

VOICES OF YOUTH

YOUNG PEOPLE'S PERSPECTIVES ON THE 2024 SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE & THE ACCELERATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE HEAR OUR VOICE!
GLOBAL ONLINE YOUTH CONSULTATION
4-22 MARCH 2024



Acknowledgments

In preparation for the [Summit of the Future](#), the insight report titled: "Voices of Youth: Young People's Perspectives on the 2024 Summit of the Future & the Acceleration of the 2030 Agenda" consolidates inputs from young people, gathering their innovative ideas and bold action needed to accelerate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) implementation. It also aims to enhance coordination amongst all actors supporting youth engagement and consultations in the context of SDG implementation and review, by spotlighting promising practices, solutions and recommendations. These inputs surfaced through a three-week SparkBlue [online consultation](#) on Youth and the Pact for the Future supported by United Nations agencies and youth partners in the lead up to the [ECOSOC Youth Forum 2024](#). This global online consultation engaged **545 participants from 65 countries from 4 to 22 March 2024**. This report was designed to inform a Plenary Session of the Forum titled "[Insights & Recommendations: The Voices of Youth and Meaningful Youth Engagement in the Summit of the Future](#)". This session offered a platform for a multi-stakeholder dialogue and consultation, and served as a key input to the upcoming [High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development](#) (HLPF) and Summit of the Future.

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Disclaimer: This paper's content provides an overview of the Pact for the Future and directly summarizes the recommendations and reflections of young people and youth organizations from the SparkBlue consultation. It represents an insights paper for young people as they mobilize for the Summit of the Future. The paper does not represent the institutional views or perspectives of any organizations.

About

Launched in 2015, the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs) are a set of 17 goals and 169 targets aimed at ending poverty, protecting the planet, and ensuring peace and prosperity for all people by 2030.

The [Summit of the Future](#) is a high-level event that will take place in September 2024 aiming to forge a new international consensus on how we deliver a better present and safeguard the future, cooperating to deliver the goals.

Germany and Namibia are co-facilitators of the Summit and announced the release of the [zero draft](#) of the Pact for the Future through [resolution 76/307](#). This pact will be negotiated in September 2024.

The Annual **Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum**, held from 16 to 18 April 2024, centered around the theme of this year's United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF): "**Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient, and innovative solutions**". The forum served as a platform for young people to share their evaluations, visions, and recommendations, which Member States would consider in advance of the Summit of the Future scheduled for September 2024.

To prepare for this significant event and inform the last plenary session of the Forum, an online global consultation titled "[Hear our voice! Young People at the Summit of the Future](#)" was conducted on SparkBlue. Its purpose was to gather insights from young individuals and youth organizations, highlight the importance of youth involvement, improve coordination among stakeholders to facilitate SDG implementation and review, and showcase recommendations,

solutions, and successful practices leading up to the Summit of the Future.

"The effective participation of youth in decision-making related to economic development must be encouraged."

-Wajdi Al-Qadasi, Yemen

This global online consultation engaged **545 participants from 65 countries from 4 to 22 March 2024** with the support of the organizers of the last session of the Forum, titled: "[Insights & Recommendations: The Voices of Youth and Meaningful Youth Engagement in the Summit of the Future](#)". These were: the United Nations entities (United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Youth Office, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, UN Women, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS), the United Nations Foundation, the Major Group of Children (MGCY) and the Youth International Coordination Meeting of Youth Organisations.

Participants were invited to express their opinions, perspectives and good practices throughout open questions for each of the following chapters of the Pact for the Future:

- Sustainable Development and Financing for Development
- International Peace and Security
- Science, Technology and Innovation, and Digital Cooperation
- Youth and Future Generations
- Transforming Global Governance

Building on this consultation, the ECOSOC Youth Forum provided the space to further explore key priorities and recommendations to be highlighted at the upcoming Summit of the

Future in September 2024, by ensuring a focus on youth empowerment, engagement, and leadership, and by promoting the contribution of young people to the Pact for the Future, the Declaration for Future Generations, the Voices of Youth report, and the Global Youth Policy Paper.

This insights paper is organized into three main sections that revolve around the recommendations and experiences of young people's engagement in the Pact for the Future and SDG implementation. Firstly, the paper showcases two analyses conducted by MGCY. The first one highlights the interlink between the 2030 Agenda and the Pact for the Future, and how young people are actively engaging in these processes. The second one outlines the challenges and issues faced by young people when engaging in such processes, and their recommendations for meaningful youth participation.

The third and final section of this insight paper looks at the five chapters of the Pact for the Future. For each chapter, it presents an analysis conducted by MGCY of the Zero Draft of the Pact for the Future, followed by specific recommendations and comments collected by young participants of the SparkBlue online consultation. The main recommendations for the Pact of the Future are:

- Strengthening frameworks for meaningful youth participation and advocacy in decision-making processes at all levels, including through policy reforms, capacity-building efforts, regular and sustainable funding for young people and youth organizations, and the establishment of youth advisory bodies and councils.
- Investing in essential services, such as quality education, employment, healthcare, and public infrastructures,

and addressing inequalities to tackle poverty and promote financial inclusion.

- Forging partnerships for digital technology and social innovation, promoting youth advocacy in digital initiatives, and strengthening youth entrepreneurship.
- Promoting intergenerational dialogues and fostering international partnerships between the United Nations (UN) and youth-led organizations. This also involves enhancing accessibility to the UN for young people, particularly those from underrepresented and marginalized communities.
- Prioritizing peace, security, and the protection of civilians and peacebuilders by implementing conflict prevention strategies, ensuring equal representation from all regions in decision-making processes, and holding Member States accountable for transparency and security-related legal frameworks.
- Scaling up support for inclusion programs such as internships, fellowships, scholarships, youth advisory councils, and online platforms to ensure equal opportunities for underrepresented groups, and integrating youth and civil society engagement systematically into global governance spaces.

"In order for youth to be accepted and respected as agents of influence in the realm of global policy, there needs to be institutional and national efforts to raise global citizens that view, understand, and empathize with the concerns of others."

-Hala Alwagdani, Saudi Arabia



Integrating the 2030 Agenda and the Pact for the Future: Amplifying youth engagement

The adoption of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) marked a before and an after in 2015 for the efforts to address the challenges of our societies and the global community, such as poverty, climate change, and inequality. Towards the adoption of the Pact for the Future and the efforts of the international community to push forward the goals beyond 2030, the role of youth cannot be overstated, and must be integrated at all levels.

Young people are not only the beneficiaries of and impacted by international agendas; they are crucial agents of change whose perspectives and actions are indispensable for achieving the SDGs in an innovative way. Youth are the catalyst of the future, the leaders for sustainable innovation, and the doers of change, action, and next steps.

In 2024, the Summit of the Future provides an once-in-a-generation opportunity to enhance cooperation, bridge governance gaps, reaffirm commitments to the SDGs and the United Nations Charter, and strengthen the multilateral system. Member States and other stakeholders aim to achieve this through the negotiation and endorsement of an action-oriented outcome document known as the Pact for the Future, with the goal of improving the lives of present and future generations.

Young people stand at the intersection of boosting the SDG implementation and reinvigorating governance and multilateralism. [Meaningful youth participation](#) in policy and decision-making processes is both a necessity and a fundamental human right. In addition, considering their adaptability and digital fluency, young people are well-positioned to spearhead

innovations that can address the progress gaps across the SDGs.

This approach ensures that policies and actions reflect and respond to the aspirations and concerns of younger generations, thereby enhancing their effectiveness and sustainability.

Empowering youth means that young people are fully integrated into the strategies and processes of both the 2030 Agenda and the Pact for the Future. This requires creating venues for youth participation in policy design, implementation, and accountability processes. In addition to these measures, the creation and promotion of intergenerational spaces at all levels ensures global frameworks are equipped with fresh and diverse ideas to build a path where no one is left behind.

The adoption of the Pact is essential to reinforce the commitments outlined in the 2030 Agenda, and presents an opportunity to adapt and expand the SDGs to reflect the changing global landscape, including heightened climate risks, technological advancements and resilient economies and societies.

“Youth embodies innovation, and the future is ours. We need to be a part of actively changing policies and not merely just advising.”

Kapwani Kavenuke - Tanzania

Since 2020, the Major Group for Children and Youth, as the formal mechanism for young people to meaningfully engage in the United Nations, has been involved in processes aimed at integrating youth into conversations, not only as “viewers” but as active participants in the policy-making and drafting of international frameworks. In particular, MGCY has sought to center the voices, perspectives and participation of youth from the Global South and marginalized

communities to empower them in shaping their futures.

In October 2022, MGCY organized a round of consultations that helped to shape, integrate, and map youth perspectives and opinions related to [Our Common Agenda](#) and the 2023 [SDG Summit](#).

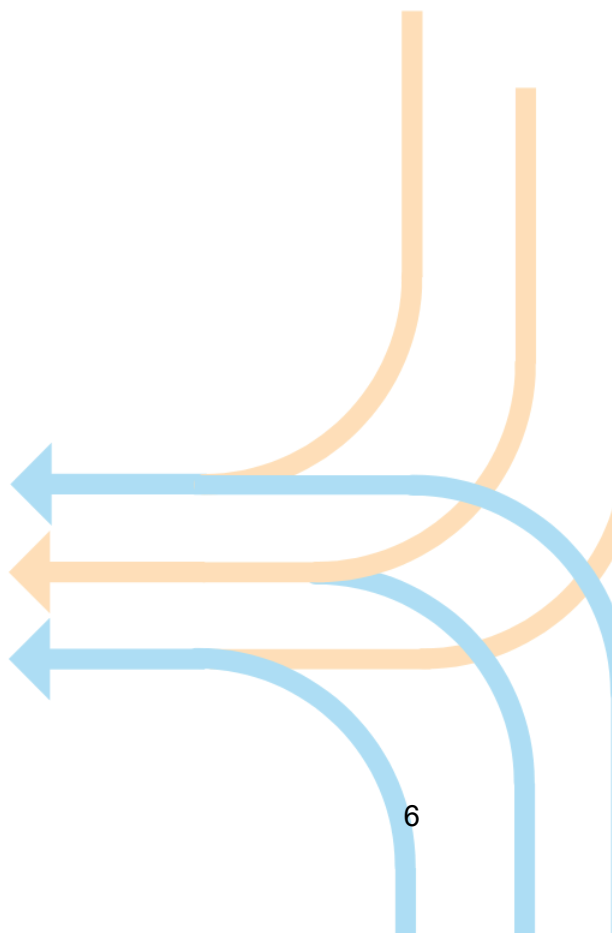
In September of the same year, they organized a youth strategy space for the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), focusing on the transition from the [2023 SDG Summit](#) to the 2024 Summit of the Future. This created a platform for young people to share their recommendations and expectations for these high-level events. These inputs formed a youth roadmap towards the Summit of the Future that continues to amplify the voices of youth in all their diversity for the future they want. This further leverages youth-led advocacy, accountability and action to shape the process and inform negotiations for the Summit and its associated outcomes, including the Pact, the Declaration on Future Generations and the Global Digital Compact.

In April 2023, during the ECOSOC Youth Forum, MGCY led a series of workshops, side-events and ministerial meetings to emphasize the importance of youth engagement not only in youth-focused events, but also in the High Level Political Forum. As a result, they managed to have the largest youth delegation ever to attend the HLPF.

Since November 2023, MGCY has collaborated with stakeholders in charge of the Zero Draft of the Pact for the Future, leading consultations with other UN entities in order to collect comments and perspectives from youth worldwide regarding the Pact and its objectives. The first [Global Youth Policy Paper](#) for the Summit of the Future was launched in January 2024, and the energy of young people and

youth-led organizations continues to drive this agenda forward.

As a result, we have fostered new energy and momentum for the Summit, placing youth engagement and rights at the heart of the conversation. Thousands of young people, especially those often excluded from these dialogues and whose voices are discounted, have been empowered and are mobilizing for a future where everyone has the right to grow up safe, happy and healthy. Young people are at the forefront of advocating for the rights of current and future generations, and our voices are being heard. Governments, UN entities, NGOs, and other stakeholders have recognized the importance of engaging youth in these processes, have committed to intergenerational solidarity and action, and we are confident that this will shape the mechanisms needed for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the effectiveness of the Pact.





Meaningful inclusion and engagement of young people

Integrating youth perspectives into decision-making processes worldwide has been a long journey. Initially, if included at all, young people were often only perceived as ‘tokens’ by governments and entities, rather than genuine contributors and stakeholders. This resulted in either a lack of interest from young people or their outright absence from decision-making spaces. Since 2015, young people have increasingly raised their voices for meaningful involvement, leading to their integration into consultations, drafts, resolutions, and engagement within governments and leadership positions. However, there are still further steps to take. Currently, youth and other civil society groups have a consultative status within some of these processes, but only a few are present in significant decision-making spaces, and their voices are often silenced or marginalized.

Nowadays, the youth population is larger than ever, representing a significant portion of demographic areas, vulnerable groups, and populations worldwide. Their inclusion in decision-making is essential. Many of the policies made today will primarily affect younger generations, who will have to live with the consequences of these decisions, just as we are currently facing the consequences of the decisions made by older generations before us. Understanding the importance of creating an inclusive path between generations to develop solutions that benefit everyone, and not just specific groups, is crucial to co-create a future we all deserve.

The obstacles to youth inclusion

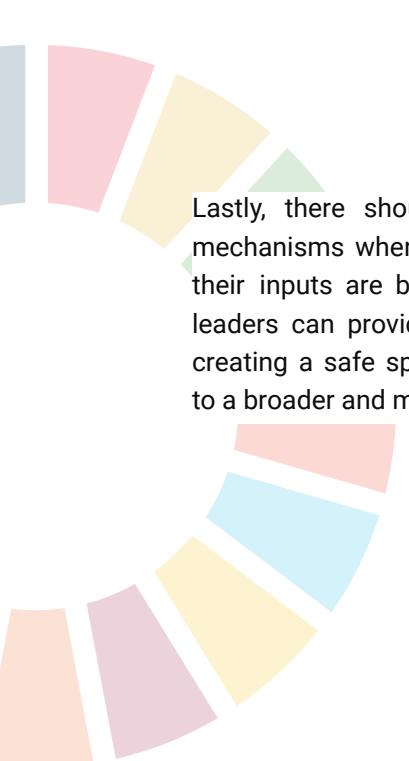
Despite the advances like the Youth Report and the Global Youth Policy Paper, which serve as practical guides for governments and policymakers to integrate youth in their

engagement, obstacles remain. One major challenge is that there is still a tokenistic approach to youth inclusion in some spaces, where young people are invited to participate, yet their inputs are not genuinely considered or integrated into final decisions and policies. Another obstacle is the lack of access for all young people, as participation of youth from the Global North is still prioritized over Global South countries, based on factors such as geography, socioeconomic status, education, and access to technology and resources. This results in a homogenized representation that does not reflect the diversity of youth perspectives and population.

We learn and change: improvement makes us better

To enhance the effectiveness of youth participation, several steps can be taken. Firstly, institutions must ensure that youth participation is meaningful to guarantee their contributions have a tangible impact on policy outcomes. For instance, young people can take charge and lead discussions.

Secondly, efforts need to be strengthened to make these processes accessible for all, including underrepresented youth groups such as indigenous youth, young refugees, young persons with disabilities, young women and marginalized youth groups. Simplifying the language used in policy discussions also helps to build a bridge between different geographies and backgrounds. This is necessary in order to create an informed society and foster an interactive dialogue among all stakeholders. Moreover, investing in education and capacity-building, including technological spaces for and by young people, is essential to provide the tools, knowledge, and skills necessary for effective engagement, empowering the leaders of both today and tomorrow.



Lastly, there should be continuous feedback mechanisms where young people can see how their inputs are being considered. Additionally, leaders can provide feedback to young people, creating a safe space where contributions lead to a broader and more inclusive outcome.

Chapter 1. Sustainable development and financing for development

This Chapter serves as a foundational pillar bridging the 2030 Agenda to the Pact for the Future by focusing on sustainable development and financing for development. It draws its basis from the Political Declaration of the 2023 SDG Summit, which reflects the collective priorities and commitments regarding the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

It could also be considered as a guiding principle for global action, where economic, social, and environmental dimensions interconnect, as it highlights the importance of integrating sustainable solutions into policy and decision-making processes.

One of the key points of this chapter is the need for financing to drive sustainable efforts. It recognizes its essential role for implementing the 2030 Agenda and includes a path that takes into consideration mobilizing domestic resources, attracting foreign investment, improving financial governance, and enhancing international cooperation.

Furthermore, it reflects Member States' priorities regarding the implementation of the SDGs. It focuses on addressing gaps and challenges on financing to promote inclusive and equitable economic growth at all levels. These measures also include access to essential services like healthcare and education and strengthening the institutions and governance structures to support sustainable development initiatives.

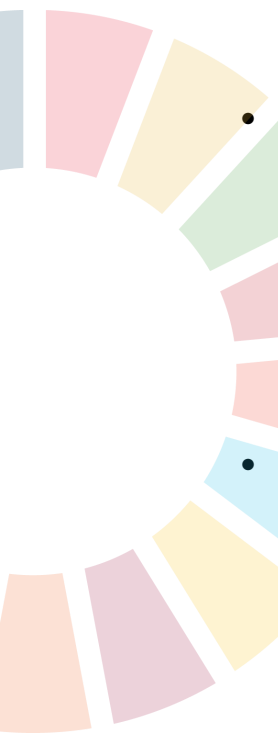
It also highlights the importance of fostering partnerships and cooperation among stakeholders, recognizing that achieving the SDGs requires collaborative efforts and collective action at local, national, regional, and global levels.

Chapter 1 sets the stage for the Pact for the Future by establishing financing for development as a fundamental priority. It takes into consideration the operationalization of the loss and damage fund during COP28, as well as other international agreements and mechanisms addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, desertification and poverty. It promotes an intersectional and cross-sectoral approach to tackle these issues..

The dynamism of youth is recognized in the Zero Draft of the Pact for the Future as a key force for social and economic transformation. The integration of youth in the fabric of global governance and development is crucial. This calls for a multifaceted approach to empower youth not merely as beneficiaries but as effective architects of their future.

The main recommendations on this chapter from youth participants in the online consultation were:

- Establishing frameworks for youth participation in decision-making bodies related to sustainable development and financing at local, national, and international levels, including by facilitating accreditation of youth organizations at the United Nations, and creating youth councils and a global youth development fund, could ensure youth voices are heard and supported on a global scale.
- Investing in essential public services such as education, employment, and healthcare is fundamental. This entails supporting innovative ideas, advocating for equitable education, providing training and capacity building and establishing technology and entrepreneurship centers to boost youth



skills for leadership roles, while tackling educational disparities and exclusion.

- Addressing disparities and inequalities to empower youth and transform the global economic system requires targeted interventions, investments and the promotion of gender equality and social inclusion in all development efforts. This will not only alleviate poverty but also foster inclusive economic growth.
- Tackling poverty necessitates the implementation of youth industrialization programs and the development of new climate technology initiatives. These efforts can empower young people to contribute to sustainable development while addressing pressing environmental challenges.
- Encouraging collaboration between youth, governments, institutions, and civil society and strengthening youth-led accountability are key steps to promote effective governance and sustainable development.

“If the children drop out from education and the unemployment increases, it will decelerate the development in such a way that we will end in a negative position from which there will be no way to escape.”

Farhana Zareen, Bangladesh

Young people need to be at the forefront of driving change, supported by structures and policies that recognize their potential as agents of sustainable development. Together, we can create a way for a future that is not only sustainable, but also equitable and inclusive where youth voices are valued and amplified.

Chapter 2. International Peace and Security

Chapter 2 focuses on International Peace and Security. It encapsulates a profound commitment to reinforce the foundations of global stability and harmony through a revitalized approach underpinned by the principles of the United Nations Charter.

It enhances the collective aspirations of Member States not only to address the impacts of conflicts and violence, but also to delve deep into the root causes, fostering a more enduring peace. In line with the New Agenda for Peace, this develops a guide towards innovative and adaptive strategies in the realm of peacekeeping and conflict prevention and resolution.

This chapter also encapsulates a reflection about the traditional instruments and mechanisms of peacekeeping, and the need to expand and update them to reflect and address the complexities of contemporary conflicts.

The general understanding of the causes of conflicts and violence is central to this chapter. It highlights a path from reactive measures to proactive prevention strategies involving an analysis of the multifaceted origins of conflicts, including socio-economic inequalities, political repression, resource scarcity, environmental degradation and historical grievances.

This New Agenda for Peace recognizes that peace is not merely the absence of conflict but also about ensuring justice, inclusivity, and sustainable development. It calls for a holistic approach to peace that encompasses a wide range of measures from strengthening the rule of law to promoting economic development and environmental sustainability.

Identifying the causes and responding to the emergencies: Youth at the center.

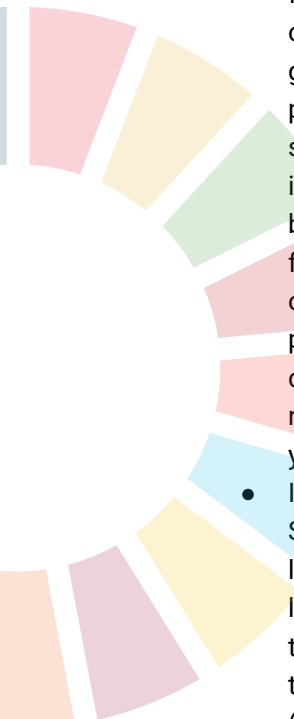
Youth are often the ones hardest hit by conflicts, and are also the key to their prevention and resolution. Their experiences provide insights into the underlying social, economic, and environmental stressors that fuel conflicts.

In order to recognize the diversity among populations and ensure that interventions are inclusive of gender, ethnicity, and background, we need to establish platforms for youth participation in peace negotiations, conflict resolution training programs tailored to young leaders, and youth-led peacebuilding projects.

Engaging with youth involves understanding their priorities and responses to these conflicts and recognizing them as key stakeholders in the pursuit of peace.

The main recommendations on this chapter from youth participants in the online consultation were:

- A youth advisory platform could be created at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to participate in UNSC meetings, sharing the vision of young people on how issues related to peace and security in the world should be resolved.
- The UN should be more accessible and open to all young people and peacebuilders, and participation should not be tokenistic and limited to a select few outstanding youth who have founded well-established organizations. This can be done by establishing a quota for youth who can apply for UN ground passes as individuals, allowing them to attend and observe UN sessions, and participate in side events.

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- It is crucial to invest in capacity-building for young peacebuilders and youth-led organizations. The UN can bridge this gap by establishing mentorship programs and providing funding specifically earmarked for youth initiatives. Cross-border exchanges between young people should also be facilitated to allow them to learn about other cultures, thus promoting tolerance, peace and social cohesion. In addition, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programs targeting young people should be implemented.
 - In the Pact for the Future, Member States should commit to concluding a legally binding instrument to prohibit lethal autonomous weapons systems that function without the application of the principle of humans in the loop (HITL) and that do not allow for human operators to disregard, override or reverse the output of such high-risk AI systems. States should also emphasize the paramount importance of employing geoengineering techniques solely for peaceful endeavors.

The Pact should include language on the protection of civilians and peacebuilders and the need for accountability measures. Member States should ensure the protection of young civilians lives' and human rights takes center stage and investigate and prosecute those responsible for crimes perpetrated against them as well as establish mechanisms for holding authorities accountable for any disproportionate and repressive actions against young peacebuilders exercising their political rights.

"International peace processes should mandate the inclusion of youth representatives, not just as 'the future' but as active contributors in the present."

- Christina Kontomichalou, founder of PanScope, China.

By institutionalizing youth participation, ensuring broader accessibility to the UN, investing in capacity building and upholding ethical standards in technology use, the international community will create a more peaceful, just and sustainable world.

Chapter 3. Science, Technology and Innovation, and Digital Cooperation

In Chapter 3, Member States seek to position science, technology, and innovation (STI) and digital cooperation within the sustainable development agenda and as global public goods, emphasizing their critical role in advancing development. This chapter highlights the potential of STI across all sectors of society. It points to a future where digital technologies and innovation are leveraged not just for economic growth but as essential tools in the fight against climate change, poverty, inequality, and other global challenges.

Throughout the chapter, the consultations about the Global Digital Compact are highlighted. The Global Digital Compact is a document that aims to address the challenges and opportunities presented in the digital age. We need to ensure that the digital revolution benefits all of humanity, emphasizing the importance of universal access to the internet, digital literacy and the development of digital public goods. The digital divide requires concerted efforts to expand internet access, improve digital literacy, and enhance the availability of affordable digital services.

STI is presented as a force to achieve the SDGs. Innovation in renewable energy technologies, sustainable agriculture, and digital health solutions can accelerate progress towards the Global Goals. The chapter also calls for increased investments in research and innovative development in areas that align with the SDGs.

Ethical implications of the technological advancements like AI, biotechnology, and data privacy receives significant attention, and the chapter calls for creation and application of frameworks and regulations that not only

encourage innovation, but also ensure that technologies are used in a way that respects human rights, privacy and ethical standards.

The chapter also acknowledges the disparities and STI capabilities between developed and developing countries, emphasizing the need for technology transfer, capacity building, and financial support in less developed regions.

“The Summit of the Future needs to emphasize the profound impact of digitalization on young people’s futures”

- Tomiwa Akinsanya.

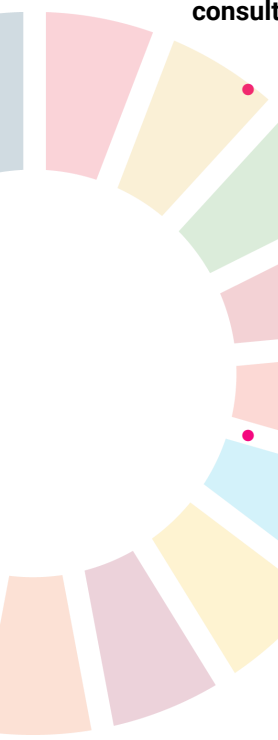
Fostering youth leadership and collaboration on STI

Young people are often framed as digital natives, and indeed, many young people are using technology and innovation to drive new solutions and transform their activism. Yet, many more are still affected by the digital divide, and this barrier must be overcome, if we are to truly benefit from technology and close the uneven gaps.

Young people should be engaged in the formulation of digital policies, governance frameworks and ethical standards reflecting their insights, concerns, and aspirations. Technology, AI, and digital innovation must be harnessed for the benefit of all, and it is critical that we listen to young people on their experiences of navigating these spaces and proactively address the potential opportunities and harms they may bring.

Equally, if the future is indeed digital, it is critical that we equip young people with the digital skills to prepare them for the jobs of the future, many of which will require a deep understanding of technology and digital platforms.

The main recommendations on this chapter from youth participants in the online consultation were:

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- The discussion highlighted the critical need for comprehensive digital literacy education and the importance of curricular updates to include technological tools. These programs could equip young people with the skills to navigate, evaluate, and contribute to the digital world safely and equitably, while closing the digital divide.
 - The discussion emphasized the necessity of creating specific funding programs for women, indigenous peoples, LGBTQI+ individuals, and other underrepresented communities in technology entrepreneurship. This approach not only enriches the entrepreneurial ecosystem with diverse perspectives, but also ensures that innovation benefits all sectors of society, addressing historical inequalities and barriers to entry.
 - Partnerships and collaborations between the different organizations and stakeholders involved, such as governments, private companies, local formal organizations, universities, and civil society organizations, are fundamental to strengthen digital cooperation.

"Digital literacy is a dynamic and evolving field, and young people need to develop a mindset of continuous learning and adaptation to keep pace with technological advancements."

-Nazrin Aliyeva (Azerbaijan)

The integration of youth perspectives, and leadership within the STI realm lays the groundwork for a more resilient and inclusive future. All stakeholders should harness youth creativity, innovation, and energy to drive

positive change and build a better world for the generations to come.

"Integrating ethical considerations and sustainability into science, technology, and innovation requires research transparency, the development of accountability standards, and consideration of the long-term impacts of technological advancement on future generations"

Yana Hederim -Ukrainian Youth Councils Association.

Chapter 4: Youth and Future Generations

This chapter focuses on the critical intersection of youth and future generations, recognizing their role in shaping global development. One of the central points of this chapter is the emphasis on education as a catalyst for empowerment and the meaningful and inclusive participation of youth in decision-making processes.

This chapter also acknowledges the distinct needs and perspectives of children as a group separate from young people. By acknowledging the vulnerabilities and strengths of children, this chapter prioritizes their rights and well-being, and also highlights the importance of nutrition, early childhood development, and addressing child poverty in order to lay the ground for future generations' well-being and resilience.

Education is the central axis to empower youth and future generations to actively contribute to society. This chapter advocates for inclusive and quality education that is essential for young people to navigate and learn effectively in an increasingly complex world.

Chapter 4 recognizes the agency and perspectives of young people and the importance of creating platforms and mechanisms for youth to engage with policy-makers, contribute to policy formulation, advocate for their interests and concerns and bring their solutions to the table.

It also emphasizes the imperative of addressing intergenerational equity and sustainability in global policy frameworks to ensure that present actions do not compromise the well-being of those yet to come.

From youth to youth

Taking into consideration that education is not just about acquiring knowledge but also about developing skills and attitudes that prepare for the interconnected and changing world we live in, young people have been emphasizing in different ways the importance of learning critical thinking, digital literacy and soft skills such as creativity, communication, and teamwork. Education systems should be flexible and adaptable to our new needs and the needs of generations to come.


Young people still encounter barriers to meaningful participation, such as lack of access to decision-making spaces, tokenism, and age-based discrimination. From a youth perspective, meaningful participation involves not only being heard but also having youth inputs valued and most importantly: acted upon.

As youth, we recognize the importance of our rights and the rights of children, understanding the challenges and vulnerabilities faced during childhood. Ensuring these rights includes providing safe and nurturing environments where we, as humans can learn, play, and grow in all stages of our lives. However, this means addressing systemic issues such as poverty, violence and discrimination that affect us all.

"No Summit can call itself "of the future", if it doesn't place young voices and the interest of young people at its core. [...] Young people challenge the status quo and bring new ideas, approaches and solutions to solve the world's most intractable problems. "

- Abdinasir Addow

To effectively plan long-term and future-equipped policies, it is crucial for Member States to engage in dialogue among peers, across different generations, and with a



focus on future generations. Such intergenerational dialogues should be ongoing, creating spaces that promote youth inclusivity at every level. The Pact for the Future should explicitly commit to principles of sustainability, equity, and intergenerational justice, while also acknowledging the significant role of young people as changemakers and leaders.

The main recommendations on this chapter from youth participants in the online consultation were:

- Meaningful youth engagement requires moving beyond tokenism and fully supporting young people in all their diversity and at all levels – ranging from global to community levels – with a holistic approach. Initiatives should range from policy reforms that ensure formal representation of young people at political levels to capacity-building efforts at the community level. Mechanisms to promote youth participation in decision-making processes must be strengthened, youth-led solutions must be taken into account and funding dedicated to young people and youth organizations should be regular and sustainable.
- Young people highlighted the need for ensuring youth-inclusive accountability and feedback mechanisms to ensure implementation of the Pact, for example by creating an oversight body or committee responsible for overseeing implementation and providing periodic reports or other clear, accountable, and transparent monitoring and evaluation processes, with active youth participation in reviewing progress.
- When reflecting on future generations, key challenges such as climate change,

inequality, human rights violations, access to education and healthcare, and social injustices, such as stigma & discrimination amongst young people living with HIV, were highlighted. To avoid or minimize the severity of these, it is vital to implement proactive measures such as investing in quality education, promoting environmental sustainability, fostering economic opportunities, strengthening democratic institutions, and ensuring intergenerational equity in decision-making processes.

- Barriers for youth engagement, including safety, limited access to information and opportunities, especially for youth in rural areas and marginalized youth, and lack of collaboration and cooperation with other stakeholders, are aspects that need to be addressed.

The Pact should be implemented by adopting a decentralized approach, with a focus on youth engagement at all levels, including grassroots level, to ensure meaningful participation and ownership of the process.

"It is said in our local language that "imiti lyikula eempanga". The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow. It is imperative to invest in the wellbeing of future generations."

- Ruth Nawakwi from Zambia, Youth Activist and Founder of Inclusive Education for Sustainable Development IESD.

Chapter 5. Transforming Global Governance

Chapter 5 focuses on the need for transforming global governance to address the multifaceted challenges of the 21st Century. This chapter emphasizes the necessity of reform of the principal organs of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, to ensure its relevance and effectiveness in today's rapidly changing geopolitical landscape.

The call for a reform of the principal organs of the UN reflects the shifting power dynamics in the international arena. It is a call to enhance transparency, accountability, and effectiveness in decision-making processes.

This chapter also reflects on globalization and financial interconnectedness by advocating for a reform to the international financial architecture to foster greater resilience and sustainability. Additionally, there is a push for promoting greater transparency and accountability in Global Financial governance to better address issues, such as inequality, debt burdens and illicit financial flows.

The chapter also underscores the importance of identifying complex global shocks such as pandemics, climate change, and economic crises, which pose significant challenges to global governance. Tackling these challenges requires a coordinated and adaptive response at the international level, involving collaboration among all stakeholders.

Creating dialogues between stakeholders and youth: a necessary action

Integrating youth perspectives into global governance enhances the dialogue to shape a future of international relations and governance structures where no one is left behind.

In order to reform the principal organs of the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, it is essential to create spaces where aspirations of all nations are included and where transparency, accountability, and participation are enhanced.

Young people recognize the profound impact of the financial crisis on their lives and communities, and they have been calling for greater representation of Global South countries in global financial institutions and mechanisms, to ensure their needs are addressed in decisions affecting their economic futures.

They also emphasize the importance of addressing student debts, youth unemployment, and access to affordable education as integral components of financial reform efforts from Member States.

Given the current polarization and divide in the world, I would also pay special attention to restoring the social fabric by revitalizing and reinforcing local communities, as an integral building block of global governance
- Andrijana Paljušević (Montenegro).

Realizing such reforms will require political will, leadership and cooperation among Member States to build a more just, inclusive and sustainable world.

The main recommendations on this chapter from youth participants in the online consultation were:

- Youth representation in decision making bodies both internationally and nationally can be achieved through developing youth councils, advisory panels or designating youth seats within existing structures.

- Youth participation should be consistently integrated into international frameworks and decision-making processes. The principle of 'No Youth Without Youth' underscores the imperative of including young people in decisions that directly affect them. Establishing permanent platforms for youth to engage in dialogues on security and peace is essential to ensure that this demographic is not overlooked or excluded.
- Youth participation needs to be promoted in regional, national and international spheres where young people are engaged and given political influence when it comes to the decision making process so that youth can develop "political will" and create agency for the future generations.
- The UN and Member States must scale up support for inclusion programmes such as internships, fellowships, scholarships, youth advisory councils, and online platforms to ensure equal opportunities for underrepresented groups. Youth and civil society engagement must be systematically integrated into global governance spaces, such as the Security Council, and their inputs must be taken seriously to have the chance to inform and influence decision-making.
- The Security Council must ensure conflict prevention rather than a reactive approach and equal representation and influence from all regions, not only the Global North.

All these recommendations can be achieved through the establishment of Youth councils, advisory boards, and permanent seats within existing structures, ensuring that young people have a permanent voice in shaping policies that affect their futures.

By prioritizing youth representation we can create sustainable governance systems that reflect the aspirations and needs of the present and future generations.

"I am thrilled to be part of this space, where I can engage with diverse perspectives and express my thoughts on the pressing issues that resonate with young people today. Through dialogue and exchange, let us embark on a journey of exploration and understanding, striving to make a meaningful impact in our communities and beyond."

~ Deemimah Liliura (Papua New Guinea)

