

# Working with... Youth



## Why

Youth stand at the frontline of disaster risk and are often particularly vulnerable to disasters.<sup>i</sup> They must also be key stakeholders in reducing risk and building resilience. Youth currently comprise the largest generation in history and their mobilization is influencing public opinion and increasing pressure on decision makers. Through engaging with, equipping and supporting youth to advocate in an organized and impactful way to global leaders and their communities for better disaster risk reduction efforts, we can mobilize the most populous voice for change.

Out of the total global population, 1.2 billion people (16%) are between the ages of 15-24 and the majority live in developing countries. In the 47 least developed countries, the youth population is projected to increase by 62% over the next three decades, rising from 207 million in 2019 to 336 million in 2050.<sup>ii</sup>

## What and How

UNDRR works hand-in-hand with youth to implement the UN Youth Strategy in support of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (Sendai Framework) and in alignment with the UNDRR Strategic Framework 2016-2021, its Work Programme 2020-21 and the UNDRR Partnership and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.

UNDRR supports youth to achieve three results:

### 1. Youth capacity built:

- a. **Build** youth capacity to engage in DRR through co-developing trainings and **co-deploying knowledge products**, including through training of trainer programmes.
- b. **Develop** webinars for youth to share knowledge products such as **Global and Regional Assessment Reports, the Global Risk Assessment Framework and risk mappings**.
- c. The **Words into Action Guideline on Children and Youth Engagement in Sendai Framework implementation** will include a dynamic multimedia version
- d. **Engage with higher learning institutions** to develop youth DRR knowledge, encourage youth engagement in DRR and to foster a new generation of DRR professionals





*“We’re fighting as if our lives depend on it. Because they do. We want to know, if you’ll fight too.”*

Victoria, age 16

## 2. Youth empowered to drive innovation:

- a. **Provide opportunities for youth at the **Global and Regional Platforms for DRR**** to exchange information and experiences and to build new initiatives and partnerships with Member States and other stakeholders.
- b. **Facilitate** open, structured and coordinated collaboration through the **UNDRR Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism (SEM)**,
- c. **Facilitate** intergenerational exchanges with science and private sector groups, including through the Integrated Research Disaster Risk Science 2020 Conference.
- d. **Ensure** Youth have a seat on the Board for key campaigns, e.g. **the Making Cities Resilient Campaign**.

## 3. Youth DRR advocacy supported:

- a. **Youth participation will promote coherence** across key international agreements (Sendai Framework, Agenda 2030, Paris Agreement, Agenda for Humanity, Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the New Urban Agenda).
- b. The distinct MGCY DRR WG consistently champions DRR through the MGCY mechanism.
- c. In coordination with the SEM, Youth representatives will engage in key events such as the High-Level Political Forum and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change annual Conference of the Parties, shaping global policy consensus, national and local policy decisions.
- d. Ensure youth is heard by decision-makers: in Asia, youth opinions are captured through a survey and online consultation to inform regional deliberations on DRR to influence the Regional DRR Platform and national governments’ commitments on Sendai Implementation. In Africa, the DRR WG is institutionalized in the African Union through the Youth Advisory Board, giving youth a formal mechanism to influence DRR policy design, implementation, monitoring and review.

## Who we are coordinating with:

UNDRR works primarily with youth through the Major Group on Children and Youth (MGCY) DRR Working Group (DRR WG). The MGCY is the UN’s official mechanism for channeling their participation in sustainable development. The DRR WG was established during the Sendai Framework negotiation process and was one of the first MGCY WGs. We also work with the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth, UNICEF, UN-Women and the Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development.

i Mudavanhu, C., Manyena, S.B., Collins, A.E. et al. Taking Children’s Voices in Disaster Risk Reduction a Step Forward. *Int J Disaster Risk Sci* 6, 267–281 (2015) doi:10.1007/s13753-015-0060-7

ii International Youth Day 12 August 2019 - Ten Key Messages; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs; 2018; [https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2019/08/WYP2019\\_10-Key-Messages\\_GZ\\_8AUG19.pdf](https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2019/08/WYP2019_10-Key-Messages_GZ_8AUG19.pdf)