wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

GLOBAL MODEL UN NEW YORK 2027

STUDY GUIDE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY THIRD COMMITTEE

Policies and Programmes Involving Youth

United Nations

YOUTH 2030

A GLOBAL PROGRESS REPORT: 2026

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Youth2030: Progress Report 2026

Youth2030: Progress Report 2026 is the sixth edition of the report on the status of implementation of Youth2030. It presents the first overview of implementation under Phase 2 (2025–2030) of Youth2030, the United Nations system-wide Youth Strategy. It marks the transition from establishing the foundations of the UN Youth Strategy to accelerating implementation and demonstrating measurable results. The report reviews progress across the UN system, highlights emerging trends and challenges, and identifies opportunities to strengthen collective action with and for youth in support of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Sustainable Development Goals

On 1 January 2016, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by world leaders in September 2015 at a historic UN summit, came into force. Ten years later, the Goals are off-track. In the years left until 2030, 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.

Table of Contents

FOREWORD BY THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL 4
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 5
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS 12
1. INTRODUCTION 13
1.1 Background 14
1.2 Youth2030: The journey so far 17
2. OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS 19
2.1 System-wide overview of progress 21
2.2 Progress in UN entities 22
2.3 Progress in UNCTs 22
3. STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1 25
3.1 System-wide overview of progress 26
3.2 Embedding meaningful youth participation in UN programming and activities 27
3.3 Policies and procedures in place to support meaningful youth participation across the UN system 33
3.4 Opportunities, challenges and a way forward 33
4. STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2 36
4.1 System-wide overview of progress 37
4.2 Support to intergovernmental and/or governmental efforts for SDG acceleration 37
4.3 Driving UN programmes, projects and initiatives with and for youth 41
4.4 Challenges, opportunities and a way forward 46
5. STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3 48
5.1 System-wide overview of progress 49
5.2 Generating and disseminating data and evidence on youth 49
5.3 Capacity-building of key stakeholders and knowledge exchange 52
5.4 Challenges, opportunities and way forward 56
6. STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4 58
6.1 System-wide overview of progress 59
6.2 Unlocking resources for the youth agenda 59
6.3 Tracking investments in youth across the UN 63
6.4 Challenges, opportunities and a way forward 66
7. STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5 68
7.1 System-wide overview of progress 70
7.2 Young talent 71
7.3 Internships 72
7.4 Challenges, opportunities and a way forward 73
8. STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6 78
8.1 System-wide overview of progress 79
8.2 Internal capacities and coherence to advance youthrelated efforts within the UN system 79
8.3 Strategies and mechanisms to strengthen accountability and transparency in working with and for youth 83
8.4 Challenges, opportunities and a way forward 85
9. A WAY FORWARD 88
10. ANNEXES 91

UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

–

FOREWORD TO THE YOUTH2030: PROGRESS REPORT 2026

14 July 2026

Around the world, young people are rising to meet the most pressing challenges of our time – from conflicts and climate change, to unemployment, unequal access to education and growing mental health concerns. They are building peace, advancing justice, protecting the planet and creating opportunities for shared prosperity.

Youth2030 represents the commitment of the United Nations to supporting and partnering with these young changemakers, providing a strategy and common framework for the United Nations system to work with and for youth across our mandate at every level.

With 2030 fast approaching, our world is marked by uncertainty, rapid change, interconnected crises and insufficient progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Ensuring that young people are meaningfully supported and engaged in shaping solutions is more important than ever to accelerate progress towards the Goals.

This report details the progress made in 2025 to implement the Youth Strategy and sets out a new acceleration plan to deepen impact, strengthen accountability, ensure system-wide coordination and to ensure that young people's ideas, concerns and participation are at the heart of the work of the United Nations and its global mission.

Throughout, we commend young people around the world – and the United Nations Youth Office as a key ally – for placing their trust in multilateralism as we work together to support youth as agents of change in their communities and beyond.

Guided by the inspiring ideas reflected in the report, let us continue to unlock their perspectives, leadership and creativity as we build a more sustainable, peaceful and prosperous future for all.

António Guterres

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

The Youth2030 Progress Report 2026 marks the first report on the implementation of Phase 2 (2025–2030) of Youth2030, the United Nations system-wide Youth Strategy. More than being an annual progress update, it marks an important transition in the implementation of the Strategy – from building institutional foundations during Phase 1 (2018–2024) to accelerating implementation, strengthening accountability and delivering measurable results during Phase 2. The findings presented in this report provide the first evidence that this strategic shift is taking place across the United Nations system.

The report comes at a defining moment for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With only four years remaining until 2030, progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) remains off track, while conflict, climate change, economic uncertainty, inequalities and rapid technological change continue to threaten development gains. In response, Member States have adopted a series of global commitments – including the Pact for the Future, the Global Digital Compact, the outcome of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development and other intergovernmental agreements – that reaffirm the importance of investing in the world's 2.6 billion young people aged 15–35 as partners in accelerating sustainable development.[1]

Against this backdrop, Youth2030 has become more relevant than ever. During Phase 1, the Strategy focused on establishing the institutional architecture needed for the UN system to work more effectively with and for young people. Significant progress was made in strengthening policy coherence, mainstreaming youth across UN planning frameworks, establishing coordination mechanisms, developing accountability tools and expanding meaningful youth engagement.

These achievements laid a strong institutional foundation for Phase 2, which places young people at the centre of efforts to accelerate SDG implementation and shape development beyond 2030. While retaining the Strategy's vision, together with the five Priority Areas and four Foundational Areas, Phase 2 introduces six Strategic Priorities that shift the focus towards transforming policies, programmes, financing systems, organizational culture and accountability across the UN system.

This report presents the first comprehensive analysis of progress under the revised Phase 2 framework. It draws on self-reporting from 132 United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) and 50 UN entities (out of 64 implementing entities) using the updated Youth2030 Phase 2 Scorecards. Progress is measured through the Green – Yellow – Red traffic-light methodology, where *Green* indicates that implementation is at milestone, *Yellow* indicates that implementation is moving forward, and *Red* indicates that implementation is getting ready. Together, the revised scorecards provide a stronger accountability framework for tracking implementation, identifying gaps and measuring progress across the UN system over time.

1. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2024). World Population Prospects 2024, *Online Edition*.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Definition **01**

Youth2030, officially titled Youth2030: The United Nations Youth Strategy, is the UN's system-wide framework aimed at empowering young people and scaling up action for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The UN launched Youth2030 on 24 September 2018. It is structured in two phases:

Foundation and Setup (2018–2024)
Acceleration and Action (2025–2030)

Interesting Facts **01**

The United Nations Youth Office (UNYO) is the first dedicated entity for youth affairs within the UN Secretariat. Its work reflects Youth2030 by strengthening collaboration, coordination, and accountability on youth-related issues across the UN system.

Interesting Facts **01**

Phase 1 key advancements are reflected in the Youth2030 Global Progress Reports published between 2021 and 2024:

2021: Establishing the baseline, by assessing the initial implementation of Youth2030, including the UN's COVID-19 response and efforts to strengthen youth participation.
2022: Strengthening accountability, by assessing how strategic planning, funding, and coordination are advancing commitments with and for youth.
2023: Advancing institutionalization, by examining the integration of youth priorities into UN planning and decision-making, alongside growing youth influence.
2024: Translating commitments into action, by highlighting progress in implementing youth commitments across global, regional, and country levels through collaboration with governments and youth networks.

Definition **02**

In September 2015, the United Nations adopted, in what became a historic summit, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Agenda laid out 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which came into force on January 1st 2026. Ten years later, the Goals are off-track. In the years left until 2030, 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.

Did You Know That... **02**

Out of the 139 targets for which we can compute reliable historical trends, only 36 per cent are on track or making moderate progress. Nearly half (49 per cent) are moving too slowly, and 15 per cent have slipped below their 2015 baselines.

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

The Youth2030 Progress Report 2026 marks the first report on the implementation of Phase 2 (2025–2030) of Youth2030, the United Nations system-wide Youth Strategy. More than being an annual progress update, it marks an important transition in the implementation of the Strategy – from building institutional foundations during Phase 1 (2018–2024) to accelerating implementation, strengthening accountability and delivering measurable results during Phase 2. The findings presented in this report provide the first evidence that this strategic shift is taking place across the United Nations system.

The report comes at a defining moment for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With only four years remaining until 2030, progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) remains off track, while conflict, climate change, economic uncertainty, inequalities and rapid technological change continue to threaten development gains. In response, Member States have adopted a series of global commitments – including the Pact for the Future, the Global Digital Compact, the outcome of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development and other intergovernmental agreements – that reaffirm the importance of investing in the world's 2.6 billion young people aged 15–35 as partners in accelerating sustainable development.[1]

Against this backdrop, Youth2030 has become more relevant than ever. During Phase 1, the Strategy focused on establishing the institutional architecture needed for the UN system to work more effectively with and for young people. Significant progress was made in strengthening policy coherence, mainstreaming youth across UN planning frameworks, establishing coordination mechanisms, developing accountability tools and expanding meaningful youth engagement.

These achievements laid a strong institutional foundation for Phase 2, which places young people at the centre of efforts to accelerate SDG implementation and shape development beyond 2030. While retaining the Strategy's vision, together with the five Priority Areas and four Foundational Areas, Phase 2 introduces six Strategic Priorities that shift the focus towards transforming policies, programmes, financing systems, organizational culture and accountability across the UN system.

This report presents the first comprehensive analysis of progress under the revised Phase 2 framework. It draws on self-reporting from 132 United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) and 50 UN entities (out of 64 implementing entities) using the updated Youth2030 Phase 2 Scorecards. Progress is measured through the Green – Yellow – Red traffic-light methodology, where *Green* indicates that implementation is at milestone, *Yellow* indicates that implementation is moving forward, and *Red* indicates that implementation is getting ready. Together, the revised scorecards provide a stronger accountability framework for tracking implementation, identifying gaps and measuring progress across the UN system over time.

1. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2024). World Population Prospects 2024, *Online Edition*.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Did You Know That... **02**

Violent conflict surged to its highest levels in decades, reversing years of development in mere months, forcibly displacing 118 million people.

Did You Know That... **02**

In 2025, global temperatures reached 1.43°C above preindustrial levels, and atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO2) reached its highest concentration in 2 million years

Did You Know That... **02**

Official development assistance collapsed by a record 23 per cent in 2025, eroding the financial foundations that the poorest countries
rely upon. As the annual SDG financing gap in developing countries hovers around $4 trillion, global military spending climbs to record highs.

Did You Know That... **02**

One in 10 people still lives in extreme poverty.

Something to Think About **02**

Technology can create opportunities for young people through education, employment and political participation, but it can also create new inequalities. Should youth policies treat technology primarily as an opportunity, a risk, or both? What safeguards might be necessary while still encouraging innovation?

Did You Know That... **02**

The Pact for the Future and Global Digital Compact were both adopted in 2024, showing that youth policy is increasingly connected to newer global issues such as AI, digital governance, intergenerational equity, and future generations. Check Page 8 for how Youth2030 connects these commitments to its Phase 2 priorities.

Something to Think About **02**

Which of these intersecting planetary and humanmade crises are affecting young people the most in your country? And how can young people be better involved in addressing them?

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

The Youth2030 Progress Report 2026 marks the first report on the implementation of Phase 2 (2025–2030) of Youth2030, the United Nations system-wide Youth Strategy. More than being an annual progress update, it marks an important transition in the implementation of the Strategy – from building institutional foundations during Phase 1 (2018–2024) to accelerating implementation, strengthening accountability and delivering measurable results during Phase 2. The findings presented in this report provide the first evidence that this strategic shift is taking place across the United Nations system.

The report comes at a defining moment for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With only four years remaining until 2030, progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) remains off track, while conflict, climate change, economic uncertainty, inequalities and rapid technological change continue to threaten development gains. In response, Member States have adopted a series of global commitments – including the Pact for the Future, the Global Digital Compact, the outcome of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development and other intergovernmental agreements – that reaffirm the importance of investing in the world's 2.6 billion young people aged 15–35 as partners in accelerating sustainable development.[1]

Against this backdrop, Youth2030 has become more relevant than ever. During Phase 1, the Strategy focused on establishing the institutional architecture needed for the UN system to work more effectively with and for young people. Significant progress was made in strengthening policy coherence, mainstreaming youth across UN planning frameworks, establishing coordination mechanisms, developing accountability tools and expanding meaningful youth engagement.

These achievements laid a strong institutional foundation for Phase 2, which places young people at the centre of efforts to accelerate SDG implementation and shape development beyond 2030. While retaining the Strategy's vision, together with the five Priority Areas and four Foundational Areas, Phase 2 introduces six Strategic Priorities that shift the focus towards transforming policies, programmes, financing systems, organizational culture and accountability across the UN system.

This report presents the first comprehensive analysis of progress under the revised Phase 2 framework. It draws on self-reporting from 132 United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) and 50 UN entities (out of 64 implementing entities) using the updated Youth2030 Phase 2 Scorecards. Progress is measured through the 🟢 Green – 🟡 Yellow – 🔴 Red traffic-light methodology, where 🟢 *Green* indicates that implementation is at milestone, 🟡 *Yellow* indicates that implementation is moving forward, and 🔴 *Red* indicates that implementation is getting ready. Together, the revised scorecards provide a stronger accountability framework for tracking implementation, identifying gaps and measuring progress across the UN system over time.

1. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2024). World Population Prospects 2024, *Online Edition*.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Definition **03**

Policy coherence means ensuring that different government policies work together toward compatible objectives instead of creating contradictions or duplicating efforts. For youth policy, this could mean coordinating education, employment, health, climate and social-protection policies rather than treating each challenge separately.

Something to Think About **05**

Youth2030's progress is based partly on information reported by the UN entities and Country Teams themselves. What are the advantages and limitations of allowing institutions to evaluate their own progress? Should independent evaluation or youth feedback also be part of accountability mechanisms?

2. Progress in implementation

A. Overall progress

The first year of Youth2030 Phase 2 provides the first evidence that the United Nations is successfully transitioning from building institutional foundations to accelerating implementation. Implementation accelerated significantly across both UN entities and UN Country Teams (UNCTs) in 2025, reflecting growing system-wide commitment to working with and for young people.

Overall implementation reached its highest level since the launch of Youth2030. Among UN entities, the average share of *Green* scores increased from 56 per cent in 2024 to 62 per cent in 2025, while among UNCTs, *Green* scores increased from 43 per cent to 65 per cent over the same period.

The acceleration was also reflected in the performance of individual UN entities and country teams. In 2025, 17 UN entities achieved more than 80 per cent *Green* scores, an eight-fold increase from 2024. This includes OHCHR, UNDP and UNFPA, which achieved 100 per cent *Green* scores. At country level, Barbados, Honduras, North Macedonia, Sierra Leone and Zambia achieved 100 per cent Green scores, demonstrating that comprehensive implementation of Youth2030 is achievable across diverse regional and development contexts.

Across regions, implementation continued to strengthen, although progress remained uneven. Africa and Europe and Central Asia recorded the highest proportion of *Green* scores (67 per cent), followed by Latin America and the Caribbean (64 per cent), Asia and the Pacific (63 per cent) and the Arab States (54 per cent). These differences highlight opportunities for targeted support, peer learning, and South–South and triangular cooperation to accelerate implementation across the system.

Five overarching trends characterize the transition from Phase 1 to Phase 2:

1. **The UN system is moving from establishing foundations to accelerated implementation, with stronger support for governments to translate global commitments into national policies, programmes and investments.**
2. **It is moving from consultation towards more institutionalized forms of meaningful youth participation, with nearly all UN entities (96 per cent) and UNCTs (98 per cent) engaging young people in their work.**
3. **It is moving from youth-specific interventions towards youth-inclusive SDG acceleration, with youth priorities increasingly embedded across national development processes.**
4. **Financing has emerged as the next frontier for implementation, underscoring the importance of the Global Youth Investment Platform and the UN Youth Marker in mobilizing and tracking investments.**
5. **Youth2030 is increasingly functioning as a whole-of-system accountability framework, embedding youth priorities across leadership, coordination, workforce, planning and reporting systems.**

Taken together, these findings tell a clear story. Phase 1 established the institutional foundations for working with and for youth. Phase 2 is accelerating implementation across the UN system. The results from 2025 provide the first compelling evidence that this strategic shift is translating into stronger institutions, better partnerships and more tangible results for young people.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Did You Know That... **02**

The exclusion of 606 million working age women from the labor force due to unpaid care responsibilities represents a significant global loss in productivity. Closing this gap could unlock economic potential comparable to that of entire regions.

Something to Think About **03**

Youth2030 implementation reached 100% Green scores in countries with very different geographic and development contexts. This suggests that youth-responsive policies do not necessarily require identical national systems. What common principles could be applied while allowing Member States to adapt implementation to their own circumstances?

Something to Think About **04**

When countries have different institutional and financial capacities, asking every Member State to implement the same programme may not be realistic. What do international youth policies look like? Do they establish common minimum standards, provide technical assistance, offer different levels of support according to national capacity?

Definition **04**

South–South cooperation involves developing countries sharing knowledge, resources or expertise with one another. Triangular cooperation adds a third partner, often a developed country, international organization or other institution, to support that exchange.

Something to Think About **2.**

There is an important difference between asking young people for their opinions and giving them influence over a decision. What actions is your country taking to move from consultation to actual decision-making power? What youth-action programs is it developing?

B. Progress by Strategic Priority

Strategic Priority 1: Empowering and engaging youth meaningfully

Strategic Priority 1 seeks to foster meaningful and inclusive youth engagement by strengthening youth-led organizations, networks and movements, enhancing advocacy and outreach with and for young people, and promoting a UN culture that champions youth empowerment and participation at all levels. Building on the institutional foundations established during Phase 1, the first year of Phase 2 demonstrates a clear shift towards institutionalizing meaningful youth participation across the UN system.

Nearly all reporting UN entities (96 per cent) and UNCTs (98 per cent) engaged young people in their work during 2025, making meaningful youth participation one of the strongest-performing areas of Youth2030 implementation. Engagement of diverse groups of young people expanded significantly, rising from 58 per cent at baseline (2020) to 77 per cent in 2024 and 89 per cent in 2025, while support for migrant and refugee youth increased from 48 per cent to 67 per cent.

UN entities also strengthened institutional systems for participation, with the proportion reporting all or nearly all policies and processes for meaningful youth participation increasing from 14 per cent at baseline (2021) to 42 per cent in 2025, alongside expanded funding and greater youth representation in governance structures.

Similar progress was evident among UNCTs, where the availability of dedicated funding to support meaningful youth participation almost doubled, increasing from 37 per cent in 2024 to 63 per cent in 2025.

These findings demonstrate that both UN entities and UNCTs are increasingly moving beyond ad hoc engagement towards institutionalizing meaningful youth participation through stronger policies, governance arrangements and dedicated financial resources. The Core Principles for Meaningful Youth Participation provide a common framework for supporting this transition, helping embed young people's voices throughout the full cycle of the UN's work—from policy development and programme implementation to governance and accountability.

Strategic Priority 2: Boosting SDG implementation with and for youth

Strategic Priority 2 represents the clearest transition from Phase 1 to Phase 2. While Phase 1 focused on strengthening policy coherence at the national level, Phase 2 emphasizes translating global commitments into national implementation by supporting youth-inclusive policymaking, scaling multi-stakeholder partnerships and integrating youth priorities throughout the SDG implementation cycle.

The first year of Phase 2 demonstrates strong progress towards this objective. Building on policy coherence analyses undertaken by 75 per cent of UNCTs during Phase 1, 82 per cent supported governments in strengthening youth-inclusive and coherent national policies in 2025. Meaningful youth participation in these policy processes increased from 74 per cent in 2024 to 89 per cent in 2025, while support for strengthening national youth participation structures increased from 71 per cent to 77 per cent. UN entities similarly expanded support to governments through policy advice, technical assistance, partnerships and capacity development, helping translate intergovernmental commitments into national action.

Progress also accelerated across key sectors central to SDG implementation. Compared with 2024, UNCT engagement increased from 85 per cent to 92 per cent in education, 72 per cent to 88 per cent in employment, 61 per cent to 83 per cent in climate action and 39 per cent to 72 per cent in digital connectivity. Support for integrating youth priorities into Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) also increased significantly, rising from 40 per cent to 68 per cent, while youth participation in VNR processes increased from 46 per cent to 66 per cent. At the same time, UN entities expanded partnerships to incubate and scale youth-led solutions and increasingly integrated youth priorities into broader UN programmes and initiatives.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Definition **01**

Meaningful youth participation means more than simply including young people in an activity. It involves creating opportunities for their perspectives to influence decisions and ensuring that participation is accessible, representative and transparent. Check Page 12 for the UN's Core Principles on meaningful youth participation.

Interesting Facts **02**

Youth policies can overlook young people whose legal status, location or access to services differs from that of citizens. Check Page 13 for the report's broader discussion of representation, accessibility and exclusion.

Something to Think About **08**

Different policy areas (such as education, employment, climate action, and digital connectivity) can reinforce one another. For example, digital access can affect whether young people can access education or employment opportunities. Does your country have an integrated youth programme or separate programmes for each issue? What might be the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative?

Together, these findings demonstrate that the institutional investments made during Phase 1 are translating into stronger implementation support under Phase 2. Looking ahead, sustaining this momentum will require embedding youth priorities systematically throughout the full SDG implementation cycle – from planning and financing to implementation, monitoring, evaluation and accountability – while recognizing young people as indispensable partners in accelerating sustainable development.

Strategic Priority 3: Advancing knowledge and enhancing capacities

Building on the strong knowledge and institutional foundations established during Phase 1, Strategic Priority 3 focuses on strengthening the capacities of institutions and stakeholders by expanding access to data, evidence, guidance, tools and knowledge that support evidence-based policymaking and youth-inclusive SDG acceleration.

Knowledge generation and capacity development remained among the strongest-performing areas of Youth2030 implementation in 2025. Nearly all reporting UN entities (93 per cent) and UNCTs (97 per cent) strengthened knowledge and capacities through research, policy guidance, technical assistance, capacity development and knowledge exchange, reinforcing the UN system's role as both a global knowledge leader and a trusted partner for governments and youth organizations. These efforts increasingly focused on strengthening the capacities of governments and youth organizations, networks and movements to integrate youth priorities into SDG acceleration, facilitate meaningful youth participation and invest in youth-led solutions.

At the country level, 84 per cent of UNCTs supported governments in integrating youth priorities into SDG acceleration, 80 per cent strengthened government capacities to facilitate meaningful youth participation and 59 per cent supported governments to invest in youth-led solutions.

Support to youth organizations, networks and movements was equally strong, with 80 per cent of UNCTs strengthening capacities to integrate youth priorities into SDG acceleration, 89 per cent supporting meaningful youth participation and 72 per cent supporting investment in youth-led solutions.

Similarly, UN entities strengthened the capacities of governments and youth organizations. Among governments, 69 per cent supported the integration of youth priorities into SDG acceleration, 73 per cent strengthened capacities for meaningful youth participation and 62 per cent supported investment in youth-led solutions. Among youth organizations, networks and movements, 80 per cent strengthened capacities to integrate youth priorities into SDG acceleration, 82 per cent supported meaningful youth participation and 67 per cent strengthened capacities to advance youth-led solutions.

These investments are enabling Member States, youth organizations and other stakeholders to translate commitments into action while supporting more effective, evidence-based implementation across all six Strategic Priorities. Continued investment in data, knowledge-sharing and learning systems will be essential to measure outcomes, document impact and continuously strengthen implementation.

Strategic Priority 4: Unlocking resources for the youth agenda

Unlocking sustainable financing remains one of the greatest opportunities and the most significant challenges for implementing youth commitments at all levels. While Phase 1 laid the foundations by strengthening advocacy and analysis on financing for youth, Phase 2 places greater emphasis through Strategic Priority 4 on mobilizing resources, expanding direct investments in youth-led initiatives and strengthening accountability for youth-responsive financing.

The first year of Phase 2 shows encouraging progress. Some 74 per cent of reporting UN entities supported or facilitated funding for youth-led initiatives, while 85 per cent of UNCTs supported investments in youth-led solutions.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Something to Think About **01**

Youth priorities can be incorporated at several stages of policymaking, from planning and financing to evaluation. Which stages could your country prioritize for youth participation, and what mechanism could ensure that young people's input is considered throughout the entire process rather than only once?

Definition **02**

Evidence-based policymaking means using reliable research, data and evaluation to inform policy decisions. For youth policy, this can help governments identify which interventions address specific needs and which approaches can be adapted or expanded.

Something to Think About **07**

Measuring outcomes can help governments and the UN identify which programmes should be continued or expanded. What indicators could Member States use to measure whether a youth programme is actually improving young people's opportunities, rather than only measuring how many people participated?

At country level, implementation has shifted from analysing public financing during Phase 1 to supporting governments in integrating youth priorities into national SDG financing strategies, investment platforms and funding mechanisms.

Progress was also made in strengthening financial accountability through improved reporting on youth allocations and expenditures and expanded resource mobilization efforts across UN entities.

Despite these advances, financing remains one of the weakest-performing strategic priorities. Only an estimated 4 per cent of reported UN entity budgets were allocated to youth priorities in 2025, while systems for systematically tracking investments remain limited. Accelerating implementation will require stronger investment in youth priorities alongside improved financing systems. The proposed Global Youth Investment Platform, together with the rollout of the UN Youth Marker, provides an important opportunity to mobilize additional public and private resources, strengthen investment tracking and improve accountability for financing with and for young people.

Strategic Priority 5: Transforming the UN workforce and organizational culture

Strategic Priority 5 represents one of the key focus areas carried forward from Phase 1 into Phase 2. It recognizes that achieving Youth2030 requires not only stronger programmes but also a more diverse, inclusive and future-ready United Nations capable of attracting, recruiting and retaining young talent while expanding fair and equitable internship opportunities.

The first year of reporting demonstrates encouraging progress in attracting, recruiting and retaining young talent across the UN system. Among UN entities, 62 per cent strengthened policies and strategies, 66 per cent scaled programmes and initiatives, and 36 per cent documented and shared innovations and good practices to attract, recruit or retain young talent (35 years or younger).

Similar progress was evident among UNCTs, where 52 per cent strengthened policies and strategies, 74 per cent scaled programmes and initiatives, and 44 per cent documented and shared innovations and good practices. Together, these efforts demonstrate growing commitment across the UN system to rejuvenating the workforce and building a more diverse, representative and future-ready organization.

The UN system also continued to expand internship opportunities for young people. Among UN entities, 60 per cent strengthened policies and strategies, 64 per cent scaled programmes and initiatives, and 34 per cent documented and shared innovations and good practices to improve internship programmes. Similarly, 47 per cent of UNCTs strengthened policies and strategies, 68 per cent scaled programmes and initiatives, and 39 per cent documented and shared innovations and good practices. While these results reflect encouraging progress, continued efforts will be needed to expand equitable, high-quality internship opportunities, particularly for young people from developing countries, and to strengthen coherence across the UN system.

However, implementation remains uneven. Policy barriers, fragmented approaches to internships and financial constraints continue to limit progress in attracting and retaining young talent and expanding equitable internship opportunities, particularly for young people from developing countries. Sustained system-wide commitment will therefore be required to transform organizational culture and strengthen intergenerational leadership across the UN system.

Strategic Priority 6: Strengthening accountability systems for working with and for youth

Strategic Priority 6 provides the institutional backbone of Youth2030 Phase 2. Building on the accountability mechanisms established during Phase 1, the revised Phase 2 framework places greater emphasis on implementation, leadership, financing and measurable results, strengthening accountability for working with and for youth across the UN system.

Did You Know That... **01**

In 2024, one in five young people aged 15–24 globally was not in employment, education or training. This highlights why financing youth policies can have implications across education, employment and social protection.

Something to Think About **03**

Governments must often balance youth-specific investments with broader national priorities such as infrastructure, health or social protection. How does investing in youth contribute to broader national development goals?

During 2025, UN entities and UNCTs strengthened dedicated capacities, coordination mechanisms, leadership engagement and the integration of youth priorities into planning and reporting frameworks. The introduction of the revised Youth2030 Phase 2 Scorecards represents a significant strengthening of system-wide accountability by shifting the focus towards implementation and results. Progress in tracking youth investments, together with the piloting of the UN Youth Marker, also provides an important foundation for strengthening transparency and accountability.

While accountability systems have strengthened considerably, important gaps remain. Leadership engagement varies across organizations, investment-tracking systems are still evolving and measurement of outcomes for young people remains limited. Continued implementation of the revised scorecards, wider adoption of the UN Youth Marker and stronger integration of youth priorities into organizational planning and reporting systems will be essential to sustain progress throughout Phase 2.

3. Gaps, challenges and opportunities

Phase 2 builds on the foundations established during Phase 1 by accelerating implementation across the United Nations system. However, several challenges continue to constrain the pace and scale of progress across the UN system.

Implementation remains uneven across UN entities, UNCTs and regions, reflecting differences in institutional capacities and leadership engagement. Although meaningful youth participation has expanded considerably, opportunities for young people to influence decision-making remain more limited than opportunities for consultation and programme participation.

Financing continues to represent the most significant implementation challenge. While resource mobilization has improved, overall investments remain insufficient, investment-tracking systems are still developing and financing mechanisms have yet to match the scale of global ambitions.

Additional investment is also needed for strengthening data and organizational learning to better measure outcomes and demonstrate impact. Finally, workforce transformation and institutional reform remain works in progress, with leadership accountability and organizational culture evolving at different speeds across the UN system. Addressing these challenges presents an important opportunity to deepen implementation during the remainder of Phase 2.

4. Way forward

The findings of the first Youth2030 Progress Report of Phase 2 provide compelling evidence that the United Nations has entered a new phase of implementation. The institutional foundations established during Phase 1 are increasingly translating into stronger implementation, partnerships and measurable results. The priority now is to sustain this momentum and accelerate progress towards 2030.

The UN system needs to prioritize expanding opportunities for meaningful youth participation in decision-making, strengthening institutional capacities for intergenerational collaboration, accelerating workforce transformation by attracting, recruiting and retaining young talent and expanding equitable, high-quality internship opportunities, and scaling successful practices through peer learning, Communities of Practice, and South–South and triangular cooperation.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Interesting Facts **01**

The Youth2030 Scorecards are designed as tools for strategic planning, performance measurement and accountability, and there are separate versions for UN entities and UN Country Teams. This allows the framework to reflect the different responsibilities of global and country-level UN actors.

Definition **02**

An outcome is the change or result produced by an intervention. For example, the number of young people completing a training programme is an output, while improved employment opportunities after completing the programme would be an outcome.

Something to Think About **04**

Countries have different financial, administrative and technical capacities. How could the UN provide technical assistance or capacity-building while allowing Member States to adapt youth policies to their own national circumstances? Is your country implementing any youth focused program?

Something to Think About **05**

International youth programmes may require different forms of financing depending on their scale. What strategy - direct funding, technical assistance, partnerships, or strengthening existing national financing mechanisms - should a resolution prioritize? ould these approaches be combined?

Greater investment in youth-responsive financing will also be essential, including through the operationalization of the Global Youth Investment Platform, wider implementation of the UN Youth Marker, strengthened youth-responsive financing strategies and expanded partnerships with governments, international financial institutions, the private sector, philanthropic organizations and youth-led organizations.

Finally, strengthening accountability should remain central to Phase 2 implementation. Continued refinement of the Youth2030 Phase 2 Scorecards, improved tracking of investments and results, stronger leadership accountability and better measurement of outcomes will enable the United Nations to demonstrate impact, strengthen learning and continuously improve implementation. As the international community enters the final years of the 2030 Agenda, Youth2030 provides a coherent system-wide framework for ensuring that young people are not only beneficiaries of sustainable development but also indispensable partners in building a more peaceful, inclusive and sustainable future.

Something to Think About **01**

Youth-responsive financing can involve governments, international financial institutions, the private sector, and organizations. How could these actors complement one another while ensuring that Member States and young people remain involved in setting priorities?

Something to Think About **02**

Tracking investments can help identify whether resources are reaching their intended beneficiaries. What information should be tracked to determine whether investments in youth are producing meaningful results?

List of abbreviations

CCAs	Common Country Analyses
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DPO	Department of Peace Operations
DPPA	Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HLSC	High-level Steering Committee
HRC	Human Rights Council
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
JWG	Joint Working Group
KPAs	Key Performance Areas
NDGs	National development goals
ODA	Office for Disarmament Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNAOC	United Nations Alliance of Civilizations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Food Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSSC	United Nations System Staff College
VNRs	Voluntary National Reviews
WHO	World Health Organization

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

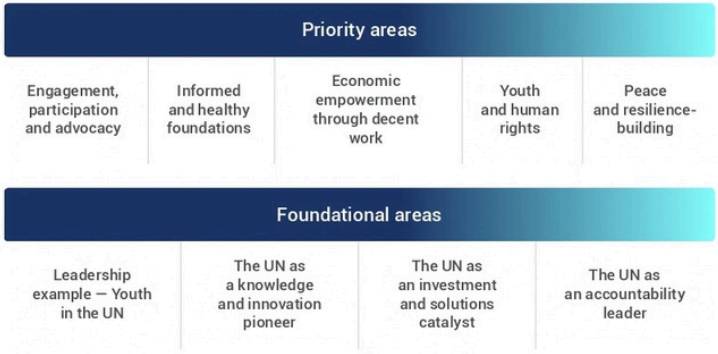
1.
Introduction

1.1 Background

The sixth edition of the *Youth2030 Progress Report* presents the first overview of implementation under Phase 2 (2025–2030)[2] of Youth2030, the United Nations (UN) system-wide Youth Strategy. It marks the transition from establishing the foundations of the UN Youth Strategy to accelerating implementation and demonstrating measurable results. The report reviews progress across the UN system, highlights emerging trends and challenges, and identifies opportunities to strengthen collective action with and for youth in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Phase 2 represents an acceleration phase of implementation. It builds on the achievements of Phase 1 (2018-2024), while responding to lessons learned, persistent gaps, and the evolving global context of slow progress towards the Global Goals. It continues to advance the Youth Strategy's stated aim of strengthening UN system-wide action with and for youth, supporting the realization of young people's rights, increasing their meaningful participation in shaping policies and decisions, and enabling their leadership and contributions as agents of change.

Phase 2 retains the core structure of Youth2030, including its five Priority Areas and four Foundational Areas, which continue to guide UN system-wide action on youth. These provide a lasting foundation for advancing youth engagement, strengthening youth agency, expanding opportunities for all young people, and supporting their contributions to sustainable development, peace and security, and human rights.



Building on this foundation, Phase 2 introduces **six Strategic Priorities** that strengthen implementation, enhance accountability and accelerate results across the UN system. These priorities reflect lessons learned from Phase 1, as well as the commitments outlined in the Pact for the Future.[3] They reinforce the UN system's support to national governments, youth organizations and other key stakeholder groups, with young people at the centre of efforts to accelerate the SDGs through more coordinated, coherent and impactful action.

2. Developed by the Youth2030 Joint Working Group, comprising 17 UN entities, 2 youth networks and Young UN, and approved by the High-Level Steering Committee in December 2024. https://www.un.org/youthaffairs/sites/default/files/2025-05/Youth2030-Phase2-May%202025.pdf
3. https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sotf-pact_for_the_future_adopted.pdf

Something to Think About **03**

Youth issues often overlap across several policy areas. How could Member States design youth policies that address multiple priorities (such as education, decent work, human rights and peacebuilding), without creating programmes that are too broad to implement effectively?

Reflecting this evolution, the 2026 edition of the *Youth2030 Progress Report* is the first to report on implementation against a new set of Key Performance Areas (KPAs) aligned with the Phase 2 Strategic Priorities. The KPAs provide a strengthened framework for tracking progress, enhancing accountability and guiding collective action across the UN system. The report draws on self-reporting by UN entities and UN Country Teams (UNCTs) through the updated Youth2030 Phase 2 Scorecards, which replace the Phase 1 reporting framework. Further details on the reporting and assessment methodologies are provided in annex 1.

Youth2030 continues to gain traction across the UN system. To date, 64 UN entities are engaged in implementation, with 50 actively reporting, alongside all 132 UNCTs. This broad institutional engagement demonstrates the Youth Strategy's growing reach and provides a strong foundation for scaling ambition, strengthening collaboration and accelerating collective action during Phase 2.

The progress made in implementing the Youth Strategy across the UN system is largely attributed to the strategic guidance of the Youth2030 High-level Steering Committee (HLSC).[4] Chaired by the Assistant Secretary-General for Youth Affairs and Head of the United Nations Youth office, this intergenerational committee leverages the expertise of UN leadership alongside insights and solutions from youth networks. Technical leadership from the Joint Working Group (JWG)[5] and the focused efforts of time-bound and issue-specific Task Teams have also played important roles.

The United Nations Youth Office, established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 76/306, leads system-wide collaboration, coordination and accountability for work with and for young people, including implementation of Youth2030. Through its UN System Coordination and Accountability Section, which serves as the Youth2030 Secretariat, the Office supports coherence, facilitates collective action, and strengthens monitoring and accountability for progress with and for young people.

4. High-level Steering Committee: 15 UN Member State representatives at the Assistant Secretary-General level; 2 youth networks; and Young UN (a network of young UN staff).
5. Joint Working Group: 17 UN entities, 2 youth networks and Young UN.

Interesting Facts **03**

The Youth2030 High-level Steering Committee combines UN leadership, Member State representatives, youth networks and Young UN. This creates a structure where institutional expertise and youth perspectives can inform the implementation of the strategy together.

#	Strategic Priority	Objective
1	**Empowering and engaging youth meaningfully**	Foster meaningful and inclusive youth engagement by strengthening youth-led organizations, networks, and movements; enhancing advocacy and outreach with and for youth; and promoting a UN culture that champions youth empowerment and participation at all levels.
2	**Boosting SDG implementation with and for youth**	Accelerate SDG implementation with and for youth by strengthening UN support for inclusive policymaking together with youth; scaling multi-stakeholder and joint initiatives for national impact; and partnering with a range of stakeholders to incubate and scale youth-led solutions.
3	**Advancing knowledge and enhancing capacities for working with and for youth**	Strengthen institutional and stakeholder capacities by enhancing access to data, evidence, tools, and knowledge to advance evidence-based, youth-responsive policies, cross-sectoral programming, and SDG acceleration with and for youth.
4	**Unlocking resources for the youth agenda across the UN**	Unlock diverse and sustainable funding for youth policy-programming and youth engagement by strengthening advocacy for youth-responsive financing, increasing resource mobilization efforts, and expanding direct funding for youth-led projects and initiatives.
5	**Transforming the UN work-force and organizational culture**	Transform the UN workforce by scaling policies, programmes, and innovations that attract, recruit, and retain young talent (35 years or younger) and expanding fair, equitable, high-quality internship opportunities for young people at all levels, including those from developing countries.
6	**Strengthening accountability systems for working with and for youth**	Strengthen UN system-wide accountability for working with and for youth by integrating the youth agenda into coordination and leadership mechanisms, and improving the tracking of investments and results, while continuing to implement and support ongoing efforts.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Something to Think About **01**

Not all young people have the same access to participation opportunities. What mechanisms could your country use to ensure that youth participation includes young people from rural areas, marginalized communities, persons with disabilities and other groups that may face barriers to participation?

Interesting Facts **02**

Multi-stakeholder initiatives can combine the resources and expertise of governments, UN entities, civil society, youth organizations and other partners. Check Pages 13–18 for examples of how these partnerships have been applied at the national level.

Definition **03**

Youth-responsive policies consider young people's specific circumstances, needs and priorities when policies are designed and implemented. They use evidence about young people rather than assuming that one policy will affect all age groups in the same way.

Something to Think About **05**

The transition from education to employment can depend on access to opportunities that provide young people with practical experience. However, the UN identifies fairness and equity as important considerations when expanding internships. How could Member States and institutions ensure that internships provide meaningful pathways to employment rather than becoming opportunities available mainly to youth who already have greater resources?

1.2 Youth2030: The journey so far

Global governance, system-wide coordination and accountability

- High-level Steering Committee: strategic guidance
- Joint Working Group: technical leadership
- Task Team: timebound, specific/ strategic areas of action
- Stakeholder engagement and visibility (Member States, youth networks)

2026
- Sixth Youth2030: Progress Report launched

2025
- Fifth *Youth2030: Progress Report* launched
- Start of Youth2030 Phase 2 (2025–2030)
- Sixth reporting of progress: 132 UNCTs; 50 UN entities

2024
- Fourth *Youth2030: Progress Report* launched
- Public-facing dashboard launched
- Youth2030 Interim Review Report launched
- End of Youth2030 Phase 1 (2018–2024)
- Fifth reporting of progress: 132 UNCTs; 50 UN entities

2023
- Third *Youth2030: Progress Report* launched
- *Internships in the UN: An Exploratory Review* launched
- Youth2030 first Interim Review undertaken
- Governance and coordination structures transition to the UN Youth Office
- Fourth reporting of progress: 132 UNCTs; 50 UN entities

2022
- Second *Youth2030: Progress Report* launched
- United Nations Youth Office established through UN General Assembly resolution 76/306
- Third reporting of progress: 131 UNCTs; 44 UN entities

2021
- First *Youth2030: Progress* Report launched
- Youth2030 UN Entities Scorecard and the reporting system built
- Second reporting of progress: 130 UNCTs; 40 UN entities

2020
- Youth2030 UNCTs Scorecard developed for performance measurement and accountability
- Youth2030 reporting by UNCTs institutionalized
- First reporting of progress: 130 UNCTs; 33 UN entities

2019
- Governance and coordination structures of Youth2030 established
- Start-up phase of Youth2030 implementation begun

2018
- Launch of Youth2030, the UN system-wide Youth Strategy, by the Secretary-General

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations



2.
Overview of Progress

KEY MESSAGES

1. Youth2030 implementation is accelerating across the UN system. In 2025, it gained significant momentum. UNCTs recorded the largest gains, with implementation scores increasing from 43% to 65% in one year. Africa and Europe and Central Asia emerged as the strongest-performing regions, demonstrating growing momentum for Youth2030 implementation across regions. Some 17 UN entities and 48 UNCTs achieved more than 80% of *Green* scores, compared with 11 and 6 in 2024; of these 3 UN entities and 5 UNCTs achieved 100% in 2025.

2. Meaningful youth participation is becoming more institutionalized. Young people are increasingly shaping UN work, with 96% (48/50) of UN entities and 98% (130/132) of UNCTs engaging youth in 2025. Progress is also being made in creating the conditions for meaningful youth participation, with UN entities having all or nearly all policies and processes in place increasing from 14% (5/36) in 2021 to 42% (21/50) in 2025, while funding for youth participation among UNCTs increased from 37% (49/132) in 2024 to 63% (83/132) in 2025.

3. Governments are receiving stronger support to deliver for and with young people. The UN is supporting governments to place young people at the centre of sustainable development through youth-inclusive policies and stronger participation in decision-making. In 2025, meaningful youth participation in policy processes increased from 74% (98/132) in 2024 to 89% (118/132), while support for integrating youth priorities into Voluntary National Reviews increased from 40% (53/132) in 2024 to 68% (90/132), with youth participation in these processes rising from 46% (61/132) to 66% (87/132). UN support also expanded across key priorities, including education, jobs, climate action and digital connectivity, helping to translate global commitments into national action.

4. The UN is strengthening the knowledge, skills, and capacities needed to accelerate youth-inclusive development. In 2025, 97% (128/132) of UNCTs supported knowledge and capacity development through research, guidance, technical assistance and knowledge exchange, helping governments, institutions and youth organizations advance youth-inclusive solutions.

5. Investing in young people must match global ambition. Greater ambition for young people requires greater investment. In 2025, 85% (106/124) of UNCTs and 74% (31/42) of UN entities supported investment in youth-led solutions, while stronger financing systems, improved tracking of youth investments and initiatives such as the Global Youth Investment Platform will be critical to scale impact and strengthen accountability.

6. The UN is advancing efforts to build a more diverse, inclusive and future-ready organization. It is strengthening its workforce by expanding opportunities for young talent, improving policies and scaling initiatives that support recruitment, retention and professional development. In 2025, 66% (33/50) of UN entities expanded programmes and initiatives to support young talent, contributing to a more diverse, inclusive and future-ready organization.

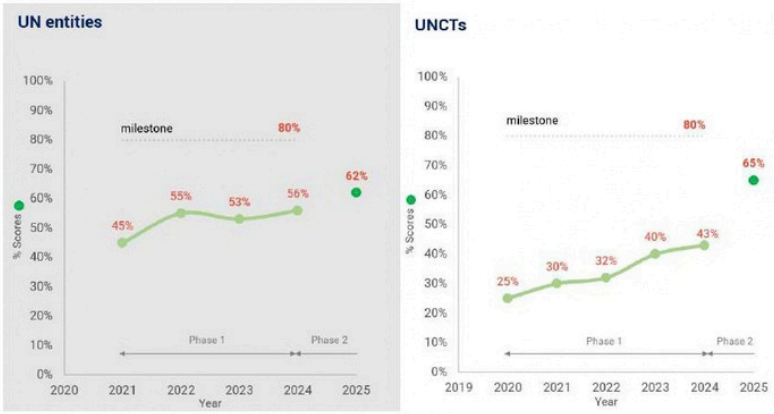
wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations
@GlobalModelUN

7. Accountability is strengthening results across the UN system. Youth priorities are increasingly integrated into UN strategies, coordination mechanisms and decision-making structures. Coordination mechanisms among UNCTs increased from 71% (94/132) in 2024 to 88% (116/132) in 2025, strengthening coherence and accountability for work with and for young people across the system.

2.1 System-wide overview of progress

The first year of Youth2030 Phase 2 provides concrete evidence that the UN is transitioning from building institutional foundations to accelerating implementation. Progress can be observed across UN entities and UNCTs in 2025, reflecting growing system-wide commitment to working with and for youth.

Overall implementation reached its highest level since the launch of Youth2030. Among UN entities, the average share of *Green* scores increased from 56 per cent in 2024 to 62 per cent in 2025, while among UNCTs, *Green* scores increased from 43 per cent to 65 per cent over the same period.



Five overarching trends characterize the transition from Phase 1 to Phase 2:

1. The UN system is moving from establishing foundations to accelerated implemention, with stronger support for governments to translate global commitments into national policies, programmes and investments.
2. It is moving from consultation towards more institutionalized forms of meaningful youth participation, with nearly all UN entities (96 per cent) and UNCTs (98 per cent) engaging young people in their work.
3. It is moving from youth-specific interventions towards youth-inclusive SDG acceleration, with youth priorities increasingly embedded across national development processes.
4. Financing has emerged as the next frontier for implementation, underscoring the importance of the Global Youth Investment Platform and the UN Youth Marker in mobilizing and tracking investments.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations
@GlobalModelUN

5. Youth2030 is increasingly functioning as a whole-of-system accountability framework, embedding youth priorities across leadership, coordination, workforce, planning and reporting systems.

Taken together, these findings tell a clear story. Phase 1 established the institutional foundations for working with and for youth. Phase 2 is accelerating implementation across the UN system. The results from 2025 provide the first compelling evidence that this strategic shift is translating into stronger institutions, better partnerships and more tangible results for young people.

2.2 Progress in UN entities

Youth2030 acceleration was clearly reflected in the performance of individual UN entities. In 2025, 17 UN entities achieved more than 80% *Green* scores, including OHCHR, UNDP and UNFPA, which attained 100% *Green* scores. This marks a substantial improvement from 2024, when 11 UN entities achieved more than 80% *Green* scores.

Top Performers: UN entities (>80% *Green* scores)

2025 (Total: 17)	2024 (Total: 11)
100% - OHCHR, UNDP, UNFPA	**97%** - UNDP, UNFPA
94% - DPPA, FAO, IOM, ODA, UN Women, UNEP, UNESCO, UN Youth Office	**93%** - UN Youth Office
88% - ILO	**89%** - UN Women, UNESCO
82% - DESA, ITU, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNODC	**88%** - OHCHR
	86% - FAO, UNAIDS
	83% - UN-Habitat
	81% - ILO, WHO

2.3 Progress in UNCTs

At country level, progress was also clear. In 2025, 48 UNCTs achieved more than 80% *Green* scores, compared with 6 in 2024, marking an eightfold increase.

Notably, Barbados, Honduras, North Macedonia, Sierra Leone and Zambia achieved 100% *Green* scores, demonstrating that comprehensive implementation of Youth2030 is achievable across diverse regional and development contexts.

Across regions, implementation continued to strengthen, with the number of UNCTs achieving more than 80% Green scores increasing in all regions in 2025 compared with 2024.

However, progress remained uneven. Africa and Europe and Central Asia recorded the highest proportion of *Green* scores (67%), followed by Latin America and the Caribbean (64%), Asia and the Pacific (63%) and the Arab States (54%). These differences highlight opportunities for targeted support, peer learning, and South–South and triangular cooperation to accelerate implementation across the system.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Top Performers: UNCTs (>80% *Green* scores)		
Global/Regional	**2025 (Total: 48)**	**2024 (Total: 6)**
Global	**100%** - Barbados, Honduras, North Macedonia, Sierra Leone, Zambia **94%** - Chad, Colombia, Gabon, Jordan, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Nepal, Senegal, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Zimbabwe **88%** - Albania, Bhutan, Burundi, Cameroon, Gambia, Jamaica, Lao PDR, Micronesia, Niger, Papua New Guinea, South Sudan, Tanzania **81%** - Bangladesh, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Chile, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Eswatini, Fiji, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Kosovo (as per United Nations Security Council resolution 1244), Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, Mozambique, State of Palestine	**92%** - Thailand **88%** - Liberia, Costa Rica **85%** - Iraq, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia
Africa	**100%** - Sierra Leone, Zambia **94%** - Chad, Gabon, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Senegal, Uganda, Zimbabwe **88%** - Burundi, Cameroon, Gambia, Niger, South Sudan, Tanzania **81%** - Cabo Verde, Congo, Eswatini, Mozambique	**88%** - Liberia **85%** - United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia
Arab States	**94%** - Jordan **81%** - Kuwait, Palestine	**85%** - Iraq
Asia Pacific	**94%** - Nepal **88%** - Bhutan, Lao PDR, Micronesia, Papua New Guinea **81%** - Bangladesh, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia	**92%** - Thailand
Europe and Central Asia	**100%** - North Macedonia **94%** - Uzbekistan **88%** - Albania **81%** - Georgia, Kosovo (as per United Nations Security Council resolution 1244), Kyrgyzstan	N/A
Latin America and the Caribbean	**100%** - Barbados, Honduras **94%** - Colombia, Trinidad and Tobago **88%** - Jamaica **81%** - Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico	**88%** - Costa Rica



wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

3.
Strategic Priority 1: Empowering and Engaging Youth Meaningfully

Strategic Priority 1 focuses on fostering meaningful and inclusive youth engagement by strengthening youth-led organizations, networks and movements; enhancing advocacy and outreach with and for young people; and promoting a UN culture that champions youth empowerment and participation at all levels. It reflects the ambition of Phase 2 to move beyond engaging young people as participants towards recognizing them as partners and co-decision makers across the UN system.

Definition **01**

Co-decision-making means that young people participate in processes where their perspectives can directly contribute to shaping decisions, rather than being limited to providing opinions or participating in activities.

3.1 System-wide overview of progress

Empowering and engaging young people meaningfully is at the heart of Youth2030. Under Youth2030 Phase 2, this work is guided by the Core Principles for Meaningful Youth Participation in Intergovernmental Processes and Across the Work of the United Nations.

Did you know?

Core Principles for Meaningful Youth Participation in Intergovernmental Processes and Across the Work of the United Nations[6]

In 2025, the United Nations Youth Office, through the Pact Implementation Working Group on Youth, led the development of the Core Principles for Meaningful Youth Participation in Intergovernmental Processes and Across the Work of the United Nations. These principles were developed as a key deliverable under Action 37(d) of the Pact for the Future, through collaboration between Member States, UN entities, young people and youth organizations.

While non-binding, they provide an important framework to strengthen meaningful, representative, and inclusive youth engagement across the Organization.

To carry this work forward, a dedicated Task Force on Meaningful Youth Participation was convened under the leadership of the Assistant Secretary-General for Youth Affairs. Co-chaired by the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Youth Office, it brought together several UN entities[7] and their respective youth representatives.

The Core Principles were themselves co-created with partners and young people. Member States were engaged at every step through online briefings, circulation of the draft to Permanent Missions, an open consultation session and a written survey.

In parallel, consultations with youth-led networks and civil society organizations, including dedicated focus groups, ensured the inclusion of diverse and underrepresented constituencies. This process grounded the Core Principles in Member State priorities, informed them with UN system expertise and shaped them through diverse youth perspectives, giving them both wider ownership and practical relevance.

The result is a set of 11 Core Principles anchored in human rights and UN instruments, including accessibility and inclusion, diversity and representativeness, safety and safeguarding, co-governance, resourcing, capacity-building, transparency, accountability and intergenerational collaboration. Together, they mark an important step from commitment to practice, placing meaningful youth participation at the heart of the UN's work.

To learn more about these Core Principles, visit:
https://www.un.org/youthaffairs/en/core-principles-meaningful-youth-participation ↗

6. https://www.un.org/youthaffairs/sites/default/files/2026-03/Core%20Principles%20for%20Meaningful%20Youth%20Participation_United%20Nations_EN.pdf
7. FAO, ITU, ODA, OHCHR, UN Women, UNDP, UNESCO, and UNICEF

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Interesting Facts 02

The Core Principles were developed following Action 37(d) of the Pact for the Future, which calls for strengthening youth participation in decision-making. Their development involved Member States, UN entities, young people and youth organizations.

Interesting Facts 05

The Core Principles themselves demonstrate the type of participatory process they promote: Member States were engaged through briefings, consultations and surveys, while youth networks and civil society participated through consultations and focus groups.

Something to Think About 07

These principles can guide the design of youth participation mechanisms. Which principles would be most important for your country, and how could they be translated into a concrete mechanism that young people could actually access and influence?

During Phase 1 (2018–2024), the UN system established a range of mechanisms and approaches to strengthen youth engagement across UN entities and UNCTs, including in strategic planning, programming, campaigns and intergovernmental processes. In 2025, as the implementation of Youth2030 entered Phase 2, UN entities and UNCTs continued to report a wide range of efforts to engage young people meaningfully across their work.

They were invited to self-report across KPAs covering several dimensions of youth engagement. These included efforts to strengthen youth participation in SDG acceleration; embed youth participation in UN programming; build capacities and knowledge on meaningful youth engagement; promote advocacy, communications and outreach with youth; and enhance accountability and transparency in working with young people across the system.

Meaningful youth participation is a central principle of Youth2030 and lies at the heart of the Youth Strategy. The findings in this chapter highlight the breadth of actions undertaken by UN entities and UNCTs to engage young people as partners in the UN's work. At the same time, they point to opportunities to further strengthen approaches that ensure youth participation is consistently meaningful at all levels and embedded across all areas of the UN's work. This includes expanding young people's roles in decision-making, accountability and feedback processes, while continuing to promote the participation of diverse groups of young people across different contexts.

3.2 Embedding meaningful youth participation in UN programming and activities

A. Modalities of youth engagement across the UN system

Youth engagement is widely reported across the UN system, with nearly all UN entities and UNCTs indicating that they engaged young people as part of their work in 2025. At the global level, 96% (48/50) of UN entities reported engaging with youth during the year, while at the country level, 98% (130/132) of UNCTs reported engagement with at least one youth group.

From a regional perspective, youth participation was strong all over the world, with 100% of UNCTs in the Arab States, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean regions engaging with at least one youth group in 2025. Meanwhile, 98% (53/54) and 96% (24/25) of UNCTs in the Africa and Asia-Pacific regions respectively reported having engaged with at least one youth group in the year.

Among UN entities, the most frequently engaged youth groups were young leaders,[8] with 86% (43/50) reporting engagement with this category in 2025. Youth-led and youth-serving organizations, networks and movements were also widely engaged, with 82% (41/50) of UN entities reporting collaboration with these groups. In addition, 80% (40/50) reported facilitating broad and diverse youth engagement through digital platforms.

At the country level, UNCTs most frequently reported engaging with formal and non-formal youth networks, with 97% (128/132) reporting engagement with this group.

8. Including influencers, entrepreneurs, academics, and advocates.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Similarly, 89% (119/132) reported broad youth engagement through digital platforms and in-person approaches, while the same proportion reported engagement with young leaders, influencers, entrepreneurs, academics and advocates.

These findings suggest that the UN system continues to expand both the reach and diversity of youth engagement across its work through different modalities of engagement based on context. UN entities appear to more frequently engage with individual youth profiles and experts, whereas UNCTs demonstrate stronger engagement with organized youth networks that can support sustained dialogue and community-level outreach.

Across both levels, digital platforms represent an important avenue for expanding the reach and diversity of youth engagement. Efforts must be continued to ensure that engagement approaches promote sustained rather than one-off participation.

Both for UN entities and for UNCTs, youth within the UN system represented the least engaged group, highlighting an opportunity to further strengthen internal participation mechanisms and reinforce youth perspectives within the Organization's work. This is explored further in chapter 7 – Strategic Priority 5: Transforming the UN workforce and organizational culture.

B. Diversity and inclusion of youth networks engaged

Strategic Priority 1 also emphasizes ensuring that youth participation is representative, inclusive and responsive to the diversity of young people's experiences. This requires engaging a broad range of youth constituencies while strengthening efforts to reach those who are often underrepresented in decision-making processes.

In 2025, UN entities and UNCTs reported engagement with a diverse range of youth networks. Among UNCTs, the diversity of young people engaged improved significantly, increasing from 58% (76/130) in 2020 to 77% (101/132) in 2024 and 89% (118/132) in 2025.

The most commonly engaged networks by UNCTs in 2025 were girls and young women, reported by 87% (115/132), and young persons with disabilities, reported by 81% (107/132). Engagement with youth at the grassroots level was also frequently reported, with 80% (105/132) of UNCTs indicating work with this group, followed by migrant and refugee youth, reported by 67% (88/132).

In 2025, a new category – young people of African descent – was introduced for the first time in the newly developed Youth2030 Phase 2 Scorecards for UN entities and UNCTs. This addition aligns with the UN system's commitment to advancing anti-racism and racial equality.

Initial reporting shows that 17% (22/132) of UNCTs and 66% (27/41) of UN entities engaged with young people of African descent in 2025. These findings provide an initial reference point for strengthening and expanding engagement with this group throughout Phase 2 of Youth2030.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Across both levels of the UN system, engagement with a broad range of youth networks demonstrates continued efforts to advance inclusive youth participation. At the same time, opportunities remain to further strengthen engagement with specific networks and ensure that approaches are adapted to diverse contexts and experiences, and to ensure that participation mechanisms are accessible, representative and responsive to diverse forms of exclusion and discrimination.

C. Facilitating youth participation in intergovernmental or governmental efforts at all levels

Beyond engaging young people in UN activities, UN entities and UNCTs also reported facilitating youth participation in public decision-making by supporting young people's engagement in national, regional and global governance processes, including policy development, implementation, monitoring and accountability. Among the UN entities that reported strengthening intergovernmental and/or government efforts to advance youth-inclusive SDG acceleration in 2025, 95% (38/40) reported taking at least one action to facilitate youth participation in this area.

The most common area of engagement was supporting the translation of intergovernmental commitments into national action, with 73% (29/40) of UN entities reporting actions such as advocacy, policy and technical support, knowledge and capacity strengthening, and strategic partnerships. Additionally, 68% (27/40) reported facilitating youth participation in strengthening intergovernmental structures, processes, and mechanisms.[9]

EXAMPLE:

- *United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs: In 2025, it supported and facilitated youth engagement in several intergovernmental disarmament processes, including meetings on small arms and light weapons, ammunition management and nuclear disarmament. Youth representatives participated as panellists, delivered statements, submitted working papers, organized side events and contributed to formal discussions. At the third Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, youth groups' working papers were published and reflected in the formal documentation of the meeting.*
- *Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights: In 2025, in collaboration with the UN Youth Office and UNFPA, it advanced efforts to strengthen meaningful youth participation in the Human Rights Council. Through a joint workstream, the three entities launched a public call for nominations and selected a diverse group of 12 young people with experience engaging with the Council and human rights processes. Over a four- to six-week period, the group identified barriers, challenges and opportunities for youth engagement in the Council and developed recommendations to strengthen short-, medium- and long-term approaches to more meaningful, inclusive and effective youth participation. The findings informed discussions with Member State and youth representatives through an expert roundtable held on the margins of the Council in June*

9. E.g.: United Nations General Assembly, Economic and Social Council High-level Political Forum, UNESCO General Conference, ITU Plenipotentiary Conference, World Health Assembly; Regional Summits and other relevant convenings.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Did You Know That... **02**

The ILO estimates that around 262 million young people aged 15–24 were Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) in 2025. This means that youth participation policies may need to consider not only political participation but also barriers connected to education, skills and access to employment.

Interesting Facts **04**

The UN Office for Disarmament Affairs example shows that youth participation can involve substantive contributions to intergovernmental processes, including statements, working papers and formal discussions, not only consultations or side events.

2025, alongside a dedicated side event on advancing meaningful youth participation in the Council. These discussions contributed to broader efforts to strengthen and institutionalize youth engagement across the Council processes.

However, fewer UN entities reported facilitating youth participation in areas more directly connected to decision-making, accountability and resource mobilization. Only 48% (19/40) supported youth participation in advocating for and securing intergovernmental commitments on policies and financing for SDG acceleration. And only 43% (17/40) facilitated youth engagement in SDG monitoring, follow-up and review processes, including Voluntary National Reviews and tracking the implementation of commitments under the Pact for the Future.[10]

At the country level, 95% (126/132) of UNCTs reported facilitating youth participation in efforts to accelerate progress towards the SDGs or national development goals in 2025. The most frequently reported area of engagement was supporting governments in formulating and revising national policies to enhance coherence, with 89% (118/132) of UNCTs reporting work in this area. Youth participation in advancing SDG localization and supporting delivery at scale was also highlighted by 85% (112/132). By contrast, fewer UNCTs reported facilitating youth participation in SDG follow-up and review processes, including Voluntary National Reviews, with just 66% (87/132) reporting engagement in this area. However, this also marked a notable increase from 2024, when 46% (61/132) of UNCTs reported supporting youth participation in Voluntary National Reviews.

Youth participation was least frequently reported in areas related to financing and investment, with 52% (68/132) of UNCTs supporting youth engagement in establishing and enhancing investment platforms and funding mechanisms, and 43% (57/132) supporting youth participation in developing and strengthening national SDG financing strategies. More information about this is available in chapter 6 – Strategic Priority 4: Unlocking resources for the youth agenda across the UN.

EXAMPLE:

- *UNCT Nepal: It supported national efforts to accelerate progress towards the SDGs and national development goals by embedding meaningful youth participation across policy development, dialogue and implementation in areas including governance, climate action, employment, education and gender equality. Led by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Organization for Migration, the UN supported the Government of Nepal in developing the Provincial Youth Policies 2025 for Madhesh, Lumbini and Sudurpaschim provinces, as well as the National Population Policy 2025, through youth-led consultative processes to ensure that young people's priorities on health, education, skills and employment were reflected.*

  Complementary provincial and national youth dialogues, organized with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the National Youth Council, brought together more than 150 stakeholders, including media representatives recognized as key partners following recent youth-led civic movements, and resulted in action plans aligned with the SDGs and the Pact for the Future.

10. https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sotf-pact_for_the_future_adopted.pdf

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Something to Think About **02**

Youth participation is increasingly integrated into policy discussions, but the data show less involvement when decisions involve financing, monitoring, and accountability. If young people are meant to be partners in policymaking, what mechanisms could allow them to participate not only in designing youth policies, but also in deciding how resources are allocated and evaluating whether those policies are working?

Definition **02**

Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) are country-led reviews through which Member States present their progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals at the UN High-level Political Forum.

- *UNCT Trinidad and Tobago: It strengthened meaningful youth participation in national development by establishing structured platforms for youth engagement, capacity-building and policy influence. The Resident Coordinator's Office coordinated UN Women, UNFPA, UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) and UNESCO (United Nations Economic, Social and Cultural Organization), in partnership with the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago, to support the National Youth Parliament 2025, equipping young people with knowledge on human rights and gender equality to develop policy recommendations and participate in parliamentary debates.*

These findings demonstrate growing recognition of young people as partners in public policy and governance processes. Nevertheless, youth participation remains significantly weaker in areas directly related to financing, accountability and monitoring. Fewer UN entities reported supporting youth participation in policy and financing commitments or SDG monitoring processes. Only 52% of UNCTs facilitated youth participation in investment platforms and 43% supported youth engagement in national SDG financing strategies. These findings suggest that meaningful participation has yet to become fully institutionalized across all dimensions of public decision-making.

D. Enabling youth participation in UN programmes and projects

A central objective of Strategic Priority 1 is ensuring that young people are not only beneficiaries of UN programmes but active partners in designing, implementing and scaling them.

Across the UN system, enabling youth participation in UN activities remains a key strength of the Organization's work with and for youth. In 2025, while 98% (130/132) of UNCTS reported having advanced youth inclusion in UN programmes and projects to accelerate progress towards the SDGs or national development goals, 94% (124/132) of UNCTs reported doing so by enabling youth participation in UN programmes and projects. Among them, 93% (115/124) enabled youth participation in implementing UN programmes, 85% (106/124) supported youth-led solutions, and 84% (104/124) enabled youth participation in designing and expanding them.

At the global level, 100% (43/43) of UN entities reported advancing youth-inclusive programmes, projects or initiatives in 2025. Among them, 98% (42/43) reported having enabled meaningful youth participation in UN programmes, projects, or initiatives. The most common reported ways of advancing this work were enabling youth participation in implementing them, with 98% (41/42) of UN entities reporting work in this area, followed by enabling youth participation in designing and expanding them, reported by 86% (36/42).

Across both UNCTs and UN entities, providing funding to youth-led organizations to implement solutions was the least frequently reported form of support for enabling youth participation in UN programmes and projects in 2025. More detailed information on financing youth-led action is provided in chapter 6 – Strategic Priority 4: Unlocking resources for the youth agenda across the UN.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Additionally, 82% (108/132) of UNCTs also reported enabling young people's participation in policymaking and decision-making processes through their advocacy, outreach and communications efforts to advance youth-inclusive SDG acceleration, compared with 69% (31/45) of UN entities.

Beyond programme and project implementation, UN entities also reported engaging young people in the Organization's internal strategic processes. In 2025, 96% (48/50) of UN entities reported youth engagement in at least one key internal strategic process. The most commonly reported activity was facilitating dialogue between senior management and young people on key issues, with 86% (43/50) of UN entities reporting work in this area.

EXAMPLE:

- *World Health Organization (WHO): In August 2025, the WHO Youth Council convened a global online dialogue with the WHO Director-General, bringing together more than 300 young people from around the world. The dialogue focused on advancing implementation of the WHO Youth Council Declaration for Creating Healthy Societies[11] at the country level, helping inform national action to strengthen youth engagement in health-related SDG implementation. As WHO's formal youth advisory mechanism, the Youth Council provides advice to the Director-General and senior leadership, ensuring that young people's perspectives inform WHO policies and initiatives that support Member States. In doing so, it contributes to strengthening youth-inclusive intergovernmental governance and advancing youth-responsive approaches to health and sustainable development.*

  Additionally, 54% (27/50) of UN entities reported engaging youth in designing and developing new strategic plans (or equivalent). By contrast, youth participation was less common in organizational evaluation and review processes. In 2025, only 32% (16/50) of UN entities reported youth participation in the evaluation of previous strategic plans (or equivalent), while 14% (7/50) reported youth engagement in mid-term or interim reviews of strategic plans.

These findings suggest that the UN system continues to embed meaningful youth engagement across its programmes and projects. Nevertheless, continued efforts are needed to further strengthen youth leadership throughout programme cycles, expand support for youth-led solutions and ensure that participation consistently extends beyond implementation to include programme design, decision-making and resource allocation. Continued implementation of the Core Principles for Meaningful Youth Participation will provide an important framework for advancing these efforts.

11. https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/youth-engagement/youth_declaration_on_creating_healthy_societies.pdf?sfvrsn=795075eb_1&download=true

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

3.3 Policies and procedures in place to support meaningful youth participation across the UN system

Establishing policies and procedures to support meaningful youth participation across the UN system is essential to institutionalizing youth engagement and ensuring that it is consistent, inclusive, and guided by clear principles and standards. Among reporting entities, those with all or nearly all policies in place increased from 14% (5/36) at the 2021 (baseline) to 42% (21/50) in 2025. At the country level, however, UNCTs with all or nearly all policies in place remained unchanged, at around 35%.

In 2025, 82% (41/50) of UN entities and 87% (115/132) of UNCTs reported having at least one policy or process in place to support meaningful youth engagement. While such policies and processes were reported across all regions, the highest levels of implementation were observed in Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and Africa. Further efforts to establish and strengthen these frameworks could help ensure meaningful youth participation in the Asia-Pacific and Arab States regions.

At both the country and entity levels, the most commonly reported measure in 2025 to support meaningful youth participation was the recognition of youth independence, leadership and collective action, engaging young people as partners rather than beneficiaries. This was reported by 71% (94/132) of UNCTs and 74% (37/50) of UN entities.

Beyond this, UNCTs and UN entities demonstrated complementary strengths across different dimensions of meaningful youth participation. UNCTs more frequently reported measures related to creating enabling conditions for participation, including standards to ensure inclusion and prevent discrimination, and mechanisms to facilitate safe participation. A key progress to note in 2025 is that funding for youth participation among UNCTs nearly doubled, rising from 37% (49/132) in 2024 to 63% (83/132) in 2025.

UN entities more frequently reported having institutional processes and guidance in place, including transparent and accessible selection processes, official guidance on meaningful youth participation; and clear information on youth roles, existing processes, the use of inputs, and resulting outcomes.

Overall, these findings highlight complementary strengths and opportunities for learning across UN entities and UNCTs. While UN entities can provide valuable experience in establishing institutional frameworks, guidance, and structured approaches to youth participation, UNCTs offer important insights into adapting these approaches to country contexts and strengthening practical mechanisms that enable diverse groups of young people to participate meaningfully. Continued exchange of lessons learned and good practices across levels can help advance more meaningful, inclusive and accountable approaches to youth participation throughout the UN system.

3.4 Opportunities, challenges and a way forward

The findings from 2025 show that meaningful youth participation is increasingly embedded across the UN system, with UN entities and UNCTs reporting a wide range of approaches to engage young people as partners in programmes, initiatives, and organizational processes. At the same time, advancing from broad engagement towards more systematic, inclusive and influential forms of participation remains an important priority for Youth2030 Phase 2.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Did You Know That... **01**

In 2025, 82% of UN entities and 87% of UN Country Teams reported having at least one policy or process supporting meaningful youth engagement. The UN Youth Office describes this as part of the broader transition from ad hoc participation toward more systematic approaches.

Something to Think About **06**

International frameworks can establish common principles while implementation remains nationally adapted. Which aspects of youth participation should be consistent across countries, and which should be left for Member States to determine according to their own circumstances?

Across the UN system, opportunities remain to further strengthen mechanisms that enable young people to contribute throughout the full cycle of UN work – from agenda-setting and design to implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review. While youth participation is widely supported in programme implementation and engagement activities, fewer efforts were reported in areas more directly connected to decision-making, accountability and follow-up processes. Strengthening these dimensions will be essential to ensuring that young people's perspectives not only inform UN action but also contribute to shaping priorities, influencing decisions and assessing outcomes.

The establishment of the Core Principles for Meaningful Youth Participation in Intergovernmental Processes and Across the Work of the United Nations provides an important opportunity to advance greater consistency and coherence across the UN system. Their application can support the development and strengthening of approaches that are inclusive, accessible and adapted to different operational contexts, while ensuring that meaningful youth participation is embedded across all areas of UN work.

The findings also highlight complementary strengths across UN entities and UNCTs. UN entities have an opportunity to continue sharing institutional approaches, guidance, and structured mechanisms for youth participation, while UNCTs provide valuable experience in adapting engagement approaches to national contexts and strengthening connections with diverse youth groups and networks on the ground. Facilitating greater exchange of lessons learned and good practices across these levels can help advance more coherent, effective and contextualized approaches to meaningful youth participation throughout the UN system.

Strengthening meaningful youth participation will require continued efforts to ensure that young people are engaged not only as participants in UN initiatives, but as partners in shaping priorities, influencing decisions and contributing to accountability processes. By embedding inclusive, transparent and participatory approaches across all areas of its work, the UN system can further advance the objectives of Youth2030 and strengthen its commitment to working with and for young people in meaningful and impactful ways.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Interesting Facts **02**

The Core Principles are designed to provide a common framework without requiring identical participation mechanisms everywhere. This is particularly relevant to consensus-building because Member States can agree on shared principles while adapting implementation to national circumstances.

Something to Think About **03**

UN entities can contribute institutional expertise, while UN Country Teams can provide experience from national contexts. How could Member States encourage South–South, triangular or interregional exchanges so countries can learn from successful youth participation mechanisms without simply copying another country's model?



wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

4.
Strategic Priority 2: Boosting SDG implementation with and for youth

Strategic Priority 2 focuses on accelerating SDG implementation with and for young people by strengthening UN support for youth-inclusive policymaking, scaling multi-stakeholder and joint initiatives for national impact, and partnering with a broad range of stakeholders to incubate and scale youth-led solutions. It recognizes that placing young people at the centre of SDG implementation is one of the strongest pathways to accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda while ensuring that no one is left behind.

4.1 System-wide overview of progress

Progress towards the SDGs remains off track globally. At the current pace, the ambitions of these global Goals are unlikely to be achieved by 2030. At the same time, young people continue to face barriers to shaping, driving and leading the solutions needed to address the world's most pressing challenges. This represents a huge untapped opportunity.

Placing young people at the centre of SDG implementation is one of the strongest pathways to accelerating progress, strengthening the effectiveness of sustainable development efforts, and helping get the 2030 Agenda back on track.

This premise is at the heart of Youth2030 Phase 2, with Strategic Priority 2 focused on boosting SDG implementation with and for youth. To understand how the UN system is advancing on this work, UN entities and UNCTs were invited to respond to a series of questions around two main areas: (a) supporting intergovernmental and/or government efforts for SDG acceleration and (b) driving UN programmes, projects and initiatives with and for youth.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the UN system is making progress in advancing youth-inclusive SDG acceleration. UN entities and UNCTs are increasingly integrating youth priorities into policies, programmes, advocacy and intergovernmental processes, while creating targeted opportunities for young people to contribute to solutions. However, the findings also show further efforts are needed to institutionalize youth-responsive approaches across the full SDG implementation cycle, particularly in financing, monitoring, review and accountability, and to strengthen young people's role as partners and co-leaders in delivering sustainable development.

4.2 Support to intergovernmental and/or governmental efforts for SDG acceleration

Supporting intergovernmental and governmental efforts to accelerate implementation of the SDGs in ways that are responsive to the needs, rights, and contributions of young people is essential to driving systemic and transformative change and advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

In 2025, 95% (38/40) of UN entities reported supporting intergovernmental or governmental efforts to advance youth-inclusive SDG acceleration. Among them, 83% (34/40) supported the translation of intergovernmental commitments into national action by ensuring that policies, programmes and decisions were youth-responsive or incorporated a youth rights perspective. This represented the most frequently reported area of support provided by UN entities to intergovernmental and governmental efforts to accelerate the SDGs with and for youth in 2025.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Did you know?

30th anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth

Marking the 30th anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth, the United Nations convened the first-ever high-level plenary meeting on youth mandated by Member States during the High-level Week of the General Assembly. Held on 25 September 2025 under the theme "Accelerating global progress through intergenerational collaboration", the meeting was a historic milestone in placing young people at the centre of global decision-making.

Convened by the President of the eightieth session of the General Assembly, with support from the United Nations Youth Office, the meeting brought together representatives of some 150 Member States, including Heads of State and Government, ministers, youth leaders, civil society representatives and UN entities. Participants reflected on three decades of progress in implementing the Programme of Action, shared good practices and innovations, and identified persistent gaps and actionable solutions across its priority areas.

The dialogue reaffirmed that advancing youth rights and opportunities requires sustained political will, meaningful youth participation and strong intergenerational partnerships to translate commitments into tangible impact.

In the lead-up to the commemoration, the United Nations Youth Office coordinated the global #YouthLead Dialogues between July and August 2025. As a first-of-its-kind decentralized youth foresight initiative, organized in partnership with the United Nations Futures Lab and UNICEF Innocenti, the dialogues engaged more than 75,000 young people from over 180 countries across all regions. Their recommendations were consolidated into a summary report that informed discussions at the high-level plenary meeting, ensuring that young people's priorities and perspectives helped shape the dialogue and future action on the global youth agenda.

Read the #YouthLead Dialogues Summary Report here ↗.
Learn more about the 30th anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth here ↗.

This was closely followed by efforts to strengthen intergovernmental structures, processes and mechanisms, reported by 80% (32/40) of UN entities, by ensuring these processes were youth-responsive or incorporated a youth rights perspective.

In addition, 73% (29/40) of UN entities reported advocating for and supporting the adoption of youth-inclusive intergovernmental commitments, policies and financing for SDG acceleration that would leave no one behind. A further 60% (24/40) supported youth-responsive SDG monitoring, follow-up and review processes, including Voluntary National Reviews, as well as tracking implementation of the Pact for the Future commitments through a youth-responsive lens.

EXAMPLE:

- *United Nations Population Fund: Throughout 2025, it supported intergovernmental efforts to advance youth-inclusive SDG acceleration by providing technical expertise and evidence to inform resolutions and policy processes. Its contributions helped ensure that intergovernmental commitments reflected the specific needs and rights of young people, particularly in relation to health, education, gender equality, protection from gender-based violence and harmful practices, and the promotion of bodily autonomy. A key example was its co-hosting of the first youth-focused official side event during the 58th session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD), alongside the Governments of Benin, Denmark and the Netherlands. The event connected the outcomes of the ICPD30 Global Youth Dialogue, held in Cotonou, Benin, in April 2024, with formal intergovernmental deliberations, helping translate young people's priorities into policy discussions. Through its technical inputs, the Population Fund contributed to strengthening Member States' commitment to youth-centred sustainable development and to recognizing investments in young people's health and education as essential drivers of progress towards the 2030 Agenda.*

Overall, the findings demonstrate strong engagement by UN entities in supporting governmental and intergovernmental processes to advance youth-inclusive SDG implementation. Efforts were particularly concentrated on translating global commitments into national action and strengthening youth-responsive intergovernmental processes. At the same time, the results point to opportunities to further strengthen support for youth-responsive SDG monitoring, follow-up and review processes, helping ensure that young people's rights, perspectives and contributions are consistently reflected in the implementation and accountability of the 2030 Agenda.

Some 90% (119/132) of UNCTs reported integrating youth priorities into efforts to accelerate the SDGs or national development goals in 2025. Among them, 82% (108/132) supported the formulation and revision of national policies, while the same proportion advanced SDG localization and delivery at scale. In addition, 68% (90/132) supported SDG follow-up and review processes, including Voluntary National Reviews – an increase from 40% (53/132) in 2024. Comparatively lower levels of support were reported for investment platforms, funding mechanisms and the development and strengthening of national SDG financing strategies, an area explored in greater depth in chapter 6 – Strategic Priority 4: Unlocking resources for the youth agenda across the UN.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations
@GlobalModelUN

Looking across the six transformative entry points, or key transitions, identified by the United Nations Sustainable Development Group during the 2023 SDG Summit as having catalytic and multiplier effects across the SDGs, UNCTs reported providing support across all six areas as set out here:

UNCT support to governments on youth-inclusive SDG acceleration in 2025

	Six Transition Areas	Percentage	Proportion
1	Education	92%	122/132
2	Jobs and social protection	88%	116/132
3	Climate change biodiversity loss and pollution	83%	110/132
4	Digital connectivity	72%	95/132
5	Food systems	52%	68/132
6	Other (see details below)	46%	61/132
7	Energy access and affordability	29%	38/132

Among the areas most frequently highlighted under the "other" category, UNCTs reported support for health, including sexual and reproductive health as well as mental health and well-being; peacebuilding; youth participation and civic engagement; gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence; and governance, the rule of law, and access to justice.

Notably, UN support expanded across key development priorities, with engagement increasing from 85% (111/132) to 92% (68/132) in education, 72% (93/132) to 88% (116/132) in jobs, 61% (79/132) to 83% (110/132) in climate action, and 39% (51/132) to 72% (95/132) in digital connectivity.

EXAMPLE:

- *UNCT Kyrgyzstan: As part of efforts to develop a more child- and youth-responsive Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC 3.0), the Country Team supported structured consultations with young people through the Youth Climate Caravan, engaging 194 young women and men across all seven regions of Kyrgyzstan. The initiative strengthened climate literacy, increased young people's understanding of national climate commitments, and encouraged locally driven action. Through regional consultations and policy dialogues, adolescents assessed youth inclusion in climate planning and developed a "youth position paper" with actionable recommendations, which was submitted to line ministries. This process strengthened recognition of young people as informed contributors to national climate action and expanded interregional youth climate networks.*

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Did You Know That... (2)

In 2024, young people were still about three times more likely than adults to be unemployed globally, while one in five young people aged 15–24 was NEET. Young women were more than twice as likely as young men to be NEET.

Something to Think About 03

Health is one of the areas identified by UN Country Teams as part of their support for youth-inclusive SDG acceleration. This is broader than access to healthcare alone, including mental health, well-being, and sexual and reproductive health. How could Member States design youth programmes that address these interconnected needs while ensuring services are accessible and inclusive?

Something to Think About 03

Youth are not a homogeneous group, and young people can experience barriers differently depending on their gender and circumstances. The UN identifies gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence among the areas of support for youth-inclusive development. How can youth policies address gender-specific barriers and prevent gender-based violence while remaining inclusive of young people with different experiences and needs?

Interesting Facts 05

In Kyrgyzstan, a UN-supported Youth Climate Caravan reached 194 young people across all seven regions and helped participants develop a youth position paper with actionable recommendations for national ministries. This is an example of connecting local youth perspectives with national climate policymaking.

Supporting governments to strengthen national structures and mechanisms to promote youth rights and advance youth participation was a key area of work for UNCTs in 2025, with 77% (102/132) reporting work in this area – an increase from 71% (94/132) in 2024. These mechanisms contribute to embedding youth rights and participation within national systems, creating a foundation for lasting institutional transformation beyond 2030. Continued attention should be given to strengthening these structures and ensuring their sustainability as vehicles for meaningful youth participation in policymaking and decision-making processes.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that youth-inclusive SDG acceleration has become increasingly embedded across UN support to both intergovernmental processes and national development efforts. At the global level, UN entities most frequently supported the translation of commitments into youth-responsive policies and strengthened youth-responsive governance processes, while at the country level, UNCTs primarily focused on integrating youth priorities into national policies, SDG localization and delivery mechanisms.

Despite this progress, comparatively lower levels of support were reported for youth-responsive SDG monitoring and review, investment platforms, funding mechanisms and national SDG financing strategies. These findings suggest that youth priorities are more consistently integrated into policy development.

The UN system should therefore strengthen support for youth-responsive financing, monitoring, review and accountability mechanisms, ensuring that young people's rights, perspectives and contributions are systematically reflected throughout the SDG implementation cycle.

4.3 Driving UN programmes, projects and initiatives with and for youth

Strategic Priority 2 also focuses on translating policy commitments into tangible SDG results through youth-inclusive programmes, projects and initiatives. This includes mainstreaming youth priorities across UN programming, scaling youth-focused interventions, strengthening partnerships and enabling meaningful youth participation in designing, implementing and delivering programmes.

In 2025, all UN entities reported advancing youth-inclusive programmes, projects, or initiatives contributing to SDG impact. Among them, 93% (40/43) integrated youth priorities into broader UN programmes, projects, or initiatives, while 77% (33/43) scaled existing youth-focused UN programmes, projects, or initiatives. This indicates that youth inclusion is increasingly embedded across broader UN programming, while dedicated youth-focused interventions continue to represent an important area for further expansion.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations
@GlobalModelUN

EXAMPLE:

- *Department of Peace Operations: In 2025, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon advanced youth-inclusive programming through the initiative "Investing in the Capacity of Young Peacebuilders in South Lebanon", implemented in partnership with UNICEF and UNESCO. The programme reached 365 young people and combined media and information literacy, youth empowerment, and economic inclusion to strengthen critical thinking, resilience to misinformation, and youth-led community engagement. Aligned with the national youth policy and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, the initiative contributed to progress on SDGs related to quality education, decent work, and peace, while promoting social cohesion and strengthening young people's sense of belonging in communities affected by conflict.*
- *International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD): In 2025 and early 2026, IFAD advanced youth-inclusive programming through the expansion of its Youth Agribusiness Hubs Programme, supporting young people's access to skills, employment, and economic opportunities while contributing to SDGs 1 (No Poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger), and 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). A key example is the programme's "Ecosystem Approach," implemented across nine African countries – Algeria, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Rwanda, Malawi, Madagascar, Mozambique and Nigeria – which moved beyond training alone to support youth integration into local markets and value chains. The programme contributed to the creation of more than 59,000 decent jobs, including significant opportunities for young women, demonstrating a strong focus on youth economic empowerment and gender equality. By equipping rural youth with skills, resources and market linkages, the initiative strengthened youth livelihoods, supported rural economies and created pathways out of poverty. Building on these efforts, IFAD launched the Rural Youth Action Plan 2026–2031, which requires all new country strategies to include youth-specific analyses to better identify and address barriers faced by young rural people. This institutionalizes a more systematic approach to integrating youth considerations across IFAD's investments and programming.*

At the country-level, in 2025, 98% (130/132) of UNCTs reported advancing youth inclusion in UN programmes and projects to accelerate progress towards the SDGs or national development goals. Among them, 87% (115/132) mainstreamed youth priorities in existing UN programmes and projects, while 70% (92/132) scaled youth-focused UN programmes and projects, including multistakeholder initiatives and joint programmes. UNCTs in the Asia-Pacific, Africa and Eastern Europe and Central Asia reported particularly strong work in this area.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Something to Think About **03**

Youth employment programmes do not necessarily create economic opportunities simply by providing training. The IFAD approach connects skills development with markets, resources, and value chains, particularly for rural youth. This raises an important policy question: How can Member States ensure that youth skills programmes lead to sustainable employment and economic opportunities, especially in rural communities?

EXAMPLE:

- *UNCT Ghana: Advanced youth inclusion through coordinated UN support to youth-led development initiatives, including the National Youth Festival, which enabled young people to co-create solutions, showcase innovations and engage directly with national and subnational decision makers. The UNCT also strengthened institutionalized youth participation through the Joint Programme on Empowering Adolescent Girls, which established a Youth Advisory Board as part of the programme's governance structure. Through these mechanisms, young people contributed to programme design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting, reinforcing youth participation as a core component of SDG localization and national development efforts.*

UN entities and UNCTs also supported meaningful youth participation in these activities, as well as strengthened partnerships to incubate or scale youth-led solutions. More details about this work can be found respectively in chapter 3 – Strategic Priority 1: Empowering and engaging youth meaningfully and chapter 6 – Strategic Priority 4: Unlocking resources for the youth agenda across the UN.

Beyond programme delivery, the UN system also advanced youth-inclusive SDG acceleration through advocacy, outreach and communications efforts that elevated youth perspectives, strengthened awareness of youth priorities and supported engagement with decision makers and wider audiences.

In 2025, 98% (44/45) of UN entities reported advancing work in this area. Among them, 96% (43/45) reported having amplified youth voices in topical issues while 93% (42/45) highlighted supporting advocacy events on specific issues relevant to youth in intergovernmental forums, summits, conferences and international days.

At the same time, 82% (37/45) of UN entities supported or implemented communications campaigns to advance youth issues in 2025 and 71% (32/45) conducted outreach initiatives to attract young talent to the UN – an area that needs further work and is explored in more detail in chapter 7 Strategic Priority 5: Transforming the UN workforce and organizational culture.

Notably, while the overall work carried out by UN entities in 2025 to promote advocacy, outreach and communications to drive youth-inclusive SDG acceleration, only 69% (31/45) of UN entities reported having enabled youth participation in policymaking and decision-making in these areas, beyond attendance at advocacy events. This highlights a clear opportunity to create more channels for young people to co-design and co-lead advocacy outreach and communications efforts across the work of the UN. More details about how the UN is advancing meaningful youth participation across the system can be found in chapter 3 – Strategic Priority 1: Empowering and engaging youth meaningfully.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

EXAMPLE:

- *UN Women: In 2025, UN Women advanced youth-inclusive advocacy and outreach through initiatives linked to the thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+30) and the sixty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69). Through youth-focused outreach, including the Global Youth Forum and the High-level Interactive Dialogue with youth representatives, UN Women created platforms for young people to share priorities and amplify their perspectives on gender equality. Through global and regional communications, UN Women further highlighted youth advocates' contributions and promoted priorities including ending gender-based violence, expanding access to education, and advancing economic empowerment, reinforcing the role of adolescent girls and young women in shaping gender equality agendas. These efforts contributed to advancing youth-responsive implementation of the Beijing+30 Action Agenda and progress towards SDG 5 on gender equality by ensuring that young people's perspectives, particularly those of young women and girls, were reflected in global advocacy and accountability processes.*
- *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime: In 2025, the Office advanced youth-inclusive advocacy through the International Anti-Corruption Day campaign "Uniting with Youth Against Corruption: Shaping Tomorrow's Integrity". The campaign highlighted how corruption affects young people, and it promoted their role as partners in advancing integrity, transparency and accountability. Through youth-focused communications, awareness-raising activities, and initiatives such as the Connecting Classrooms programme and an anti-corruption innovation hackathon, the Office supported youth engagement in anti-corruption efforts and contributed to strengthening inclusive institutions and progress towards SDG 16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions.*

Some 98% (129/132) of UNCTs undertook at least one type of outreach, advocacy and communication effort to advance youth issues in 2025. Africa, the Arab States, and Eastern Europe and Central Asia performed particularly well in this area, with all UNCTs in these regions reporting at least one type of activity in this regard.

Among the areas of work, 93% (123/132) of UNCTs reported having amplified youth voices – the best performing area under outreach, advocacy and communications efforts. At the same time, 88% (116/132) of UNCTs reported having organized advocacy events and 73% (97/132) communications campaigns.

EXAMPLE:

- *UNCT Jordan: In 2025, the UNCT in Jordan strengthened youth-inclusive SDG acceleration by creating platforms to recognize and amplify young people's contributions to sustainable development. Through a joint storytelling initiative as part of the International Youth Day campaign and broader UNCT outreach, UN entities highlighted youth innovators, climate activists, young entrepreneurs, and community leaders whose initiatives, supported through UN programmes, advanced priorities including climate action, digital inclusion, gender equality, livelihoods, and social cohesion. By documenting and sharing these experiences, the initiative demonstrated the impact of youth-led solutions, strengthened public recognition of young people as partners in development, and reinforced pathways for youth engagement in advancing Jordan's SDG priorities.*

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Notably, 82% (108/132) of UNCTs reported having enabled youth participation in policymaking and decision-making processes as a key contribution of their work in driving advocacy, outreach and communications for youth-inclusive SDG acceleration, a significantly higher proportion than UN entities in the same area. More details are available in chapter 3 – Strategic Priority 1: Empowering and engaging youth meaningfully.

Finally, similar to UN entities, UNCTs also reported a comparatively lower rate of activity in the area of outreach to attract young talent to the UN in 2025. This issue is further addressed in chapter 7 Strategic Priority 5: Transforming the UN workforce and organizational culture.

While advocacy, outreach and communications represent a strong area of engagement across the UN system, findings also highlight an opportunity to further strengthen young people's role as active contributors to these efforts. Although most UN entities and UNCTs reported amplifying youth voices and supporting youth-related advocacy activities, fewer reported enabling young people to participate in the design, development and leadership of these efforts beyond attending events. Expanding opportunities for youth to co-create advocacy strategies, campaigns and communications products would further advance meaningful youth participation and strengthen the effectiveness and relevance of youth-focused outreach.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the UN system advanced youth-inclusive SDG acceleration through a combination of programming, partnerships, advocacy, outreach and communications efforts. Across UN entities and UNCTs, youth priorities were increasingly integrated into broader programmes and initiatives, while dedicated youth-focused interventions continued to provide targeted support and opportunities for young people. Advocacy and communications efforts further strengthened the visibility of youth contributions across global and national agendas.

Nevertheless, dedicated youth-focused programming has not expanded at the same pace as youth mainstreaming. While youth voices are increasingly amplified through advocacy and communications, comparatively fewer UN entities reported enabling young people to co-design, co-lead and influence these efforts beyond participation in events.

Future efforts should focus on scaling dedicated youth-focused programmes alongside mainstreaming approaches, strengthening partnerships that incubate youth-led solutions and creating more structured opportunities for young people to co-design, implement and lead programmes, advocacy and communications initiatives.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations
@GlobalModelUN

4.4 Challenges, opportunities and a way forward

The 2025 findings show that youth-inclusive SDG acceleration is increasingly embedded across the work of the UN system, with UN entities and UNCTs supporting efforts to translate global commitments into national action, integrate youth priorities into programmes and policies, and amplify young people's contributions across sustainable development efforts. This reflects growing recognition that young people are not only beneficiaries of the 2030 Agenda, but essential partners in designing, implementing and accelerating solutions.

At the same time, the findings highlight opportunities to further strengthen the depth and consistency of youth inclusion across the SDG implementation cycle. While many UN entities and UNCTs reported integrating youth priorities into existing programmes, policies and processes, fewer reported scaling dedicated youth-focused initiatives or systematically embedding youth-responsive approaches across all areas of work. Efforts must continue to move beyond individual initiatives and strengthen institutional approaches that ensure young people's rights, perspectives and contributions are consistently reflected in planning, implementation, monitoring and accountability mechanisms.

A key opportunity lies in strengthening young people's role as partners and co-creators across SDG acceleration efforts. While youth voices were frequently amplified through advocacy, outreach and communications activities, further efforts are needed to ensure that young people meaningfully participate in shaping priorities, in designing interventions and in leading solutions. Creating more structured pathways for youth participation across policy processes, programme development and accountability mechanisms can help ensure that actions are informed by young peoples' lived experiences and respond effectively to their needs and aspirations.

The findings also point to the importance of strengthening approaches that connect youth inclusion with broader systems for SDG acceleration, including financing, monitoring and review processes, and national implementation frameworks. By continuing to support governments and partners in developing youth-responsive policies, strengthening evidence and accountability mechanisms, and investing in youth-led solutions, the UN system can further leverage the potential of young people as drivers of sustainable development.

As our world approaches 2030, accelerating progress towards the SDGs will require renewed commitment to working with and for young people. Building on the strong foundation established under Youth2030 Phase 1, Phase 2 should prioritize institutionalizing youth-responsive approaches across policy, programming, financing, monitoring and accountability systems; scaling youth-focused programmes and partnerships; and creating more structured pathways for young people to participate as partners and co-creators in designing, implementing and reviewing sustainable development solutions.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations
@GlobalModelUN


12
RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

5.
Strategic Priority 3: Advancing knowledge and enhancing capacities for working with and for youth

Strategic Priority 3 seeks to strengthen institutional and stakeholder capacities by enhancing access to data, evidence, tools and knowledge to advance evidence-based, youth-responsive policies, cross-sectoral programming and SDG acceleration with and for youth.

5.1 System-wide overview of progress

Advancing knowledge and strengthening capacities are essential for enabling institutions, youth organizations and other stakeholders to design and implement effective policies and programmes with and for youth. Strategic Priority 3 focuses on strengthening institutional and stakeholder capacities by enhancing access to data, evidence, tools and knowledge to support evidence-based, youth-responsive policies, cross-sectoral programming and SDG acceleration with and for young people.

It recognizes knowledge generation and capacity development as foundational to effective implementation of the youth agenda. This includes improving access to research, data and evidence, developing guidance and tools, promoting knowledge exchange, and strengthening the capacities of governments, youth organizations, networks and movements, and other stakeholders to meaningfully engage in youth-inclusive development processes.

To assess progress in this area, UN entities and UNCTs self-reported on actions undertaken in 2025 to strengthen knowledge and capacities for youth-inclusive SDG acceleration. Overall, 98% (44/45) of UN entities and 97% (128/132) of UNCTs reported strengthening knowledge and capacities for youth-inclusive SDG acceleration. This high level of engagement shows that advancing knowledge and capacities remains one of the strongest areas of implementation under Youth2030 across global, regional and country levels.

Despite this strong performance, important gaps remain. While considerable progress has been made in generating evidence and strengthening capacities, fewer efforts have focused on developing monitoring, evaluation and data systems needed to measure long-term outcomes and impact. This limits the ability to systematically assess the effectiveness of youth-responsive interventions and strengthen accountability across the UN system.

The system should therefore continue investing in knowledge generation while placing greater emphasis on strengthening monitoring and evaluation capacities, youth-sensitive indicators, innovative data systems and evidence utilization to improve accountability, learning and evidence-based decision-making for youth-inclusive SDG acceleration.

5.2 Generating and disseminating data and evidence on youth

Generating and disseminating evidence is a central component of Strategic Priority 3. It focuses on strengthening the evidence base for youth-responsive policymaking through research, data systems, norms, standards, guidance and practical tools that support governments, UNCTs, youth organizations and other stakeholders in advancing youth-inclusive SDG acceleration.

In 2025, 60% (27/45) of UN entities reported developing norms, standards, guidance and tools on working with and for youth. These resources play an important role in translating evidence and knowledge into practical approaches that support key stakeholders, including governments, UNCTs and youth organizations, in advancing youth-inclusive SDG acceleration.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

EXAMPLE:

Did you know?

Key 2025 knowledge products and reports on youth

UNDESA 2025 World Youth Report on Youth Mental Health and Well-being:
https://desapublications.un.org/publications/world-youth-report-youth-mental-health-and-well-being

FAO Status of Youth in Agrifood Systems report:
https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/5f0cec17-98b7-4d74-9cb1-6ea829b7d920

ILO World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2025:
World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2025 | International Labour Organization

OHCHR Global Progress Report on Sustainable Development Goal 16:
https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/hrindicators/2025sdg16reportmedium.pdf

UNODC Stolen Futures: How Corruption Hurts Young People:
https://track.unodc.org/uploads/documents/corruption/Publications/2026/Stolen_Futures.pdf

WHO Guidance for countries to assess adolescent health and well-being:
https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240107847

ITU Facts and Figures on Youth Internet Use 2025:
https://www.itu.int/itu-d/reports/statistics/2025/10/15/ff25-youth-internet-use/

UNSSC The role of youth in the Climate, Peace and Security Agenda:
https://reliefweb.int/report/world/role-youth-climate-peace-and-security-agenda

UNAOC Contributing to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals through the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda:
https://www.unaoc.org/resource/thematic-paper-sdg-yps-agenda/

At the same time, 87% (39/45) of UN entities reported generating and disseminating data and evidence to inform policy and practice. Among these entities, the most commonly reported action was documenting lessons learned and good practices, with 82% (32/39) reporting work in this area. Production of new research reports was also widespread, with 62% (24/39) reporting this activity. In addition, just over half of reporting entities – 51% (20/39) – developed or updated databases relevant to youth. Together, these findings indicate a strong focus among UN entities on generating, capturing and sharing knowledge to inform youth-related policies and programmes.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Generating and disseminating data and evidence to inform policy and practice		
Actions taken by UN entities	**Percentage**	**Proportion**
Documented lessons learned and good practices	82%	32/39
Produced new research reports	62%	24/39
Developed or updated databases relevant to youth	51%	20/39
Developed new indicators	38%	15/39
Conducted evaluations	36%	14/39
Built new data products, including dashboards	31%	12/39

At the same time, fewer UN entities reported activities that strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems. Only 38% (15/39) reported developing new indicators, 36% (14/39) conducted evaluations and 31% (12/39) developed new data products such as dashboards. These findings suggest that while many UN entities are successfully generating and documenting knowledge, comparatively fewer are investing in the systems needed to monitor long-term progress and measure results. This may partly reflect the technical and resource-intensive nature of developing indicators, conducting evaluations and building data systems, which often extend beyond annual reporting cycles.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Did you know?

Meta-synthesis analyses examine lessons learned from Youth2030 implementation

Through an inter-agency knowledge collaboration led by the UNFPA Independent Evaluation Office and the UNICEF Evaluation Office, a series of meta-synthesis exercises is examining lessons learned from the implementation of the United Nations Youth Strategy, Youth2030.

In 2025, drawing on nearly 300 UN evaluations and applying a responsible AI-enabled methodology, the analysis sought to answer: "What works to amplify the rights and voices of youth in education and employment?"

The findings highlight the importance of tailored approaches for specific disadvantaged youth groups, cross-sector collaboration, locally relevant education programmes and investments that expand young people's skills, opportunities and rights.

Developed with partners across the UN system and youth-led networks,[12] the report was launched at the ECOSOC Youth Forum 2025 and represents the third in a series of four meta-synthesis exercises generating evidence to support the implementation of Youth2030.

Check out the full report here ↗.

Overall, the findings demonstrate strong system-wide efforts in generating evidence, developing standards and norms, and producing practical guidance to advance the youth agenda. However, comparatively fewer UN entities are investing in the measurement systems needed to track outcomes over time. Strengthening monitoring and evaluation capacities, expanding youth-related indicators and data systems, and innovative data products would therefore complement existing efforts by improving the ability to monitor progress, demonstrate results and support evidence-based decision-making for youth-inclusive SDG acceleration.

5.3 Capacity-building of key stakeholders and knowledge exchange

Strengthening the knowledge and capacities of governments, youth organizations, networks, movements and other stakeholders is another core pillar of Strategic Priority 3. It focuses on equipping key actors with the knowledge, skills and tools needed to integrate youth priorities into SDG implementation, facilitate meaningful youth participation and strengthen investment in youth-led solutions.

Across the UN system, the most common area of work in strengthening knowledge and capacities for youth-inclusive SDG acceleration is capacity-building of key stakeholders and knowledge exchange efforts. At the global level, 93% (42/45) of UN entities reported efforts in this area in 2025, while at the country level, 97% (128/132) of UNCTs reported carrying out this type of work.

12. Co-led by the UNFPA Independent Evaluation Office and UNICEF Evaluation Office, along with the EvalYouth Global Network, Generation Unlimited, Global Partnership for Education Youth Leaders, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNDP, UNESCO, and the United Nations Youth Office

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Among UN entities strengthening the knowledge and capacities for youth-inclusive SDG acceleration, 95% (40/42) reported providing learning opportunities for a variety of external stakeholders through in-person, hybrid or large-scale e-learning courses.

Both for UN entities and for UNCTs, to further understand which stakeholder groups benefited from this support, data were collected across three main knowledge and capacity categories:

1. Integrating youth priorities in SDG acceleration
2. Facilitating youth participation
3. Investing in youth-led solutions (results for this category are highlighted in more depth in chapter 6 focused on Strategic Priority 4 – Unlocking resources for the youth agenda).

Across UN entities and UNCTs, findings indicate consistently high levels of engagement across these areas, suggesting that capacity development has become one of the most widely institutionalized dimensions of Youth2030 implementation.

When looking at integrating youth priorities in SDG acceleration, 89% (40/45) of UN entities and 89% (118/132) of UNCTs strengthened the knowledge and capacities of key stakeholders. Youth organizations, networks and movements was the most supported stakeholder group in this area by UN entities, with 80% (36/45) reporting knowledge and capacity support to youth organizations. Meanwhile, governments received the most support from UNCTs, with 84% (111/132) reporting work in this regard.

However, whereas the rate of support in this area by UNCTs to youth organizations was also high, at 80% (106/132), the support provided by UN entities to building knowledge and capacities of governments in youth-inclusive SDG acceleration was much lower – at 69% (31/45).

The stronger performance of UNCTs also likely reflects their closer engagement with national institutions and day-to-day policy processes. This highlights an opportunity for UN entities to build on country-level experience and strengthen support to governments, which play a critical role in institutionalizing youth-responsive policies and embedding youth priorities within national SDG implementation frameworks.

Meanwhile, in relation to strengthening the knowledge and capacities of key stakeholders to facilitate youth participation in SDG acceleration, 89% (40/45) of UN entities and 91% (120/132) of UNCTs reported work in this area, demonstrating a strong system-wide commitment to advancing meaningful youth participation. Across UN entities and UNCTs, youth organizations, networks and movements were the stakeholder group most frequently supported, with 82% (37/45) and 89% (117/132), respectively, reporting efforts to strengthen their knowledge and capacities. At the same time, substantial efforts were also directed towards governments, with 73% (33/45) of UN entities and 80% (106/132) of UNCTs reporting work in this area.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

While these figures demonstrate robust efforts across the system, including to invest in the skills and leadership of young people, they also point to an opportunity to further strengthen support for governments, particularly among UN entities. Building the capacities of public institutions to facilitate meaningful youth participation will be critical to driving the institutional and cultural changes needed to embed youth participation in policymaking and decision-making processes, ensuring that it is not only taking place at all levels but is meaningful at every stage.

EXAMPLES:

- *UNCT Zimbabwe: In 2025, the UNCT Zimbabwe, through the Health Resilience Fund and 2gether4SRHR, strengthened youth-inclusive SDG and NDS2 implementation by enhancing institutional capacities and youth participation in decision-making. Functional Youth Desks were operationalized across all ministries, with 83 Youth Desk officers trained to capture, analyse and communicate youth priorities. The Country Team also supported inclusive youth engagement platforms, including the Youth Model Parliament and the Youth Inclusive Budget Conference, which brought together 356 delegates from across the country and informed parliamentary action. These efforts strengthened evidence-based policymaking and ensured that youth priorities were integrated into national development processes.*
- *UNCT Serbia: The UNCT supported the Ministry of Tourism and Youth in developing Serbia's first Youth Wellbeing Index, implemented at both national and local levels across 17 municipalities. This instrument enables the systematic monitoring of progress under the National Youth Strategy, fully aligned with the SDGs and Serbia's national development goals, while strengthening the capacity of Local Youth Offices to collect and utilize youth-sensitive data. A practical manual was also developed to guide indicator design and reporting against specific SDGs. In parallel, the Country Team advanced youth-inclusive reforms by strengthening the skills of frontline workers through standardized youth worker training in 12 municipalities, supporting the establishment of Serbia's national career guidance framework and platform, and promoting inclusive local policy development through U-Report consultations that engaged 4,861 young people in shaping strategic youth priorities.*
- *UNESCO: In Morocco, the UNESCO Shabab Labs – Youth as Researchers programme trained and mentored 22 PhD students to apply action research methodologies and facilitate collaborative research processes with young people. The researchers worked alongside more than 200 youth participants to co-design and implement 37 innovative projects addressing locally identified challenges across 14 youth centres in six regions of the country. Participating youth received over 600 hours of tailored mentoring and technical support, strengthening their capacities in scientific research, innovation and active citizenship. They also engaged in national youth participation mechanisms, using the findings from their research and action projects to inform decision-making and policy discussions.*

In addition to capacity-building of key stakeholders, in 2025 some 90% (38/42) of UN entities reported having facilitated knowledge exchange, including through Communities of Practice, South-South and triangular cooperation, and regional exchanges. Meanwhile, 79% (33/42) reported having hosted or maintained platforms, portals, repositories or clearing houses, making up-to-date data, evidence and knowledge products available.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

- *United Nations Development Programme: In 2025, the Programme strengthened the knowledge and capacities of key stakeholders to advance youth-inclusive SDG acceleration through the Regional Advocacy Lab held in Chișinău, Republic of Moldova. The Lab brought together youth leaders and civil society organization representatives from Armenia, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova, creating a regional platform for peer learning, skills development, and collaboration on the "just green transition". Participants received targeted training on advocacy strategies, narrative building, strategic communication, fact-checking, and campaign design, with a particular focus on countering misinformation and strengthening evidence-based public discourse. These skills enhanced their ability to articulate youth perspectives and engage effectively with policymakers, the media and the wider public. A core feature of the Lab was its emphasis on co-creation and applied learning. Participants worked collaboratively to develop advocacy tools and campaign concepts tailored to their national and local contexts, directly supporting ongoing and planned initiatives on climate action, governance, and social inclusion. By strengthening the advocacy and communication capacities of youth leaders and civil society organizations, the Regional Advocacy Lab enhanced their ability to influence public dialogue, shape narratives on the just green transition and participate more effectively in policy processes that advance youth-inclusive SDG implementation.*

Overall, the findings demonstrate that capacity-building and knowledge exchange remain among the strongest areas of implementation under Youth2030. The consistently high levels of engagement reported by UN entities and UNCTs suggest that strengthening the capacities of governments, youth organizations and other stakeholders has become a well-established feature of the UN system's work on youth. The findings also point to particularly strong efforts by UNCTs, especially in strengthening government capacities and facilitating youth participation, reflecting their operational role and close collaboration with national institutions.

Continued investment in building the capacities of youth organizations, networks and movements needs to be complemented by a greater emphasis on strengthening the institutional capacities of governments. In parallel, expanding and strengthening data platforms, knowledge portals, repositories and other knowledge-sharing mechanisms could facilitate greater exchange of good practices, improve access to evidence and tools, and support the scaling of successful approaches across the UN system. Strengthening government capacities also remains essential for institutionalizing youth-responsive policies and embedding meaningful youth participation within national planning and decision-making processes.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations
@GlobalModelUN

5.4 Challenges, opportunities and way forward

Efforts to advance knowledge and enhance capacities for working with and for youth remain one of the strongest areas of implementation under Youth2030. Across the UN system, UN entities and UNCTs report consistently high levels of engagement in generating evidence, developing practical guidance, strengthening stakeholder capacities and facilitating knowledge exchange. These efforts provide an important foundation for supporting youth-inclusive SDG acceleration and enabling governments, youth organizations and other stakeholders to translate commitments into action.

At the same time, the findings point to several opportunities for further strengthening implementation. While many UN entities are producing research, documenting lessons learned and developing practical guidance, far fewer are investing in the monitoring systems needed to measure long-term outcomes, including youth-related indicators, evaluations and innovative data products. Strengthening these functions would improve accountability, enable more robust measurement of results and further support evidence-based policymaking.

The findings also suggest opportunities to deepen institutional capacity development, particularly for governments. Although significant efforts are underway across the system, UNCTs consistently report stronger engagement with government institutions than UN entities, reflecting their closer operational partnerships at country level. Expanding support for government capacities – particularly to institutionalize meaningful youth participation and integrate youth priorities into policy and planning processes – would help translate successful initiatives into sustainable systems change.

At the same time, continued investment in knowledge exchange will remain essential. Communities of Practice, regional learning initiatives, South-South and triangular cooperation, and accessible knowledge platforms provide valuable opportunities to scale good practices, strengthen collaboration across the UN system and accelerate the adoption of innovative approaches. Building on these strengths while strengthening monitoring, evaluation and institutional capacities will further enhance the UN system's ability to support youth-inclusive SDG acceleration and deliver on the ambitions of Youth2030.

At the same time, continued investment in strengthening the capacities of youth organizations, movements and networks must remain a clear priority for the UN system at all levels. Across the world, the capacity-building and knowledge exchange efforts led by UN entities and UNCTs contribute not only to tangible progress in the implementation of Youth2030 but also to a broader cultural shift towards working with young people as partners, recognizing them as experts, and investing in their agency, leadership and solutions to global challenges. This approach lies at the heart of the vision of Youth2030 and the UN's commitment to working with and for youth.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations



6.
Strategic Priority 4: Unlocking resources for the youth agenda across the UN

Strategic Priority 3 seeks to strengthen institutional and stakeholder capacities by enhancing access to data, evidence, tools and knowledge to advance evidence-based, youth-responsive policies, cross-sectoral programming and SDG acceleration with and for youth.

6.1 System-wide overview of progress

Unlocking adequate, predictable and sustainable financing is fundamental to realizing the ambitions of Youth2030 Phase 2. While political commitments to youth have continued to grow across the UN system, progress ultimately depends on whether sufficient financial and human resources are mobilized to translate these commitments into action.

Access to adequate and sustainable resources remains one of the greatest challenges to advancing the youth agenda. Across the UN system, inadequate funding and limited human resources continue to constrain the ability of UN entities to advance youth priorities and support countries in implementing policies and programmes with and for youth.

These challenges are compounded by the lack of institutional mechanisms to systematically track investments in youth across the UN system, making it difficult to estimate resource needs, identify funding gaps and monitor progress over time.

Recognizing the central role of resources in accelerating progress for youth, Youth2030 Phase 2 identifies unlocking resources for the youth agenda as a key lever for implementing the Strategy. This includes mobilizing more diverse and sustainable financing for youth policy and programming, strengthening advocacy for youth-responsive financing, expanding resource mobilization efforts and increasing direct support for youth-led initiatives and organizations.

To understand progress across the UN system, UN entities and UNCTs self-reported on actions undertaken across two main areas: (a) unlocking resources for the youth agenda and (b) strengthening efforts to track investments in youth across the UN system.

6.2 Unlocking resources for the youth agenda

Unlocking resources for the youth agenda is a core pillar of Strategic Priority 4. It focuses on strengthening youth-responsive financing frameworks, building the capacities of governments and other stakeholders to invest in young people, expanding direct funding for youth-led organizations and initiatives, and leveraging partnerships to mobilize additional resources for youth-inclusive sustainable development.

In 2025, UN entities and UNCTs reported a range of efforts to unlock resources for the youth agenda, including through policy support, capacity-building, direct investment in youth-led action, and strategic partnerships.

Supporting governments to integrate youth priorities into financing frameworks for the SDGs and national development goals is an important area of work for the UN system at the country level. In 2025, 58% (76/132) of UNCTs reported facilitating the inclusion of youth priorities in national investment platforms and funding mechanisms, while 45% (59/132) supported the development or strengthening of national SDG financing strategies aimed at mobilizing public and private resources for SDG implementation.

While these findings demonstrate continued efforts to strengthen youth-responsive

Something to Think About **08**

In 2025, just over half of UN Country Teams reported helping governments include youth priorities in national investment platforms and funding mechanisms. This shows that having youth-focused policies does not automatically mean that resources are integrated into national financing decisions. How could Member States ensure that youth priorities are reflected not only in policies, but also in national budgets and financing strategies?

financing, engagement in this area remains fairly limited. Among the key areas of support provided by UNCTs to governments, financing-related actions were reported less frequently than support in other areas. This suggests that integrating youth priorities into financing frameworks remains a relatively underdeveloped dimension of UN support and represents an important opportunity for further investment under Youth2030 Phase 2.

Strengthening the knowledge and capacities of key stakeholders remains critical to ensuring that resources can be effectively mobilized and directed towards youth-inclusive SDG acceleration. Among the UN entities that reported advancing this work in 2025, 62% (28/45) strengthened government capacities to invest in youth-led solutions, while 67% (30/45) supported the capacities of youth organizations, networks and movements. In addition, 33% (15/45) provided capacity-building support to other stakeholders, including regional and intergovernmental organizations, the UN system, private sector, civil society organizations and academia.

Similarly, among UNCTs that strengthened the knowledge and capacities of key stakeholders for youth-inclusive SDG action in 2025, 78% (103/132) reported supporting capacities related to investing in youth-led solutions. This included 59% (78/132) that focused on governments, 72% (95/132) on youth organizations, and 36% on other stakeholders.

While efforts to strengthen capacities related to investing in youth-led solutions were evident at global and country levels, they were reported less frequently than other areas of capacity development. Expanding support in this area will be important to strengthen the enabling environment for sustainable financing of youth-led initiatives.

Beyond financing frameworks and capacity-building, direct investment in youth-led organizations and initiatives remains essential to translating commitments into tangible support for young people driving change in their communities. In 2025, among the UN entities that enabled meaningful youth participation in UN programmes, projects or initiatives, 74% (31/42) identified and directly funded – or facilitated funding for – youth-led solutions. At the country level, among the UNCTs that enabled youth participation in UN programmes and projects, 85% (106/124) supported youth-led solutions, while 65% (81/124) provided funding to youth-led organizations to implement those solutions.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations
@GlobalModelUN

EXAMPLE:

- *International Telecommunication Union: The Generation Connect Young Leadership Programme, an ongoing initiative launched by the International Telecommunication Union and Huawei, supports 30 young fellows from all regions annually through mentorship, training, and funding of up to US$ 10,000 per fellow to implement youth-led digital development projects aligned with the SDGs in their communities. In 2025, the 2024–2025 cohort completed the programme, while the 2025–2026 cohort was selected by a global jury from a pool of 6,800 applicants across 156 countries and began implementing their projects to advance digital inclusion and sustainable development in their communities.*

These findings demonstrate that support for youth-led action is becoming an increasingly established feature of UN programming. However, achieving transformational change will require continued efforts to expand both the scale and sustainability of these investments, ensuring that youth-led organizations and initiatives have access to the resources needed to deliver lasting impact. Particular attention should also be given to supporting solutions led by young people in vulnerable situations, including young women and girls, young persons with disabilities, young refugees and migrants, Indigenous youth, and other groups facing intersecting forms of discrimination and exclusion.

Did you know?

A Global Youth Investment Platform is underway

Today, one in five young people are not in employment, education or training,[13] while global youth unemployment stands at 13.4%, more than double the adult rate. Despite these realities, there is no global framework to systematically connect, align and scale investments in and for young people.

To address this gap, UN Member States requested the establishment of a Global Youth Investment Platform through Action 34(a) of the Pact for the Future.

In response, the Secretary-General, through the Pact Implementation Working Group on Youth and under the leadership of the Assistant Secretary-General for Youth Affairs, convened a multi-stakeholder taskforce in 2025. Co-chaired by the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Youth Office, the taskforce brought together several UN entities[14] and youth representatives to design the Platform as a framework for catalyzing increased and better-aligned financing for youth-related programming, including youth-led solutions.

Rather than creating a new fund, the Platform is designed as an ecosystem enabler that strengthens and connects existing financing mechanisms across the UN system and beyond. Guided by the principles of youth co-leadership and meaningful youth engagement, equity and inclusion, transparency and accountability, country

13. ILO, *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2024: Decent Work, Brighter Futures* (Geneva: ILO, 2024), p. 15.
14. DPPA/PBSO, ITC, UN-Habitat, UNFCCC, UNICEF and WIPO

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

ownership, and alignment with the SDGs, it seeks to embed a "youth investment logic" across existing financing systems, while expanding access to funding for youth-led initiatives and youth-serving programmes.

The Platform proposes four funding windows to support investments at different stages, ranging from micro grants (up to US$ 25,000) for early-stage ideas and community innovation to large investment packages (above US$ 2 million) for multi-country programmes, scalable enterprises and public-private partnerships.

The Platform advances three strategic pathways to scale youth investments: (a) unlock funding through existing financing mechanisms, (b) mobilize new resources through stronger partnerships and advocacy, and (c) learn and scale through improved evidence, accountability and peer learning.

The Platform will focus on establishing a Youth Knowledge and Learning Investment Hub, integrating its own principles into existing UN financing mechanisms, supporting country-level youth investment approaches through UNCTs, promoting the systematic application of the UN Youth Marker to strengthen tracking and accountability, and mobilizing greater investment through advocacy and strategic partnerships.

Achieving this scale of impact will also require strong partnerships across sectors and stakeholders. Among the UN entities that advanced youth-inclusive programmes, projects and initiatives in 2025, 86% (37/43) strengthened partnerships to incubate or scale youth-led solutions, compared with 79% (104/132) of UNCTs. These findings demonstrate that partnerships to support and scale youth-led solutions are being advanced across global and country levels. Further efforts to deepen and expand these partnerships, particularly at the country level, will be critical to creating the enabling conditions for more sustainable and transformational outcomes for young people.

Overall, the findings suggest that the UN system is employing multiple approaches to unlock resources for the youth agenda, including policy support, capacity-building, direct investment in youth-led action, and strategic partnerships.

Despite these encouraging developments, financing remains one of the least advanced dimensions for advancing the youth agenda. Support for integrating youth priorities into financing strategies and investment frameworks continues to be reported less frequently than support for policy development, programming and capacity-building. Likewise, efforts to strengthen capacities for investing in youth-led solutions remain fairly limited, suggesting that enabling environments for sustainable youth financing are still evolving. While direct funding for youth-led organizations has expanded, many youth-led initiatives continue to face barriers in accessing flexible, predictable and long-term financing.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Interesting Facts **02**

The proposed Global Youth Investment Platform considers different scales of youth investment, from small grants for early-stage community ideas to large packages for multi-country programmes and partnerships. This recognizes that youth-led initiatives may require different types and levels of financing depending on their stage and scale.

Future efforts should focus on embedding youth priorities more systematically within national financing strategies and investment platforms, strengthening capacities across governments and financing partners, scaling direct support to youth-led organizations, and expanding financing partnerships such as the Global Youth Investment Platform. Particular attention should continue to be given to ensuring that financing reaches young people facing the greatest barriers to participation and sustainable development.

6.3 Tracking investments in youth across the UN

Strategic Priority 4 also focuses on strengthening transparency, accountability and evidence on investments in youth. Robust systems for tracking financial resources are essential to understanding how much the UN system invests in young people, identifying financing gaps, measuring progress and informing future resource mobilization efforts.

Tracking investments in youth across the UN system remains a persistent challenge. Without robust systems to identify, monitor and assess investments in youth, it is difficult to understand the scale of resources being directed towards the youth agenda, identify funding gaps, measure progress and inform future resource mobilization efforts.

Recognizing this challenge, Youth2030 Phase 2 places greater emphasis on strengthening data and accountability mechanisms related to youth investments. Through the updated Youth2030 Phase 2 Scorecards, UN entities and UNCTs are asked a series of questions aimed at improving understanding of the UN system's investment landscape for youth. In parallel, a comprehensive UN Youth Marker is being developed by the Youth2030 Task Team, comprising 14 UN entities and two youth-led organizations, to support more systematic tracking of investments in youth across the UN system.

Did you know?

Development of the UN Youth Marker

The UN system does not yet have a standardized approach to track how much it invests in young people. While some UN entities and UNCTs use their own systems to identify and monitor youth-related investments, many do not. Among those that do, approaches vary, making it difficult to generate a consistent picture of investments across the system and compare progress over time.

To address this gap, the Youth2030 Task Team on the UN Youth Marker was established in November 2024, bringing together 14 UN entities and two youth networks. Co-facilitated by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the UN Youth Office and the Major Group for Children and Youth, the Task Team worked throughout 2025 to develop guidance for a system-wide UN Youth Marker to help identify and track programmes, projects and resources that contribute to youth outcomes.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Something to Think About 05

Without a standardized way to track youth-related investments, it can be difficult to determine how much is being invested, identify funding gaps, or compare progress across the UN system. How could Member States develop common indicators or tracking mechanisms to improve transparency and accountability for resources allocated to youth?

The proposed UN Youth Marker is currently being piloted by interested UN entities and UNCTs, including ESCWA, UNFPA, UNCT Guatemala and UNCT Bhutan, to assess its practicality, relevance and usability across diverse contexts.

Once put in place, the UN Youth Marker will serve as a key accountability tool for Youth2030 Phase 2, improving transparency, strengthening reporting and supporting advocacy for greater investment in and for young people.

In 2025, data collected across the UN system provide important insights into how youth priorities are reflected in planning, budgeting and investment processes. At the global and country levels, 54% (27/50) of UN entities reported integrating actions on youth into their annual budgets, while 68% (90/132) of UNCTs reported integrating youth priorities into their Joint Work Plans. However, the extent to which these commitments translate into financial allocations and actual expenditures varies across the system.

At the country level, among UNCT Joint Work Plans that included youth priorities, 18% of total funding allocated in 2025 was earmarked for youth priorities. Of the total funding actually spent under the plans during the year, 10% was spent on youth priorities. These figures provide insight into how youth priorities are reflected in UNCT resource allocation and spending decisions, while also highlighting that youth priorities continue to represent a relatively small share of overall financial allocations and expenditures.

At the level of UN entities, available data provide insight into the share of organizational resources dedicated to youth priorities. While recognition of young people as powerful agents of change has grown, and commitments to meaningful youth participation have increasingly been integrated across the UN system, this ambition is not yet fully reflected in annual spending patterns.

Taken together, these findings provide important insights into how youth priorities are reflected in resource allocation and expenditure decisions across the UN system. They highlight the need to further align financial resources with policy commitments, ensuring that growing recognition of the importance of working with and for youth is matched by sustained investments at all levels.

However, fully understanding the scale and impact of investments in youth requires more systematic tracking mechanisms. The absence of a standardized system to track investments in youth across the UN system limits the ability to consistently monitor these investments, identify gaps and assess progress over time.

Among entities that reported integrating youth priorities into their planning and budgeting processes, 22% (11/50) of UN entities and 29% (26/90) of UNCTs reported implementing a standardized youth marker system to monitor investments in youth. The development of a UN system-wide Youth Marker will represent an important step towards addressing this gap and strengthening transparency and accountability for investments in youth across the UN system.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

There is also considerable scope to expand dedicated financing for youth through establishing youth funding windows within both existing and new financing mechanisms. To date, such approaches remain relatively limited, particularly among UN entities. In 2025, 40% (36/90) of UNCTs reported establishing youth funding windows within existing financing mechanisms, compared with 26% (13/50) of UN entities. Similarly, 26% (23/90) of UNCTs had established youth funding windows within new financing mechanisms, compared with 20% (10/50) of UN entities. Expanding these dedicated financing mechanisms represents an important opportunity to translate commitments into sustained investments for young people and accelerate the implementation of Youth2030.

EXAMPLE:

- *UNCT Philippines: Through the Joint SDG Fund-supported Localize to Realize (L2R) SDGs Joint Programme, jointly implemented by UN-Habitat and UN Women, the Sangguniang Kabataan and youth from marginalized communities, including Sama Bajaus, were engaged as partners in local development and SDG implementation. Youth participated in community consultations, local governance dialogues and SDG-aligned planning processes, helping ensure that young people's perspectives and priorities informed local policies and programmes. Through the initiative, youth strengthened their capacity, gained opportunities for representation in barangay councils, and contributed to monitoring and reporting on SDG progress, enabling them to play a meaningful role in advancing sustainable development in their communities.*

Encouragingly, efforts to strengthen resource mobilization for youth priorities were widespread across the UN system. In 2025, 83% (75/90) of UNCTs and 68% (34/50) of UN entities reported taking action to improve resource mobilization for the youth agenda. Sustaining and expanding these efforts will be essential to advancing work with and for young people, particularly in the context of the significant financial constraints the UN system is currently facing.

Overall, progress in 2025 demonstrates important steps towards strengthening accountability for investments in youth. UN entities and UNCTs increasingly integrated youth priorities into planning and budgeting processes, while the Youth2030 Task Team advanced development and piloting of the UN Youth Marker to establish a standardized system for tracking youth investments across the UN system. At country level, 68% of UNCTs integrated youth priorities into Joint Work Plans, while 54% of UN entities incorporated youth actions into annual budgets. These efforts provide an important foundation for improving transparency and strengthening evidence on investments in young people.

Nevertheless, available evidence indicates that financial allocations for youth remain modest relative to overall organizational spending. Among UNCT Joint Work Plans, only 18% of allocated funding and 10% of actual expenditure were directed towards youth priorities. Furthermore, standardized tracking systems remain limited, with only 22% of UN entities and 29% of UNCTs reporting the use of a youth marker or similar mechanism. These findings suggest that policy commitments continue to outpace financial investment and accountability mechanisms.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

The UN system should therefore accelerate the roll-out of the UN Youth Marker, strengthen the integration of youth priorities into its planning, budgeting and reporting processes, and increase the proportion of financial resources allocated to youth priorities. Improved investment tracking will strengthen transparency, support evidence-based decision-making and help ensure that growing commitments to young people are matched by sustained financial investment across the UN system.

6.4 Challenges, opportunities and a way forward

The findings under Strategic Priority 4 – Unlocking resources for the Youth Agenda across the UN highlight a central challenge: while the importance of working with and for youth is increasingly recognized across the UN system, available resources and financing mechanisms do not yet fully reflect this ambition. Strengthening investments in youth will require continued efforts to align policies, priorities and resource allocation, ensuring that young people are supported not only through commitments and programmes but also through sustained financial investments.

A key opportunity will be to strengthen the mechanisms that enable the UN system to better understand, track and advocate for investments in youth priorities. Expanding the use of standardized approaches, as well as developing a UN system-wide Youth Marker, will be critical to improving transparency, strengthening accountability and generating evidence to inform resource mobilization efforts. Better data on investments in youth will also support stronger advocacy for youth-responsive financing and help demonstrate the value and impact of these investments.

At the same time, increasing the scale of financing for youth must be accompanied by efforts to ensure that resources are accessible to and benefit diverse groups of young people, particularly those facing the greatest barriers. This includes expanding support for youth-led organizations, networks and movements, funding youth-led solutions, strengthening partnerships across sectors, and ensuring that financing mechanisms are inclusive, accessible and responsive to the needs of young people in all their diversity.

As the UN system continues to navigate major financial constraints, unlocking resources for the youth agenda will require innovation, collaboration and sustained leadership across all levels. By strengthening financing mechanisms, improving investment tracking and ensuring resources reach young people and youth-led solutions, the UN system can advance the ambitions of Youth2030 Phase 2 and accelerate progress towards the SDGs while leaving no young person behind.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations



7.
Strategic Priority 5: Transforming the UN workforce and organizational culture

Strategic Priority 5 focuses on transforming the UN workforce and organizational culture by scaling policies, initiatives and innovations that attract, recruit and retain young talent (35 years or younger), while expanding fair, equitable and high-quality internship opportunities for young people at all levels, particularly from developing countries. It seeks to build a more diverse, inclusive and future-ready United Nations.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

What is the issue?

The overall representation of young people in the UN workforce remains a challenge and requires further attention. According to 2024 data from the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination,[15] the average age of UN personnel is 46, an increase from 45.3 in 2018 when data started being made available. This reflects an aging workforce and underscores the urgency of accelerating efforts to transform the UN workforce and organizational culture across all levels

> *"A key constraint in attracting, recruiting and retaining young talent in the United Nations workforce is the limited availability of roles at the junior level, combined with a tendency among hiring units to favour more experienced candidates. In many cases, vacancy requirements, including minimum years of experience, narrow access for otherwise qualified young applicants and reduce the number of entry points into the Organization. This creates challenges not only for recruitment, but also for retention, as younger talent may perceive limited opportunities for progression within the system."*
>
> *- United Nations Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance*

Human resource policies also differ across the UN system, particularly among UN Secretariat and non-Secretariat entities. These differences are especially evident in internship policies and practices, with the UN Secretariat internship programme being subject to General Assembly oversight, whereas non-Secretariat entities generally have greater leeway to develop and adapt their human resource frameworks. Non-Secretariat entities have generally demonstrated more comprehensive internship policies and support measures, highlighting opportunities for harmonization and cross-system learning.

Transforming the UN workforce and organizational culture to build a diverse, multigenerational workforce – by attracting, retaining, and developing young talent – is central not only to Youth2030 but to the future of the United Nations. Empowering young people, particularly young women, within the UN system is a key priority recognized for organizational renewal under the UN 2.0 initiative – the Secretary-General's vision for a modern, future-ready UN system powered by cutting-edge skills and a forward-looking culture. This requires sustained efforts to bring more young people into the workforce and nurture their leadership potential.

15. https://unsceb.org/hr-others

What is the Youth2030 Phase 2 approach to this issue?

Under Youth2030 Phase 2, the UN commits to transforming its workforce across two broad domains: (a) by scaling policies, programmes, and innovations that attract, recruit, and retain young talent (35 years or younger) and (b) by expanding fair, equitable, and high-quality internship opportunities at all levels, including for young people from developing countries.

For Youth2030 Phase 2, the scoring criteria for the KPAs on young talent and internships have been updated to capture more nuanced information compared with the Phase 1 mechanisms.

7.1 System-wide overview of progress

To understand efforts across the UN system to transform the UN's workforce, UN entities and UNCTs self-reported on actions undertaken across the following three action areas:

- strengthening policies and strategies (abbreviated to **strengthening policies** below)
- **scaling programmes** and/or initiatives[16] (abbreviated to scaling programmes below)
- documenting and sharing innovations and best practices (abbreviated to **sharing good practices** below)

Overall, significant efforts are underway across the UN system, in both the domains: youth talent and internships. Insights from the two domains are unpacked in the upcoming sections below.

Youth in Human Resources plans: There is a steady increase in UNCTs integrating youth in their Business Operations Strategy (BOS)[17] and plans, evident from the following trend: 11% (14 of 130) in 2020 (baseline); 36% (48 of 132) in 2024; 41% (54/132) in 2025. Some good examples from the field are also available. At the entity level, however, the results have been less conclusive, highlighting the need for a more robust approach to assessing progress, which Youth2030 Phase 2 seeks to address through revised scoring criteria.

EXAMPLE:

- *UNCT Brazil: Since 2023, the Business Operations Strategy (BOS) has included a common service line dedicated to mapping internship programmes across UN entities and advancing affirmative internship practices. Through the sharing of best practices on recruitment, outreach, terms of reference, and retention, the initiative seeks to strengthen the youth workforce and establish minimum quality standards for UN internship programmes. Particular emphasis is placed on expanding access for young people from vulnerable and underrepresented groups. Several UN entities at the country level are already implementing affirmative internship programmes that specifically target youth from marginalized communities, including persons with disabilities, transgender individuals, and Black youth.*

16. Including targeted outreach campaigns and/or culture change, initiatives to attract diverse youth from underrepresented geographies and groups, including young persons with disabilities.

17. The Business Operations Strategy is a result-based framework that focuses on UNCT-level joint business operations with the purpose of eliminating duplication, leveraging the common bargaining power of the UN and maximizing economies of scale. The strategy focuses on common services that are implemented jointly or delivered by one UN entity on behalf of one or more other UN entities.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations
@GlobalModelUN

Meaningful youth participation of young people within the UN: In 2025, opportunities for the meaningful engagement of young personnel within the UN remain limited across all levels of the Organization. While 98% of UNCTs (130/132) and 96% (48/50) of UN entities reported engaging with one or more youth groups in 2025, only 67% (88/132) of UNCTs reported engaging young people within the UN system. Similarly, 74% (37/50) of UN entities reported engaging young personnel within their own workforce. This gap suggests that, while engagement with external youth constituencies has become widespread, there remains significant scope to create more opportunities for young personnel to participate in internal organizational processes and contribute to UN-led initiatives.

7.2 Young talent

In UN entities, in 2025, 58% (29/50), advanced actions in two or three areas in the domain young talent, namely strengthening policies, scaling programmes and sharing good practices, while 16% (8/50) took no action. The commonest action taken was scaling programmes in 66% (33/50), followed by strengthening policies in 62% (31/50), with only 36% (18/50) sharing good practices.

In UNCTs, in 2025, 42% (56/132), advanced actions in two or three areas on young talent, namely strengthening policies, scaling programmes and sharing good practices, while 11% (14/132) took no action. The commonest action taken was scaling programmes in 74% (98/132), followed by strengthening policies in 52% (68/132), with 44% (58/132) sharing good practices.

Regional disparities are also evident among UNCTs. The Asia-Pacific region showed the strongest overall performance, with 64% (16/25) of UNCTs advancing actions in two or three areas, followed by 60% (15/25) in Latin America and the Caribbean and 57% (31/54) in Africa. Some 40% (4/10) Arab States and 39% (7/18) in Europe and Central Asia reported efforts in this area.

EXAMPLES:

- *International Telecommunication Union (ITU): The ITU Young Professionals Programme is a hands-on training programme which enables the next generation of ICT leaders to join the ITU as full-time staff and directly contribute to the organization's work both in technical and policy-related roles in diverse fields. From more than 3,500 applicants, the first cohort of six P-1 appointments were made in 2025. This first cohort are from Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, India, Malawi and Pakistan and are now working across all three ITU bureaux and the General Secretariat.*

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

- *UNCT China: Several United Nations entities have established strategic partnerships with leading Chinese universities to enhance youth engagement and attract young talent to the UN system. Examples include the UNFPA–Tsinghua Fellowship Programme and partnerships between UNDP, United Nations Volunteers, Tsinghua University and Shanghai University which support fully funded UN volunteer placements. In addition, the Office of Human Resources, which hosts a dedicated National Officer Development function, implements a youth outreach programme funded by the Government of China. Through nationwide engagement with universities, the programme promotes awareness of UN career opportunities and helps attract qualified young professionals across a range of levels, including P-2 to P-4 positions.*

7.3 Internships

In UN entities, in 2025, 56% (28/50) advanced actions in two or three areas in the domain of strengthening internships, namely strengthening policies, scaling programmes and sharing good practices, while 18% (9/50) took no action. The commonest action taken was scaling programmes in 64% (32/50), followed by strengthening policies in 60% (30/50), with only 34% (17/50) sharing good practices.

In UNCTs, in 2025, 49% (65/132), advanced actions in two or three areas in the domain of strengthening internships, namely strengthening policies, scaling programmes and sharing good practices, while 19% (25/132) took no action. The most common action taken was scaling programmes in 68% (90/132) of UNCTs, followed by strengthening policies in 47% (62/132), with 39% (52/132) sharing good practices. Regional disparities are also evident. The Asia-Pacific region showed the strongest overall performance, with 60% (15/25) advancing actions in two or three areas, followed by 52% (28/54) in Africa. Some 44% (8/18) of Europe and Central Asia reported efforts in this area and 40% (4/10) in Arab States, and 40% (10/25) in Latin America and the Caribbean region.

EXAMPLES:

- *UN University: The University's Junior Fellows Internship Programme at the Office of the Rector serves as a flagship pipeline for early career talent. It attracts highly qualified graduate students and recent postgraduates through a competitive, biannual recruitment process, targeting candidates with strong analytical skills and a demonstrated interest in UN work. This structured entry point enables the University to identify and engage high-potential young professionals at an early stage. The same programme strengthens internship quality through a well-defined framework that combines a formal orientation, close supervision and substantive work assignments (e.g. research, policy support and event coordination). The provision of stipends, training and hands-on experience in a professional UN environment enhances both accessibility and learning outcomes, contributing to more meaningful and effective internships. In addition, the programme is supported by a dedicated alumni network, which helps maintain engagement with former junior fellows and facilitates continued professional connections beyond the internship period.*

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations
@GlobalModelUN

- *UNCT Niger: The UNCT in Niger greatly expanded opportunities for youth engagement through the scale-up of high-quality internship programmes across multiple UN entities. The United Nations Population Fund supported youth participation by hosting 12 young women through the Kwarewa internship initiative and deploying 100 young midwife interns across health facilities nationwide. Complementing these efforts, UNDP, together with seven partner UN agencies, provided structured internship placements for 83 young graduates (48 women and 35 men), supported through dedicated coaching and digital monitoring via the Kohar Aiki platform. These initiatives strengthened equitable access to professional opportunities, promoted gender inclusion, and enhanced skills development, contributing to a more youth-responsive and professionalized internship ecosystem within the UN system in Niger.*

7.4 Challenges, opportunities and a way forward

The findings show that, while important efforts are underway across the UN system to strengthen pathways for young talent and improve internship opportunities, some major gaps remain.

At the UN entity level, greater attention is needed to strengthen policies and strategies that support workforce rejuvenation. While many UN entities reported scaling programmes and initiatives, fewer reported strengthening the institutional policy frameworks needed to sustain long-term change. Advancing workforce rejuvenation will require a stronger focus on reviewing recruitment, career development and retention policies to ensure that young talent can enter, develop and thrive within the UN system.

Greater policy coherence is needed across the UN system, particularly in relation to human resource policies that shape youth access to employment and career progression. Progress is often hindered by policy constraints that can unintentionally limit opportunities for young people to enter and remain within the UN workforce. These challenges are particularly evident in ongoing discussions on United Nations Secretariat human resource policies, where barriers such as the "break in service" requirement continue to affect pathways from internships to employment. Addressing such constraints – while promoting greater coherence across recruitment, internship and talent management policies – will be essential to creating more accessible and equitable opportunities for young professionals across the UN system.

At the same time, implementation is taking place in an increasingly complex institutional context. Financial constraints across the UN system have resulted in hiring freezes, delayed recruitment processes and post reductions, reducing opportunities to recruit external candidates into entry-level positions even where vacancies exist. Within the UN Secretariat, these constraints have also limited the placement of successfully rostered candidates under the Young Professionals Programme, while fewer career development opportunities have constrained progression prospects for younger staff. In parallel, the ongoing UN80 Initiative is driving significant organizational reforms across the UN system, contributing to a period of institutional change and adaptation. Together, these factors have made workforce rejuvenation more challenging and underscore the importance of ensuring that efforts to attract, recruit and retain young talent remain a priority throughout this period of transition.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Despite these challenges, important opportunities for reform are emerging. The Secretary-General's proposals for human resources management reforms, particularly on recruiting and retaining young talent and internship programmes in the UN Secretariat, provide an important opportunity to modernize entry pathways for young people into the Organization, remove longstanding policy barriers and strengthen the UN's ability to attract and retain the next generation of talent. If adopted by Member States, these reforms could significantly strengthen efforts to build a more diverse, inclusive and multigenerational workforce.

Did you know?

The UN Secretary-General has proposed reforms to strengthen internships and pathways for recruiting and retaining young talent in the UN Secretariat

In 2023, the General Assembly adopted resolution 77/278, requesting the Secretary-General to undertake a comprehensive review of two key areas related to human resource management within the UN Secretariat: (a) the internship programme and (b) workforce rejuvenation and strengthened pathways for recruiting and retaining young talent. The Secretary-General's recommendations in both areas are currently under consideration by Member States.

A. Reforming the UN Secretariat internship programme

The Secretary-General's report *Review of the United Nations Secretariat Internship Programme* (A/79/566/Add.1), presented in October 2024, proposes reforms to improve the value, accessibility and sustainability of internships within the UN Secretariat.

The report includes three recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly:

1. Take note of the proposed approach to restructuring the internship programme with the aim of improving its value and sustainability.
2. Approve the removal of the current restriction ("break in service"), which prevents interns from applying for or being appointed to positions in the Professional, higher and Field Service categories (at the FS-6 and FS-7 levels) for six months following the expiration date of an internship.
3. Approve the principle of a centrally funded and managed financial support scheme.

The report was considered by the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly in March 2025. Consideration of the matter was deferred to the March 2026 session, when Member States again postponed further consideration.

B. Recruiting and retaining young talent in the UN Secretariat

In November 2025, a Comprehensive Approach to Recruiting and Retaining Young Talent was presented as an annex to the Secretary-General's report on *Implementation of Human Resources Management Reforms: Outlook for 2026–2029* (A/80/550). The proposal responds to General Assembly resolution 77/278 and aims to address workforce aging, strengthen talent pipelines, improve geographical representation and ensure that the United Nations is equipped with the skills needed for the future.

The annex highlights that young people aged 18–35 represent only 10% of Secretariat staff positions, despite constituting more than 20% of the broader workforce. It reviews existing entry pathways –including the Young Professionals Programme (YPP), Junior Professional Officer Programme, internships, and UN Volunteers – and identifies challenges affecting recruitment and retention of young talent, including low application rates from underrepresented and non-represented Member States, limited career progression opportunities, fragmented programme management and insufficient alignment with strategic workforce needs.

The Secretary-General invites the General Assembly to:

1. Take note of the proposed comprehensive approach to the recruitment and retention of young talent.
2. Approve the expansion of the scope of posts eligible for the YPP (to include selected non-geographical posts with sustained long-term funding).
3. Approve the extension of the validity of YPP rosters from three to four years, while lowering the maximum age eligibility for participation in the YPP from 32 to 30 years.
4. Approve the review of staff at the P-2 level who are applying for posts at the P-3 level and meet the relevant requirements before any other candidates, with the exception of staff affected by downsizing.
5. Request the Secretary-General to provide an update on efforts to implement the comprehensive approach at the 82nd session of the General Assembly in 2027-2028.

The proposal was considered by the General Assembly in March 2026; however, consideration was also deferred to a later date.

Building a younger, more diverse and future-ready UN workforce will require action at multiple levels of the system.

At the entity level, priority should be given to strengthening institutional policy frameworks that support workforce rejuvenation. This includes addressing policy barriers where possible, including through Member State consideration of proposed reforms to United Nations Secretariat policies, reviewing and strengthening policy frameworks within non-Secretariat entities and scaling programmes and initiatives that have demonstrated success in attracting, recruiting and retaining young talent across the system.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

At the country level, UNCTs should continue to emphasize innovation and system-wide collaboration. The Business Operations Strategy and its plan provide an important platform for developing common approaches to internships, sharing recruitment practices and strengthening pathways for young professionals across UN entities operating in the same country.

Across the wider UN system, greater investment in documenting, sharing and scaling successful practices will be essential. Enhanced knowledge exchange and learning across UN entities and UNCTs can help accelerate workforce rejuvenation, improve policy coherence and ensure that successful innovations are adopted more widely as Youth2030 Phase 2 progresses.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations



8.
Strategic Priority 6: Strengthening accountability systems for working with and for youth

Strategic Priority 6 focuses on strengthening system-wide accountability by integrating the youth agenda into UN coordination and leadership mechanisms, improving the tracking of investments and results and reinforcing ongoing efforts to strengthen accountability for working with and for young people across the UN system. It provides the institutional foundation for measuring progress and driving continuous improvement in Youth2030 implementation.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

8.1 System-wide overview of progress

Strengthening UN system-wide accountability for working with and for youth is essential to ensuring that commitments under Youth2030 translate into measurable progress and meaningful outcomes at all levels. This includes integrating the youth agenda into UN coordination and leadership mechanisms, improving the tracking of investments and results, and reinforcing institutional mechanisms that promote accountability, transparency and continuous improvement in implementing the UN Youth Strategy. It builds on and further strengthens existing accountability instruments and approaches, including those developed during the first phase of Youth2030 (2018–2024).

To understand ongoing efforts in this area, UN entities and UNCTs were invited to self-report on a series of questions covering two main areas: (a) internal capacities and coherence to advance youth-related efforts within the UN system and (b) strategies and mechanisms to strengthen accountability and transparency in working with and for youth.

Overall, findings indicate that the UN system has continued to strengthen the institutional foundations required for accountability in working with and for youth. Progress is evident in dedicated capacities, coordination mechanisms, leadership engagement and the integration of youth priorities into planning, monitoring, and reporting frameworks.

However, gaps remain in ensuring that these efforts are consistently resourced, sustained and embedded across organizational planning, operational and decision-making processes so that commitments under Youth2030 translate into coordinated implementation and measurable results across the system. Variations also persist in leadership engagement, dedicated staffing, and the systematic integration of youth priorities into budgeting and institutional management systems, limiting the ability to consistently translate commitments into measurable results.

Therefore, the UN system should continue strengthening institutional capacities while embedding accountability for youth more systematically across governance, planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting processes. Sustained leadership commitment, stronger coordination, dedicated resources and improved accountability systems will be essential to accelerate implementation of Youth2030.

8.2 Internal capacities and coherence to advance youth-related efforts within the UN system

A. Internal capacities

A core component of Strategic Priority 6 is strengthening the institutional capacities required to advance youth-related work across the UN system. This includes ensuring dedicated personnel, building staff capacities, establishing internal coordination mechanisms and creating institutional arrangements that enable coherent and sustained implementation of Youth2030.

At the global level, 90% (45/50) of UN entities reported efforts to strengthen internal capacities for advancing youth-related work across their organizations in 2025. Among them, 86% (43/50) reported having personnel dedicated to youth-related

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

work. Of these, 77% (33/43) reported the availability of part-time personnel, while 74% (32/43) had full-time personnel dedicated to advancing the youth agenda. In addition, 19% (8/43) reported access to rosters of external experts to provide surge capacity, and 9% (4/43) identified other forms of personnel support, including academic staff and scholars providing pro bono research support, as well as personnel dedicated to children's participation who also contributed to youth-related activities.

Whereas these findings demonstrate that most UN entities have some form of dedicated human resources to advance the youth agenda, 14% (7/50) reported having no personnel specifically dedicated to youth-related work. Dedicated human resources are a prerequisite for implementing the UN's commitments to work with and for youth. Although this gap may reflect a range of constraints, including limited financial resources, challenges also remain among entities with dedicated personnel in ensuring sustainable and consistent support for youth-related efforts.

UN entities also highlighted the reliance on part-time focal points managing youth-related work alongside other substantive responsibilities, project-based and time-bound funding arrangements, and high staff turnover as factors that can affect continuity, institutional memory and the systematic mainstreaming of youth priorities. Together, these findings underscore the need for continued efforts to ensure that all UN entities have the dedicated and sustainable capacity required to advance the implementation of Youth2030 across the system.

Building staff capacities on working with and for youth is essential to advancing and mainstreaming youth-related work within UN entities and across the system. In 2025, 66% (33/50) of UN entities reported undertaking efforts in this area. Among these, 97% (32/33) strengthened capacities for meaningful youth engagement, while 79% (26/33) focused on youth policy and programming. Ensuring that all personnel – not only those directly responsible for the youth portfolio – are equipped with the knowledge and skills to advance youth-related work is critical to embedding the youth agenda across the UN system. While findings indicate that capacity-building efforts are underway, they also highlight the need for continued and more dedicated attention to strengthening staff capacities on youth-related issues.

Beyond dedicated personnel and capacity-building, effective internal coordination is essential to ensure coherent implementation of youth-related work across the system. In 2025, 72% (36/50) of UN entities reported having internal coordination and information-sharing mechanisms in place. This question was specifically directed to UN entities with multiple offices worldwide to assess how they coordinate youth-related efforts across their organizational structures. The presence of such mechanisms is critical to ensuring that youth-related expertise, approaches, and lessons learned are shared across offices and teams, reducing fragmentation and supporting more consistent integration of youth priorities across organizational structures.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations
@GlobalModelUN

EXAMPLE:

- *International Organization for Migration (IOM): In 2025, IOM strengthened the coherence of its youth-related efforts through its Youth Focal Point Network, bringing together staff from headquarters, regional offices and country offices working on youth-related programming across areas including migration governance, climate change, peacebuilding and sustainable development. The network provided a structured platform for information exchange, peer learning and coordination, supporting alignment of youth initiatives with the UN Youth Strategy and IOM's institutional priorities. Through the network, youth engagement approaches, tools, and good practices were shared across regions and technical units, promoting more consistent standards for meaningful youth participation and strengthening the integration of youth perspectives into programme design, policy dialogue, and reporting. As a result, the network enhanced the consistency and quality of youth engagement approaches across operations, strengthened institutional learning, and supported the more systematic youth mainstreaming across sectors and regions.*

Although progress is encouraging, important capacity gaps remain. Some 14% of UN entities reported having no dedicated personnel for youth-related work, while many continue to rely on part-time focal points, project-based funding and temporary staffing arrangements. These constraints affect continuity, institutional memory and the systematic mainstreaming of youth priorities. Staff capacity-building also remains uneven, highlighting the need to ensure that youth-related competencies extend beyond specialist staff to the wider workforce.

B. Coherence and coordination of youth efforts

Beyond strengthening capacities within individual entities, Strategic Priority 6 also focuses on improving coherence across the UN system by promoting coordinated approaches, strengthening inter-agency collaboration and ensuring that youth priorities are systematically integrated into technical and leadership decision-making structures.

At the global level, 86% (43/50) of UN entities reported having taken action to ensure coherence of youth efforts in 2025. Among them, 86% (43/50) reported having engaged at the technical level in inter-agency coordination mechanisms on youth issues (e.g. networks, working groups or other structures around issue-based, thematic or system-wide areas).

Similarly, at the country level, 88% (116/132) of UNCTs reported that their technical coordination mechanisms included a focus on youth in 2025 – an increase from 71% (94/132) in 2024. Common approaches included dedicated inter-agency youth coordination groups or thematic working groups, as well as integrating youth as a standing agenda item within existing coordination mechanisms, particularly those focused on gender equality, human rights and leaving no one behind. Meanwhile, 71% (94/132) reported that youth efforts in their country team aligned with system-wide strategies and coordination efforts at regional and/or global levels.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

These findings highlight that leveraging inter-agency coordination mechanisms is increasingly being embedded within existing UNCT structures and part of UN entities' modus operandi to advance youth-related work. This type of coordination supports the coherence of youth efforts across the system, rather than having them addressed through isolated initiatives. It provides a stronger foundation for collective action and accountability at all levels. However, continued efforts are needed within UNCTs to ensure that these mechanisms are consistently linked to broader system-wide strategies and decision-making processes.

EXAMPLE:

- *UNCT Colombia: In 2025, the UNCT Colombia strengthened the coherence of its youth-related efforts through its Results Groups, which undertook joint planning from the beginning of the year to implement the Cooperation Framework through coordinated workplans. These workplans prioritized population-based approaches, with youth identified as a cross-cutting priority, reflected in the Cooperation Framework's results structure through dedicated outputs that brought together complementary actions across UN entities. In addition, the UNCT maintained an Inter-Agency Youth Group, co-led by UNICEF and UNFPA, with participation from UN entities across the country team and a joint workplan to strengthen coordination and accountability. The Group also developed tools to enhance coherence, including a Youth Marker, to guide the design, implementation and monitoring of actions promoting youth inclusion across the UNCT's joint programme portfolio.*
- *UNCT Bosnia and Herzegovina: To strengthen the coherence of youth-related efforts, the UNCT in Bosnia and Herzegovina established the Youth Empowerment Group (YEG), an inter-agency coordination mechanism co-chaired by UNFPA and IOM. Bringing together designated representatives from all UN entities, YEG provides a platform for regular coordination, ensuring that youth priorities are systematically integrated across the UNCT's technical coordination mechanisms and programming. The Group meets monthly to align activities, share information, and coordinate youth-related initiatives across entities. To support coherent implementation, YEG developed inter-agency tools including the UNCT Youth Strategy 2023–2025, Guidance for Meaningful Youth Participation, and protocols governing engagement with the Youth Advisory Board, establishing common standards for planning, participation, transparency, and accountability.*

Leadership engagement and political commitments at the highest level of the Organization are pivotal to enhancing coherence for youth efforts and advancing the youth agenda. It helps elevate youth priorities beyond technical coordination, strengthening institutional ownership and increasing the likelihood that work on youth informs strategic decision-making, resource allocation and organizational priorities. In 2025, 52% (26/50) of UN entities reported having ensured entity leadership participation in inter-agency decision-making structures that systematically integrate youth issues; whereas 67% (88/132) of UNCTs reported that leadership and decision-making structures in the UNCT included a focus on youth. This suggests that while youth-related work is increasingly reaching leadership and decision-making spaces, further efforts are needed to ensure that senior leadership engagement becomes a consistent feature of institutional governance across the UN system.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

These findings demonstrate that the UN system has continued to strengthen the institutional foundations needed to advance youth-related efforts, including through dedicated personnel, internal coordination mechanisms, staff capacity-building and inter-agency structures.

Nevertheless, opportunities remain to further strengthen system-wide coherence. Not all UNCTs reported alignment with regional and global coordination efforts, while leadership engagement remains inconsistent across organizations. Strengthening the connection between technical coordination mechanisms and senior leadership decision-making processes will be critical for sustaining institutional ownership and ensuring that youth priorities consistently inform strategic planning and resource allocation.

8.3 Strategies and mechanisms to strengthen accountability and transparency in working with and for youth

An effective accountability system requires mechanisms that systematically track progress, strengthen transparency and ensure that institutional commitments translate into measurable results. Strategic Priority 6 therefore also focuses on integrating youth priorities into organizational planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting processes while strengthening accountability across all levels of the UN system.

In 2025, 98% (49/50) of UN entities reported that their key strategic frameworks align with Youth2030. Among these, 94% (47/50) reported alignment through their Strategic Plans (or equivalent), 16% (8/50) through multi-year funding frameworks, and 8% (4/50) through other mechanisms, including peacekeeping policy, guidance and operational activities.

Additionally, 98% (49/50) of UN entities reported including youth-related actions in at least one key annual planning or reporting instrument in 2025. Specifically, 86% (43/50) reported integrating actions on youth into annual workplans, while the same proportion reported their inclusion in annual reports. However, only 54% (27/50) reported integrating youth-related actions into annual budgets, an area explored in greater depth in chapter 6 – Strategic Priority 4: Unlocking resources for the youth agenda across the UN. Overall, 52% (26/50) of UN entities reported including youth-related actions across all three areas: annual workplans, annual reports and annual budgets.

While important progress has been made, ensuring that actions on youth are systematically reflected across planning, reporting and budgeting frameworks remains essential to strengthen accountability, enhance transparency and translate commitments into measurable results across all areas of the UN 's mandate.

Among UN entities that reported integrating actions on youth into their annual workplans, the specific actions highlighted included:

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

UN entity inclusion of actions on youth in annual workplans in 2025		
Annual plans	**Percentage**	**Proportion**
Programme plan(s)	86%	43/50
Communications plan(s)	62%	31/50
Human Resources plan(s)	56%	28/50
Partnerships plan(s)	44%	22/50
Senior Management Compacts (at the leadership level)	22%	11/50

These results point to stronger institutionalization of youth priorities in programme planning than in organizational management functions. While youth actions are widely integrated into programme and communications plans, they are less consistently reflected in partnerships, human resources and senior leadership performance frameworks. Expanding integration across these areas would help embed account-ability for working with and for youth more systematically throughout organizational planning and management processes.

At the country level, 100% (132/132) of UNCTs reported undertaking at least one action to integrate youth priorities into planning, implementation and reporting frameworks in 2025. Among them, 97% (128/132) reported integrating youth actions into UNCT Annual Results Reports, while 92% (122/132) and 91% (120/132) respectively reported their inclusion in UN Cooperation Frameworks (or equivalent) and Common Country Analyses (CCAs). These findings demonstrate that youth priorities are increasingly reflected in the strategic frameworks that guide UNCT planning and reporting processes.

Needing further strengthening, however, is the integration of youth priorities into operational and resource-related frameworks. When asked about the inclusion of youth-related actions in Joint Work Plans, including funding allocated and expenditure on youth priorities during Cooperation Framework implementation, 68% (90/132) of UNCTs reported doing so. More in-depth analysis of this result is provided in chapter 6 – Strategic Priority 4: Unlocking resources for the youth agenda across the UN. Similarly, 41% (54/132) of UNCTs reported integrating youth actions into the Business Operations Strategy and its related plans, which serve as key human resource management frameworks at the UNCT level. Further analysis of this result is provided in chapter 7 – Strategic Priority 5: Transforming the UN workforce and organizational culture.

This highlights that, while youth priorities are increasingly reflected in strategic planning and coordination processes, they are less consistently embedded in the operational systems that guide implementation across UNCTs. Strengthening

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

the integration of youth priorities into Joint Work Plans and Business Operations Strategies would help ensure that institutional commitments are translated into coordinated implementation, operational planning, resource allocation and organizational practices. This would further strengthen accountability by connecting strategic commitments with day-to-day implementation across the UN system.

Overall, the findings highlight that the UN system has established and continues to strengthen institutional foundations to advance accountability for working with and for youth. UN entities and UNCTs reported efforts across dedicated capacities, coordination mechanisms, leadership engagement and accountability tools to support the implementation of Youth2030.

Despite these positive developments, important gaps remain in institutionalizing accountability across all management systems. Youth priorities are less consistently reflected in annual budgets, partnerships plans, human resources plans and senior management performance frameworks than in programme planning documents. This suggests that while youth priorities are increasingly mainstreamed in programme delivery, they are not yet systematically embedded across organizational management and resource allocation processes.

Further efforts are therefore needed to ensure that these mechanisms are consistently embedded across planning, operational and decision-making processes, enabling commitments to work with and for youth to translate into sustained, system-wide implementation, stronger institutional accountability and measurable results.

8.4 Challenges, opportunities and a way forward

Findings under Strategic Priority 6 demonstrate that the UN system has continued to strengthen the institutional foundations needed to advance accountability for working with and for youth. Across UN entities and UNCTs, progress is evident in strengthening dedicated capacities, coordination mechanisms, leadership engagement and the integration of youth priorities into strategic planning and reporting frameworks. Together, these efforts contribute to a more coherent and accountable approach to implementing Youth2030 across the UN system.

The findings, however, also highlight opportunities to further institutionalize the youth agenda. While youth priorities are increasingly reflected in strategic frameworks and coordination mechanisms, they are less consistently embedded across operational systems, management processes and accountability mechanisms. Ensuring that youth as a priority is systematically integrated into planning, budgeting, human resources, monitoring and reporting processes will be essential to translating institutional commitments into sustained implementation and measurable results.

Continued investment in dedicated institutional capacities also remains critical. Although most UN entities reported having personnel dedicated to youth-related work, many highlighted challenges related to reliance on part-time focal points, project-based funding arrangements and staff turnover, which can affect continuity and the systematic mainstreaming of youth priorities. Sustaining dedicated capacities, strengthening staff knowledge and skills, and reinforcing internal coordination

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

mechanisms will remain important to ensuring that youth engagement is embedded as a shared institutional responsibility across all levels.

Strengthening accountability for working with and for youth will therefore require continued leadership commitment and system-wide collaboration. Embedding youth priorities across organizational policies, decision-making processes and accountability frameworks will help ensure that commitments under Youth2030 are consistently translated into coordinated action, greater transparency, institutional learning and improved results for and with youth across the UN system.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations



9.
A Way Forward

The findings of the sixth *Youth2030 Progress Report* – the first year of implementation of Youth2030 Phase 2 – provide compelling evidence that the UN system is transitioning from laying foundations to accelerating implementation. Building on the progress achieved during Phase 1, implementation advanced significantly across both UN entities and UNCTs in 2025, reflecting growing system-wide commitment to working with and for young people. The priority now is to sustain this momentum and increase ambition towards 2030.

The UN system must continue to place meaningful youth participation in policymaking and decision-making processes at the heart of Youth2030 implementation. It needs to move from ad hoc engagements towards institutionalizing meaningful youth participation through stronger policies, governance arrangements and dedicated financial resources. The Core Principles for Meaningful Youth Participation in Intergovernmental Processes and Across the Work of the United Nations provide a common framework for supporting this transition, helping embed young people's voices throughout the full cycle of the UN's work – from policy development and programme implementation to governance, monitoring and accountability.

Strengthening institutional capacities for intergenerational collaboration should remain a priority. Sustaining momentum in translating intergovernmental and governmental commitments into action will require stronger implementation support to boost SDG implementation with and for youth by embedding youth priorities systematically throughout the full SDG implementation cycle – from planning and financing to implementation, monitoring, evaluation and accountability –while recognizing young people as indispensable partners in accelerating sustainable development.

Investments in knowledge and capacities for working with and for youth will be essential to sustaining progress and enabling governments, youth organizations and other stakeholders to design and implement more effective, evidence-based youth-responsive policies and programmes for SDG acceleration. Continued investment in data, knowledge-sharing and learning systems will be essential to measuring outcomes, documenting impact and continuously strengthening implementation.

Unlocking resources for the youth agenda across the UN and beyond remains one of the main gaps in Youth2030 implementation. Accelerating implementation will require stronger investment in youth priorities alongside improved financing systems. The proposed Global Youth Investment Platform, together with the rollout of the UN Youth Marker, provides an important opportunity to mobilize additional public and private resources, strengthen investment tracking and improve accountability for financing with and for young people. Strengthened youth-responsive financing strategies and expanded partnerships with governments, international financial institutions, the private sector, philanthropic organizations and youth-led organizations will be key.

Accelerating workforce transformation across the UN system is equally important. Sustained commitment both from UN entities and UNCTs will be required to attract, recruit and retain young talent, as well as to expand fair, equitable and high-quality internship opportunities at all levels, including for young people from developing countries.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Finally, strengthening accountability should remain central to Phase 2 implementation. Continued refinement of the Youth2030 Phase 2 Scorecards, improved tracking of investments and results, stronger leadership accountability and better measurement of outcomes will enable the United Nations to demonstrate impact, strengthen learning and continuously improve implementation.

Across all these areas, Youth2030 provides a unique opportunity to scale successful approaches in working with and for youth across the UN system through peer learning, Communities of Practice and South–South and triangular cooperation.

As the international community enters the final years of the 2030 Agenda, Youth2030 provides a coherent system-wide framework to ensure that young people are not only beneficiaries of sustainable development but also indispensable partners in building a more peaceful, inclusive and sustainable future for all.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations
@GlobalModelUN

Annex I

Youth2030 Phase II Reporting and Analysis

Building on Youth2030 Scorecards ↗ used during 2018 to 2024, the Youth2030 Joint Working Group developed Youth2030 Phase 2 Scorecards (2025-2030) to support the implementation and performance measurement of Youth2030, the United Nations Youth Strategy, and its Phase 2 Results Framework.

The Phase 2 scorecards assess the extent to which United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) and United Nations entities are accelerating efforts towards advancing meaningful youth engagement and ensuring that all young people are empowered to shape the policies and decisions that affect their lives and the world around them.

Data Sources and Coverage

The assessment draws on self-reported data submitted through two reporting platforms:

- **UNINFO - UN SDG Information Management System (IMS)** survey for United Nations Country Teams
- **Youth2030 Entities Scorecard Reporting System (ESRS)** for United Nations entities

The reporting exercise in this report (chapters 1-9) covered activities implemented during the **2025 reporting year** (from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025). For UNCTs, data collection took place between **1 November and 31 December 2025**, followed by a quality assurance period until 30 January 2026. For UN entities, data collection took place between **13 February 2026 and 31 March 2026**, followed by a quality assurance period until 30 April 2026.

Total number of reporting entities is as follows:	
UN Country Teams	132
UN entities	50

Assessment Framework

The Phase 2 scorecards assess performance across four sections that include eight Key Performance Areas (KPAs) linked to the outcomes and outputs of Youth2030 Phase 2. Each KPA consists of one or more scored indicators, and some qualitative questions designed to capture additional details, including concrete examples of implementation experiences. Qualitative responses are not incorporated into scoring results but provide contextual information to support interpretation of results.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Section #	Section name	Key Performance Areas (KPAs)	UNCT scored questions	UNCT qualitative questions	UN entities scored questions	UN entities qualitative
I	Youth-inclusive SDG/NDG acceleration	1. Strengthen efforts to accelerate SDGs/NDGs with and for youth	3	3	2 (optional)	3
		2. Advance youth-inclusive UN programmes for SDG/NDG impact	1	2	1 (optional)	2
II	Youth empowerment and engagement	3. Build knowledge and capacities for youth-inclusive SDG/ NDG acceleration	3	1	4 (optional)	4
		4. Promote advocacy, outreach, and communication with and for youth	1	1	1 (optional)	1
III	UN workforce transformation	5. Support young talent (≤35 years) across the UN + 6. Enhance UN internship programmes	2	1	2	2
IV	Accountability, transparency, and coherence of UN youth efforts	7. Improve coherence of youth efforts in the UN	1	1	2	4
		8. Ensure accountability and transparency in UN work with and for youth	5	6	5	7
Total			16	15	17	23

Optional Indicators

Some indicators in the UN entity scorecard are designated as optional to reflect the diversity of mandates across entities. Results for optional indicators are calculated using only the subset of reporting entities that decided to provide responses. As a result, denominators for optional indicators may differ from the total reporting population.

Meaningful youth participation

Indicators on meaningful youth participation have been highlighted in reporting snapshots to support and advance efforts to strengthen work with youth. Data reflected are intended to encourage further actions to ensure young people are meaningfully engaged in the work of the UN, in alignment with Youth2030 and commitments under the Pact of the Future.

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Scoring methodology

Performance scores uses a traffic-light system rating scale consisting of **Green**, **Yellow**, and **Red**.

● At milestone ● Moving forward ● Getting ready

Aggregation of results

For global results, the percentages obtained by individual reporting entities are aggregated across all reporting entities in the reporting group (UNCTs or UN entities) to calculate the overall proportion of green, yellow and red scores.

For regional analyses and snapshots, the same methodology is applied, but calculations are limited to reporting entities within the relevant Development Coordination Office geographic region.

Quality assurance and limitations

The assessment is based on self-reported information submitted by participating UNCTs and UN entities. To promote consistency and accuracy of reporting, submissions underwent a review process coordinated by the Youth2030 Secretariat.

During the reporting and quality assurance period, the Secretariat reviewed submitted responses and engaged directly with reporting entities to seek clarification, resolve inconsistencies and correct identified data issues where necessary.

While the review process strengthens data quality, findings remain subject to limitations associated with self-reported information, including differences in interpretation of reporting requirements and variations in the availability of supporting evidence across reporting entities.

Comparability between phases

It should be noted that Phase 2 scores are not directly comparable to Phase 1 scores, as the focus areas, framework and scoring criteria were revised. Accordingly, assessments should be interpreted using the relevant Youth 2030 Scorecard applicable to the reporting period under review (2018–2024 for Phase 1 and 2025–2030 for Phase 2).

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations
@GlobalModelUN

Annex II

List of contributing UN entities

	Acronym	Entity	UN reporting body
1	DCO	Development Coordination Office	UN Secretariat
2	DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs	UN Secretariat
3	DGC	Department of Global Communications	UN Secretariat
4	DMSPC	Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance	UN Secretariat
5	DPO	Department of Peace Operations	UN Secretariat
6	DPPA	Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs	UN Secretariat
7	ECE	Economic Commission for Europe	ECOSOC, UN Secretariat
8	ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	ECOSOC, UN Secretariat
9	ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	ECOSOC, UN Secretariat
10	ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia	ECOSOC, UN Secretariat
11	FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	ECOSOC
12	IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development	ECOSOC
13	ILO	International Labour Organization	ECOSOC
14	IOM	International Organization for Migration	General Assembly
15	ITC	International Trade Centre	General Assembly, ECOSOC
16	ITU	International Telecommunication Union	ECOSOC
17	OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	UN Secretariat
18	OCT	Office of Counter-Terrorism	UN Secretariat
19	ODA	Office for Disarmament Affairs	UN Secretariat
20	OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	UN Secretariat
21	OHRLLS	Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States	UN Secretariat
22	SRSG-VAC	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children	UN Secretariat
23	UNAOC	United Nations Alliance of Civilizations	UN Secretariat
24	UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification	Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD
25	UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund	General Assembly, ECOSOC
26	UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	General Assembly, ECOSOC
27	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme	General Assembly, ECOSOC
28	UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction	UN Secretariat
29	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme	General Assembly, ECOSOC
30	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	ECOSOC
31	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund	General Assembly, ECOSOC
32	UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme	General Assembly, ECOSOC
33	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund	General Assembly, ECOSOC
34	UNICRI	United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute	ECOSOC
35	UNIDIR	United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research	General Assembly, ECOSOC
36	UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization	ECOSOC
37	UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research	General Assembly, ECOSOC
38	UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	UN Secretariat
39	UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services	General Assembly, ECOSOC
40	UNOSSC	United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation	UNDP and High-Level Committee on South-South Cooperation (subsidiary body of General Assembly)
41	UNSSC	United Nations System Staff College	Other and related entities
42	UNTB	United Nations Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries	General Assembly
43	UN Tourism	World Tourism Organization	General Assembly
44	UNU	United Nations University	General Assembly
45	UNV	United Nations Volunteers	General Assembly, ECOSOC
46	UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women	General Assembly, ECOSOC
47	UNYO	United Nations Youth Office	UN Secretariat
48	WHO	World Health Organization	ECOSOC
49	WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization	ECOSOC
50	WMO	World Meteorological Organization	ECOSOC

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Annex III

List of contributing UN Country Teams [a, b]

	Africa (54)	Arab States (10)	Asia-Pacific (25)	Europe and Central Asia (18)	Latin America and the Caribbean (25)
UN Country Teams	Algeria Angola Benin Botswana Burkina Faso Burundi Cabo Verde Cameroon Central African Republic Chad Comoros Congo Côte d'Ivoire Democratic Republic of the Congo Djibouti Egypt Equatorial Guinea Eritrea Eswatini Ethiopia Gabon Gambia Ghana Guinea Guinea-Bissau Kenya Lesotho Liberia Libya Madagascar Malawi Mali Mauritania Mauritius Morocco Mozambique Namibia Niger Nigeria Rwanda Sao Tome and Principe Senegal Seychelles Sierra Leone Somalia South Africa South Sudan Sudan Togo Tunisia Uganda United Republic of Tanzania Zambia Zimbabwe	Bahrain Iraq Jordan Kuwait Lebanon Saudi Arabia State of Palestine Syrian Arab Republic United Arab Emirates Yemen	Afghanistan Bangladesh Bhutan Cambodia China Democratic People's Republic of Korea Fiji India Indonesia Iran (Islamic Republic of) Lao People's Democratic Republic Malaysia Maldives Micronesia Mongolia Myanmar Nepal Pakistan Papua New Guinea Philippines Samoa Sri Lanka Thailand Timor-Leste Viet Nam	Albania Armenia Azerbaijan Belarus Bosnia and Herzegovina Georgia Kazakhstan Kosovo[c] Kyrgyzstan Montenegro North Macedonia Republic of Moldova Serbia Tajikistan Türkiye Turkmenistan Ukraine Uzbekistan	Argentina Barbados Belize Bolivia (Plurinational State of) Brazil Chile Colombia Costa Rica Cuba Dominican Republic Ecuador El Salvador Guatemala Guyana Haiti Honduras Jamaica Mexico Panama Paraguay Peru Suriname Trinidad and Tobago Uruguay Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

a. The list of Resident Coordinators of United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) provided by the United Nations Development Coordination Office is available at: https://un-dco.org/meet-resident-coordinators.

b. The list of UNCT multi-country offices is available at: https://unsdg.un.org/un-in-action/country-level?tab=mco-listing.

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

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Annex IV

Youth2030 High-level Steering Committee

January–December 2025

☐ UN entity ☐ Youth network

Entity	Youth2030 High-level Steering Committee	Youth2030 Technical Leadership Team (Joint Working Group)
UN Youth Office	Felipe **Paullier** Assistant Secretary-General, Youth Affairs, Head of the UN Youth Office & Chair of the High-level Steering Committee	Sudha **Balakrishnan** (Chair) Elizeu **Chaves Jr.**, Godfrey **Alumai**, Bianca **Herzog**, Tomas **Malik**, Finlay **Batts**, Reese **Medina**
DCO	Oscar **Fernández-Taranco** Assistant Secretary-General, Development Coordination Office	Katarina L. **Kuai**, Janine Theresa **Chase**
DESA	Navid **Hanif** Assistant Secretary-General, Economic Development	Nicola **Shepherd**
DMSPC	Martha Helena **Lopez** Assistant Secretary-General, Human Resources	Ahmed **Toraif**
DPPA	Elisabeth **Spehar** Assistant Secretary-General, Peacebuilding Support	Paul **Fargues**, Carole **Rozumek**
ICMYO	Titi Maya **Ghale** Youth Representative	Jonathan **Pagel**, Kinga **Szalaba**
IOM	Ugochi **Daniels** Deputy Director-General, Operations	Amira **Nassim**, Neha **Sinha**
MGCY	Sameh **Kamel** Youth Representative	Yugratna **Srivastava**
OHCHR	Ilze **Brands Kehris** Assistant Secretary-General, Human Rights	Daria **Kosheleva**
UNAIDS	Christine **Stegling** Deputy Executive Director for Policy, Advocacy and Knowledge	Alicia **Sanchez**
UNDP	Marcos **Neto** Assistant Secretary-General & Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support	Pauline **Deneufbourg**, Kiri **Ginnerup**, Giulia **Jacovella**
UNESCO	Gabriela **Ramos** Assistant Director-General, Social and Human Sciences	Kristina **Balalovska**, Maria **Kypriotou**, Souria **Saad-Zoi**
UNFPA	Diene **Keita** Deputy Executive Director for Programmes	Cecile **Mazzacurati**, Danielle **Engel**, Joao **Scarperlini**, Rewan **Youssif**, Virpi **Mesiäislehto**
UN-Habitat	Michal **Mlynár** Assistant Secretary-General & Deputy Executive Director	Douglas **Ragan**, Gonzalo **Ruiz Fernández**
UNICEF	Not applicable	Fabio **Friscia**
UNIDO	Gunther **Beger** Managing Director of the Directorate of SDG Innovation and Economic Transformation (IET)	Denise **Zwiauer**, Dagmar **Díaz Costanti**, Juan Pablo **Davila**, Stefan **Kratszch**, Virpi Stucki, Yala **Hivernon**
UNODC	Candice **Welsch** Director of the Division for Policy Analysis and Public Affairs	Kirsty **Rancier**, Paloma **Munne**
UN-Women	Nyaradzayi **Gumbonzvanda** Deputy Executive Director, Normative Support, System Coordination, and Programme Results	Ritah **Muyambo**
WHO	Not Applicable	Valentina **Baltag**, Wole **Ameyan**
Young UN	Hannah-Sophie **Wahle** Programme Analyst	Kamila **Karimova**

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Annex V

UN System Coordination and Accountability Section/ Youth2030 Secretariat

United Nations Youth Office

January – December 2025

UN System Coordination and Accountability Section / Youth2030 Secretariat

Sudha **Balakrishnan**, Chief of the UN System Coordination and Accountability Section

Godfrey **Alumai**, Programme Management Officer

Bianca Liu **Herzog**, Programme Management Officer

Finlay **Batts**, Associate Coordination Officer

Reese **Medina**, Associate Programme Management Officer

Tomas **Malik**, Data Analyst

Acknowledging the support from:

Christina **O'Shaughnessy** (Editor/proofreader)

Ronald **Baumann** (Designer)

Fama Tombong **Saidy** (Intern)

Vanessa Santini **Gomes** (Intern)

Ester **Carneiro** (Intern)

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Annex VI

Youth2030: Progress Report 2026 | Contributors and reviewers

Entity	Youth2030 High-level Steering Committee	Youth2030 Technical Leadership Team (Joint Working Group)
DCO	Janine Theresa **Chase**, Bianca Jinete, Elena **Todorova**	Joerg **Schimmel**
DESA	Isabelle **Legare**, Odile Laetitia **Metso**, Samantha **Savarese**, Nicola **Sheperd**, Kohei **Yamada**	Masumi **Ono**, Nicola **Sheperd**
DGC	Krystal **Fruscella**, Robert Lawrence **Skinner**	Robert Lawrence **Skinner**
DMSPC	Ahmed **Toraif**	Chidinma **Ogbuehi**
DPO	Lucrezia **Lesa**, Tamasha Mkimbo **Mpyisi-White**	Brenda **Ammeraal**, Tamasha Mkimbo **Mpyisi-White**
DPPA	Zachary Colin **Lavengood**, Carole Monika **Rozumek**	Rebecca **Feeley**
ECE	Sara **Johansson**, Michael **Kunz**, Elise **Zerrath**	Michael **Kunz**
ECLAC	Raquel **Santos García**, Daniel **Trucco**	Daniela **Trucco**
ESCAP	Sabine **Henning**, Marco **Roncarati**	Sabine **Henning**
ESCWA	Naeem **Al-Mutawake**, Oussama **Safa**	Oussama **Safa**
FAO	DallaValle **Francesa**, Lauren **Philips**	Peter **Wobst**
IFAD	Antao **Rahul**, Nana **Otabil**	Antao **Rahul**
ILO	Curcio **Chiara**, Susana **Puerto Gonzalez**	Sara **Elder**, Susana **Puerto Gonzalez**
IOM	Achieul **Dhieu**, Achuiel Dhieu **Kueth**	John **Fahy**
ITC	Mayara **Louzada Alarcao Sobral**, Aissata **Tambadou**	Mayara **Louzada Alarcao Sobral**
ITU	Dunola **Mgbachi**	Slyvia Ahrens **Poll**
OCHA	Christopher **Gerlach**, Ghulam **Ghous**, Ibrahim **Jalal**	Josephine Charlotte **Guerrero**
OCT	Fernando **Cavalcante**, Sylvia **Kabaki**	Sian **Hutchinson**
ODA	Saana **Annala**	Soo Hyun **Kim**
OHCHR	Yasamin **Kashfi**	Imma **Guerras Delgado**
OHRLLS	Yuki **Matsuoka**, Sithembile Hillary **Siziba**	May **Yaacoub**
SRSG-VAC	Luisa **Sotomayor**, Masue **Suzuki**	Pablo **Espiniella**
UNAOC	Alessandro **Girola**, Dana **Podmolikova**	Alessandro **Girola**
UNCCD	Malwina **Buldys**, Marcos **Montoiro-Allue**	Marco **Montoiro-Allue**

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

UNCDF	Faten **Bokri**, Anna **De Hostos**, Arianna **Gasparri**, Serena **Gonfiantini**, Laura **Munoz Pérez**, Edoardo **Tancioni**	Faten **Bokri**, Marjolaine **Coté**, Serena **Gonfiantini**, Manik **Marasinghe**
UNCTAD	Arlette **Verploegh Chabot**, Zarja **Vojta**	Arlette **Verploegh Chabot**
UNDP	Pauline **Deneufbourg**	Giulia **Jacovella**
UNDRR	Tiina Johanna **Mylly**	Marlene **Grundstrom**
UNEP	Marianna **Osipova**	Sam **Barratt**
UNESCO	Maria **Kypriotou**, Souria **Saad-Zoi**	Souria **Saad-Zoi**
UNFPA	Rewan **Youssif**	Emilie **Flimer-Wilson**, Cecile **Mazzacurati**
UN-Habitat	Shamoy **Hajare**, Simon Peter Okoth **Otieno**	Shamoy **Haraje**
UNICEF	Anne-Marie **Akiki**, Fabio **Friscia**	Anne-Marie **Akiki**, Marcy **Levy**
UNICRI	Matthew **Burnett Stuart**, Giordana **Lucente**, Alice **Roberti**, Leif **Villadsen**	Leif **Villadsen**
UNIDIR	Renata **Hessmann Dalaqua**, Maliha **Khan**, Aleksandra **Lankamer**	Maliha **Khan**
UNIDO	Denise **Zwiauer**	Juan Pablo **Davila**
UNITAR	Roxana **Gomezvalle**, Katinka **Koke**, Svenja **Vollmer**	Katinka **Koke**
UNODC	Kirsty **Rancier**	Monica **Belalcazar**
UNOPS	Seema **Gaikwad**, Marie Constanze **Peschke**, Obinuju **Osude**, Peris **Waruguru Wambugu**	Ataol **Oktem**
UNOSSC	Ragini **Malik**, Dingding **Sun**	Dingding **Sun**
UNSSC	Michela **Berta**	Silke **Weinlich**
UNTB	Burcu **Morel**	Federica Irene **Falomi**
UN Tourism	Lucy **Garner**	Igor **Stefanovic**, Lucy **Garner**
UNU	Nicolas **du Bois**	Nicolas **du Bois**
UNV	Hae Yeon **Jeong**	Naoual **Driourich**
UN-Women	Ritah **Muyambo**, Vivek **Rai**	Vivek **Rai**
UNYO	Matthew **Hunter**, Tomas **Malik**	Elizeu **De Oliveira Chaves Jr**
WHO	Valentina **Baltag**	Wole **Ameyan**
WIPO	Nadine **Hakizimana**, Nahal **Zebarjadi**	Todd **Reves**
WMO	Theophilus **Wellington**	Josefina **Bunge**, Theophilus **Wellington**

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations

United Nations

United Nations Youth Office
801 1st Avenue – New York, NY – 10017

July 2026

For further information: youth2030@un.org

wfuna
World Federation of United Nations Associations