

FAST FACTS

United Nations
Development Programme



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

Youth as partners for the implementation of the SDGs

"The future of humanity and of our planet lies in our hands. It lies also in the hands of today's younger generation who will pass the torch to future generations."

2030 Agenda, paragraph 53

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the international community's ambitious response to today's most pressing global development challenges. It will guide our development priorities for an entire generation. Young people played a key role in shaping this agenda and understand the stakes: they experience first-hand many of the issues it seeks to address.

Recent decades have witnessed significant advances in terms of human development, but deep challenges remain. Progress has been uneven, with many young people across the globe still experiencing interlocked forms of discrimination, limited political inclusion, high levels of poverty, and limited access to health systems, educational opportunities and decent jobs.

The goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda are interconnected, aiming to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Explicitly or implicitly, young people are deeply embedded within their fabric. Their knowledge, reach, and innovative solutions are essential if sustainable development is to be realized.



Voluntary Talk Session for International Volunteer Day in Kosovo* organized by UNV and UNDP | Photo: © Lirak Mulliqi/UNDP Kosovo*

*References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244

MATTERS OF FACT

- Today's generation of adolescents and young people (between 10 and 24 years old) is close to 1.8 billion, more than at any other time in human history.
- The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with a total of 169 targets were adopted in 2015.
- 65 out of the 169 SDG targets reference young people explicitly or implicitly, with a focus on empowerment, participation and/or well-being.
- There are 20 youth-specific targets spread over six key SDGs: Goal 2 (hunger), Goal 4 (education), Goal 5 (gender equality), Goal 8 (decent work), Goal 10 (inequality) and Goal 13 (climate change).
- Young people's involvement is also key if the call for participation, inclusion, accountability and revitalized global engagement embedded in Goals 16 (peaceful, just and inclusive societies) and 17 (partnerships and implementation) is to be achieved.

UNDP's approach

Achieving the 2030 Agenda will require strong partnerships between young people and all stakeholders so that young people's challenges are addressed, their contributions recognized, and that they are included at all levels of decision-making. UNDP's approach is founded on partnering with youth across all dimensions of sustainable development and the commitment to support their efforts at empowerment and innovation.

UNDP promotes the empowerment of youth through programmes across its global network, which spans more than 170 countries and territories. We work with civil society partners, including youth organisations and networks, other UN agencies and development partners to advance youth empowerment for sustainable development and peace. UNDP's Youth Strategy "Empowered Youth, Sustainable Future" 2014-2017, sets out the vision for our work with youth in governance, decent jobs for youth and resilience-building.

UNDP partners with young women and young men as champions of the 2030 Agenda by:

- **Supporting** governments as they integrate the SDGs into their national and local strategies, and supporting young people by creating formal spaces for their engagement, such as national youth platforms, to provide viable opportunities for young women and young men to be at the table, bring evidence, inform decisions and influence development priorities and budget allocations.
- **Identifying** obstacles to accelerate progress on goals and targets, and to define effective interventions that help achieve outcomes on a number of fronts, such as those against youth discrimination or those promoting enhanced youth participation and civic engagement.
- **Providing** effective, demand-driven, context-specific and evidence-based policy advice and technical assistance, drawing on the depth and breadth of knowledge and programming experience across the world.

Monitoring and Accountability: UNDP supports government and other stakeholders' efforts in producing the quality data that will be needed to capture the underlying development realities of youth. UNDP also works with parliaments and relevant institutions supporting oversight and accountability.

Research: As a global convener, UNDP partners with academia and civil society organisations to produce fresh research and insights connecting local, national and global knowledge to address gaps in emerging areas of youth participation and development, such as research on financing for youth and on youth and peacebuilding. UNDP also regularly publishes human development reports on youth.

Advocacy: UNDP supports spaces for national dialogue, consultations and social media campaigns, reaching out to the most marginalized and promoting the role of young people as advocates and partners in the implementation of the SDGs.

UNDP in action – Featured Examples

Global: UNDP supports the implementation of the UN System-Wide Action Plan on Youth (www.unyouthswap.org). UNDP is also a key partner in the UN Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth, led by ILO, which aims to scale-up action in support on youth employment. In the area of SDG monitoring, UNDP, in partnership with Plan International and other civil society and research organisations, has also established a working group to support the development of youth-focused indicators, particularly to measure youth participation in decision-making and accountability.



Brazil: UNDP participates in the National Conference of Youth, which aims to strengthen dialogue between youth and government institutions, as well as to identify issues and priorities for the planning of public policies in this area. In December 2015, a dialogue was organized with youth representatives on mechanisms to strengthen youth partnership and participation in its implementation.

Cameroon: The United Nations Volunteer Programme and the Ministry of Youth and Civic Education, are collaborating on the establishment of the National Volunteer Programme to better mobilise youth volunteers for the implementation of the SDGs.

Sri Lanka: UNDP's Foresight and Innovations 2016 Summit will have preliminary regional consultations involving youth speakers. Representatives of youth groups will also feature as part of the main conference's dialogues. The conference will aid in engaging youth in the planning and implementation stage of the SDGs as well as their monitoring and evaluation over the long run. The "Unlocked" blogs have an open call for young writers, who can submit written pieces through a trilingual platform – enabling all youths in the country to contribute and read the submissions. Additionally, the HackADev initiative, first conducted in Colombo and later on in the Uva province, facilitates the engagement of young people to find innovative solutions to long term development issues, thus mobilising and reaching out to them as pivotal agents of change.

For more information, visit:

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