



YOUTH2030

A Global Progress Report
Executive Summary

2024

YOUTH
2030





Youth2030: Progress Report 2023

Youth2030: Progress Report 2024 is the fourth report on the status of implementation of Youth2030, the [UN Youth Strategy](#). The report sheds light on the efforts made by the UN system at various levels to fulfill its commitments with and for youth. It provides a comprehensive overview of the progress made and the collaborative efforts of the UN to support Governments and youth networks on their path to sustainable development. It underscores the continued commitment of the UN system to leaving no youth behind.



Sustainable Development Goals

On 1 January 2016, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by world leaders in September 2015 at an historic UN summit, came into force. At the midpoint to 2030, the SDGs are off-track. Over the next six years, Member States, the UN system, and young people worldwide must mobilize efforts to achieve these universal Goals to end all forms of poverty, fight inequality, and tackle climate change while ensuring No One is Left Behind.

UNITED NATIONS



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FOREWORD

The world stands at a crossroads, facing existential threats that transcend borders and generations – from conflicts to climate chaos to deepening inequalities.

In this critical moment, young people are leading the charge for urgent action. Their creativity, resilience and vision are vital for a more sustainable, peaceful and just future for all. The United Nations youth strategy – Youth2030 – aims to strengthen our efforts for and with young people. This report highlights progress and challenges at the global, regional and local levels.

Our work is founded on a core principle: we must work with young people as equal partners. This requires facilitating youth engagement in decision-making processes, at the United Nations and beyond; amplifying diverse young voices worldwide; and allocating dedicated resources, in particular in developing countries.

The Summit of the Future in September offers an opportunity to scale up efforts, strengthen intergenerational solidarity, and make concrete commitments to support and empower young people. I urge all partners to support this cause, at the Summit and beyond.

The United Nations must lead by example. I am grateful for the efforts of the new Youth Office and the entire UN family to promote youth participation and cooperation. Let us accelerate this work at all levels.

I will continue to stand with young people, speaking out and working for real change. Together, we can build a more prosperous, equal and resilient future, with young people front and centre.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'António Guterres', written over a long, thin horizontal line that tapers to a point on the right.

António Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations

Executive Summary

*The fourth edition of the **Youth2030 Progress Report** provides an overview of the implementation of the Youth Strategy across the United Nations (UN) system. The report is being launched against the backdrop of emerging opportunities for meaningful youth engagement in policymaking and decision-making processes, including at the UN, but also marked by multiple global crises that have led to the Sustainable Development Goals being severely off track.*

The UN launched its **Youth2030, the UN System-wide Youth Strategy**, on 24 September 2018, aiming to fundamentally transform its work **with** and **for** youth at all levels. Nearly six years since its inception, Youth2030 has gained significant traction within the UN System, advancing across its five priority areas and four foundational areas. However, significant acceleration is needed to achieve the Youth Strategy's goals.

The data presented reflect self-reported progress from 50 UN entities and 132 UN country teams (UNCTs) measured against key performance indicators (KPIs) outlined in the Youth2030 Scorecards and scored using a Red-Yellow-Green rating scale for the year 2023. This report includes performance scores for 2023 and tracks progress from baselines set in 2021 for UN entities and 2020 for UNCTs, providing insight into trends over time.

During the development of the Scorecards between 2020 and 2021, the initial milestone for the first phase of Youth2030 implementation by 2024 was set at achieving a 🟢 rating of $\geq 80\%$ for KPIs in UN entities and UNCTs. Progress towards this milestone has been steady but slow: 🟢 scores in UN entities increased from **45%** in 2021 (baseline) to **53%** in 2023, whereas UNCTs saw an improvement from **25%** in 2020 (baseline) to **40%** in 2023.

Among the **UN Development Coordination Office** regions, Europe and Central Asia performed the best with **51%** 🟢 scores. Among the 50 UN entities actively implementing Youth2030, the following eight have achieved the 2024 milestone with 🟢 scores $\geq 80\%$:

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- United Nations Youth Office (UNYO)
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).

Six out of the 132 UNCTs have also reached this milestone: **Chad, Mozambique, Costa Rica, Bhutan, Kosovo¹** and **Thailand**.

The greatest improvement in overall 🟢 scores between the 2021 baseline and 2023 was observed in the following UN entities: **UNAIDS, International Organization for Migration, International Telecommunication Union, International Trade Centre and UNESCO. The UNCTs of Mozambique, Jamaica, Bosnia and Herzegovina and El Salvador** showed the most improvement between the 2020 baseline and 2023.

The UN System continues to advance global commitments on youth across five broad themes: (a) making data and evidence on youth widely available and setting standards for the work on youth, (b) establishing programmes, projects and partnerships on youth, (c) supporting Governments in policymaking, (d) building the capacity of stakeholders and supporting the exchange of knowledge on youth and (e) advocating and communicating on youth issues.

Data and evidence generation and the establishment of evidence-based standards on youth continue to be a critical function within UN entities, demonstrating commendable performance across various action areas. Progress is evident in enhancing insights on youth left behind in their data and evidence collection. However, despite the increasing emergence of projects leveraging big data to obtain insights on youth, examples of such innovative approaches within the system remain rare.

Across the UN System, there has been momentum in supporting **joint programmes and multistakeholder initiatives on youth**; but more work is needed to scale this support across countries. Notably, UN entities' and UNCTs' direct support of youth-led solutions has improved, marked by a significant increase in UN entities directly funding youth-led organizations, networks and movements to undertake youth-led projects. However, this type of support remains marginal.

The continued support of UN entities and UNCTs to Governments in **strengthening national policies and programmes on youth**, as well as mainstreaming youth issues in sectoral policies, remains a key area of the UN System's work on youth. There was a clear improvement in the support to strengthen Governments' capacities to Leave No Youth Behind. However, at the country level, we see a decrease in the support provided by UNCTs to strengthen the capacity of Governments to improve public financing for youth development and enhance the availability of disaggregated data.

For the fourth year in a row, the top three sectors to which UNCTs provided support in the areas of policy alignment and mainstreaming youth were **education, health, and employment/labour**, which are considered to be sectors traditionally aligned to youth issues. There remains significant potential for enhancing support in non-traditional and emerging sectors such as technology, innovation, culture, tourism, urban development, climate action and finance.

UN entities have maintained strong performance in **building capacities of various stakeholders** on youth issues, including duty bearers and rights holders. This work has advanced in several areas, including making e-learning courses widely accessible to the public, hosting joint knowledge portals, and facilitating knowledge exchange. Meanwhile, within UNCTs, there has been great improvement in incorporating youth issues into their knowledge exchange plans while ensuring that these activities are appropriately funded. There is nonetheless still much scope for improvement.

Communications and advocacy initiatives on youth, including events, international days and communications campaigns, have been the best-performing areas among UN entities, consistently achieving the highest levels of scores among all KPIs since 2021 (baseline). In UNCTs, this area has greatly improved, particularly regarding the inclusion of youth in joint communication and advocacy plans at the country level and ensuring that such campaigns are accessible for young persons with disabilities.

The focus on youth within the UN's **strategic planning processes** has shown improvement, marked by a significant increase in the inclusion of results for youth in **United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs)** and youth situational analyses in **common country analyses** by UNCTs at the country level. Across various work streams – such as programming, human resources, communication, and advocacy – UN entities have enhanced alignment with the objectives of Youth2030. There was significant progress made in considering the accessibility of young persons with disabilities in their communications and advocacy strategies/plans.

Although many UN entities and UNCTs are dedicating funds to youth-related initiatives, improved **tracking and transparency in information reporting** on planned funding, allocation and expenditure rates are needed at all levels.

Engagement in **inter-agency coordination mechanisms** on youth was stronger among UN entities at global and regional levels compared with UNCTs. Many entities are also actively participating in both issue-based/thematic and system-wide mechanisms to improve the coherence of the work on youth. However, further work is needed to improve the proportion of UNCTs that are coordinated on youth issues through results groups or a task team.

Additionally, while UN entities are undertaking data-driven actions to improve the **proportion and representation of youth in the workforce and strengthen the fairness and quality of internships and fellowships**, collective action at the UNCT level remains a challenge due to lack of policy coherence. Further strengthening is needed at the global, regional and country levels concerning internal capacities regarding youth, particularly on building the capacity of personnel on youth-policy programming and meaningful youth engagement.

The United Nations has witnessed a significant surge in **youth engagement across its entities and UNCTs**, underscoring a growing commitment to involving youth in various facets of their work and ensuring their meaningful participation. Engagement with diverse youth groups has improved, with networks of girls and young women and youth networks at the grassroots level being the most commonly engaged groups in 2023. UNCTs made notable strides in engaging youth with disabilities, migrant youth and refugee youth. Senior management dialogues with youth in UN entities have seen a surge. Youth engagement in strategic planning processes at the entity level has remained at nearly the same level. However, there has been a ten-fold increase in youth engagement in UNSDCF by UNCTs. Engagement of youth in UN-led projects at all levels, including investment projects focused on youth-led solutions and communications and advocacy solutions, has greatly increased.

The progress made in implementing the Youth Strategy across the UN System is supported by the strategic guidance of the Youth2030 **High-level Steering Committee (HLSC)**. This intergenerational committee leverages the expertise of UN leadership alongside insights and solutions from youth networks. Technical leadership from the **Joint Working Group (JWG)** and the focused efforts of time-bound and issue-specific **Task Teams** have also played pivotal roles. With the establishment of the UN Youth Office these governance and coordination structures have transitioned from the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth to the UN Youth Office.

Five years into its implementation, the Youth2030 HLSC commissioned a review to understand how the UN System has taken its implementation forward, what lessons have been learned from the experience thus far and identify potential areas for further improvement on the planned course of action. The review also examines the changing environment to make recommendations for the remaining period. The findings from the present report also informed the interim review and its recommendations.

Moving forward with a focus on accelerating Youth2030 implementation, a stronger alignment with Sustainable Development Goals acceleration and "Our Common Agenda" operationalization efforts is needed, as well as a focus on internal transformations in the UN linked to the Secretary General UN 2.0 initiative. To take this work to the next level and build on emerging opportunities in the UN's work with and for youth, a revitalized Youth2030 Global Governance should also be considered. These recommendations are aligned with the findings of the first interim review of Youth2030.

Acronyms | Abbreviations

BOS	Business Operations Strategy
CCA	Common Country Analysis
CF	Cooperation Framework
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ESRS	Youth2030 Entities Scorecard Reporting System
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HLSC	High-level Steering Committee
HR	Human Resources
HRIS	Human Resources Information Systems
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System
JWG	Joint Working Group
JWP	Joint Workplans
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
LGBTQI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
OSGEY	Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth
UNYO	United Nations Youth Office
QCPR	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
TT	Task Teams
Youth2030	United Nations Youth Strategy



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