The United Nations system-wide Youth Strategy, Youth2030, was launched with the firm conviction that young people in all their diversity need to be full-fledged partners in the work of the United Nations and in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Progress Report 2021 is the first report on activities within the United Nations system on Youth2030. The report provides a baseline snapshot of how United Nations entities and United Nations Country Teams are responding across the United Nations commitments to youth worldwide.

I am grateful for the leadership of the Envoy on Youth, Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, the High-level Steering Committee for Youth2030 and all who contributed to the report, including youth-led and youth-serving organizations.

I am pleased to see that we are making steady progress, especially when it comes to working for youth, but we still have a great deal of work to do to transform the way we work with young people, in all contexts.

The impacts of today's crisis will resound down the decades. To emerge stronger, intergenerational solidarity is an imperative. We, in the United Nations, must place young people at the heart of our efforts to secure a sustainable and inclusive recovery. Only by doing so can we support the development of young people and reach our shared goal of a more prosperous, equal, resilient and peaceful world for all.

António **Guterres**

Secretary-General of the United Nations

Executive Summary

Youth2030: Progress Report 2021 is the first report on the implementation of the United Nations Youth Strategy, "Youth2030: working with and for young people". Drawing on data submitted by 33 United Nations entities and all 130 United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs), the report provides information and insight on the status of youth-related activities to achieve the goals of the Youth Strategy across the United Nations system.*

Launched by the Secretary-General in 2018, Youth2030 is a common framework for the UN system in working **with** and **for** youth across the human rights, peace and security, and development pillars and in all its humanitarian endeavours. As shown in the present report, the global implementation of the strategy is gaining momentum: over the past two years, including during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, UN entities have continued to put the UN Youth Strategy into action, accelerating its implementation at the speed and scale required to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the General Assembly in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The United Nations, Youth and the Sustainable Development Goals

United Nations entities are engaged in a number of strategic partnerships, programmes and projects to address the challenges related to the development and empowerment of youth and to deliver on the SDGs. United Nations entities are actively investing in youth-lead or co-lead innovations and solutions and are also leveraging a range of advocacy and communication tools to support meaningful youth engagement across several platforms and forums to promote large-scale SDG-related action on youth. In addition, UN entities are establishing a number of knowledge platforms and networking opportunities, thus facilitating the sharing of lessons learned and best practices for a range of stakeholders, including, in particular, for youth.

The work of the UN on youth is based on data and evidence, which are shared as public goods with all stakeholders working in this field in order to inform evidence-based programming and advocacy. As custodians of data collected on the SDGs, UN entities maintain up-to-date statistics in global and regional databases and support cutting-edge research across Youth2030 priority areas, including access to data products, thematic research reports and think pieces. Moreover, UN entities are also spearheading the development of several evidence-based policy and technical guidance tools and capacity-building resources for stakeholders.

The work of UN entities on youth and the SDGs is reflected in the work of UNCTs in two ways: (a) in the form of support to Governments; and (b) as UNCT-led projects. The majority of technical assistance provided to Governments on youth-related activities focus on policy alignment (90%), disaggregated data (90%), and the mainstreaming of youth engagement in the design, monitoring and review of in-country programmes (85%); the top sectors supported are education (95%), employment/labour (85%) and health (85%).

UNCT-led projects on youth involve investment in youth-led solutions, advocacy and communication campaigns and knowledge exchanges of the 130 UNCTs, 80 per cent support investments in youth-led solutions; 60 per cent support advocacy and communication campaigns on youth; and 30 per cent support knowledge exchanges on youth-related subjects.

*The report will be issued in two parts: (a) a narrative of progress in the implementation of the UN Youth Strategy by UN entities and UNCTs; and (b) snapshots of the performance of individual UN entities and UNCTs.

The United Nations, Youth and COVID-19

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the UN has continued to address the needs of youth. Early on in the crisis, UN entities issued Calls to Action alerting stakeholders to the dangers of the disease and they have continued to build a growing body of data and evidence on the impact of the pandemic on youth, outlining the effects of the increasing digital divide and focusing attention on youth groups that have been left farthest behind in the global response. To address this situation, UN entities have developed innovative techniques **with** and **for** youth, as well as a range of resources and tools for stakeholder action at all levels, in order to keep the pledge to "Leave No Youth Behind". UN entities are engaged in strategic partnerships, with the aim of achieving results and providing resources at all levels, and are advocating with and mobilizing stakeholders to act through COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. By sharing knowledge in “real-time” or “near real-time”, UN entities are working to ensure that stakeholders have the capacities to take needed action, engaging directly **with** youth in data and evidence generation and supporting the funding of youth-led solutions to the problems young people are facing during the crisis.

For the present progress report, UNCTs submitted information on their COVID-19 response for youth across 10 areas: 80 per cent of UNCTs reported having included youth in their COVID-19 response in at least one area, while 40 per cent supported youth across more than eight areas. Nearly all UNCTs have provided policy support to Governments and supported action to “Leave No Youth Behind”. While UNCTs in all regions have performed well, the response in the Europe and Central Asia region has been the strongest, with all Country Teams having addressed the needs of youth in their COVID-19 response and recovery actions.

Internal organization of the United Nations to deliver "with" and "for" youth

To intensify work on priority areas of youth programming and to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs, some UN entities have adopted new strategies and plans on youth or have aligned their existing plans with the goals of Youth2030. There are active resource mobilization efforts by UN entities to fund youth plans; some are able to track a year-to-year increase in fund allocation/utilization for youth programmes. Support for youth-led organizations and initiatives is reflected in the establishment of several novel efforts aimed at funding youth-led groups, including leveraging private investment funds. In addition, seven entities have put a youth marker system in place to track “results achieved” and “resources used” for youth at organizational or project levels. In the UNCT central frameworks (UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs)), which guide UN country-level engagement and action, 90 per cent of UNCTs have included results **for** youth and 80 per cent have included youth programming in their joint workplans. However, half of UNCTs have no information on funding for youth, whether planned, available or utilized, and only a third of UNCT reports on youth are available publicly.

UN entities display unique but complementary strengths in their support **for** youth across several priority areas. Programme alignment and delivery without duplication of efforts is ensured through internal coordination mechanisms, organized thematically or system-wide, across several thematic areas. There are similar coordination structures for joint action on youth-related issues in place in over 50 per cent of UNCTs.

To ensure that the UN is fit for the future, Youth2030 stressed the importance of attracting, investing in and managing young talent, including by expanding opportunities and improving the quality of internships for youth, as well as fairness in the process of granting them. In this regard, 18 UN entities reported on their policies and practices in transforming the culture of the workplace, improving both internships (in both quality and fairness) and young talent management. At present, only 10 per cent of UNCTs have adopted actions or introduced innovations to increase the share of youth (people under the age of 35) in the Country Teams or to promote internships.

Overall, the UN is delivering well **for** youth, although the extent to which it is working **with** youth varies across entities and UNCTs. UN entities are guided either by entity-level or inter-agency-level policies or guidance on meaningful youth engagement, engaging **with** youth both outside and within the United Nations. Some entities have reported on institutionalized platforms for meaningful youth engagement, such as youth councils, networks or boards. However, only 15 per cent of UNCTs have policies and processes that meet all, or most, criteria for meaningful youth engagement, 40 per cent have partial policies and processes in place, and 45 per cent have not adopted policies (or have only one). In the main, youth engagement has focused on involving networks of youth, both formal and non-formal (90%); two-thirds of UNCTs have engaged young leaders, influencers, entrepreneurs, academics and advocates; and two-thirds of UNCTs reported that they support the broad engagement of youth. Youth working within the UN system are the least likely to be engaged by UNCTs (30%). When it comes to the pledge to "Leave No Youth Behind", it was reported that networks of girls and young women are most frequently involved in the work of UNCTs, while indigenous groups are the least represented. Youth are engaged in three distinct processes with UNCTs: (a) 60 per cent of UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks include young people in the design phase; (b) 90 per cent of UNCTs include young people in their activities to support Government efforts to implement the SDGs; and (c) 80 per cent of UNCTs support investments in youth-led solutions. In general, within the UN system, there is greater support **for** youth than for working **with** youth.

Global governance, technical leadership and system-wide coordination

Global governance, technical leadership and system-wide coordination structures have been established to promote transformative change and the implementation of the Youth2030 across the UN system. Ongoing efforts include the identification of fields for fast-tracking results, institutionalizing performance measurement and accountability systems (such as the Youth2030 UNCT Scorecard), developing knowledge packs to accelerate implementation of the UN Youth Strategy by the UNCTs and engaging with a broad range of stakeholders to galvanize action.

The implementation of the UN Youth Strategy will be ramped up over the coming years: the present findings provide a baseline on where the UN system currently stands vis-à-vis delivering on its aims and objectives.

The road ahead

Ensuring that the COVID-19 response and recovery is “green” and “to scale” over the course of the Decade of Action (2020–2030) is critical to the successful implementation of the SDGs. As we look to recover better together, some key considerations for the work of the UN system **with** and **for** youth include: balancing short-term responses and funding with long-term economic, social and environmental action and investments across Youth2030 priority areas; applying a youth and intergenerational lens in all recovery efforts; ensuring equity considerations, including addressing the digital divide to ensure the imperative to "Leave No Youth Behind"; leveraging the power of youth movements in the COVID-19 response for action on the SDGs; and joint technical cooperation among global and regional country teams in carrying out strategic actions at all levels.

“Strengthening the foundations for a UN that delivers **with** and **for** young people”, as set out in the UN Youth Strategy, is a formulation for resetting the internal focus of the UN system on youth and enabling it to respond cohesively, effectively and transparently to the needs of youth. It is evident that the coordinated work of the entire UN system is critical to ensuring a better delivery of the goals of Youth2030. For this purpose, the use of several (existing) instruments needs to be scaled up and institutionalized. In the short term, a system-wide youth marker system at the organizational level within and across entities needs to be established to ensure accountability and transparency of the work of the United Nations on youth. A data-driven action plan should be prioritized to review and rework policies and practices with regard to the youth workforce, including improving the value of internships for youth. In this regard, the roll-out of the Business Operations Strategy within the UN system presents an excellent opportunity to strengthen coordination and action across all of these vital areas.

While youth engagement in the UN system is evident at all levels, it needs to be stepped up, especially in its engagement **with** youth from disadvantaged groups. In order for youth engagement to be truly meaningful, working **with** youth needs to be more systematic and institutionalized, backed by strong policies and processes, to ensure that the UN, its entities and UNCTs can collectively deliver on the SDGs, including the important targets for youth, by 2030.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
BOS	Business Operations Strategy
CCA	Common country analysis
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
CSO	Civil society organization
DCO	Development Coordination Office
DESA	Department for Economic and Social Affairs
DISD	Division for Inclusive Social Development
DMSPC	Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance
DOS	Department of Operational Support
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GBV	Gender-based violence
GenU	Generation Unlimited
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HLSC	High-Level Steering Committee
HLPF	United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
IANYD	Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICMYO	International Coordination Meeting of Youth Organizations
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMS	Information Management System
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ITC	International Trade Centre
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
JWG	Joint Working Group
KEx	Knowledge exchange
KPIs	Key performance indicators
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LGBTIQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer +
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODA	Office for Disarmament Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

OSGEY/DGC	Office of the Secretary-General on Youth /Department of Global Communications
PBF	Peacebuilding Fund
PBSO	Peacebuilding Support Office
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNAOC	United Nations Alliance of Civilizations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNCT-SWAP-GESC	United Nations Country Team System-wide Action Plan Gender Equality Scorecard
UNDIS	United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNSDCF	UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UNSDG	United Nations Sustainable Development Group
UN-SWAP	UN System-Wide Action Plan
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UN-Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WHO	World Health Organization
Youth2030	United Nations system-wide Strategy on Youth
YPS	Youth, peace and security

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1.
Youth2030: the UN system-wide Youth Strategy

1.1 Overview

Our world is home to the largest generation of young people in its history, and in many countries young people make up the largest proportion of the population.

As "torchbearers" and partners in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, young people have a pivotal role to play in achieving sustainable, inclusive and peaceful societies worldwide. The numerous challenges that young people face – including mental health issues, sexual and reproductive health and rights, poor educational outcomes and high rates of unemployment, the climate change, migration and humanitarian crises, poverty, gender inequality and global conflicts – have all been compounded in the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. During this demanding period, young people throughout the world have been the drivers of social change, showing a spirit of resilience and innovation and a strong commitment to the future of the global community.

Youth2030, the UN system-wide Youth Strategy, launched by the Secretary-General in 2018, reset the UN focus on youth to facilitate expanded global, regional and country-level action and outlined UN joint action **for** and **with** youth. The UN recognizes that it cannot achieve its historic mission and cannot be prepared to face future challenges without young people as full-fledged partners in building a better world for all.

Youth2030 aims to:

- Address the needs, build the agency and advance the rights of young people in all their diversity (referred to as the work of the UN system **for** youth throughout the progress report).

- Ensure young people's engagement and participation in the implementation, review and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other relevant global agendas and frameworks (meaningful youth engagement is referred to as the work of the UN system **with** youth throughout the progress report).

- Make sure that the work of the UN work on youth is pursued in a coordinated and holistic manner with the full participation of youth, in line with the reform of the UN development system.

1.2 Structure

Youth2030 is structured to transform how the UN works **for** and **with** young people across the three pillars of the UN system, human rights, peace and security, and development, as well as in all its humanitarian endeavours. The strategy has two broad components:

- **Priority areas for programming**
- **Foundational areas**

Priority areas				
Engagement, participation and advocacy	Informed and healthy foundations	Economic empowerment through decent work	Youth and human rights	Peace and resilience-building

Foundational areas			
Leadership example- Youth in the UN	The UN as a knowledge and innovation pioneer	The UN as an investment and solutions catalyst	The UN as an accountability leader

1.3. Overview of progress in the implementation of Youth2030

As evidenced by the reporting of UN entities and UN Country Teams (UNCTs) on the status of implementation of the UN system-wide Youth Strategy in 2020, Youth2030 has gained momentum across the UN system over the past two years.

The highlights across priority programing areas of Youth2030 include:

UN entities and UNCTs recalibrated the implementation of the strategy during the COVID-19 crisis to ensure that the needs of youth were addressed rapidly and robustly through:

- Issuance of urgent Calls to Action.
- Generation of data and evidence on the impact of COVID-19 on youth.
- Development of resources and tools for action at all levels.
- Adaptation of ongoing programmes and projects to respond to the pandemic, including innovations with youth.
- Establishment of strategic partnerships for results and resources.
- Support for advocacy and stakeholder mobilization for action at scale; knowledge shared in real time/near-real time to strengthen capacities of stakeholders to act.

In all UN efforts, safeguarding the gains made in SDGs for youth was underlined. Progress continues to be made across Youth2030 priority areas of programming at all levels through:

- Driving change through data and evidence.
- Developing resources and tools to accelerate action on youth and SDGs.
- Addressing development challenges for youth, through a range of projects, programmes and partnerships.
- Innovating **for** and **with** youth;
- Advocating, communicating and mobilizing stakeholders for action on youth and SDGs.

In the foundational areas of the UN system-wide Youth Strategy, guided by the youth focus in UN strategic plans and cooperation frameworks, there are a number of important initiatives, including: numerous efforts in the area of joint planning, implementation and coordination on youth to improve the coherence and effectiveness of delivery; changes in the youth workforce and internships; and enhancement of the UN leadership and organizational culture to engage youth meaningfully.

Detailed insights on the progress in priority and foundational areas of the strategy are available in chapter 2 below.

Implementation excellence and transformative changes across the UN are being driven through global leadership (strategic and technical), system-wide coordination and wide stakeholder engagement and advocacy: information on systems, structures and knowledge efforts related to support for the UN Youth Strategy are summarized in chapter 3 below.

1.4 The journey from launch to December 2020

September 2018
Launch of Youth2030, the UN system-wide Youth Strategy

Jan. - June 2019 (first and second quarters)

- Youth2030 High Level Steering Committee (HLSC) established for strategic guidance.
- 10 fast-track countries identified to accelerate results.
- Initial action plans for the implementation of Youth2030 received from 32. UN entities and 3 multi-stakeholder initiatives.

July - Dec. 2019 (third and fourth quarters)

- Youth2030: the Joint Working Group (JWG: technical leadership team) constituted; working modalities established.
- Youth2030 Scorecard conceptualized for performance measurement and accountability.
- 4 key performance indicators included in the UN Sustainable Development Group Information Management System (UNSDG IMS) for UN reporting.

Jan. - June 2020 (first and second quarters)

- Youth2030 Secretariat established for system-wide coordination.
- Youth2030 global joint workplan agreed upon.
- Timebound Task Teams start developing key knowledge products.
- Online, shared workspace set up for seamless working.
- UNCT Scorecard ready for field testing.

July – Dec. 2020 (third and fourth quarters)

- UNCT Scorecard validated, finalized and integrated in UNSDG IMS.
- Stakeholder briefings to galvanize support for Youth2030 implementation organized.
- Youth2030 online and a one-stop knowledge portal developed.
- UNCT knowledge pack, consisting of an action guide, a toolkit and a catalogue of initiatives, advanced.
- Global governance and coordination mechanisms fully functional.
- Youth Focal Point function set up in the offices of five resident coordinators in fast-track countries.
- 130 UNCTs reported for the first time on UNSDG IMS against the scorecard.
- 33 UN entities reported for the first time on the status of the implementation of Youth2030.

2.
Insights into the implementation of Youth2030 in the UN system

The following insights into the implementation of Youth2030 across the UN system are based on an analysis of reporting by 33 UN entities and all 130 UNCTs on their work "for" and "with" youth, organized as follows:

- 2.1. Key messages
- 2.2 First reporting: analysis
- 2.3 How is the UN system responding to the needs of youth in the COVID-19 crisis?
- 2.4 How is the UN system supporting the “Youth and SDGs” agenda?
- 2.5 How is the UN internally organized at the global, regional and country levels to deliver **for** and **with** youth?
- 2.6 Youth2030: UNCT Leaderboard 2020: top-performing UNCTs in different areas of action

In three sections (2.3, 2.4 and 2.5) insights on both UN entities and UNCTs are provided with regard to:

What is happening across UN entities ?
How is work at the UN entity-level reflected in the work of the UNCTs?

2.1
Key messages

1.

The UN response to the needs of youth during the COVID-19 crisis has been rapid and robust.

2.

Across the UN system, there is growing momentum on the "Youth and the SDGs" agenda in the Youth2030 priority areas of programming at all levels. Projects, programmes, strategic partnerships, support to Governments and innovations with young people are part of the ongoing work of the UN **for** and **with** youth. While there are differences among regions, the work of the UN system on youth is set to accelerate over the short term.

3.

The ambitious UN reform process is also reflected in youth programming of the "new generation" of UNCTs.[1] Joint planning, implementation and coordination on youth are evident, although more pronounced in some regions than others.

4.

Effective tracking of results and resources for youth and transparency of reporting on youth in the UN system need to be strengthened at all levels.

5.

Two foundational areas of Youth2030 - internships and the youth workforce – require attention.

6.

The UN is delivering well **for** youth, although work **with** youth varies across UN entities and UNCTs, robust in some and less so in others. There is evidence of the engagement of disadvantaged/ marginalized groups, but this needs to be stepped up. Overall, for youth engagement to be truly meaningful, working **with** youth needs to be more systematic and institutionalized, backed by strong and inclusive policies and processes.

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[1] The reform aims to reposition the United Nations development system (including the UNCTs, sometimes referred to as the "new generation of UNCTs) with a stronger, better-defined collective identity as a trusted, reliable, cohesive, accountable and effective partner with countries in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

2.2
First reporting: analysis

The 33 UN entities[2] that reported on their action plans/workplans are:

- Eleven Departments and Offices of the UN Secretariat: DCO, DESA, DMSPC, DOS, DPPA, OCHA, ODA, OHCHR, UNDRR, UNODC and OSGEY/DGC.

- Five funds and programmes of the General Assembly: UNDP, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNICEF and UNV.

- Four "other UN entities" of the General Assembly: ITC, UNHCR, UNOPS and UN-Women.

- One related organization of the General Assembly: IOM.

- Three of the regional commissions of the Economic and Social Council: ECE, ECLAC and ESCWA.

- Seven specialized agencies: FAO, IFAD, ILO, ITU, UNESCO, UNIDO and WHO.

- One "other body" of ECOSOC: UNAIDS.

- One initiative of the Secretary-General: UNAOC.

All 130 UNCTs reported in the UN Sustainable Development Group Information Management Systems (UNSDG IMS).

While the reporting by the UN entities was qualitative, UNCTs reported on 20 key performance indicators (KPIs) in the Youth2030 UNCT Scorecard, the performance measurement and accountability tool for UNCTs. Twenty indicators yielded 27 scores for each UNCT. For each set of scoring criteria and thresholds set in the Youth2030 UNCT Scorecard, scores are marked as 🟢 : "at milestone"; 🟡 : "moving forward; and 🔴 : "getting ready". (The percentages of UNCTs in each category have been rounded off to the closest number).

Access to the complete results reported on the Youth2030 UNCT Scorecard are available here. ↗

[2]The full names of all entities are set out the in the acronyms and abbreviations listing in the prefatory matter.

2.3

How is the UN system responding to the needs of youth in the COVID-19 crisis?

KEY MESSAGE

1.
The UN response to the needs of youth during the COVID-19 crisis has been rapid and robust.

Insights on the UN system response to the needs of youth in the COVID-19 crisis are organized as follows:

2.3.1 **How are UN entities responding to the needs of youth in the COVID-19 crisis?**
- Calls to Action.
- Generating data and evidence on the impact of COVID-19 on youth.
- Developing resources and tools for action at all levels.
- Adapting ongoing programmes and projects to respond to COVID-19, including innovations **with** youth.
- Establishment of strategic partnerships to achieve results and provide resources.
- Advocating with and mobilizing stakeholders to act and to share knowledge.

2.3.2 **How is the response at the UN entity-level reflected in the response of the UNCTs?**

2.3.1 How are UN entities responding to the needs of youth in the COVID-19 crisis?

Calls to Action

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, several Calls to Action were issued by world leaders urging stakeholders to act. Three UN Calls to Action applicable to youth are highlighted here:

The Secretary-General's first Call to Action ↗ in March 2020:

- Outlined the impact of the pandemic on youth, on quality education, employment and business opportunities for women and youth.
- Called attention to vulnerable youth groups, including, young women and girls, minorities, indigenous peoples, LGBTIQ+ and young people with disabilities.
- Highlighted the positive contribution to the response by youth.
- Outlined the key actions to be taken by different stakeholders; and
- Underlined the need for the engagement and ownership of youth, across the response of the UN system.

The Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth issued a Call to Young People ↗ in March 2020 urging them to join hands and respond to the pandemic by:

- Following WHO guidelines.
- Educating their families, friends and community.
- Volunteering.
- Donating.
- Holding Governments accountable.

The UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (UN IANYD) Statement on COVID-19 and Youth ↗ closely followed in April 2020, signed by 50 UN entities and 166 youth organizations/networks on:

- Partnering safely and effectively with young people during and after the COVID-19 crisis.
- Recognizing young people's potential to advance the fight against the pandemic.
- Understanding the impact the pandemic "has and will have" on young people and ensuring that the UN response supports young people's human rights and is inclusive of their needs.

Generating data and evidence on the impact of COVID-19 on youth

A highlight of the work of UN entities on youth and COVID-19 is the generation of data and evidence through response and recovery efforts (see 2.4.1 below: Driving change through data and evidence). Evidence on the impact of COVID-19 on youth and the effectiveness of interventions continue to be generated at the global, regional and country levels. Studies and surveys early in the pandemic indicated how girls and young women, migrant and refugee youth, LGBTIQ+ youth and rural and urban youth were disproportionately affected. The digital divide emerged as a critical bottleneck that needed focus and investment to ensure the pledge to "Leave No Youth Behind" in the response. Some of the efforts to generate evidence were led by youth, and in many other cases youth were meaningfully engaged by the UN.

Examples of UN data and evidence generation efforts:

- Youth and COVID-19: Impact on Jobs, Education, Rights and Mental Well-Being (Decent Jobs for Youth).
- How many children and young people have Internet access at home? (Generation Unlimited + Giga).
- COVID-19 impacts on the labour migration and mobility of young women and girls in South-East Asia and the Pacific (IOM).

Examples of youth-led evidence generation, where youth were meaningfully engaged:

- Survey Report on Youth Engagement on COVID-19 for the Africa We Want (UNDRR, UNESCO, the Africa Youth Advisory Board on Disaster Risk Reduction + partners).
- Youth as Researchers on COVID-19, a global youth-led initiative to measure the impact of COVID-19 (UNESCO).

Developing resources and tools for action at all levels

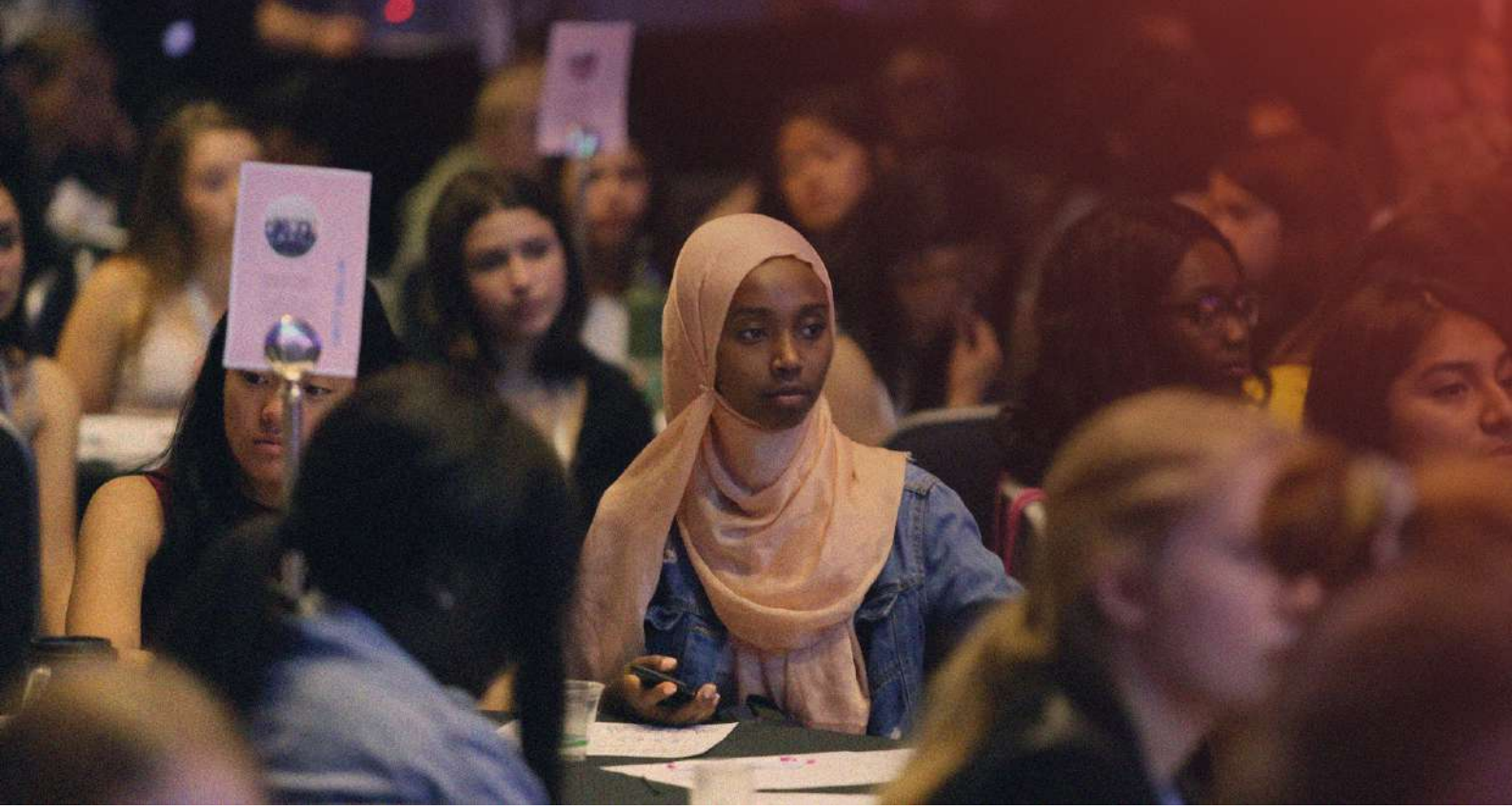
Across all Youth2030 priority areas, policy, technical and operational guidance and tools were rapidly developed to support stakeholders in responding to the needs of youth in the crisis and recovering better together. Several guidance documents and briefs focused on targeted strategies for the pledge to "Leave No Youth Behind". Stress was laid on the importance of ensuring meaningful youth engagement in stakeholders' action, including in national responses. Young people's leadership on innovation and finding new solutions was emphasized.

Examples of UN system guidance on youth and COVID-19:

- Education in a post-COVID-19 world: Nine ideas for public action (UNESCO + partners).
- COVID-19 Operational guidance for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings activities for children, adolescents, and families (UNICEF).
- My Body, My Life, My World through a COVID-19 lens (UNFPA).
- ILO monitor series, a set of technical pieces on the impacts of COVID-19 on labour markets with concrete youth-related analyses and recommendations (ILO).
- COVID-19: Working with and for Young People in Humanitarian Action (Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action).
- Protecting and mobilizing youth in COVID-19 responses (DESA).

Example of guidance on Meaningful youth engagement in stakeholders' response:

- Engaging with adolescents and young people in assessments of socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 and recovery: regional guidance (UN Issue-Based Coalition on Adolescents and Youth in the Europe and Central Asia region).



Adapting ongoing programmes and projects to respond to COVID-19, including innovations with youth

Early in 2020, existing workplans in UN entities, including multi-stakeholder initiatives and project plans, were reworked to strengthen the UN COVID-19 response and recovery. Existing funding instruments were adjusted to ensure an adequate response to the pandemic. Some highlights include innovations with vulnerable youth, including youth in urban informal settlements, LGBTIQ+ youth and refugee youth.

Some examples of recalibration of UN initiatives and funding:

- 16x16 Initiative adapted to COVID-19 (UNDP).
- UN Peacebuilding Fund Youth Promotion Initiative adapted for COVID-19 response (DPPA).

Some examples of UN engaging youth in the COVID-19 response are:

- COVID-19 design challenge for youth (UNDP + UNICEF) (Example: Ethiopia).
- Youth-led Emergency COVID-19 response project: 100 COVID-19 prevention handwashing stations, reaching 2.5 million people, as well as handwashes, masks distribution and health information.
- Kenya and Somalia: Youth in informal urban settlements
- Ecuador: LGBTIQ+ community, Venezuelan refugees (UN-Habitat with 35 youth-led organizations).

Establishment of strategic partnerships to achieve results and provide resources

Strategic partnerships were established at all levels to support the response and achieve impact at scale. New funds were established by the UN for its COVID-19 response and recovery efforts, which UNCTs could draw upon in building their individual youth responses to the crisis. Some UN entities established special funds for youth-led responses.

Examples of strategic partnerships:

- Giga – Connect every school to the Internet (ITU + UNICEF).
- Global Youth Mobilization for Generation Disrupted: Invest and scale-up youth-led solutions (WHO + partners).
- Issue-based coalition on youth and adolescents focusing on the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 on youth (UN Regional Collaborative Platform for Europe and Central Asia).
- Youth co:Lab in the Asia-Pacific region: youth social entrepreneurship movement (UNDP + partner).

Examples of new funds established by the UN for its COVID-19 response and recovery efforts from which UNCTs built their youth responses:

- United Nations COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund (UN, coordinated by UNDP) (Example: Kenya).
- COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund (WHO).

Examples of funds established by UN entities for youth-led responses:

- Y+ Social Aid Fund: Support young people living with HIV in the COVID-19 pandemic (UNAIDS).
- WASH vs. COVID-19 Innovator Fund Digitalizing and crisis- proofing 20 youth-led start-ups (ESCWA + partners).
- The Youth Fund: COVID-19 Action New fund designed by young people to support youth action (UNFPA, MGCY + partners).

Advocating with and mobilize stakeholders to act; share knowledge

The response to the COVID-19 crisis among youth needed to be large-scale and comprehensive. A key UN action was to advocate, communicate and mobilize stakeholders to act **for** and **with** youth. UN entities also invested in sensitization and capacity development activities to scale up solutions rapidly. Several UN entities transferred knowledge and good practices in real-time and near-real-time to stakeholders through different online platforms and mechanisms (including webinars and town halls). In its response, the UN reached out, inter alia, to policymakers, programme managers and implementers and advocates, including, importantly, young people.

Examples of advocacy and stakeholder mobilization are:

- Safeguarding investment in education in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis (UNESCO + SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee).
- #YouthAgainstCOVID19, young people as communicators and influencers to spread accurate information on COVID-19 (UNFPA + partners).
- Recover with integrity: “Keeping the Receipts: Transparency and Accountability during COVID-19” (UNODC and Africa Young Parliamentarians Network).
- Averting a lost COVID-19 generation: A six-point plan to respond, recover and reimagine a post-pandemic world for every child (UNICEF).
- Reimagine the UN Together Challenge: UN system-wide ideation and crowdsourcing challenge to share, innovate and scale solutions in the COVID-19 crisis (OSGEY).

Illustrations of the transfer of knowledge and good practices in real-time and near-real-time to stakeholders:

- #CopingWithCOVID webinar series on young people and mental health (OSGEY, UNICEF + WHO).
- #DigitalCovidConvo: Young People's Role in Driving Digital Trends During Uncertain Times (OSGEY + partners).
- Global Online Dialogue on “Navigating uncertainties: An intergenerational dialogue on COVID-19 and youth employment” (DESA).
- Interactive lab on youth surveys, data + COVID-19 (Decent Jobs for Youth, IANYD + MGCY).
- Strengthening advocacy capacities of youth/women's organizations in Central America, including the negative impact of COVID-19 on sexual and reproductive health rights (OHCHR).

2.3.2 How is the response at the UN entity-level reflected in the response of the UNCTs?

UNCT action on youth and COVID-19 was captured across ten (10) areas:

1. "Leave No Youth Behind".
2. Policy support.
3. Data.
4. Public finance.
5. Mainstreaming youth engagement in design, monitoring and review of national response.
6. Investments in youth-led solutions for COVID-19.
7. Advocacy and communication.
8. Knowledge exchange.
9. Recalibrating UNCT workplans to respond to the needs of youth during COVID-19.
10. UNCT commitment to meaningful youth engagement in its COVID-19 response.

Highlights of UNCT action on youth and COVID-19:

80 per cent[3] of UNCTs (103 of 130) included youth in their COVID-19 response in at least one area of action; 54 UNCTs across the regions supported youth in COVID-19 across most areas, and 26 UNCTs have supported youth and COVID-19 in all ten areas.

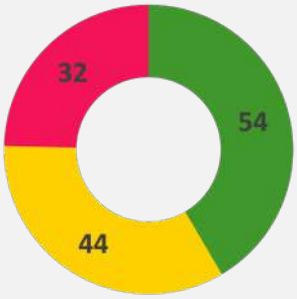
- **Top areas of support:**

- Policy support (95%).
- Leaving No Youth Behind (95%).
- Data availability and quality (75%).
- Investments in youth-led responses during the COVID-19 crisis (75%).

While all regions have performed well, the response in the Europe and Central Asia region has been outstanding, with all UNCTs addressing the needs of youth in their COVID-19 response and recovery actions. The response in the Asia-Pacific region has also been strong, with 50 per cent of UNCTs supporting youth across most areas.

- **Number of UNCTs 🟢 "at milestone", 🟡 "moving forward" and 🔴 "getting ready" for the COVID key performance indicator is outlined below**

UNCTs, youth and COVID-19 response and recovery planning



Key performance indicator 20: UNCTs, youth and COVID-19 response and recovery planning

*Includes UNCTs that support at least 1 area/sector/criteria

54 UNCTs "at milestone" for COVID-19 response and recovery: key performance indicator

Africa	Arab States	Asia-Pacific	Europe and Central Asia	Latin America and the Caribbean
Angola	Jordan	Bangladesh	Albania	Barbados
Benin	State of Palestine	Bhutan	Kosovo*	Chile
Burkina Faso		Cambodia	Kyrgyzstan	Colombia
Cabo Verde		Fiji	Moldova	Dominican Republic
Cameroon		India	North Macedonia	Ecuador
Egypt		Islamic Republic of Iran	Serbia	Guatemala
Ethiopia		Lao People's Democratic Republic	Tajikistan	Panama
Gabon		Pakistan	Turkmenistan	Suriname
The Gambia		Philippines	Ukraine	Trinidad and Tobago
Guinea-Bissau		Sri Lanka	Uzbekistan	
Kenya		Thailand		
Mali		Timor-Leste		
Mauritania				
Rwanda				
Sao Tome and Principe				
Senegal				
Somalia				
South Africa				
Togo				
Uganda				
Zimbabwe				

*All references to Kosovo in the present report shall be understood in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

2.4
How is the UN system supporting the "Youth and SDGs" agenda?

KEY MESSAGE

2.
There is growing momentum across the UN system on the "Youth and SDGs" agenda at all levels of the Youth2030 priority areas, as evidenced in numerous projects, programmes, strategic partnerships, support to Governments and innovations **for** and **with** youth. While regional variations occur, the work on youth is set to accelerate over the short term.

Insights on UN system action on the "Youth and SDGs" agenda are organized as follows:

2.4.1 How are UN entities supporting the "Youth and SDGs" agenda?

Driving change through data and evidence.
Developing resources and tools to accelerate action on youth and the SDGs.
Addressing development challenges for youth, through a range of projects, programmes and partnerships.
Innovating **for** and **with** youth.
Advocating, communicating and mobilizing stakeholders for action on youth and SDGs.

2.4.2 How are UNCTs supporting the "Youth and SDGs" agenda?

2.4.1 How are UN entities supporting the 'Youth and SDGs agenda?

Driving change through data and evidence

Data and evidence generation, which are the cornerstone of the UN work on youth and the SDGs at all levels, adds immediate value to the initiatives of stakeholders and institutions to advance action on youth (see also section 2.3.1. above: Generating data and evidence on the impact of COVID-19 on youth). UN entities act as custodian agencies for the compilation, validation, analysis, use and communication of statistically sound, internationally comparable thematic data in the SDG Indicators Global Databases. ↗ These UN entities are also responsible for strengthening national monitoring and reporting capacity.

During the reporting period, the UN shared its up-to-date reference data in global SDG databases and regional databases to advance global, regional and country-level action. In this regard, the development of an SDG youth dashboard to track progress on youth-relevant data is of particular importance.

Spearheading new global indicators and methodologies for data collection and supporting cutting-edge research across several Youth2030 priority areas are highlighted in the reports submitted by UN entities.

UN entities make available data and data products (factsheets, briefs and global periodic reports) as a public good to inform evidence-based programming and advocacy. During the reporting period, UN entities issued over 50 thematic research reports, think pieces and working papers to advance global action on youth.

Global SDG databases relevant to youth include:

- ↗ Global Education database, UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS).
- ↗ ILOSTAT with youth statistics (ILO).

Regional databases with thematic/population focus to advance regional and country-level action include:

- JUVeLAC Youth Observatory (Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), including social inclusion) (ECLAC).
- SDG database (Young people's health and education) (ECE).
- MaterniLAC database (Adolescent fertility in LAC) (ECLAC).
- Gender Equality Observatory (Young women in LAC, including Gender-based violence) (ECLAC).
- MIALC (Internal migration in LAC) (ECLAC).

Examples of the development of new global indicators and methodologies for data collection:

- Global Action for Measurement of Adolescent Health (GAMA) (UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN-Women, the World Bank Group, WFP+ WHO).
- MILENA methodology: "Socioeconomic consequences. of adolescent pregnancy in six Latin American countries" (UNFPA).

A sample list of key/flagship global periodic publications (youth sensitive/youth-focused) includes:

- UN *World Youth Report 2020* (DESA).
- Global Education Monitoring Report (UNESCO).
- Global AIDS Report (UNAIDS).
- Creating Opportunities for Rural Youth: 2019 Rural Development Report (IFAD).
- Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020 Technology and the future of Jobs (ILO).
- Report of the Secretary-General on youth, peace and security.
- Global Humanitarian Overview 2021 (OCHA).

Developing resources and tools to accelerate action on youth and the SDGs

In addition to databases and other informational products, during the reporting period UN entities have developed at least two dozen resources, including guidance and technical notes, manuals, handbooks, “standards” documents and toolkits. These resources are for both policymaking and technical direction, as well as for sensitization/capacity-building for various stakeholders, including parliamentarians, policymakers, programme managers, implementers, advocates and influencers, including youth.

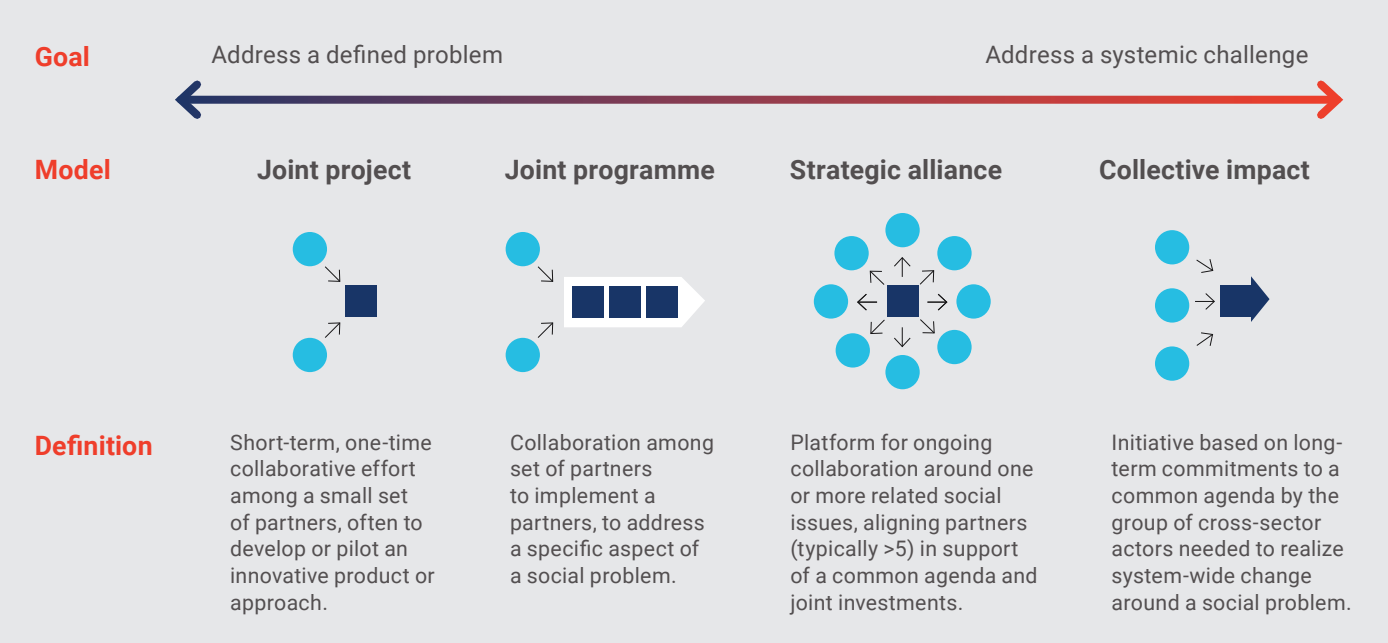
Examples of UN resources and guidance:

- Secondary Education Guidance: Multiple and Flexible Pathways (UNICEF).
- International Technical and Programmatic Guidance on Out-of-School Comprehensive Sexuality Education (UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF + WHO).
- Promoting green jobs for youth through national employment policies and programmes (ILO).
- #Faith4Rights toolkit (OHCHR).
- Engaged and Heard! UNICEF Training on Adolescent Participation and Civic Engagement (UNICEF).
- Youth, Peace and Security: a programming handbook (UNFPA, UNDP, DPPA + partner).
- Education for Justice (E4J) Initiative (UNODC).
- Words into Action guidelines: Engaging children and youth in disaster risk reduction and resilience building (UNDRR).

Addressing development challenges for youth, through a range of projects, programmes and partnerships

The UN uses a wide and diverse array of institutional arrangements to address development challenges on youth. From projects and programmes supported by single UN entities to complex multi-stakeholder partnerships, the UN system continues to deploy a full spectrum of institutional arrangements.

Multi-stakeholder partnership typology



Source: See Peterson, K., Mahmud, A., Bhavaraju, N. and Mihaly, A. (2014), The Promise of Partnerships: A Dialogue between International NGOs and Donors, FSG (Creative commons).

Examples of joint projects on youth, peace and security under the UN Peacebuilding Fund:

- Building the social cohesion of the communities that receive young returnees as a bridge towards a peaceful and effective reintegration in Guatemala (FAO, IOM + UNESCO).
- Harnessing the Youth's Potential to Sustain Peace in Uganda (OHCHR, UNDP + UNFPA).
- Participation of Youth and Women in Peacebuilding process in Sri Lanka (UNFPA, UNV + UN-Women).

Examples of UN joint programmes and initiatives:

- The "Education Plus" Initiative: Empowerment of adolescent girls and young women in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF + UN-Women).
- Joint UN Regional Programme: on universal access to sexual and reproductive health and to end AIDS (UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF + WHO).
- Opportunities for Youth in Africa: accelerating job creation for youth in the agri-food sector (FAO, UNIDO + partners).
- Global Programme to End Child Marriage (UNFPA + UNICEF).

Examples of multi-stakeholder partnerships, initiatives, coalitions, platforms, alliances and mechanisms in place to support programming in different youth development areas (and meaningful youth engagement):

- SDG4 steering committee.
- Generation Unlimited, including a Young Peoples' Action Team.
- Decent Jobs for Youth: the Global Initiative for Action.
- Solutions for Youth Employment (S4YE).
- Global Partnership on Children with Disabilities (Youth Council).
- Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security.
- The Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action.
- Connect4Climate.

Innovating "for" and "with" youth

Innovations and creative solutions add value and transformative changes to UN system efforts to address development challenges among youth. Reporting from UN entities and UNCTs includes a long list of innovations, where youth lead or co-lead solutions. Good examples of digital/technical innovations, including “hackathons”, as well as activities on youth-led accountability and innovating **for** and **with** vulnerable and disadvantaged youth groups, are available. Examples of youth awards for innovation are highlighted below.

Examples of youth-led initiatives:

- Youth-led rehabilitation efforts to support local communities affected by the Beirut explosion of August 2020 (UNESCO, UNFPA + UNODC).
- CONCAUSA is an initiative that aims to empower, connect and mobilize adolescents in Latin America: it organized an online contest social innovation projects by youth for the SDGs. (ECLAC, UNICEF + partner)
- Youth Now! Regional virtual camp to mobilize against gender-based violence and to design youth-led solutions. (UNFPA + partners).
- Youth Sustainable Energy Hub is a youth-led initiative on sustainable energy. (UNICEF, UNIDO, SDG 7 Youth Constituency + partners).
- IANYD Interactive Labs, co-designed by the UN and youth entities.

Examples of youth-led social accountability in design, monitoring and review of government/national programmes:

- Municipal Seal of Approval: development of municipal plans of action, based on a participatory situational analysis with children and adolescents in 1,900 municipalities in Brazil (UNICEF).
- Youth-led scorecards: national accountability mechanism on the implementation of the 2016 Political Declaration on AIDS (UNAIDS).

Examples of innovations for and with vulnerable youth groups:

- Regional (Latin America and the Caribbean) Leadership School for people of African descent, led by an Afro-descendent organization for youth (UNFPA + Ashanti Peru).
- Regional (LAC) Leadership School for youth with disabilities (UNFPA, UNESCO + partners).

Examples of digital innovations, including “hackathons”:

- #Hack4Education: Youth-led technical solutions for inclusive and equitable quality education (ITU, UNESCO + partners).
- Youth "hackathon" programming marathon for young developers in Eastern Africa to design and implement software applications on anti-corruption (UNODC).
- DataJam: technical youth challenge to develop data-based solutions to combat human trafficking (UNODC).
- Future Cities Challenge: young people design solutions to transform their cities (UN-Habitat + partner).
- Apps 4 Digital Peace Competition 2020: technology-based solutions by youth to promote a safe and peaceful cyber environment (ODA, OSGEY + partner).

Examples of the UN recognizing the leadership of youth:

- Youth Advocates and Ambassadors for Rural Youth (IFAD).
- Youth Inspiring Youth in Agriculture in Uganda: Youth Agripreneurs Awards (FAO + partners).
- Youth SDG Awards, recognizing young people’s role as leaders of the SDGs (UNDP + partner).

Advocating, communicating and mobilizing stakeholders for action on youth and the SDGs

Achieving the SDGs will only be possible if the response is large scale and comprehensive. During the reporting period, UN entities have continued to advocate, communicate and mobilize stakeholders to act **for** and **with** youth.

UN entities issued consensus statements, calls to action, blog series and articles to raise awareness on a wide range of youth issues, including disarmament, climate, digital inclusion, environment, conflict prevention, youth-led accountability, public finance, civic engagement, human rights and sexual reproductive health and rights.

UN entities continue to support meaningful youth engagement in several global platforms and intergovernmental forums, including the ECOSOC Youth Forum, the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the Commission for Social Development, the Security Council, the General Assembly and events, summits, global conferences of UN entities and global thematic conferences. UN entities also participated and contributed to youth-led events.

Several advocacy campaigns and initiatives, including social media campaigns, were implemented across Youth2030 priority areas. Areas covered by these campaigns included youth empowerment, political participation, digital cooperation, education for sustainable development, climate, socio-emotional learning, disarmament and disaster risk reduction.

Several UN entities have actively participated in the International Youth Day (led and organized by DESA) and other International Day commemorations advocating for youth rights across various themes. UN entities also support youth networks through their advocacy.

UN entities established several knowledge platforms to facilitate the sharing of lessons learned and best practices, as well as virtual networking opportunities for different stakeholders, including youth.

Examples of Calls to Action:

- Call to Action “Make adolescent well-being a priority” (Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health).
- Consensus Statement on Youth-led Accountability, ICPD25, Nairobi Summit.
- Joint Statement on Recent Violent Escalations During Youth-led Protests Around the World (OSGEY and Special Rapporteurs of the UN Human Rights Special Procedures).
- Secretary-General’s Call to Action for Human Rights includes a focus on the rights of youth and future generations.

Examples of meaningful youth engagement in global forums, platforms and global summits and conferences:

- UN75 Global Dialogues with young people (OSGEY, OPGA, ICMYO + MGCY).
- Regional Youth Consultation in LAC: towards Beijing+25 (UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF + UN-Women).
- Youth Climate Summit UN Climate Action Summit (OSGEY, UNDRR + partners).
- Youth Engagement Reference Group - Nairobi Summit on the 25th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development.
- International Symposium on Youth Participation in Peace Processes (OSGEY, DPPA/PBSO, UNDP + UNFPA).
- Migration Youth Forum and the Youth Leadership and Innovation Award for Migration at the Global Forum for Migration and Development (IOM, UNICEF + MGCY).
- Youth Delegates Programme (DESA).

Examples of UN entities participating and contributing to youth-led events:

- International Association of Students in Economics and Management: Global Youth Forum (ILO).
- European Youth Parliament (ILO).

Examples of advocacy campaigns and initiatives:

- Generation17 (UNDP + partner).
- Digital Skills for Jobs Campaign (ITU + ILO).
- Interactive exhibition on youth-led green technologies as part of the Green Technology Transfer initiative (ESCWA).
- PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival on Migration, Diversity and Social Inclusion (IOM, UNAOC).
- Evaluation for Action (#Eval4Action campaign) (UNFPA, EvalYouth Global Network + partners).
- Reach not Preach (OSGEY).
- #Youth4Climate Live Series (OSGEY, the World Bank Group + partners).

Examples of UN support to youth networks and coalitions in their advocacy efforts:

- The PACT, the global coalition on youth-led and youth-serving organizations to strengthen meaningful engagement in the HIV and sexual and reproductive health rights response (supported by UNAIDS).
- We Are The Generation To End It (#GenEndIt) platform: global community to campaign on AIDS issues concerning young people (UNAIDS + partners).
- Generation Equality Youth Task Force (supported by UN-Women).
- Global coalition of LGBTIQ+ youth-led networks (supported by OSGEY).
- Youth alumni networks (supported by UNAOC).

Examples of UN knowledge platforms are:

- Knowledge Portal on Volunteerism (UNV).
- Decent Jobs for Youth Knowledge Facility
- Chispa Rural Guatemala for rural youth to access information, success stories of young agripreneurs (FAO + partners).
- Youth4Peace Global knowledge platform about youth-inclusive peacebuilding (UNDP + partners).

2.4.2 How are UNCTs supporting the "Youth and SDGs" agenda?

Insights into UNCT support for the "Youth and SDGs" agenda are organized under two broad headings:

- **UNCT support to Governments on youth and the SDGs.**
- **UNCT-led projects and campaigns.**

UNCT support to Governments on the "Youth and SDGs" agenda:

The UNCTs reported on their support to Governments on youth and the SDGs to strengthen capacities across the following seven areas: (a) "Leaving No Youth Behind", (b) policy alignment to SDGs, (c) policy coherence, (d) public finance, (e) disaggregated data, (f) mainstreaming youth engagement in design, monitoring and review of in-country programmes, and (g) in-country youth coordination mechanisms. Four of the seven areas are supported across youth-relevant sectors.

Alignment of UNCT support to Governments on youth and SDGs:

- 95 per cent of UNCTs (123 of 130) supported Government efforts for the "Youth and SDGs" agenda in at least one area.
- 50 per cent of UNCTs (64 of 130) supported Government efforts in all seven areas.

Top areas supported are:

- Policy alignment (90%)*.
- Disaggregated data (90%)*.
- Mainstreaming youth engagement in the design, monitoring and review of in-country programmes (85%)*.

Top sectors supported are:

- Education (95%).
- Employment/labour (85%).
- Health (85%).

Support "for" youth was higher than "with" youth, for example:

- 90 per cent* of UNCTs supported policy alignment **for** youth development; 80 per cent of these UNCTs supported actions **with** youth.
- 80 per cent* of UNCTs supported public finance **for** youth development; only 25 per cent of these UNCTs supported actions **with** youth.

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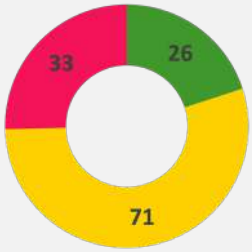
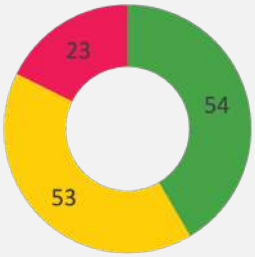
*Includes UNCTs that support at least 1 area/sector/criteria.

Number of UNCTs ● at milestone, ● moving forward and ● getting ready for the key performance indicators in the UNCT support to Governments on youth and SDGs are provided below:

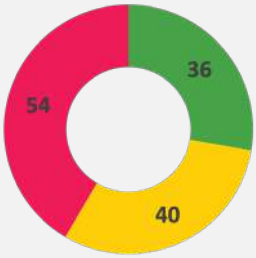
UNCT support to Governments on youth and the SDGs



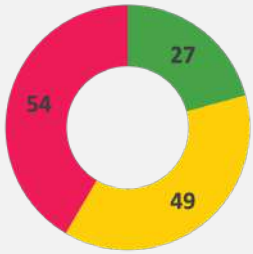
KPI 11.
"Leave No Youth Behind": Assessment and action



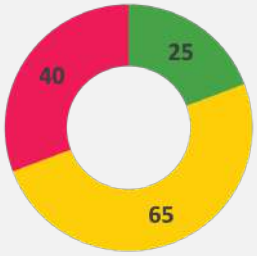
KPI 12.1
Policy alignment to the SDGs for youth development



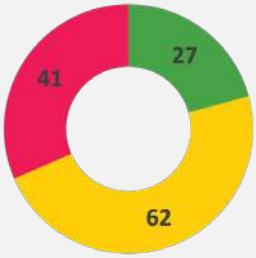
KPI 12.2
Policy coherence for youth development



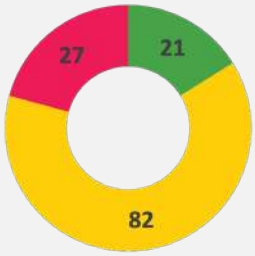
KPI 13.
Public finance for youth development



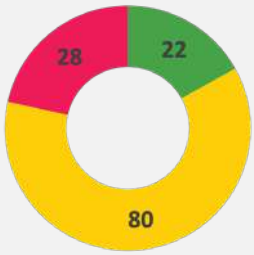
KPI 14.
Disaggregated data on youth for decision-making



KPI 15.
Youth in design, monitoring, and review of in-country programmes



KPI 16.
In-country youth coordination mechanisms



KPI 6.4
Meaningful youth engagement in UNCT support to Governments on SDGs

UNCT-led projects and campaigns on youth

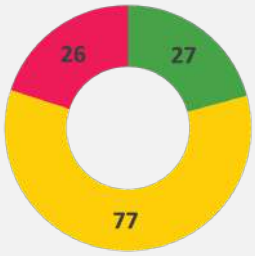
UNCT-led projects and campaigns on youth were reported on in 3 distinct areas: (a) investments in youth-led solutions, (b) knowledge exchange, and (c) communication and advocacy.

The highlights of UNCT-led projects, campaigns on youth are:

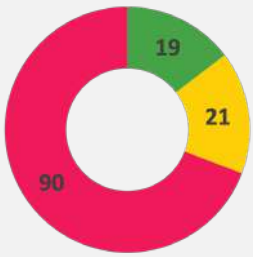
- 80 per cent of UNCTs supported investments in youth-led solutions; 65 per cent of these UNCTs supported investments **with** youth.
- 30 per cent of UNCTs included youth in knowledge exchange plans; 80 per cent of knowledge exchange in these UNCTs were done **with** youth.
- 60 per cent of UNCTs included youth in their joint communication and advocacy plans:
  - 40 per cent of these plans included considerations on accessibility **for** youth with disabilities.
  - 90 per cent of these UNCTs carried out their campaigns **with** youth.

The number of UNCTs ● at milestone, ● moving forward and ● getting ready for key performance indicators in UNCT-led projects and campaigns on youth are shown below:

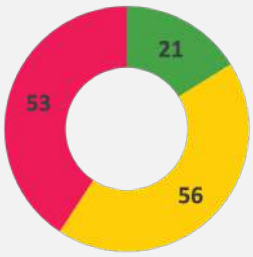
UNCTs, youth-led solutions, knowledge exchange, communication and advocacy



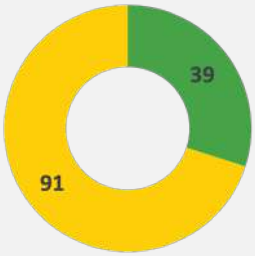
KPI 17.
Investments in youth-led solutions



KPI 18.
UNCTs, youth and knowledge exchange



KPI 19.
UNCTs, youth, communication and advocacy



KPI 6.5
Meaningful youth engagement in UNCT-led projects and campaigns

2.5

How is the UN internally organized at various levels to deliver "for" and "with" youth?

KEY MESSAGES

3.
The ambitious UN reform process on youth programming is reflected in the new generation of UNCTs: joint planning, implementation and coordination on youth are evident, more in some regions than in others.

4.
Effective tracking of results and resources for youth and transparency of reporting on youth in the UN system needs strengthening at all levels.

5.
Two foundational areas of Youth2030 - internships and youth workforce - need more attention.

6.
The UN is delivering well **for** youth. Work **with** youth varies across UN entities and UNCTs - robust in some and less in others. Engagement with disadvantaged/marginalized groups is evident but needs to be stepped up. Overall, for youth engagement to be truly meaningful, working **with** youth needs to be more systematic and institutionalized, backed by inclusive and strong policies and processes.

The present section presents some insights on how the UN system is organized to deliver on Youth2030. It is organized into four parts, with analysis at both the UN entity level and UNCT level for each:

- 2.5.1 Youth in UN strategic plans and cooperation frameworks.
- 2.5.2 Coordination architecture and capacities for delivering on Youth2030.
- 2.5.3 Youth workforce and internships.
- 2.5.4 Leadership and organizational culture for meaningful youth engagement.

2.5.1. Youth focus in UN Strategic Plans and Cooperation Frameworks

Youth focus at the UN entity-level: strategic plans

UN entity-level strategic plans are the principal frameworks around which organizations plan and deliver in the medium-term. At the country level, the UNSDCF is the central partnership framework to the engagement of the UNCTs with Governments and stakeholders in support of the 2030 Agenda. Clear articulation of youth results in these plans, resourcing them adequately and tracking them efficiently are critical for delivering on Youth2030. This section provides insights on the above areas.

- Youth in entity-level strategies and plans: Youth2030 is the umbrella strategy that guides the UN work on youth. During the reporting period, aligned to and building on Youth2030, several UN entities have articulated new strategies and plans/action plans on youth to intensify their work on priority areas of youth programming. Strategic plans of some UN entities that preceded the launch of Youth2030 are being fully aligned in the upcoming iterations.

  Examples of new UN entity-level youth strategies in the reporting period:

  - Youth Strategy (ITU).
  - My Body, My Life, My World: A Global strategy for adolescents and youth (UNFPA).
  - Programme Guidance for the Second Decade: Programming with and for Adolescents (UNICEF).
  - UN-Habitat Youth.

- Resourcing strategic plans on youth; tracking allocation and expenditure: Active resource mobilization by UN entities to fund their youth plans is evident in the self-reporting. Indication of annual resource envelope and/or year-to-year increase is available in some UN entities such as ILO, DPPA, OCHA and OHCHR.

- Youth marker system: nine (9) UN entities reported that they have a youth marker/ tagging system in place to track "results achieved" and "resources used" for youth at organizational or project levels.

  - Organizational level: OHCHR, UNDP + UNICEF.
  - Project-level marker: DPPA, IOM, ITC, OCHA, UNHCR + UNIDO.

- Funding for youth-led groups and initiatives: commitment to support youth-led organizations and initiatives are shown through the establishment of several novel efforts at funding youth-led groups, including private investment funds. Some of these funds prioritize vulnerable youth groups such as stateless, displaced, migrants and rural youth. Examples:

  - Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative: Higher education scholarship programme (UNHCR).
  - Drug Abuse Prevention Centre Grants (UNODC).
  - Agribusiness Capital Fund: Boosting small and medium enterprises and creating jobs for rural youth (IFAD).
  - Grants for entrepreneurship and business skills training to migrant and host community youth (IOM).
  - Youth Initiative Fund annual platform for youth-led initiatives in displacement and statelessness settings (UNHCR).
  - Youth Solidarity Fund seed funding to support youth-led organizations that foster peaceful and inclusive societies. (UNAOC).
  - Small Grants Programme – youth initiative on environment and climate (UNDP + GEF).

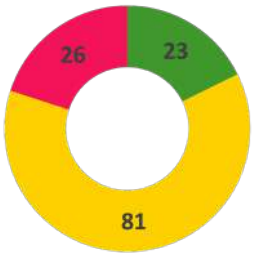
Youth focus in UNSDCFs at the UNCT level

Highlights of youth focus in UNSDCFs at the UNCT level

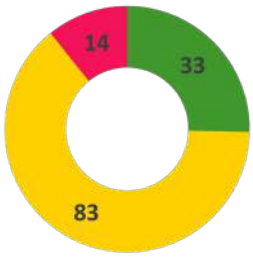
- 90 per cent of the UNCTs (116 of 130) include results for youth in UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs); 25 per cent have results at both output and outcome levels.
- 80 per cent of Common country analysis (CCA) (104 of 130) include a Youth Situational Analysis; 20 per cent meet all or most quality criteria.
- 80 per cent of joint working plans (106 of 130) include Youth2030 programme priorities; 40 per cent cover all or most priority areas.
- 10% (14 of 130) of the Business Operations Strategy implementation plans include Youth2030 priorities.
- 55% of UNCTs (73 of 130) have no information on funding (planned, available, utilized) on youth.
- 35% of UNCT (44 of 130) reports on youth are available publicly.

Number of UNCTs ● at milestone, ● moving forward and ● getting ready for KPIS in youth focus in UNSDCFs are set out below:

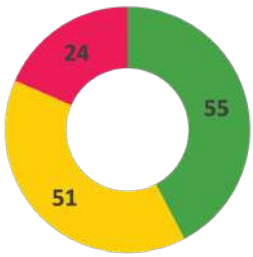
Youth focus in UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks



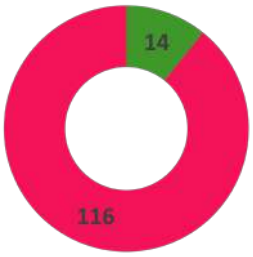
KPI 1.
Youth situational analyses in Common country analysis (CCAs)



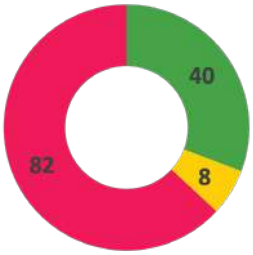
KPI 2.
Results for youth in United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs)



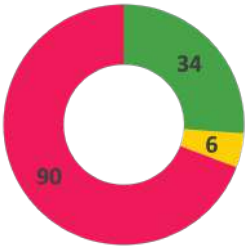
KPI 3.1
Youth2030 in the joint workplans of UNCTs



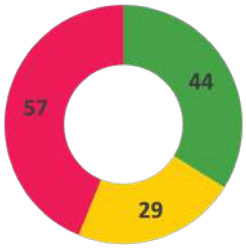
KPI 3.2
Youth2030 in Business Operations Strategy implementation plan of UNCTs



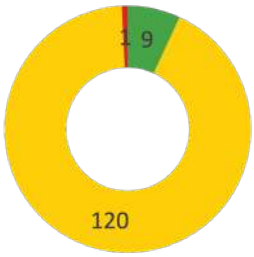
KPI 4.1
Funding for youth results in UNSDCFs (planned vs available)



KPI 4.2
Funding for youth results in UNSDCFs (available vs utilized)



KPI 5.
Transparency of youth results in UNCTs



KPI 6.3
Meaningful youth engagement in UNSDCF processes of UNCTs

2.5.2 Coordination architecture and capacities for delivering on Youth2030

The UN reform process aims to reposition the United Nations development system with a stronger, better-defined collective identity as a trusted, reliable, cohesive, accountable and effective partner to countries in the 2030 Agenda. These are underlined in the foundational areas of Youth2030.

Coherent joint action needs strong coordination mechanisms to harness synergies and deliver effectively without duplication of efforts. The present section presents some insights on the coordination architecture and capacities **for** youth at the entity level and at the UNCT level.

Coordination architecture and capacities for Youth2030 at the UN entity level

- Coordination architecture at entity level: Internal coordination on youth work in the UN occurs across entities (interagency level) and within entities (across global, regional and country-level), to ensure programme alignment and coherence.

  Some of the currently available inter-agency coordination mechanisms on youth are:

  - **System-wide coordination (youth, overall):**
    - Youth2030 Secretariat, Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, coordinates 23 UN entities + youth networks at the global-regional level and 130 UNCTs.
    - Joint Youth, Peace and Security Secretariat (PBSO + UNFPA), which also co-chairs the Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security.
  - **Interagency coordination (youth, overall):**
    - Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD), Division for Inclusive Social Development (DISD/DESA) and rotating co-chair from UN entities. Coordinates 55 UN entities at the global level.
    - World Programme of Action on Youth and Focal Point on Youth, Division for Inclusive Development (DISD/DESA).
  - **UN thematic inter-agency coordination mechanisms on thematic areas on youth:**
    - H6+ Technical Working Group on Adolescent Health and Well-Being.
    - YES Group (Youth Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment) (ILO, ICT, UNIDO + UNCTAD).
  - **Other UN thematic inter-agency coordination mechanisms, which include youth.**

  Inter-agency coordination and coherence of youth programmes are also accomplished through: (a) a common approach in strategic plans; and/or (b) joint frameworks of action/programmes.

  Examples of inter-agency coordination and coherence:

  - Common chapter implementation in strategic plans of entities (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF + UN Women); examples of joint initiatives- Spotlight initiative, ↗ Regional Pacific initiative.
  - ↗ UNDP-ILO Framework for Action.
  - ↗ UNDP- UN-Habitat framework for urban action.

- Several UN entities, including IOM, ITU, OHCHR, UNESCO, UNICEF and UNIDO, reported that they have strong internal coordination mechanism/networks within to ensure seamless communication, knowledge sharing on youth work across the organization.

- Capacities for delivering on Youth2030 in UN entities: UN entities utilize different modalities of Human Resources Management to deliver **for** and **with** youth. Entities also use a combination of modalities to manage their youth work:

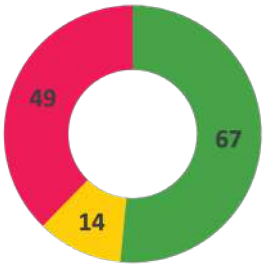
  - Dedicated youth teams across the organization.
  - Specific staff positions on youth.
  - Youth focal points (who have youth work as an additional responsibility).
  - Roster of youth experts (for surge capacity).

  Twenty UN entities invested in "learning and development" among staff through a variety of formats (workshops, e-learning) and utilize different opportunities to strengthen organizational capacity on youth (organizational induction or in-service training). Capacity-building efforts covered both youth policy-programming areas and meaningful youth engagement.

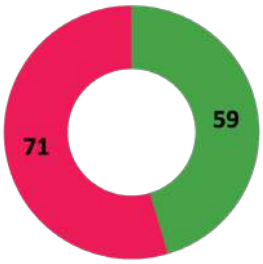
- Coordination and capacities for delivering on Youth2030 in UNCTs:
  - 50 per cent of UNCTs (67 of 130) are coordinated through a results group/thematic group/Task Team for joint action on youth.
  - 45 per cent of UNCTs (59 of 130) have capacities for Youth2030 implementation.

Number of UNCTs 🟢 at milestone, 🟡 moving forward and 🔴 getting ready on coordination and capacities key performance indicators are below:

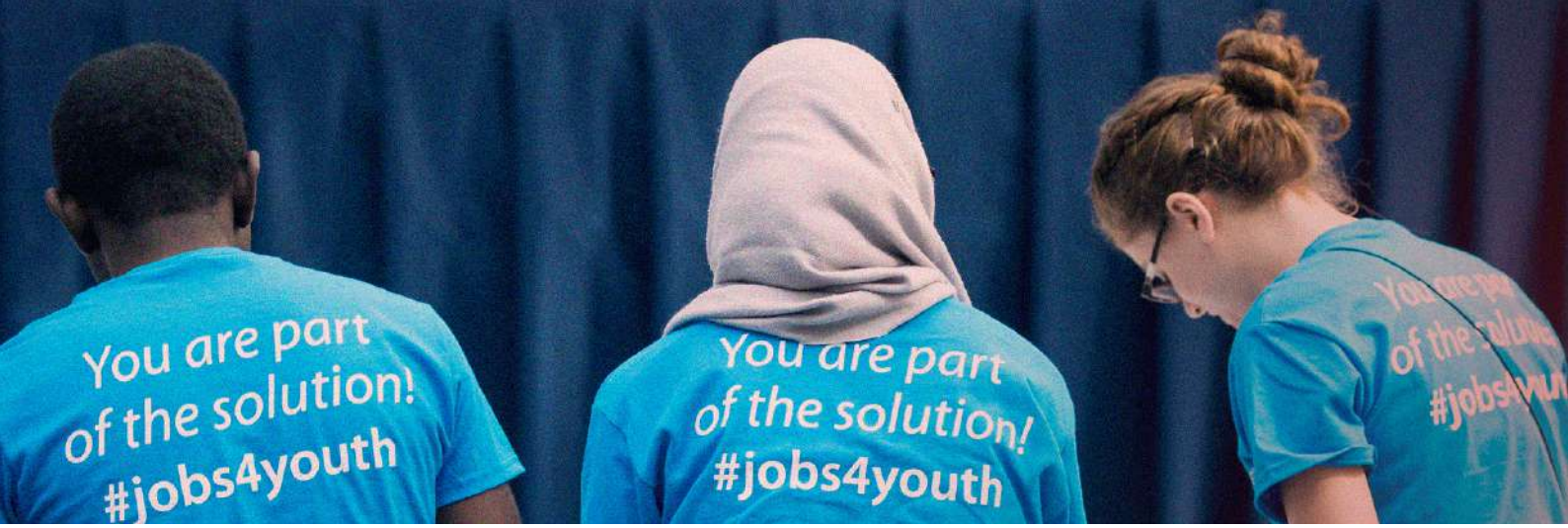
UNCT leadership, culture, architecture and capacities for youth



KPI 7.
Youth coordination architecture in UNCTs



KPI 8.
Capacities for Youth2030 implementation in UNCTs



2.5.3 Youth workforce and internships

Expanding opportunities and improving fairness and quality of internships and investing in attracting and managing young talent are highlighted in the foundational areas of Youth2030. Insights on UN action on the youth workforce and on internships are presented below.

Youth workforce and internships in UN entities

Eighteen UN entities reported on their policies and practices, including the transformation of the workplace culture and improving the fairness and quality of internships and young talent management. UNCTs reported on their actions on the two areas in their Business Operations Strategies and plans (against the Youth2030 Scorecard key performance indicators).

Examples of workplace culture transformations in UN entities:

- #NewWork aimed at changing the workplace culture and creating the "UN we want" (UN Secretariat DMSPC/DOS).
- “Ditch UNfair internships!” pilot project aimed at promoting fair and quality internships (OHCHR).
- Together Mentoring: innovative mentoring programme for UN staff (DMSPC + ESCAP).
- Driving change through data: disaggregated workforce data for evidence-based policymaking (composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics) (UN Secretariat: DMSPC/DOS).

- Good practices reported by UN entities on their efforts to improve fairness and quality of internships:

  - Fair access to internships in UN
    - Youth from non-OECD/DAC countries (IOM).
    - Minority and indigenous fellowship programmes(OHCHR).
    - Youth from the Global South (OSGEY).
  - Paid internships (ILO, IOM, OSGEY, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNOPS + UN-Women).
  - Strengthening the quality of internships through the establishment of support networks (including peer-to-peer networks), knowledge exchange, access to capacity-building and mentorship systems (UN Secretariat: DMSPC/DOS, ODA + UNOPS).

UN entities have reported on their efforts to attract, retain and manage youth talent, for example:

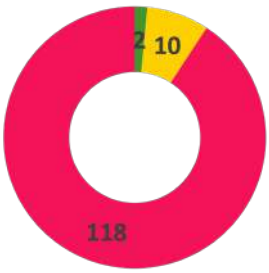
- Junior professional Officer Programme (administered by DESA + UNDP JPO Service Centre).
- Junior Talent Programme (UNOPS).
- New and Emerging Talent Initiative (UNICEF).
- Young Professionals Programme (UN Secretariat).
- Young talent with disabilities for the SDGs (UNV + UNDP)
- Youth UN Volunteers (UNV).

Youth workforce and internships in UNCTs:

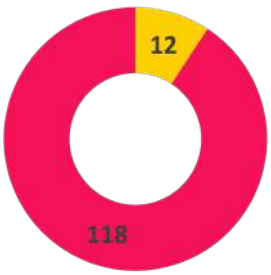
- 10 per cent of UNCTs (12 of 130) have included actions or the introduced innovations on the youth workforce in their BOS plans to increase the share of the youth workforce (under age 35).
- 10 per cent of UNCTs (12 of 130) have included actions or introduced innovations in internships to improve fairness and quality.

The number of UNCTs 🟢 at milestone, 🟡 moving forward and 🔴 getting ready on the key performance indicators on the youth workforce and internships are presented below:

UNCT leadership, culture, architecture and capacities for youth



KPI 9.
Youth workforce
in UNCTs



KPI 10.
Fair and quality
internships in UNCTs

2.5.4 Leadership and organizational culture for Meaningful youth engagement

Meaningful youth engagement and working with youth is underlined as the foundation of Youth2030.

This section provides insights on:
- Youth engagement in UN entities: policies and platforms for engagement and UN-entity-level processes in which young people are engaged.
- Youth engagement in UNCTs: policies, processes and diversity of groups engaged with youth and UNCT-level processes in which youth are engaged.

Meaningful youth engagement in UN entities

- **Policies and guidance on meaningful youth engagement:**
  - UN entities are guided either internally or at an inter-agency-level, including:

    ↗ Meaningfully engaging with youth: guidance and training for UN staff (UNESCO + IANYD).

Platforms for meaningful youth engagement (UN entities):
- UN entities engage with youth outside and within the UN. UNOPS and others have also built the capacity of their partners and vendors to promote youth rights and enable them to engage youth meaningfully in their projects.

- Some UN entities reported on institutionalized platforms, such as youth councils, networks or boards for meaningful youth engagement, including:

  ↗ Generation Connect Visionaries Board (ITU).
  ↗ Youth Advisory Board (UN-Habitat).
  ↗ Global Youth Advisory Council (UNHCR).
  ↗ Youth Council (WHO).

Sixteen UN entities reported that platforms for meaningful youth engagement are in place at programmatic/thematic-levels, including

↗ Secretary-General's Youth Advisory Board on Climate Change.
↗ Youth and Sport Task Force (UNESCO).
↗ YouthConnekt (UNDP).

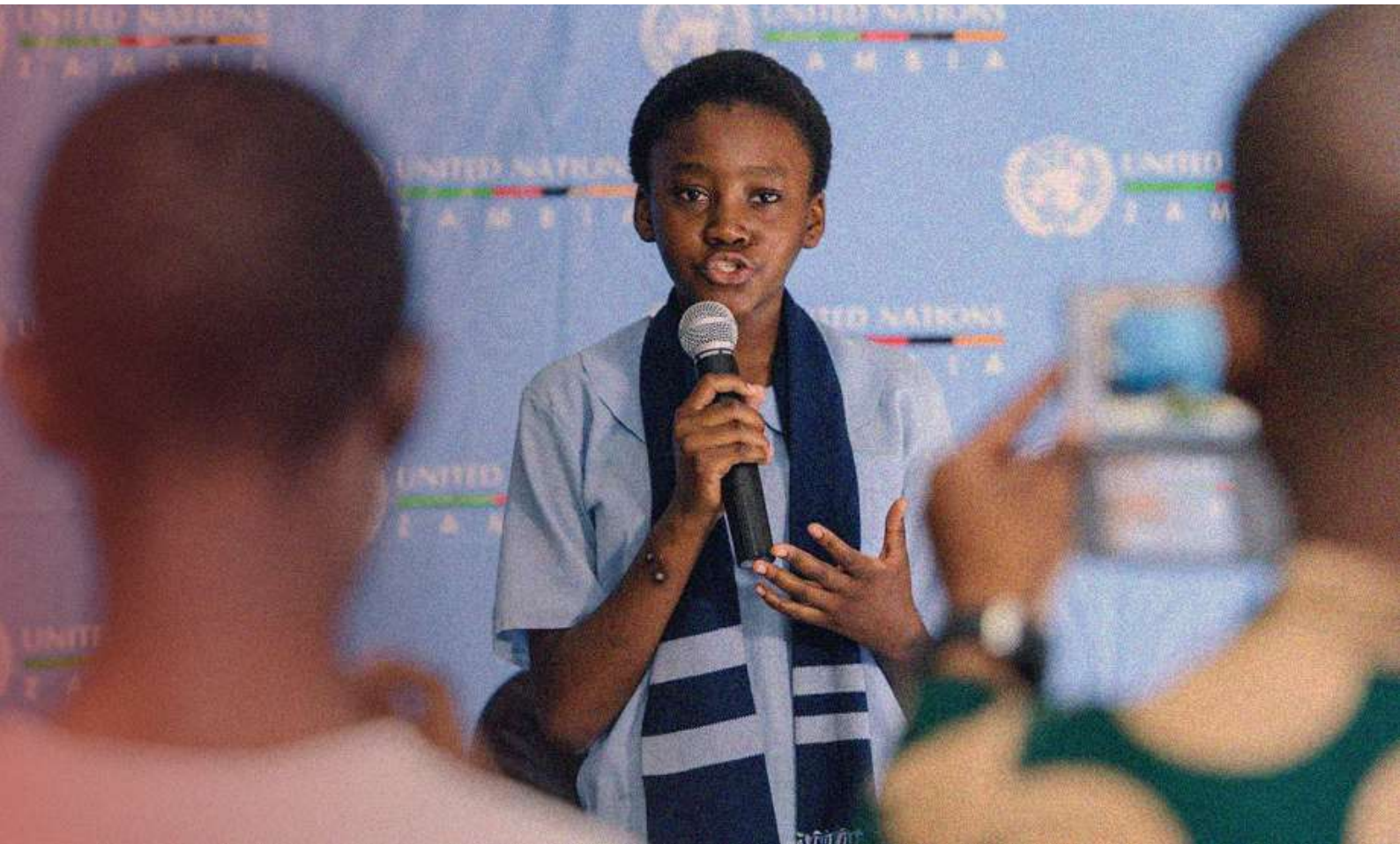
Some UN entities have encouraged youth to organize themselves as networks for collective representation of their voices and internal advocacy, including:

↗ Tangerines Network (UNFPA).
↗ Young ESCWA.
↗ Young UN (Secretariat entities, funds and programmes).
↗ Young UNESCO.
↗ Young UNICEF.

- Some UN entities, such as UNICEF, reported that youth were engaged in dialogue and decision-making in internal organizational platforms, for example the meetings of the Global Management Team.

- UN entities encouraged large-scale youth engagement through online platforms (i.e., the U-Report (UNICEF), Mission 1. On climate (UNDP)).

- **UN entity processes that engage youth:** UN entity-level processes that youth are engaged in include:
  - Design and development of strategies (ITU, UNAIDS, UNFPA + UNICEF).
  - Implementation of youth projects (including youth-led projects) and innovations (several UN entities).
  - Global-regional forums/processes, including global conferences and convenings (several UN entities).



Meaningful youth engagement in UNCTs

Policies and practices for meaningful youth engagement in UNCTs: 15 per cent of UNCTs (19 out of 130) have established policies and processes that meet all (or most) criteria for Meaningful youth engagement; 40 per cent have some policies and processes in place; and 45 per cent have none (or one) in place.

Policies and practices for meaningful youth engagement in UNCTs

- Number of UNCTs at milestone/7 to 8 criteria met
- Number of UNCTs moving forward/2 to 6 criteria met
- Number of UNCTs getting ready/0 to 1 criteria met

The table below shows the availability of different policies and processes for Meaningful youth engagement in the 130 UNCTs (access details in the Youth2030 UNCT Scorecard).

Rank	UNCT policies and processes for meaningful youth engagement	No. of UNCTs	Percentage
1.	Rights-based and safe	60	46
2.	Institutionally mandated	58	45
3.	Informative	47	36
4.	Accountability - UNCTs to youth	42	32
5.	Transparent	38	29
6.	Accountability - Youth to UNCTs	35	27
7.	Resourced	33	25
8.	Designated	26	20

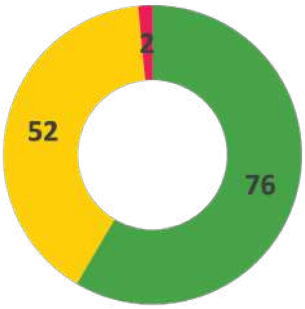
- **Diversity of youth engaged by UNCTs:** Insights are available on the engagement of UNCTs with four different categories of youth (groups):

- Networks of youth (both formal and informal).
- Young leaders, influencers, entrepreneurs, academics and advocates.
- Wide engagement of youth (through various platforms, both online and face-to-face).
- Youth within the UN system.

60 per cent of UNCTs (76 out of 130) engaged in 3 to 4 categories of youth (groups); 40 per cent engaged 1 to 2 categories; the most common category of youth engaged was networks of youth, both formal and informal (90%); two-thirds of the UNCTs engaged young leaders, influencers, entrepreneurs, academics and advocates; two-thirds supported wide engagement of youth; and the engagement of youth from within the UN system was the least common group engaged by UNCTs (less than 30%).

Number of UNCTs ● at milestone, ● moving forward and ● getting ready for the key performance indicator on diversity of youth engaged is below:

UNCT leadership, culture, architecture and capacities for youth



KPI 6.2
Meaningful youth engagement-
Categories of youth groups engaged

Among the 130 UNCTs that engaged youth networks, networks of youth, girls and young women were the most frequently engaged; networks of indigenous youth were the least likely to be engaged (less than 20%).

Engagement of UNCTs with youth networks			
Number of UNCTs that engaged at least one youth network		No. of UNCTs	Percentage
		115	88
Rank	Networks engaged		
1.	Networks of girls and young women	91	79
2.	Networks of youth (formal and informal) at grassroots level	86	75
3.	Networks of youth with disabilities	51	44
4.	Networks of youth living with HIV	49	43
5.	Networks of LGBTIQ+ youth	46	40
6.	Networks of migrant youth	42	37
7.	Networks of refugee youth	42	37
8.	Networks of youth (formal and informal) in conflict-affected areas	35	30
9.	Networks of indigenous youth	21	18

- **Youth engagement in UNCT processes:** As discussed above, youth are engaged in three distinct processes in UNCTs: (a) UNSDCF processes, (b) UNCT support to Governments on the SDGs; and (c) UNCT-led projects and campaigns:

- 60 per cent of UNCTs design and implement their UNSDCFs in consultation **with** youth, although just 8 per cent engage youth in the evaluation of their UNSDCFs.
- In UNCT support to Governments on the "Youth and SDGs" agenda, support **for** youth was higher than **with** youth, for example:
  - 90 per cent* of UNCTs supported policy alignment **for** youth development; 80 per cent of these UNCTs supported policy alignment **with** youth.
  - 80 per cent* of UNCTs supported public finance **for** youth development; only 25 per cent of these UNCTs supported financing for youth development **with** youth.

- Youth engagement in UNCT-led projects and campaigns:
  - 80 per cent of UNCTs supported investments in youth-led solutions; 65 per cent of those UNCTs supported investments **with** youth.
  - 30 per cent of UNCTs included youth issues in their knowledge exchange plans; 80 per cent of those plans were done **with** youth.
  - 60 per cent of UNCTs included youth issues in their joint communication and advocacy plans.
    - 90 per cent of those UNCTs activated campaigns **with** youth.
    - 40 per cent of the UNCTs that incorporated youth issues in their communication and advocacy plans included considerations on accessibility of youth with disabilities.

*Includes UNCTs that support at least 1 area/sector/criteria.

2.6

Youth2030: Leaderboard 2020: Top performing UNCTs in different areas of action

The Youth 2030 Leaderboard 2020 lists the top performing UNCTs in the implementation of Youth2030 for 2020. These UNCTs meet all 10 criteria in the COVID-19 key performance indicators (with one score) and those with the maximum number of “at milestone” key performance indicators scores in other sections (SDG support, UNCT-led projects, UNSDCF, leadership and organizational culture, which have multiple scores).

Youth2030: Leaderboard 2020 – Top performing UNCTs	
UNCT areas of action	**UNCTs with the maximum number of "at milestone" indicators by region**
1. **UNCTs, youth and COVID-19 response and recovery (26)**	**Africa (12):** Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gabon, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, South Africa, Togo **Arab States (1):** Jordan **Asia-Pacific (5):** Bangladesh, Bhutan, Fiji, India, Lao People's Democratic Republic **Europe and Central Asia (6):** Albania, Kosovo*, North Macedonia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan **Latin America and the Caribbean (2):** Guatemala, Trinidad and Tobago
2. **UNCT support to Governments on youth and SDGs (3)**	**Europe and Central Asia (2):** Kosovo*, North Macedonia **Asia-Pacific (1):** India
3. **UNCTs, youth-led solutions, knowledge exchanges and communication and advocacy (3)**	**Europe and Central Asia (1):** North Macedonia **Asia Pacific (2):** India, Thailand
4. **Youth focus in UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (1)**	**Africa (1):** The Gambia
5. **UNCT leadership, culture, architecture and capacities for youth (7)**	**Africa (4):** Cameroon, the Gambia, Mali, South Africa **Asia Pacific (2):** India, Thailand **Europe and Central Asia (1):** Uzbekistan

*All references to Kosovo in the present report shall be understood in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

3.
Driving system-wide change and excellence in implementation

Insights on how system-wide change and excellence in implementation are ensured are presented as follows:

- 3.1 Global governance, technical leadership and system-wide coordination.
- 3.2 “Fast-track” countries.
- 3.3 Performance measurement and accountability tools: Youth 2030 Scorecards.
- 3.4 Youth2030 knowledge products and portal.
- 3.5 Stakeholder engagement.

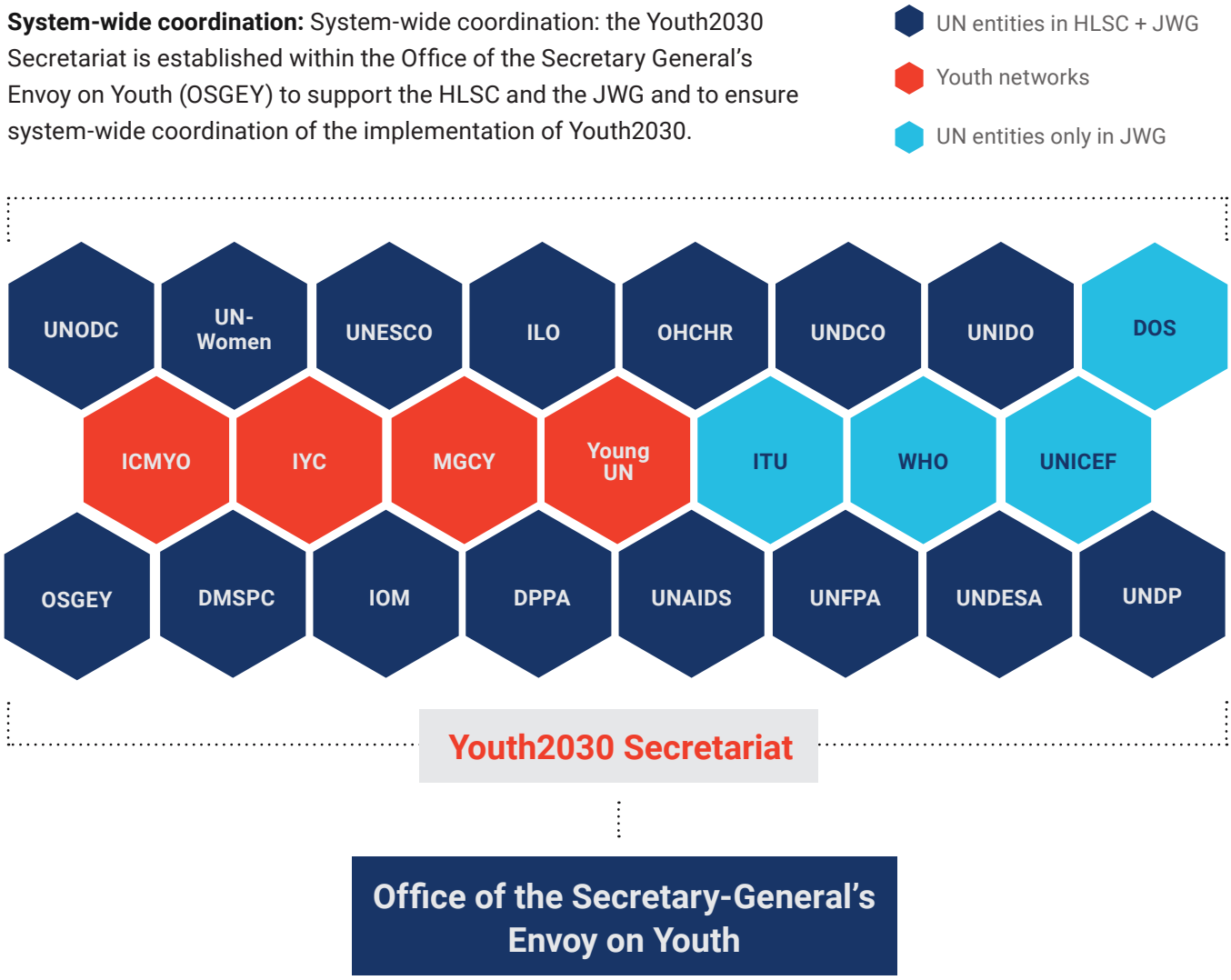
3.1 Global governance, technical leadership and system-wide coordination

The implementation of Youth2030 benefits from the strategic guidance of the strategy's High-Level Steering Committee (HLSC), which is ably supported by a technical leadership team, the Joint Working Group (JWG) and its Task Teams.

- **High-Level Steering Committee[4] – structure and representation:**
  - Chair: Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth.
  - Representatives at Assistant Secretary-General level or equivalent from 15 UN entities.
  - Representatives from 4 youth organizations/networks.

- **Joint Working Group (JWG)[5] and its Task Teams:**
  Structure and representation:
  - Chair: Head of Youth2030 Secretariat.
  - Representatives at technical level from 23 UN entities.
  - Representatives from four youth organizations/networks.

System-wide coordination: System-wide coordination: the Youth2030 Secretariat is established within the Office of the Secretary General's Envoy on Youth (OSGEY) to support the HLSC and the JWG and to ensure system-wide coordination of the implementation of Youth2030.



[4] Fifteen UN entities (DCO, DESA, DMSPC, DPPA, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, OSGEY, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNIDO, UNODC, UN-Women) and 4 youth networks (IANYD Youth Caucus, ICMYO, MGCY and Young UN).

[5] Twenty-three members total: 19 UN entities (DCO, DOS, DESA, DMSPC, DPPA, ILO, IOM, ITU, OHCHR, OSGEY, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, UN-Women, WHO) and 4 youth networks (IANYD Youth Caucus, ICMYO, MGCY and Young UN).

3.2
Fast-Track countries

Ten "fast-track countries" countries (Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Ghana, Jordan, Morocco, Niger, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Uzbekistan) are envisaged as leaders in the implementation of the strategy identified to fast track results where several youth initiatives are ongoing, supported by the UN. These countries are incubation grounds to model joint UN work, test new knowledge products before global roll-out, support cutting-edge research and innovations and foster strategic partnerships for results and resources.

A Youth Focal Point function is being established in the offices of five UN Resident Coordinators (Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Jordan, Uganda and Uzbekistan) to review the effectiveness of different models of UNCT coordination on youth.

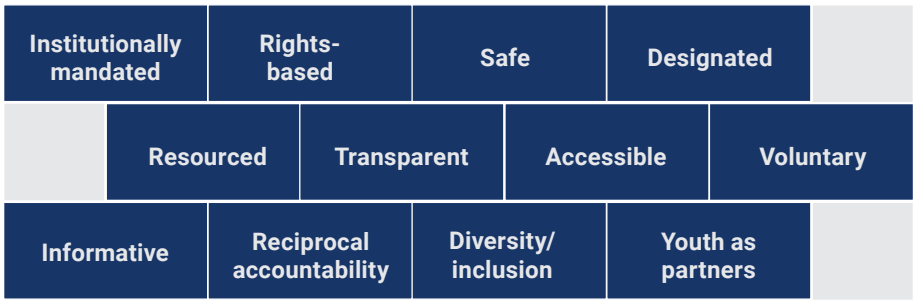
3.3
Performance measurement and accountability tools: Youth2030 Scorecards

A set of two **Youth2030 Scorecards**, one for UNCTs and one for UN entities, serve as strategic planning, performance measurement and accountability tools for joint action:

- The Youth2030 UNCT Scorecard launched in November 2020 has been institutionalized for routine reporting in the UN Sustainable Development Group's Information Management Systems (UNSDG IMS). The first reporting of UNCTs in 2020 was in this platform.
- The Scorecard for UN entities will be available in the second half of 2021.
- A public-facing dashboard for visualization of Youth2030 performance scores across UNCTs and UN entities will be available in the second half of 2021.

The Scorecards are in line with well-established principles of meaningful youth engagement (below). It draws from: (a) several policy, programme and operational documents and performance measurement tools[6] in the UN system; and (b) insights from reported data on four youth indicators from 130 UNCTs (UNCT mini-baseline 2019).[7]

Principles of meaningful youth engagement:



[6] UN system-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy Scorecards.
[7] UNCT mini baseline indicators: availability of situational analysis on youth in common country analysis, results for youth in cooperation frameworks, Youth Advisory Boards for inputs into the work of the UN system and typology of YAB (joint or entity-specific).

3.4 Youth2030 UNCT Knowledge pack

A knowledge pack for UNCTs is being finalized, consisting of an Action Guide, an Online Toolkit and a Catalogue of Programmes and Initiatives.

Complementing the UNCT Scorecard, a knowledge pack for UNCTs is being advanced through the collaborative work of 24 UN entities and various youth organizations/networks. It consists of an Action Guide, an Online Toolkit and a Catalogue of Programmes and Initiatives to support UNCTs to deliver on the UN system-wide Agenda by 2030.

- The Action Guide outlines major global commitments and sets out key areas for UNCT joint action on youth. It outlines entry points for programming and provides an overview of how the coordination, capacities and culture in UNCTs can be transformed to deliver results for and with youth more effectively.

- The Toolkit is an online collection of more than 650 resources, tools, and good practices, across Youth2030 priority and foundational areas. The target audiences are UNCTs, Governments and youth networks, including policymakers and programme implementers. While the Action Guide sets out the "why to" and "what to" for youth programming, the Toolkit focuses on the "how to". The structure of the Toolkit is presented below:

Overarching tools					
Governments	Policy alignment	Public finance	Data, evidence, and research	Meaningful youth engagement in national, subregional processes	National multisectoral and multi-stakeholder coordination
Youth networks	Innovation	Knowledge exchange	Advocacy and communication		
UNCTs	Cooperation framework	UNCT leadership culture, architecture and capacities			
With general and thematic tools, including the pledge to "Leave No One Behind" and the COVID-19 response					

The Catalogue of Programmes and Initiatives is a ready reference source on programmes and initiatives, including multi-stakeholder partnerships, across Youth2030 priority areas, collated through a mapping exercise. The Catalogue aims to:

- Help identify strategic opportunities for coordinated programme acceleration and expansion, across new geographies and themes.
- Guide-focused resource mobilization efforts.
- Identify youth-focused/youth-led innovations and actions for support and scaling up.

About 100 initiatives have been collated: review and analysis processes are ongoing.

Youth2030 Online, a one-stop knowledge portal to house all digital information and updates on Youth2030, is available on the website of the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth.

3.5 Stakeholder engagement

Broad stakeholder engagement is ongoing in order to galvanize implementation, support and discussion on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth, as well as to advance meaningful youth engagement in COVID-19 response and recovery efforts and action on the SDGs. Three critical stakeholder engagements held in 2020 are highlighted below:

- **Youth networks briefing:**
  - Led and organized by youth organizations/networks engaged in the HLSC and the JWG.
  - Reached over 270 youth-led organizations and young people, representing more than 100 nationalities.
- **Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD) briefing:**
  - Reached 58 representatives from 25 UN entities and 8 youth organizations/networks.
- **Member States briefing:**
  - Hosted by the Permanent Missions of Slovenia and Sri Lanka to the UN, with OSGEY, on the second anniversary of Youth2030.
  - More than 25 Member States and 4 youth organizations/networks participated in the deliberations, with 22 UN entities and selected resident coordinators.

4.
The road ahead

The present Youth2030 report provides useful insights on the work of the UN at various levels, including strengths and gaps in the implementation of the UN system-wide Youth Agenda. The report also contains insights on the scope of UN programming across the priority areas of youth development, the status of institutional arrangements for joint work and how the UN is meaningfully engaging youth in its work.

The road ahead will focus on the work of the UN system in facilitating transformative shifts in the youth development landscape to achieve the SDGs through:

4.1 Recovering better together.

4.2 Ensuring institutional arrangements are in place for coherent delivery.

4.1 Recovering better together

Recovering better together is focused on sustaining the COVID-19 response, ensuring that the recovery is "green", inclusive and fair – so that all countries can speed "to scale" in the Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs. A wide array of youth projects and programmes and large multi-stakeholder partnerships are being implemented across regions; several youth-led and youth-solutions addressing issues and bottlenecks in design and delivery are available or being tested out across the globe. The challenge is to interlink the ecosystem of youth work, connecting discrete solutions and moving from fragmented projects to large-scale and very-large-scale integrated solutions and programmes.

- Identification of strengths and gaps in the situation of youth in countries and assessment of how far countries are from achieving their SDG targets.
- Building a portfolio of solutions based on country-level gaps, drawing from local, national, regional and global resources; ensuring that solutions are integrated into existing national programmes/plans of action; and advocating for resources to achieve scale.
- Supporting government-scale youth programmes, including delivering on multiple outcomes for youth (ensuring an integrated delivery to achieve multiple outcomes).

Key considerations, as teams build forward better and implement accelerated actions, include:

- Balancing short-term responses and funding with long-term economic, social and environmental action and investments across priority areas, with a focus on education, skills and employment for youth, including a "green" economy.
- Applying a youth and intergenerational lens in all recovery efforts.
- Ensuring equity considerations and the pledge to "Leave No Youth Behind", including attention to the digital divide.
- Leveraging the power of youth movements in the COVID-19 response, for action on the SDGs.
- Joint technical cooperation among global, regional and country teams during strategic moments of action at all levels, for example, during the development of national development plans, the UNSDCF design and development phase and opportunities presented by new strategic partnerships for results and resources.

4.2 Ensuring institutional arrangements are in place for coherent delivery

Several foundational components need strengthening, as laid out in Youth2030, in order to reset the UN focus on youth and help the system deliver cohesively, effectively and transparently.

- **Stepping up joint work:** Stepping up joint work across all levels is critical in order to build on synergies without duplicating efforts. Several instruments are available for joint action at the country, global and regional levels, such as joint workplans, Business Operations Strategy plans, joint frameworks across UN entities and common chapter/approaches in strategic plans. These need to be institutionalized to ensure joint delivery.

- **Tracking results and resources for youth, with transparency:** Tracking results and resources for youth and ensuring transparency is critically important. Establishing a system-wide youth marker system at the organizational level within and across UN entities will be a priority. Learning from current tracking/marker systems and building on the roll-out of solutions, such as the Integrated Planning, Management and Reporting system in the Secretariat, can go a long way in institutionalizing systems for tracking results and resources for youth development.

- **Resetting internships and youth workforce, across the system:** Youth2030 lays emphasis on young talent management and fair internships. A data-driven action path needs to be adopted to review and rework policies and practices on the youth workforce and internships. Drawing from good practices inside and outside the UN system, and seizing the opportunity of the roll-out of the Business Operations Strategy in UNCTs to innovate and strengthen these foundational areas of youth work in the coming years, will be critical to ensuring the future-focus of the UN.

- **Recalibrating how we are engaging with youth:** While the commitment of the UN to working **with** youth is evident at all levels, to advance a deeper and more significant involvement of youth in the Organization, policies and practices must be fully in place, as laid out in the principles of meaningful youth engagement. The focus should be on including young people both inside and outside the Organization. Reviewing and recalibrating existing policies, platforms and practices for more meaningful youth engagement is a critical part of the road ahead. As the UN system recalibrates its focus on youth, it is timely to ask:

- Do the traditional platforms and practices for listening to and engaging with young people still hold good?
- How can we harness frontier technologies to listen to the voices of youth real-time/near-real-time and more widely?
- What new tools and modalities can we leverage to ensure representativeness of engagement?
- How do we ensure that UN engagement with youth is trusted by young people themselves?

Youth work in the UN is at a tipping point. The extraordinarily challenging period of the COVID-19 crisis has presented exceptional opportunities to build forward better and to scale to ensure the implementation of the SDGs for youth. The timing is also right to accelerate the sweeping internal changes in the UN for a future-focused reset on youth issues. “Accelerate” is the watchword for the implementation of Youth2030 in 2021 and beyond, as we speed to scale, engaging youth, truly meaningfully, in decision-making and delivery in the Decade of Action and in line with the efforts on defining “Our Common Agenda”.

Annex

Youth2030 High-Level Steering Committee 2019-2020

UN entity Youth network

Organization	First Name/Last Name/Title
OSGEY	Jayathma Wickramanayake, Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth Chair of the Youth2030 High-Level Steering Committee
DCO	Robert Piper, Assistant Secretary-General for Development Coordination, Director of the Development Coordination Office
DESA	Elliot Harris, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development and Chief Economist
DMSPC	Martha Helena Lopez, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources
DPPA	Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support
IANYD Youth Caucus	Ines Moued, Youth Representative
ICMYO	Fahmida Faiza, Youth Representative
ILO -	Sangheon Lee, Director of the ILO Employment Policy Department
IOM	Laura Thompson, Deputy Director-General
MGCY	Khaled Emam, Youth Representative
OHCHR	Craig Mokhiber, Director of the New York Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNAIDS	Shannon Hader, Deputy Executive Director of Programmes
UNDP	Haoliang Xu, Assistant Secretary-General, Director of UNDP's Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (ASG)
UNESCO	Gabriela Ramos, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences
UNFPA	Diene Keita, Deputy Executive Director for Programmes
UNIDO	Hiroshi Kuniyoshi, Deputy to the Director General and Managing Director of External Relations and Policy Research
UNODC	Jean-Luc Lemahieu, Director of the Division for Policy Analysis and Public Affairs
UN-Women	Asa Regner, Deputy Executive Director for Normative Suppor, UN System Coordination and Programme Results
Young UN	Kamila Karimova, Youth Representative

Youth2030 Technical Leadership Group (Joint Working Group)

UN entity Youth network

Organization	First Name/Last Name
DCO	Florence Basty-Hamimi, Giovanella Quintanilla, Janine Theresa Chase, Katarina Kuai
DESA	Jonas Aissi, Mario Spiezio, Nicola Shepherd
DMSPC	Alexia Lachavanne, Benjamin Salignat, Mari Pesonen, Vibhu Sharma
DPPA	Chelsea Payne, Marie Doucey
IANYD Youth Caucus	Andres Cabanzo, Cherop Soy, Ines Moued, Teresa Oberhauser
ICMYO	Fahmida Faiza
ILO	Ewa Staworzynska, Susana Puerto-Gonzalez, Valter Nebuloni
IOM	Amira Nassim, Neha Sinha
ITU	Carla Licciardello, Jenny Arana, Sylvia Poll
MGCY	Aashish Khullar, Donovan Gutierres, Jolly Amatya, Khaled Emam, Rosario Garavito
OSGEY	Alexandra Ronco, Bianca Herzog, Hillary Bakrie, Michael Imasua, Marija Vasileva-Blazev, Saskia Schellekens
OHCHR	George-Konstantinos Charonis
UNAIDS	Alicia Sanchez
UNDP	Maria Stage, Noella Richard
UNESCO	Kristina Balalovska, Maria Kypriotou
UNFPA	Cécile Mazzacurati, Danielle Engel, Petar Mladenov
UNICEF	Fabio Friscia
UNIDO	Bashir Conde, Beatrice Verez, Claudia Linke-Heep
UNODC	Gautam Babbar, Kirsty Rancier
UN-Women	Asmae Ibrahim, Ines Esteban Gonzalez, Priya Alvarez
Young UN	Anna Gkioka, David Krivanek, Heidrun Fritze, Kamila Karimova
WHO	Chiara Servilli, Regina Guthold, Valentina Baltag
EOSG	Michael Anthony McManus

Youth2030 Secretariat, OSGEY

Sudha Balakrishnan (Head of Secretariat)

Anca Gliga (UN entities coordination)

Andreas Karsten (UNCT Action Guide)

Henrik Dale (UNCT coordination)

Maanishaa Narain Jessani (Planning and monitoring)

Maarten Van Brederode (UNCT Action Guide)

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Romeral Ortiz-Quintilla (Toolkit)

Roberta Brangam (Edits)

Ilias Sawadogo (Coordination)

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A Global Progress Report

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