

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Youth Engagement Action Plan 2022-2025



UNDRR

UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

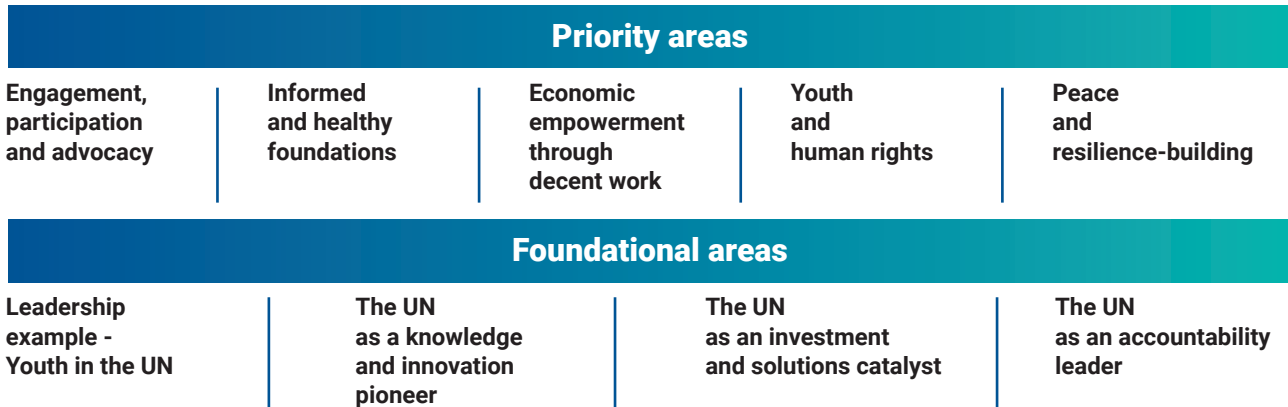
1. BACKGROUND

Why this Action Plan 2022-2025?

Today, youth demographics comprise 1.8 billion of the global population (approximately 23 per cent), of which an estimated 90 per cent live in developing countries. Recognizing the critical importance of engaging youth in discussions and decision-making about our common future, in 2018 the UN Secretary-General presented an ambitious system-wide strategy to guide the United Nations and its

partners to work meaningfully with and for young people around the world. [Youth2030](#) is the first-ever UN system-wide strategy on youth and guides joint UN action for and with young people globally across the three pillars of the UN system: human rights, peace and security, and development, as well as in all its humanitarian endeavours.

The strategy has two broad components:



Youth2030 has five priority areas:

- 1 Engagement, Participation and Advocacy - Amplify youth voices for the promotion of a peaceful, just and sustainable world
- 2 Informed and Healthy Foundations - Support young people's greater access to quality education and health services
- 3 Economic Empowerment through Decent Work - Support young people's greater access to decent work and productive employment
- 4 Youth and Human Rights – Protect and promote the rights of young people and support their civic and political engagement
- 5 Peace and Resilience Building – Support young people as catalysts for Peace and Security & Humanitarian Action

The UN Secretary-General tasked his Envoy on Youth, in conjunction with the UN system and youth themselves, to lead the development of a UN Youth Strategy. Today, the Youth Strategy implementation engages with 33 UN Entities and 130 UN Country Teams.

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) developed a 2020-21 Youth Engagement Action Plan that outlined UNDRR's work with youth and relevant partners in support of the implementation of Youth2030. The UNDRR Youth Action Plan thereby responds directly to [the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030](#) (henceforth Sendai Framework) which states that: "...disaster risk reduction requires an all-of-society engagement and partnership... gender, age, disability and cultural perspectives should be integrated in all policies

and practices, and women and youth leadership should be promoted". The Sendai Framework also calls on governments to engage with children and youth in the "design and implementation of policies, plans and standards" and underlines that "children and youth are agents of change and should be given the space and modalities to contribute to disaster risk reduction in accordance with legislation, national practice and education curricula".

Guided by this 2020-2021 Action Plan, UNDRR has strengthened its engagement with youth across all regions and workstreams, through the building of new partnerships with youth organizations and groups; implementation of advocacy campaigns; and roll-out of targeted training sessions. As a result, UNDRR now reaches thousands of youth representatives across the globe, accelerating a global youth movement in support of risk reduction and the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

Building on [progress made against the 2020-2021 Action Plan](#), and aligned with [UNDRR's new Strategic Framework 2022-2025 and Biennial Work Programme 2022-2023](#), the 2022-25 Action Plan outlines how UNDRR will continue to work hand-in-hand with youth and relevant partners to further implement Youth2030 in support of the Sendai Framework and risk-informed development. The [Words into Action Guideline on Children and Youth Engagement in Sendai Framework implementation](#) guidelines launched in 2019, and partnerships with organizations such as the MGCY, UNICEF, UN Women and youth-focused civil society groups, will provide the basis for action and leadership.

What is the goal of the Youth Engagement Action Plan 2022-2025?

Increase and catalyse engagement and action of youth in risk reduction and prevention for sustainable development at global, regional, national and local levels.

What are the expected results and impact of the UNDRR Youth Engagement Action Plan 2022-2025?

Expected results are:

- 1 Youth are engaged as experts and innovators in Sendai Framework implementation processes, including the Global and Regional Platforms for DRR, as well as the work on the Mid-Term Review of the Sendai Framework (MTR SF), and key intergovernmental bodies such as the ECOSOC, including especially the Youth Forum, Financing for Development Forum and ECOSOC High-level Political Forum, and General Assembly, including the High-level Week that opens each session and climate COPs as well as related regional processes.
- 2 DRR Youth partners promote and infuse DRR knowledge and engagement within their peer groups, including the broader UN Youth groups as well as Youth at local and national levels as and where possible.

The expected overall impact of the UNDRR Youth Engagement Action Plan 2022-25 is that DRR and prevention action across the globe reflect youth concerns and priorities.

What is the underlying Theory of Change (TOC)?

Youth make up the largest population group today and are more exposed to growing disaster risk than any other group. As seen in youth movements, such as the Friday for Futures initiative, youth are powerful and resourceful agents of change. Engaging with, equipping and supporting Youth to advocate in an organized and impactful way with global leaders and in their communities can lead to more effective DRR policies and efforts, as well as all-of-society mobilisation. Engaging youth will also help hold Member States accountable to their commitments to the next generation and accelerate change.

Working through the Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY) and other global and regional youth groups, the TOC builds on the following understanding of progress:

- a Enhance awareness, knowledge and capacity of youth on DRR
- b Work with youth to develop targeted advocacy and communication messages and strategies
- c Enable and facilitate youth engagement in key DRR and resilience related policy processes and practice.

What constitutes the Action Plan 2022-2025?

Aligned with the TOC and in continuation of the work started under the 2020-2021 Action Plan, UNDRR supports youth to achieve three mutually reinforcing result areas.

Result Area 1	Result Area 2	Result Area 3
Youth capacity and risk knowledge enhanced	Youth empowered to drive innovation and novel risk communication	Youth engagement in GP22 and MTR as well as other DRR-related policy processes and activities supported

2. GOALS BY RESULT AREA

Result Area 1: Youth capacity and risk knowledge enhanced

In a world with rapidly increasing disaster risk, many young people have already experienced the impact of inaction on disaster risk reduction and prevention. Aligned with the heightened political attention to resilience, particularly related to climate change and health risks, youth are eager to enhance their understanding of DRR and share this knowledge with their peers and communities to bring about systemic, transformative change.

Result Area 1 will focus on awareness raising and capacity building of youth on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction and their linkages to sustainable development, including building DRR literacy of youth through scientific and educational institutions and initiatives. Aligned with Youth2030, this will include driving change and accelerate action on DRR and the SDGs. through data and

evidence, resources and tools development. Initiatives and communication tools to engage youth in DRR advocacy such as the [Prevention Save Lives campaign](#) launched in 2021 will help address development challenges for youth, in particular skills and opportunities for youth to reach their full potential as a driving force for supporting development and contributing to peace and security. A key event to bring together youth across the globe will be a Youth Conference on DRR in late 2022/early 2023 by UNDRR's partner MGCY, in collaboration with other global and regional youth groups and relevant partners.

For details of the activities and sub-activities in 2022-2023 see Annex I.

The expected impact of Result Area 1 is:

- Enhanced awareness, capacity and knowledge among youth on DRR and climate change and the SDGs through tools, trainings and knowledge products.
- Youth engagement in DRR incentivized and “community feeling strengthened” through leveraging channels and contacts, especially at scientific and higher

education institutions, to get more young people involved in DRR.

- Increased engagement of young scientists in DRR initiatives through GAR, GRAF, R-STAGs and the MTR SF.

Result Area 2:

Youth empowered to drive innovative DRR communication

Over the past years, a rapidly changing risk landscape and related human and economic losses reiterated the need for more and better communication and advocacy on climate change, disaster risk reduction and sustainable development. The importance to enhance communication and engagement, not only with but also between youth groups and between youth and other stakeholder groups, has thereby been a key element of regional and global policy processes, including the UNDRR Regional Platforms and [the 2021 UN Climate Change Conference \(COP26\)](#).

Aligned with Youth2030 focus on innovating for and with youth, Result Area 2 will be achieved by leveraging youth interest, energy and capacities to change the risk narrative. UNDRR will work with its partners to enable broader advocacy within youth groups as well as with governments, other stakeholder groups and the wider public to accelerate advocacy efforts and risk communication on DRR and CCA as key elements for resilient, sustainable development. Events such as the International Day for DRR

(13 October) and Tsunami Awareness Day (5 November), as well as UNDRR websites, social media channels, media partners (including International Broadcasting Union (IBU) and other communication tools will present critical communication opportunities, supported and expanded by targeted webinars, policy briefs and other knowledge products.

The expected impact of Result Area 2 is:

- Youth are enabled to lead targeted advocacy and communication on DRR, CCA and sustainable development.
- Regular exchanges, higher visibility and recognition of the various global and regional DRR Youth groups activities, both internally (among members) and externally, with youth groups engaged in policy processes on climate and development.
- Accelerated leadership and organizational culture for meaningful youth engagement in DRR.

Result Area 3:

Youth DRR engaged in policy processes and practice

Strengthening the engagement of youth in policy and decision-making related to risk reduction is a critical element of inclusive development. Youth engagement must thereby be increased, from representing their stakeholder group to acting as experts and innovators to help the international community find new ways of doing business in the face of increasing risks and disasters.

In support of this, a key deliverable for 2022-2023 will be the participation of youth in the MTR SF processes and the Global Platform and the Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on DRR in 2022. Similarly, UNDRR will explore opportunities for youth mobilization and engagement in UNDRR-led initiatives such as MCR2030 and ARISE.

Looking at the broader policy arena related to DRR, UNDRR and its partners will also continue to enhance youth voices and participation in key international and regional policy processes such as the High-level Political Forum (HLPF), ECOSOC Financing for Development Forum and Youth Forum, and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP), thereby shaping global policy consensus, and national and local policy decisions. At the global level, engagement will

be mainly channelled through the UNDRR Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism (SEM), which facilitates open, structured and coordinated collaboration among stakeholder groups to support the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

The expected impact of Result 3 is:

- Youth voices systematically included in key DRR and resilience related events and processes. This includes enhanced advocacy, communication and stakeholder mobilization on youth, DRR and SDGs through the participation by youth and recognition of youth considerations in GP22 and the MTR SF, and contribution to the 2023 Mid-Term-Review High-Level Meeting (HLM).
- Youth engaged in regional strategy implementation and product development and youth concerns reflected in UN strategic plans and cooperation frameworks, coordination architecture and capacities related to Youth2030 and the Sendai Framework.
- Strengthened global governance, technical leadership and system-wide coordination, including engagement of youth in the Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism (SEM).

How will the Action Plan 2022-2025 be implemented?

UNDRR supports and harnesses the energy and motivation of youth to find solutions to better reduce and prevent risks and participate in policy and practice development for enhanced resilience. UNDRR does this by working hand-in-hand with youth representatives and networks to build their capacity through tools, information and spaces

for advocacy, through which youth can take their own innovative actions and influence their peers, families, communities and ultimately policy-makers and nations. Aligned with the UNDRR Biennial Work Programme 2022-2023, activities for the first implementation period (2022-2023) are included in the Activities table (Annex I).



Key Partners

UNDRR will continue to work with youth-led groups. A key partner remains the **Major Group on Children and Youth (MGCY)** and its Youth DRR Working Group (DRR WG). The MGCY is the UN's official mechanism for channelling youth participation in sustainable development.ⁱ The DRR WG was established during the Sendai Framework negotiation process and was one of the first MGCY WGs. It comprises several regional sub-groups. The UNDRR Partnerships Branch will coordinate the implementation of this new Action Plan, closely coordinating with key partners.ⁱⁱ

In addition to the MGCY, UNDRR will continue and expand its engagement with **targeted regional youth groups**, including the Arab States Youth Group, Africa Youth Advisory Board for DRR (AYAB, hosted in the African Union), the Youth Committee for the Americas and the Caribbean and U-Inspire in Asia.

Furthermore, UNDRR will work with **UN agencies and other organizations leading the engagement with Children and Youth**; building on previous collaboration with the UN Special Envoy on Youth, the UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD) and UNICEF, as well as UN Women, UNFPA, UNESCO and civil society organizations such as Save The Children. On the latter, the SEM will play a major role in ensuring the voices of youth and community leaders are heard.

How will the results of the Action Plan 2022-2025 activities be monitored?

Progress against the Action Plan will be monitored through annual reporting, including tracking anecdotal evidence of the impact of this work. Progress on implementation of this Action Plan will also be provided to the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth through the UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD), the Secretary-General's Report on the implementation of the Sendai Framework, the UNDRR Annual Report and the UNDRR

website. Last but not least, youth networks engaged in this Action Plan are encouraged to register and report their commitments and achievements through the Sendai Framework Voluntary Commitments Mechanism. Building on the progress review, the activities of the Youth Action Plan for 2024-2025 will be determined in 2023.

ⁱ Since the first United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 - known as the Earth Summit, it was recognized that achieving sustainable development would require the active participation of all sectors of society and all types of people. Agenda21, adopted at the Earth Summit, drew upon this sentiment and formalized nine sectors of society as the main channels through which broad participation would be facilitated in UN activities related to sustainable development. These are officially called "Major Groups". Two decades after the Earth Summit, the importance of effectively engaging these nine sectors of society was reaffirmed by the Rio+20 Conference. Its outcome document "The Future We Want" highlights the role that Major Groups can play in pursuing sustainable societies for future generations. In addition, governments invited other stakeholders, including local communities, volunteers and foundations, migrants and families, as well as older persons and persons with disabilities, to participate in UN processes related to sustainable development, which can be done through close collaboration with the Major Groups. Major Groups and other stakeholders (MGoS) continue to demonstrate a high level of engagement with intergovernmental processes at the UN. The coordination of their input to intergovernmental processes on sustainable development has been led by UNDESA/Division for Sustainable Development (DSD). Member States ultimately decide upon the modalities of participation of MGoS. Thus, the engagement and participation of MGoS in intergovernmental processes related to sustainable development varies depending on the particular sustainable development topic under discussion.

ⁱⁱ There is no universally agreed international definition of youth. For statistical purposes the United Nations Secretariat defines 'youth' as persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. This is the target group for this Action Plan. However, as the MGCY works with youth up to the age of 30, this Action Plan covers Youth from 15-30 years old.



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