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Social development: social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family

Youth development links to sustainable development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [70/127](#). It provides an analysis of the linkages and complementarities on youth issues between the World Programme of Action for Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It also describes recent initiatives in the area of youth policies and programmes based on inputs received from Member States, United Nations entities and civil society organizations. The report concludes with key recommendations for consideration by the Assembly.

* [A/72/150](#).



I. Introduction

1. In its resolution [70/127](#), on policies and programmes involving youth, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Assembly at its seventy-second session on the implementation of the resolution, including on the linkages and complementarities on youth issues between the World Programme of Action for Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to be prepared in consultation with Member States as well as the relevant specialized agencies, funds and programmes and regional commissions, taking into account the work done by the United Nations system, and also encouraged the Secretariat to consult, as appropriate, with youth-led and youth-focused organizations. Further to that request, the Secretariat consulted with relevant entities and received responses from 37 Member States,¹ 12 United Nations entities that are members of the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development² and two youth-led organizations.³

2. Section II of the present report analyses the youth dimensions of sustainable development. It presents an overview of the interlinkages between the two frameworks, in particular in relation to monitoring youth development (see annex).⁴ Sections III and IV highlight activities and initiatives undertaken by Member States, United Nations entities and youth-led organizations to implement the World Programme of Action.

3. Section V sets out recommendations on how to generate synergies between youth development and sustainable development.

II. The youth dimensions of sustainable development

4. From its inception, young people were actively involved in the development of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including through: (a) the formal inclusion of young people in United Nations negotiations related to sustainable development through the major group system, in particular the children and youth major group; (b) consultations with young people held at the national level by Member States to inform their national positions; and (c) the My World global survey.⁵

5. Echoing this participation, as well as the growing interest in and increased policy focus on youth issues as they relate to sustainable development, youth are

¹ Argentina, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Côte d'Ivoire, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Lebanon, Mexico, Montenegro, Myanmar, the Netherlands, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Qatar, the Republic of Moldova, Senegal, Serbia, the Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey and Uruguay.

² The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Department of Political Affairs, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office.

³ The children and youth major group and the European Youth Forum.

⁴ A more detailed comparison between the indicators of the World Programme of Action for Youth and those of the Sustainable Development Goals is available from www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/wpay/2017/comparison-education-indicators.pdf.

⁵ As of June 2017, the answers from young respondents to the My World global survey totalled more than 5 million, making youth the first cohort of respondents.

given specific recognition in the preamble of the 2030 Agenda, and both explicit and implicit references to youth are found throughout its 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

6. The pledges made in the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind and to reach the furthest behind first, as well as its affirmation to be people-centred, ensure that youth are included in all aspects of the Agenda. At the same time, youth are given specific mention in four areas: youth employment, adolescent girls, education, and sports for peace. Finally, young people are recognized as agents of change, entrusted with fulfilling their own potential and ensuring a world fit for future generations.

A. Interlinkages between the World Programme of Action for Youth and the Sustainable Development Goals

7. Youth development is not only critical to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, but is also recognized in other development frameworks, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, the Istanbul Declaration and Programme of Action and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway.

8. The Sustainable Development Goals are integrated, indivisible, global in nature and universally applicable, and therefore all of them apply to youth. Although there is no stand-alone Goal on youth, the language used in a majority of the Goals encompasses all social groups, including youth (Goals 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11 and 16), while Goal 3, “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages”, is the only one that specifically addresses age.

9. Many of the priority areas listed in the World Programme of Action⁶ are addressed in the Sustainable Development Goals, with the exception of intergenerational issues. Some of the priorities are clearly identifiable within the Goals, such as education, in Goal 4; employment, in Goal 8; and girls and young women, in Goal 5, while other areas are dealt with less explicitly, such as juvenile justice, in Goal 16. In addition, some Goals address several priorities, such as Goal 3, which deals with health care, substance abuse and HIV/AIDS.

10. A mapping exercise and analysis⁷ of the overlaps between the indicators relating for the World Programme of Action⁸ and those for the Sustainable Development Goals suggests that enhancing the implementation and monitoring of the World Programme of Action will accelerate progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

11. Of the 232 indicators listed in the revised list of global Sustainable Development Goal indicators,⁹ 68 provide information relevant to youth development, while an additional 18 are deemed highly relevant to youth in that

⁶ The World Programme of Action addresses 15 priority areas: education, employment, hunger and poverty, health, the environment, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, leisure-time activities, girls and young women, full and effective participation of youth in the life of society and in decision-making, globalization, information and communications technology, HIV/AIDS, armed conflict, and intergenerational issues.

⁷ The analysis is based on a global indicator framework developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, which was adopted by the Statistical Commission at its forty-eighth session, held in March 2017 (see [E/2017/24-E/CN.3/2017/35](https://unstats.un.org/ctd/commission/48th/session/), chap. I, sect. A). The analysis is also based on the complete set of metadata for currently available indicators as of May 2017 (available from <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/>).

⁸ See [E/CN.5/2013/8](https://unstats.un.org/ctd/commission/48th/session/).

⁹ [E/CN.3/2017/2](https://unstats.un.org/ctd/commission/48th/session/), annex III.

they measure one of the priority areas of the World Programme of Action. However, those 18 indicators are not disaggregated by age at the global level and do not reflect a clear definition of or methodology for data collection. If they were disaggregated by age, the total number of youth-relevant Sustainable Development Goal indicators would increase to 85.

12. Of the 68 indicators mentioned above, 53 directly contribute information about the sociodemographic situation of young people, while 15 provide information about the enabling environment that is conducive to youth development.

13. The youth sociodemographic indicators can be divided into two categories. On the one hand, nine indicators measure youth-specific issues, such as adolescent births; youth not in employment, education or training; child marriage; and youth having experienced sexual violence during childhood. On the other hand, 44 indicators are disaggregated by age or by group, for example, the proportion of individuals using the Internet or the number of victims of human trafficking. It is worth noting that, while the language used in some sociodemographic indicators does not refer to age disaggregation, metadata indicates that possibility for 21 indicators.

14. Fifteen indicators provide information about the enabling environment that is conducive to youth development. These can measure specific youth enablers, such as trained teachers in lower and upper secondary education, or effective climate-change-related planning and management focusing on youth. They can also measure enabling factors conducive to social development in general, such as social protection coverage or public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment.

15. A set of 49 indicators has been proposed¹⁰ for selection and adaptation by Member States in monitoring and assessing the implementation of the World Programme of Action. A comparison of the 68 Sustainable Development Goal indicators with the 49 World Programme of Action indicators reveals that 20 are identical or similar in wording, meaning or objective. This represents nearly half of the World Programme of Action indicators. If age disaggregation were included for an additional 6 Sustainable Development Goal indicators, related to nutrition, access to safe drinking water, sanitation, energy, transport, and ownership of a mobile phone, this number would rise to 26.

16. Finally, an analysis of youth-relevant indicators by tiers¹¹ reveals a fairly balanced distribution, with 30 per cent pertaining to tier I, 41 per cent to tier II and 28 per cent to tier III. The tier I youth-relevant indicators relate mostly to youth health, education and employment, on which data have been extensively collected for many years, while tier III youth-relevant indicators pertain to more recent statistical fields, such as a youth-enabling environment, climate change or governance.

¹⁰ See [E/CN.5/2013/8](#).

¹¹ To facilitate the implementation of the global indicator framework, its indicators are classified by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators into three tiers on the basis of their level of methodological development and the availability of data at the global level. Further information about the tier classification is available from <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/tier-classification/>.

B. The role of the Sustainable Development Goals in implementing the World Programme of Action for Youth

1. The global indicator framework: leaving no youth behind

17. The global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals offers the potential to gather more robust information on the situation of youth, which in turn could support better implementation of the World Programme of Action through enhanced evidence-based youth policies. For example, although suicide and accidental death from self-harm is the third leading cause of death among young women and young men,¹² being particularly acute among indigenous youth,¹³ it is an issue that is often neglected in youth policies. Therefore, the language of Sustainable Development Goal target 3.4, on mental health and well-being, which goes beyond the World Programme of Action proposal for action, offers greater potential for a more effective response to youth mental health issues.

18. Youth poverty is a key topic of both the World Programme of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals. Thus, the global indicator framework will allow for two perspectives on youth poverty not covered in the Programme of Action: (a) young people living below the international poverty line (with the data disaggregated by sex, employment status and geographical location); and (b) youth poverty in all its dimensions.

19. Another example relates to youth mortality. While the World Programme of Action indicators track five causes of mortality (maternal causes, road traffic accidents, homicide and conflict-related and self-inflicted injury), the global indicator framework includes those five causes and adds four: (a) household and ambient air pollution; (b) unsafe water, unsafe sanitation and lack of hygiene; (c) unintentional poisoning; and (iv) disasters.

20. Youth-related data will be provided on a wide array of issues that were not measured with World Programme of Action indicators, such as gender-based violence, gender parity in average hourly earnings, time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, researchers, missing persons and trafficking, safety perception when walking alone, or number of positions in public institutions.

21. The use of such data could strengthen the evidence for effective implementation of the World Programme of Action. For example, global information about youth access to finance services (Sustainable Development Goal indicator 8.10.2) could open up new perspectives in terms of youth financial literacy and inclusion policies.

22. An overwhelming majority of the indicators measuring the sociodemographic situation of young people are disaggregated not only by sex and age, but also by other factors, such as geographical location and indigenous or disability status. This will provide a wealth of information about specific youth groups, such as adolescent girls and young women, indigenous youth, youth with disabilities and young migrants. In that context, some indicators related to parity provide an important snapshot of the diversity of the situation of youth. Such indicators might prove essential in measuring the impact of inclusive youth policies.

¹² See *The World's Women 2015: Trends and Statistics* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.15.XVII.8). Available from https://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/downloads/WorldsWomen2015_report.pdf.

¹³ See E/2017/43-E/C.19/2017/11.

2. Beyond the global indicator framework: age disaggregation at the national level

23. The Statistical Commission has repeatedly highlighted the importance of disaggregation of data by age. In March 2017, a city group on ageing and age-disaggregated data was established by an informal group of national statistical offices and United Nations system and civil society organizations.¹⁴

24. As noted above, the global indicator framework includes 18 indicators that can be considered highly relevant to youth but currently are not disaggregated by age at the global level and do not reflect defined methodologies.

25. Access for youth to land and employment opportunities for youth in agriculture are key points of the World Programme of Action for which no indicators exist. The corresponding Sustainable Development Goal target 2.3, on agricultural productivity, does not specifically mention youth, while indicator 2.3.2, on the average income of small-scale food producers, is not disaggregated by age. Such gaps in monitoring highlight the importance of ensuring that additional work on age disaggregation can be undertaken at the global and national levels in the coming years, allowing for enhanced monitoring of World Programme of Action priorities through the Sustainable Development Goals.

26. Adequate global collection and analysis on a number of topics important for youth development are not included in the frameworks. For example, while technical and vocational education and training are mentioned in the preamble of the 2030 Agenda and the narrative of the World Programme of Action, there is no specific target or indicator related to those activities. This is also the case with other World Programme of Action priorities, such as leisure-time activities and armed conflict.

27. The Sustainable Development Goals also cover issues that were not fully considered in the priorities of the World Programme of Action. Goals related to sustainable agriculture, inequalities, sustainable consumption and production, life below water or life on land could broaden the scope of youth policies, while additional national targets such as social protection for young people, young people's resilience to disaster and the representation of young women in national parliaments, local governments or managerial positions could also enhance the implementation of the World Programme of Action.

28. Some indicators are relevant to youth issues but are not disaggregated by age in the global indicator framework. It might be useful for national Sustainable Development Goals monitoring frameworks to include, where feasible, age disaggregation for indicators such as informal employment or violence against young journalists, activists, trade unionists and human rights advocates. In addition, indicators regarding enabling environments for development, such as primary school facilities,¹⁵ could be expanded to measure secondary and tertiary education facilities so as to better assess the situation of youth education.

C. The role of the World Programme of Action in advancing youth development through the Sustainable Development Goals

29. The World Programme of Action remains a useful international framework for guiding youth policies, as it includes topics key to youth development that are not fully considered in the Sustainable Development Goals. For example, the World Programme of Action indicators on youth health offer more robust information than

¹⁴ See [E/2017/24-E/CN.3/2017/35](#).

¹⁵ See Sustainable Development Goal indicator 4.a.1.

those contained in the Goals. Although Member States have repeatedly¹⁶ emphasized the need to increase youth awareness about nutrition, including eating disorders and obesity, it is currently not measured within the global indicator framework, as indicators 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 refer only to children under 5. The World Programme of Action indicators monitoring the percentage of young people considered to be underweight and overweight could inform targeted youth health policies.

30. With respect to substance abuse, the World Programme of Action indicator “Number of youth held in custody by civil authorities in connection with drug-related crimes” complements Sustainable Development Goal indicator 3.5.1, on substance abuse prevention and rehabilitation, capturing the interlinkages between substance abuse and juvenile justice.

31. Several Sustainable Development Goal indicators related to energy, water and transportation are not disaggregated by age, while the World Programme of Action indicators measure youth access to energy, water and transportation. Given that adolescent girls and young women, in particular in rural areas of developing countries, often continue to be excluded from education owing to the water burden and that diarrhoeal diseases are the fifth leading cause of death among young women aged 15-29,¹⁴ the inclusion of age disaggregation regarding access to safe drinking water and sanitation in national Sustainable Development Goal indicator frameworks could prove useful. Similar recommendations can be formulated with respect to access to energy and transportation, as crucial enablers for education, employment and poverty eradication (all of which are World Programme of Action priorities).

32. The World Programme of Action priority of globalization includes migration, an issue central to youth development, as nearly 22 million international migrants are between 15 and 24 years of age¹⁷ and 20 per cent of the global youth population in that age range were willing to move permanently to another country.¹⁸ While the Sustainable Development Goal indicators related to migration (10.7.2 and 8.8.1) do not provide information about young migrants, World Programme of Action indicators on youth migrants and student mobility could be useful in monitoring the impact of migration policies on youth.

33. In addition, with regard to youth access to housing, while a wealth of information about youth living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing will be made available through Sustainable Development Goal indicator 11.1.1, youth homelessness is not captured in that indicator. Youth homelessness, an important issue in some countries, might be captured by using World Programme of Action indicator 13, “Percentage of youth deprived of adequate shelter”.

D. Mainstreaming of youth into environmental issues of the Sustainable Development Goals

34. Under the 2030 Agenda, greater progress in integrating the social, economic and environmental components of youth development is under way, although additional efforts are needed, in particular regarding the mainstreaming of youth-specific dimensions into environmental policies.

¹⁶ See General Assembly resolutions [66/121](#) (para. 14), [68/130](#) (para. 6) and [70/127](#) (para. 8).

¹⁷ See *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2015 Revision* (United Nations, 2015).

¹⁸ See *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends for Youth 2016* (International Labour Organization, 2016).

35. Indeed, it is worth underlining that the targets and indicators of Sustainable Development Goals 14 and 15 do not include social development or youth-specific dimensions, while the nexus between human well-being and oceans, for example, have been well documented.¹⁹ Sustainable tourism and fishery industries can provide social inclusion opportunities, through job opportunities for youth,²⁰ in particular those living in coastal areas and small island developing States.

36. Youth can also play an instrumental role in their local communities in the sustainable management of natural resources. While several Sustainable Development Goal targets, such as 6.b, on water and sanitation management, and 15.c, on sustainable livelihood opportunities, refer to local communities (including young people), there are no indicators measuring youth contributions.

III. Implementing the World Programme of Action for Youth to achieve sustainable development

A. New youth policies, programmes and laws

37. The development of youth policies and strategies is a priority for Member States that enables them to target the specific needs and challenges of youth. In recent years, a number of States have developed or updated national youth policies.²¹ In China, the milestone medium- and long-term youth development programme (2016-2025) is the first set of national guidelines for youth development. Changing political contexts in some States can result in lengthy youth policy formulation processes (for example, Cambodia and the State of Palestine).

38. Furthermore, the number and the range of sectoral youth-related policies²² have increased in recent years. Member States²³ have developed youth employment policies), including, in the case of Sweden, a national strategy on youth not in employment, education or training. Youth sexual reproductive health and youth health policies have been developed in Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique and Sri Lanka, while Mozambique and Zimbabwe have formulated strategies for preventing child marriage. Safety and juvenile justice policies have been developed in China and Poland, while Nepal has developed a national youth vision for 2025. Ireland has developed the world's first national strategy for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex young people.

39. Member States have also modified their youth normative frameworks by passing either general youth laws (El Salvador, Madagascar and Montenegro) or issue-specific ones. Among these, Austria has made education or training compulsory until age 18, while Trinidad and Tobago has banned child marriage.

¹⁹ See *Global Sustainable Development Report 2015* (United Nations, 2015) and "Mapping the linkages between oceans and other Sustainable Development Goals: a preliminary exploration" (ST/ESA/2017/DWP/149) (United Nations, 2017).

²⁰ See "Youth and development of aquaculture and livestock in Africa" (ARC/14/INF/8) (FAO, 2014).

²¹ Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, China, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Guyana, Madagascar, Montenegro, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Somalia, the Sudan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Uganda and the State of Palestine.

²² Further information about the efforts of Member States to implement World Programme of Action priorities, including girls and young women, employment, education, health and youth in conflict, is available from www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/wpay/2017/part3-implementing-wpay2017-lv.pdf.

²³ Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, El Salvador, Mexico, Samoa, Sweden and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

India has adopted a child labour act and ratified two related ILO conventions, while Colombia has adopted a youth employment and entrepreneurship act. Youth participation acts have also been adopted in the Republic of Moldova and the Sudan, while Liberia, through its equal representation and participation act, has reserved one seat in Parliament for youth. In Ecuador, the rights and diversity of youth are recognized in the Constitution, together with additional youth-specific rights, such as the right of young people to integrate into the labour market in just and decent conditions.

40. Efforts have also been undertaken to mainstream youth into sectoral policies, such as in the areas of health (in Poland), civic engagement (in France) and human security (in El Salvador, Germany and Switzerland).

41. Member States have recognized the diversity of youth by identifying different groups of youth in youth policies or in specifically targeted programmes: poor and excluded youth, homeless and street youth, youth with disabilities, indigenous youth, young refugees and other young migrants, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex youth, young people in conflict with the law, informally organized or non-organized youth, young substance abusers and youth affected by natural disasters.

42. A steady and consensual commitment to youth issues and consistent support for youth policies, with reviews conducted on a regular basis, can be regarded as major achievements.²⁴

B. Youth in national sustainable development efforts

43. The cross-fertilization of youth development and sustainable development policies has been undertaken by Member States through a two-pronged approach: the mainstreaming of youth into national sustainable development plans, and the mainstreaming of sustainable development into youth policies.

44. Many Member States have included youth-related outcomes in their localization of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially by analysing the contribution made by youth policy to the Goals.²⁵ This endeavour has been particularly visible in the national sustainable development strategies of Chad, Egypt, Germany and Mauritania.

45. Governmental entities responsible for youth, such as youth ministries, are also part of national Sustainable Development Goals coordination groups (in Austria, Azerbaijan, the Dominican Republic and the Philippines), and some of these mechanisms include young representatives (in Belgium, Finland and Slovenia). Young people have participated in the national voluntary review reports in the Netherlands and Peru, where youth organizations independently wrote part of the reports.

46. Member States have engaged with young people to support the formulation and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (Montenegro, Serbia and the Sudan), with a National Youth Summit on Climate Change organized in Canada. Communication strategies to inform young people about the Goals are also high on the agendas of some Member States (Azerbaijan, Lebanon, Serbia and Switzerland), with Belgium supporting campaigns conducted by young people themselves.

²⁴ Such commitment and support have been demonstrated by Austria, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Finland, Montenegro and Serbia.

²⁵ Austria, Finland, Hungary, the Philippines, Poland, Serbia and the Sudan.

47. At the regional level, several intergovernmental organizations have made youth a priority in their sustainable development efforts. The Ibero-American Pact for Youth, endorsed by 22 Heads of States, positions youth development within the Sustainable Development Goals as its first priority, through the development of regional youth targets and indicators. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation has organized a regional dialogue on youth participation in the implementation of the Goals.

48. A number of Member States have mainstreamed the Sustainable Development Goals into their national youth policies and programmes.²⁶

49. Youth-led organizations themselves can play a strong role in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, through awareness-raising, training and volunteerism (for example, the European Youth Forum).

C. Strengthening institutional arrangements for youth

50. In addition to strengthening youth governmental entities, Member States are pursuing policy coordination as a key element of ensuring the implementation of youth policies at all levels.

1. Strengthened youth governmental institutions

51. Some Governments have recognized youth work and built the capacities of youth workers.²⁷ While Peru has reformed its institution dealing with youth, the Dominican Republic and Senegal have strengthened their youth ministries by adopting internal strategic plans.

52. Other achievements have included the increased investment in youth in national budgets (in the case of El Salvador) and the impact produced by youth programmes, which has led, for example, to a reduced number of youth not in employment, education or training in Poland. More effective delivery of youth services has been achieved by creating dedicated spaces for youth networks (in Argentina, Chile and the Dominican Republic) or supporting such spaces (in Azerbaijan, Mauritania and Trinidad and Tobago). Uruguay has launched a “youth card”, which offers a full package of services, benefits and discounts for youth. Lebanon is about to launch a similar card, which already exists in Chile, Colombia and many European countries.

2. Strengthened coordination on youth

53. Many Member States host intergovernmental youth coordination mechanisms, either through dedicated structures or through participation in sectoral mechanisms. Youth ministries have made renewed efforts in their coordination missions thanks to specific mechanisms.²⁸ France has created a youth policy advisory board, directly reporting to the Prime Minister, whose goal is to ensure the consistency of youth policy. In El Salvador, the youth coordination mechanism includes two new members: the Ministry of the Environment and Natural resources and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock. Mexico has established its first interministerial coordination mechanism on youth data. In some countries, coordination tasks have involved subnational authorities (Sweden and Switzerland) and other stakeholders,

²⁶ Austria, Azerbaijan, Côte d’Ivoire, Hungary, Ireland and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

²⁷ The Governments of Austria, Armenia, Chile, China, Ecuador, Finland, the Netherlands, Qatar and Slovenia.

²⁸ In China, Côte d’Ivoire, Fiji, Georgia, Germany, Malawi, Serbia, the Sudan and Uruguay.

such as the private sector, indigenous peoples, youth experts and youth organizations (Chile, Côte d'Ivoire and Serbia), with Austria and Azerbaijan gathering stakeholders together in annual youth forums.

54. To ensure youth mainstreaming, youth governmental institutions are engaged in other intergovernmental coordination mechanisms, such as on gender (in Mexico and Uruguay), bullying (in China) and citizen security (in El Salvador). The Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth of Austria provides youth training to other governmental institutions.

55. Coordination and mainstreaming efforts have resulted in a stronger commitment to youth policies on the part of other ministries (in Austria, Cambodia, the Dominican Republic and Serbia) and a recognition of the role of the youth ministry, in particular its coordination function (in Hungary and Turkey).

56. Local youth policies and programmes have been central to the efforts of several Member States. Some have partnered with local authorities (China, Germany and Sri Lanka), especially by granting financial means for them to provide local youth services (Argentina, Poland, the Republic of Moldova and Uruguay) or by creating a framework for youth development at the subnational level (Cambodia). Sweden ensures the exchange of knowledge about youth programmes among local authorities.

3. Challenges

57. Many achievements are highlighted above, from the expanded coverage and enhanced quality of youth services to the mainstreaming of youth into sectoral policies. Nevertheless, Member States also point out the challenges that continue to prevent the full implementation of the World Programme of Action.

58. Youth policies and their implementation are affected by the broader environment, including the political climate, humanitarian crises, uneven local development, budget cuts and competing priorities. In countries where the electoral participation of young people is declining and/or in ageing societies, the political influence of young people is also shrinking. That in turn can have a negative impact on the degree of priority given by politicians to youth and the development of youth policy.

59. Ongoing challenges that youth policies struggle to address include those related to high levels of youth unemployment and underemployment; alcohol and substance abuse; gender inequality; migration; and the intergenerational transmission of poverty.

60. Maintaining a holistic youth development perspective, including investing in culture, sports and civic engagement, can be difficult when one issue is particularly acute, such as youth unemployment.

61. Challenges to the implementation of youth policies range from coordination difficulties and constraints on financial resources to resistance from government entities that do not traditionally engage in youth mainstreaming. The diversity of youth sometimes makes it difficult to respond to their evolving and multifaceted needs. This can pose challenges to the creation of effective channels for the participation of youth, in particular vulnerable and marginalized young people. Moreover, in some ministries, including youth ministries, inadequate human resources and capacity to address youth issues reflect a lack of curricula in this area in many countries, as well as a lack of recognition of work on youth more broadly.

62. There is confusion among some stakeholders between “youth development”, which refers to the well-being of youth, and “youth in development”, which refers

to the participation of youth in all aspects of society and means that youth should be engaged not only in youth policy but in all policies as full members of society.

D. Youth participation

63. Establishing legally recognized youth participation mechanisms is essential for high-quality participation by youth. Many countries have continued their support for such mechanisms at the national and local levels,²⁹ while others have created or are creating new ones.³⁰ Member States highlight the effectiveness of combining both in-person and online avenues for participation.

64. Youth participation is considered instrumental in all stages of the youth policymaking process. For example, youth have been consulted during the formulation stage of forthcoming federal accessibility legislation in Canada, the employment policy in El Salvador, the demographic strategy in Germany and the forthcoming youth strategy in the European Union. El Salvador recently included youth in the management board of the national entity in charge of youth policy, while Canada has included youth in the review of its international assistance policy.

65. Moreover, youth participation is facilitated and strengthened by the mediation function of youth-led organizations. Financial and capacity-building support is provided to youth organizations in a number of Member States.³¹ Targeted support has been provided to indigenous youth organizations, student-led organizations and non-organized youth.³²

66. Youth participation in decision-making at the international level has made significant progress in recent years, with more Member States including young people as part of their national delegations to the United Nations. In 2016, more than 60 delegates from more than 35 Member States attended the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, with Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Canada, Chad, Czechia, Eritrea, Hungary and the United Arab Emirates launching their United Nations youth delegate programmes. Another notable development has been the inclusion of youth delegates not only in the Commission for Social Development but also in the high-level political forum on sustainable development, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, as well as in other United Nations processes and forums, such as the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), the World Health Assembly and the Economic and Social Council Youth Forum.

67. Closely linked to youth participation, a renewed interest in strengthening youth civic engagement and volunteerism has been noted,³³ with new youth civic services created in Canada and Côte d'Ivoire.

²⁹ Austria, Belgium, Brazil, China, Chile, Ecuador, Germany, Mexico, Portugal, Sri Lanka and Uruguay.

³⁰ Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, Senegal and the Sudan.

³¹ Azerbaijan, Chile, China, Ecuador, Mexico, Serbia, Slovenia, Uruguay and the members of the European Union.

³² In Belgium, Canada, Chile, Ecuador and El Salvador.

³³ In Chile, China, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, France, Germany, Hungary, Kuwait, the Philippines and Poland.

E. Youth data, research and evidence-based policy orientation

68. The monitoring and evaluation of youth policies have been bolstered,³⁴ including through innovative monitoring tools (in Ireland). Other examples are external evaluations on education (in Australia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) and the introduction of youth vulnerability indices, which allow for targeted interventions with respect to marginalized youth (in Chile).

69. The amount of information about the situation of young people has increased significantly in recent years, owing in particular to improved disaggregation of data (in Austria, the Dominican Republic and Montenegro), in particular with respect to young women (in Chile, Finland, Greece and Senegal). In Mexico, an innovative partnership with the national statistical agency has resulted in the inclusion of four new indicators in the national statistical framework: youth informal employment rate, youth monthly earnings, youth lacking access to social security, and youth leaving school to start a family. While Malawi has launched a new youth information system, Uruguay has created a dedicated youth data website, where the results of the third national questionnaire on youth can be downloaded in open data formats.

70. This newly generated or newly accessible information has been complemented by data analysis and studies about the general youth situation (in Germany, Malawi and the Sudan) or about specific topics, such as indigenous youth (in Australia and the Philippines), young refugees (in Canada), young women's mental health (in the Netherlands), the sexual exploitation of young people (in Switzerland) and care work from a gender and generational perspective (in Uruguay). Mexico and Uruguay have created dedicated units on youth studies within their youth-related public entities.

71. Participation by youth in monitoring and research has attracted growing attention, with indigenous youth participating in studies in Canada and young researchers being trained in Lebanon.

72. An important development in the field of youth data has been the creation of national youth development indices,³⁵ supported by the work undertaken by the Commonwealth Secretariat. India is now producing subnational youth development indices. Recently, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations developed its own regional Youth Development Index, which covers its 10 member States.

73. Despite the important progress made, additional efforts are required in order to obtain better disaggregated data on youth, in particular marginalized youth, and to measure youth participation and civic engagement.

IV. Multiplying efforts in the United Nations

74. United Nations entities actively supported Member States and young people in achieving youth development objectives. In 2016, the United Nations Inter-agency Network on Youth Development, a network of more than 50 United Nations entities, presented its global report³⁶ on United Nations work on youth carried out through the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Youth. The report articulated an

³⁴ In China, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, India, Ireland, the Netherlands, Poland, Serbia, Switzerland, Uganda and Uruguay.

³⁵ In Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico and the Philippines.

³⁶ Available from www.unyouthswap.org/resources.

initial global, coordinated and multisectoral vision on United Nations support for youth policies and the youth sector.

75. Led by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UNDP, the 2016 report has been instrumental in terms of taking stock of recent and ongoing United Nations work on youth. It is also seen as a useful baseline and an advocacy tool to further increase coherence and coordination on youth within the United Nations system at all levels. Findings show, for example, that a majority of United Nations country teams prioritize youth in their programming and that the United Nations system has supported 101 countries in formulating youth employment and development frameworks, action plans and policies.

76. System-wide advocacy efforts and attention to youth engagement have also been further strengthened through the appointment, in June 2017, of a new Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth.

Youth in the 2030 Agenda

77. United Nations support for Member States in monitoring the youth dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals has assumed various forms. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), in collaboration with a range of partners, has developed the adolescent country tracker, an outcome-based framework and a proposed set of indicators closely linked to the Goals, in order to describe the state of the world's adolescents. ECLAC is supporting the development of youth-related indicators and a related toolkit for youth organizations.

78. The United Nations has also provided strong support for evidence-based youth policies, in particular through an important global inter-agency partnership on capacity-building and regional dialogues, led by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Commonwealth Secretariat. Regional capacity-building workshops conducted in five regions and on four continents have targeted more than 75 Member States and hundreds of participants from youth ministries and youth-led organizations. Among other activities, the children and youth major group has been facilitating processes to enable local youth groups to become engaged with respect to national and regional disaster risk reduction plans, including through youth-led peer-reviewed science policy publications.

Youth in armed conflict situations, including conflict prevention, protection, peacebuilding and post-conflict processes

79. While the World Programme of Action includes a focus on youth and armed conflict, Security Council resolution [2250 \(2015\)](#), on youth, peace and security, was the first Council resolution wholly dedicated to the important and positive role that young women and men play in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security. To support its implementation, several tools have been developed, including a global platform, Youth4Peace.info, developed by UNDP, which has supported youth-related peacebuilding initiatives in various countries.³⁷

80. Work has been undertaken on progress study, mandated in Security Council [2250 \(2015\)](#), on the positive contribution of young people to peace processes and conflict resolution, in particular through regional and national consultations with young peacebuilders.³⁸

³⁷ Algeria, Angola, Burundi, Colombia, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Malawi and Panama.

³⁸ In Asia and the Arab Region and in Colombia, Myanmar and Sri Lanka.

81. The Department of Political Affairs has promoted youth engagement with respect to electoral processes by involving them as voters and candidates as well as agents of voter education, registration staff and polling officials.

Youth employment

82. The Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth, launched in February 2016 under the leadership of ILO, brings together 22 United Nations entities in an effort to expand country-level action to promote decent jobs for young people through evidence-based interventions and knowledge and multi-stakeholder partnerships, contributing to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals and targets related to youth employment. In September 2016, the Secretary-General appointed a Special Envoy on Youth Employment to advance the Global Initiative and support the promotion of effective youth employment strategies. Moreover, several new joint programmes on youth empowerment and employment have been developed (in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Samoa and Somalia). In Ethiopia, UNIDO has supported youth-led entrepreneurship in strategic industries with high growth and job creation potential. In the Philippines, ITU has supported coding training to enhance employment opportunities for youth in the field of technology.

83. FAO supports more than 20 countries through activities to promote youth agricultural employment, in particular through its Integrated Country Approach in Guatemala, Senegal and Uganda. In 2016, FAO launched an online policy database on employment and decent work in rural areas.³⁹

84. IOM has provided economic opportunities for vulnerable young migrants, mobile populations and youth at risk.⁴⁰

Youth health

85. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has supported the implementation of the Caribbean Community Integrated Strategic Framework for the Reduction of Adolescent Pregnancy. Many initiatives have been undertaken to address adolescent pregnancy, including in Ghana, Guyana and Myanmar. UNICEF-supported HIV prevention interventions have reached more than 1 million adolescents and young people in Côte d'Ivoire. In Uganda, UNFPA and UNICEF have launched two joint programmes on accelerating efforts to end female genital mutilation and child marriage.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

86. While the implementation of the 2030 Agenda could broaden the scope of youth policies and increase the amount of available information about youth, the World Programme of Action remains a useful international framework for guiding youth policies, as it includes topics key to youth development that are not fully considered in the Sustainable Development Goals. In the light of the inputs received from Member States, United Nations entities and youth-led civil society organizations, the following actions by States are recommended:

(a) **Develop and strengthen existing evidence-based national policies for youth development and coherent cross-sectoral efforts in line with the World Programme of Action for Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;**

³⁹ <http://www.fao.org/rural-employment/policies/en/>.

⁴⁰ In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Djibouti, Iraq, Kenya, Mauritania, the Niger, Panama, Somalia, Uganda and Yemen.

(b) **Prioritize and commit adequate resources for the implementation of youth-related policies, including youth participation in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages;**

(c) **Mainstream the perspectives of youth, in particular marginalized youth groups, into all policies and programmes, carried out at all levels by all governmental departments, to ensure the effective implementation of the World Programme of Action and that no youth are left behind;**

(d) **Strengthen the capacity of national statistical offices to design, collect and analyse age-disaggregated data so as to contribute effectively to follow-up, reporting and accountability for the achievement of the youth dimensions of the 2030 Agenda.**

Annex

Indicators relevant to youth development and well-being in the global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals

Goal 1 (No poverty)

- 1.1.1 Proportion of population below the international poverty line, by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural)
- 1.2.1 Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age
- 1.2.2 Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions
- 1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, new-borns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable
- 1.5.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population
- 1.a.2 Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection)
- 1.b.1 Proportion of government recurrent and capital spending to sectors that disproportionately benefit women, the poor and vulnerable groups

Goal 2 (Zero hunger)

- 2.2.2 Prevalence of malnutrition (weight for height $>+2$ or <-2 standard deviation from the median of the WHO Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age, by type (wasting and overweight)
- 2.3.2 Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status

Goal 3 (Good health and well-being)

- 3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio
- 3.1.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel
- 3.3.1 Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, by sex, age and key populations
- 3.4.2 Suicide mortality rate
- 3.5.1 Coverage of treatment interventions (pharmacological, psychosocial and rehabilitation and aftercare services) for substance use disorders
- 3.5.2 Harmful use of alcohol, defined according to the national context as alcohol per capita consumption (aged 15 years and older) within a calendar year in litres of pure alcohol
- 3.6.1 Death rate due to road traffic injuries
- 3.7.1 Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15-49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods
- 3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate (aged 10-14 years; aged 15-19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group

- 3.8.1 Coverage of essential health services (defined as the average coverage of essential services based on tracer interventions that include reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health, infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases and service capacity and access, among the general and the most disadvantaged population)
- 3.9.1 Mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution
- 3.9.2 Mortality rate attributed to unsafe water, unsafe sanitation and lack of hygiene (exposure to unsafe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All (WASH) services)
- 3.9.3 Mortality rate attributed to unintentional poisoning
- 3.a.1 Age-standardized prevalence of current tobacco use among persons aged 15 years and older
- 3.b.1 Proportion of the target population covered by all vaccines included in their national programme
- Goal 4 (Quality education)
- 4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people: (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex
- 4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex
- 4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill
- 4.5.1 Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated
- 4.6.1 Proportion of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex
- 4.7.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment
- 4.a.1 Proportion of schools with access to: (a) electricity; (b) the Internet for pedagogical purposes; (c) computers for pedagogical purposes; (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities; (e) basic drinking water; (f) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic handwashing facilities (as per the WASH indicator definitions)
- 4.b.1 Volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study
- 4.c.1 Proportion of teachers in: (a) pre-primary; (b) primary; (c) lower secondary; and (d) upper secondary education who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (e.g. pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country

Goal 5 (Gender equality)

- 5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age
- 5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence
- 5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18
- 5.3.2 Proportion of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age
- 5.4.1 Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location
- 5.5.1 Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments
- 5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions
- 5.6.1 Proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care
- 5.6.2 Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education
- 5.b.1 Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex
- 5.c.1 Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment

Goal 6 (Clean water and sanitation)

- 6.1.1 Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services
- 6.2.1 Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services, including a hand-washing facility with soap and water
- 6.b.1 Proportion of local administrative units with established and operational policies and procedures for participation of local communities in water and sanitation management

Goal 7 (Affordable and clean energy)

- 7.1.1 Proportion of population with access to electricity
- 7.1.2 Proportion of population with primary reliance on clean fuels and technology

Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth)

- 8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in non-agriculture employment, by sex
- 8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of female and male employees, by occupation, age and persons with disabilities
- 8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities

- 8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training
- 8.7.1 Proportion and number of children aged 5-17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age
- 8.8.1 Frequency rates of fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries, by sex and migrant status
- 8.10.2 Proportion of adults (15 years and older) with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider
- 8.b.1 Existence of a developed and operationalized national strategy for youth employment, as a distinct strategy or as part of a national development strategy

Goal 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure)

- 9.1.1 Proportion of the rural population who live within 2 km of an all-season road
- 9.5.2 Researchers (in full-time equivalent) per million inhabitants
- 9.c.1 Proportion of population covered by a mobile network, by technology

Goal 10 (Reduced inequalities)

- 10.2.1 Proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
- 10.3.1 Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law
- 10.7.2 Number of countries that have implemented well-managed migration policies

Goal 11 (Sustainable cities and communities)

- 11.1.1 Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing
- 11.2.1 Proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
- 11.5.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population
- 11.7.1 Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
- 11.7.2 Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months

Goal 12 (Responsible consumption and production)

- 12.8.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development (including climate change education) are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment

Goal 13 (Climate action)

- 13.1.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population

- 13.3.1 Number of countries that have integrated mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning into primary, secondary and tertiary curricula
 - 13.b.1 Number of least developed countries and small island developing States that are receiving specialized support, and amount of support, including finance, technology and capacity-building, for mechanisms for raising capacities for effective climate change-related planning and management, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities
- Goal 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions)
- 16.1.1 Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age
 - 16.1.2 Conflict-related deaths per 100,000 population, by sex, age and cause
 - 16.1.3 Proportion of population subjected to physical, psychological or sexual violence in the previous 12 months
 - 16.1.4 Proportion of population that feel safe walking alone around the area they live
 - 16.2.1 Proportion of children aged 1-17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month
 - 16.2.2 Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation
 - 16.2.3 Proportion of young women and men aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18
 - 16.3.1 Proportion of victims of violence in the previous 12 months who reported their victimization to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms
 - 16.3.2 Unsentenced detainees as a proportion of overall prison population
 - 16.5.1 Proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials, during the previous 12 months
 - 16.6.2 Proportion of population satisfied with their last experience of public services
 - 16.7.1 Proportions of positions (by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislatures, public service, and judiciary) compared to national distributions
 - 16.7.2 Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group
 - 16.10.1 Number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists, associated media personnel, trade unionists and human rights advocates in the previous 12 months
 - 16.a.1 Existence of independent national human rights institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles
 - 16.b.1 Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law

Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals)

17.8.1 Proportion of individuals using the Internet

17.18.1 Proportion of sustainable development indicators produced at the national level with full disaggregation when relevant to the target, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics
