



# MEANINGFUL INCLUSION OF YOUTH: A PROMISING FUTURE

Report by the Youth Sounding Board  
Consultations for the Youth Action Plan





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## ABOUT THE REPORT

### Young people can be effective change makers and problem solvers of many of society's pressing problems.

As the ones who will be around to see and feel the long-term effects of policy decisions, it is only right that they are given real and substantial opportunities to meaningfully participate, to be heard, and to be given a seat at the decision-making table.

Young people face innumerable and diverse barriers to participation. They experience struggles across the board, in the fields of education, economic empowerment, climate change, peace and security, governance, and human rights. Young people are very diverse. The solutions to the issues they face must take into consideration that diversity through nuancing.

The Report was prepared by the Youth Sounding Board for EU International Partnerships (YSB) from October to December 2021, based on their consultations in the context of the upcoming Youth Action Plan (YAP) in EU external action. In this report, young people from around the world voice their opinions, share thoughts about the challenges they face, and discuss their solutions and efforts to make a difference.

The report aims to cover all the consultations and provide a comprehensive albeit non-exhaustive narrative, of the shared struggles. It proceeds to propose solutions that are not only effective but are also gathered directly from the affected sectors.

To ensure that the report can be as comprehensive as possible, the Youth Sounding Board came up with five subgroups divided along thematic areas.

1. Governance and Human Rights
2. Climate Justice and Environmental Action
3. Peace, Security and Humanitarian Action
4. Economic Empowerment through Education and Skills
5. Health and Well-Being

The information presented in this report is the consolidated result of each subgroup's grounded and comprehensive consultations with youth, youth-led organizations, and youth-focused organizations as well as subject-matter experts from over 50 countries of diverse distribution. Through key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and online survey forms available in at least six different languages, the Youth Sounding Board was able to connect with young people and come up with a list of issues most relevant to youth. Desk research was undertaken to complement the data gathered in the interviews, consultations, and survey forms in finding patterns and surfacing statistics relating to the concerns gathered ultimately determining whether the issues raised are common issues across several countries or regions. In doing so, the inherent limitation of having only consulted a small group of stakeholders was overcome.



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Cover illustration by Nayla Pariamachi, Peru

## ABOUT THE YOUTH SOUNDING BOARD

### THE YOUTH SOUNDING BOARD FOR EU INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS (YSB)

is a group of twenty-five youth leaders and young visionaries committed to amplifying the voices of youth from around the world. The YSB is mandated to advise the European Commissioner for International Partnerships **Jutta Urpilainen** and the European Commission's Directorate General for International Partnerships (**DG INTPA**) on how to make EU external action more relevant and effective for youth. In pursuit of this goal, the YSB draws strength from its diversity of geography, diverse advocacy and activism background, gender and sexual orientation, religion, and unique experiences as members of marginalized or underserved communities or sectors and persons with disabilities.

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# A MESSAGE TO THE YOUTH FROM THE YSB

## THE PROMISE

*by Gilberto Morishaw*

I see a land far away in the distance, where the mist goes to hide.  
A land where a thousand murmurs whisper with the sound of the tides.

I see a place, where the truth has kissed the face of grace.  
Where darkness was not too shy to be guided away from the depths of lies  
Into the lightening gaze of the truth.  
Unconcealing.

I see a world. A world where young voices coalesce together to reach a tumultuous thundering.  
Shattering and shaking the foundations of the old order.  
Igniting the hearts of millions.

I see a land, hand in hand standing up for justice.  
I see a place day by day committing itself to change.  
I see a world. More and more pulling into the future.

So boldly and brightly shining with the light of a thousand suns.  
Unstoppable, indivisible in its glorious pursuit of a dream  
Pushing us forward in progress to be

United, in purpose.  
United, in freedom  
United, by choice.  
United, one voice.

Our stories are different, yet united towards change.  
We'll rise up for justice, the course we'll maintain.  
Boldly in courage, towards hope, no despair.  
We are walking, we are moving, soon we'll get there.  
We'll get there.

# A MESSAGE TO THE OLDER GENERATION FROM THE YSB

## WHAT WOULD YOU TELL YOUR YOUNGER SELF?

*by Benjie Allen Aquino, Omnia El Omrani, and Christina Williams*

Dear older generation,

If you were given the chance to go back in time and talk to your younger self, what would you say?

Would you tell them to dream big and fight for their dreams and aspirations? Would you tell them to simply keep moving forward despite the challenges faced? Seeing the state of the world today, would you tell them to advocate for equity, diversity, and inclusion?

While it may no longer be possible to go back in time to incite and inspire your younger self to act, know that there are millions of young people today who need to hear those inspiring messages you would have wanted to tell yourself.

There are millions of capable and driven young people today that can and want to make a difference. Put faith in them. Invite them to dialogues your younger self would have never been invited to. Allow them access to opportunities your younger self has been denied. Hear them out and listen to them as much as you would have wanted your younger self to have been heard out and listened to.

As the generation that would be impacted most by the decisions made today, we need the decision-making table to be reoriented to ensure meaningful and sustainable engagement and inclusion of our voices, perspectives and effort - as equal stakeholders at a global, regional and national level. We cannot be "add-ons" to adult-led initiatives. Instead, we need formal participatory mechanisms, not only for our integrated participation, but also for the emergence of youth-led solutions and their implementation.

We invite you to work together with us to create a healthier, sustainable and prospering world that places the health of the current and future generations at the center.

Let us build back better, greener, and healthier - together. Another world is possible.

Have you thought about what you'd want to tell your younger self now? Take that message and tell that to the young people around you. They need it.

Sincerely,  
The Youth Sounding Board for EU International Partnerships



# GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Girls, young women, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, asexual and allies (LGBTQIA+) youth are subjected to discrimination and oppression that, in turn, limits their access to social services and makes them more susceptible to abuse and human rights violations. Such discrimination and oppression are either embedded in law or are cultural in origin. Young people are also underrepresented in parliaments and formal avenues of political participation due to, among others, age-based restrictions as well as a general lack of knowledge of formal political participation processes. In response, youth have been involved in informal participation avenues such as protest actions and external campaigns. However, even such spaces may be unsafe. Suppression of dissent and the crackdown on youth activists threaten youth participation in such informal spaces for participation. Finally, in the context of the current pandemic, vaccine inequality is preventing young people from mobilizing for campaigns and advocacies and is serving as a barrier against access to opportunities abroad, particularly in countries that do not recognize certain vaccine brands as valid vaccines.

## FINDINGS

### THE OPPRESSION OF LGBTQIA+ INDIVIDUALS CONTINUES THROUGH THE CRIMINALIZATION OF HOMOSEXUAL BEHAVIOR AND SOCIETAL AND CULTURAL STIGMA

There are at least 60 countries across the world where homosexual behavior is criminalized. About half of these countries are in Africa. In about 10 countries, homosexuality is punishable by death. Beyond the discriminatory legal framework, even in countries where homosexuality is not illegal or criminal, societal stigma alone against the LGBTQIA+ youth is enough reason for concern. The “cost of coming out” includes homelessness, bullying in educational institutions, and lower wages or reduced prospects for employment or promotion. LGBTQIA+ youth are 120% more likely to experience homelessness. 90% of LGBTQIA+ students have reported being bullied or harassed in



“When I came out as a trans woman to my family, I was physically attacked then told to leave home. I became homeless for a long time, living off donations from friends and university professors. This dependency compelled me to pursue sex work in order to sustain myself.”

**Amber Quiban, Philippines**

school. LGBTQIA+ people are less likely to be hired, are paid less, and are not promoted.<sup>1</sup> While these statistics are based on conditions in the United States, Human Rights Watch and the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing has recognized such a problem to exist worldwide.<sup>2</sup>

### PATRIARCHAL CULTURE LIMITS MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING OF GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN.

Patriarchal culture that persists, especially in rural areas, has created challenges for girls and young women to meaningfully participate in decision-making within their families and communities. In addition, the pandemic exacerbated other challenges even more, such as the risk of violence, which is present not only in regular life settings, but also in digital settings. The risk of child marriage, coupled with the risk of interrupting education prematurely, has also increased during the pandemic. The pandemic also increased the digital gender divide due to the unequal access to the internet and digital tools, especially in rural setting where 39% of people living in rural areas in the United States, for example, lacked access to broadband.<sup>3</sup>

“When I said I wanted to be prime minister, he said to me that girls are too soft for politics. I was told that I was too ambitious and I should consider another career option simply because of my gender.”

**Celeste Chung, Malaysia**



### THERE IS A DISTINCT LACK OF YOUTH REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENTS

Leaders in government usually consist of older people who primarily operate on the concept of tried and tested ideas. According to a report by the United Nations Development Programme, the average age of parliamentarians is 53.<sup>4</sup> Age-based restrictions make it a lot more difficult for the young innovative people to have their voices heard.



“They call us dreamers, that we don’t know what the real world is like. At the same time, when the future is uncertain, they blame us for not thinking big sooner.”

**Stephanie Paliza, Peru**

### THE CRACKDOWN AGAINST YOUTH ACTIVISTS CONTINUES TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT OF FEAR THAT HINDERS YOUTH FROM SAFELY ENGAGING IN INFORMAL SPACES OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Youth activism continues to rise across the world. While these youth movements lobby for a wide range of causes and advocacies, a common risk that youth activists face today is the suppression of dissent either by the State or by private individuals and corporations. Governments across the world have been reported to target student activists and have increased online surveillance of dissenters during the COVID-19 pandemic. Private individuals, on the other hand, file strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs).<sup>5</sup>



"I have received death threats and rape threats for fighting for women's rights. Some of my comrades have also been arrested. Because of this, many young individuals are afraid to speak up."

Sittie, Malaysia



### THERE IS A LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF FORMAL POLITICAL PARTICIPATION PROCESSES

Majority of young people do not understand in totality what it means to be engaged in civic matters or actively participate in their civic duties. They grapple with the complexities of formal political processes and, in effect, are unable to effectively participate. This lack of understanding of how to participate is especially seen among youth minorities such as indigenous peoples, out-of-school youth, and youth in street situations, among others.

### COVID-19 VACCINE INEQUALITY IS HINDERING YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND ACTION

Vaccine inequality is preventing youth from accessing opportunities and attending venues and events where they could otherwise be given a platform to be heard. Unvaccinated young individuals have to deal with movement and travel restrictions. There have also been reports that states are using one's vaccination status to justify non-acceptance of youth delegates and prevent youth activists from mobilizing for protest actions. Further, vaccinated individuals, who have received vaccine brands that other countries refuse to recognize as valid vaccines, are prevented from accessing scholarships and attending conferences abroad which they would otherwise be qualified to attend, in terms of credentials and track record.

<sup>1</sup>Morton, M. H., Samuels, G. M., Dworsky, A., & Patel, S. (2018). Missed opportunities: LGBTQ youth homelessness in America. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

<sup>2</sup>End of Mission Statement by The Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing presents her preliminary findings after her visit to the Republic of France, conducted on 2 – 11 April 2019. Available online: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24475&LangID=E> (Accessed on 28 January 2022).

<sup>3</sup>Federal Communications Commission, Federal Communications Commission. Broadband progress report. Washington, DC: Federal Communications Commission. 2016 Feb.

<sup>4</sup>Power G. Global Parliamentary Report: The changing nature of parliamentary representation. Inter-Parliamentary Union; 2012.

<sup>5</sup>Bueno de Mesquita J, Kapilashrami A, Meier BM. Human rights dimensions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## METHODOLOGY

Consultations and focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with representatives from the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Pakistan, Colombia, United States of America, small island developing states, and several countries in Africa. Survey forms in English and Spanish were rolled out. While the same survey form was available in Uzbek and Urdu, such forms weren't disseminated due to the sensitivity of LGBTQIA+-related conversations in a few countries. To overcome this limitation, key informant interviews were instead held with citizens of Central Asian countries, who are residing outside the region. The concerns gathered from such discussions and surveys were consolidated and distilled into a list of issues which was then used as leads for further desk research. Desk research supplemented the FGDs in finding patterns and surfacing statistics relating to the concerns gathered in obtaining quantitative information. Some of the interviews were conducted through survey forms that collected narrative information women, men and gender non-conforming persons with an age range of 20 - 27 years. A total of 192 individuals were consulted.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**STRENGTHEN AND BROADEN GENDER EQUALITY PROGRAMS** to include LGBTQIA+ focused SOGIE equality programs that promote the following:

- (i) decolonised curriculum, including comprehensive sex education;
- (ii) gender-neutral uniforms in schools;
- (iii) removal of SOGIE-based discriminatory provisions in school handbooks, manuals or policies;
- (iv) scholarships for third-gender students who do not fit in the binary;
- (v) collection of SOGIE aggregated data;
- (vi) provision of emergency shelter for LGBTQIA+ youth; and
- (vii) negotiations with partner countries in relation to decriminalization of homosexual behavior and legalization of marriage equality or same-sex civil unions.

**SUPPORT PARTICIPATION OF GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN** through gender responsive and gender sensitive reform through:

- (i) implementation of gender quotas in events;
- (ii) illegalization of child marriage;
- (iii) requirement of the use of gender lens in all forms and stages of policy analysis.

**SUPPORT THE RULE OF LAW INITIATIVES, ACCESS TO JUSTICE, AND PROTECTION OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION OF YOUTH ACTIVISTS** and call for the immediate release of political prisoners and the dismissal of baseless strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs).

**NEGOTIATE WITH PARTNER COUNTRIES TO ENACT LAW REFORMS** on the lowering of age-related restrictions as regards eligibility to become a member of parliament.

**SUPPORT CAPACITY-BUILDING AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT EDUCATION INITIATIVES**, especially those that are catered to minority groups.

**ADDRESS VACCINE INEQUALITY** that is preventing youth from accessing opportunities and mobilizing for external campaigns and advocacies.

# CLIMATE JUSTICE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

In addressing youth concerns in the area of Climate Justice and Environmental Action, technical and financial support must be made available to the most vulnerable groups based on an interdisciplinary and intersectional matrix. This includes recognition of how populations, based on their gender and sexual orientation, race, age, geographic location, socio-economic background, and intellectual or physical abilities may be adversely affected by climate change. The agenda also has to consider how the health status and choices of transportation affect or is affected by the environment. In addition, focus must be given to ensuring the personal security and safety of climate activists as well as bridging the knowledge gap on matters of environmental sustainability.



"We must include youth in all levels of decision-making. If we don't, our climate talks are thus designed to fail."

**Haya Abushkhaidem, Palestine**

## FINDINGS

### YOUNG CLIMATE ACTIVISTS FACE THREATS TO SECURITY AND SAFETY

There is an increase in threats to safety in all fields of activism. However, this phenomenon appears to have increased exponentially for climate and environmental activists. 2020 was a record year for murders of environmental activists as 227 people were killed. In 2022, Breiner David Cucuñame, a 14-year-old boy, was killed while being on patrol with Indigenous Guard, a non-profit organization based in Colombia, that aims to protect indigenous communities and land. This is a huge threat to young people. Not only is it a tragic attack on the lives of individuals, but it also creates a chilling effect that silences the voices of other activists in fear of political and societal retribution. It has been reported in South America that indigenous communities advancing the preservation of the Amazon are at high risk of being harmed.<sup>8</sup>

Climate activists protest and legally object against extraction projects in vulnerable ecosystem. These projects are often located in areas stewarded by indigenous people. Many of these activists face a hostile environment and deal with counteracting violent measures which discourage continued climate action and exacerbate climate injustice. Not only is biodiversity largely lost due to extraction projects, such as mineral and oil extraction, which exploit the environment, but the underrepresented communities, who bear the most consequences, experience existential threats to their home lands.

### LACK OF ACCESS TO FUNDING PREVENTS YOUNG CLIMATE ACTIVISTS FROM EFFECTIVELY PURSUING THEIR ADVOCACY

Young people are at the frontlines of the climate movement. Movements like Fridays for Future, World's Youth for Climate Justice, Youth 4 Climate, and many others are able to lead larger movements in spite of larger financial barriers. Nevertheless, this is not the norm. Grassroots/local organizations often lack the capacity and institutional solvency to fund climate action initiatives. This makes it harder for communities to effectively adapt and mitigate the worst effects of climate change.

### COVID-19 HAS DISRUPTED CLIMATE ACTION

Although COP26 served to create more momentum for climate action, there is still much more work to be done. Government funding is being invested into traditional polluting industries in order to "rescue" the economy. This modus operandi is short-sighted and destructive, as it does not actually deal with the larger challenges that the world is facing right now. Young people have disproportionately suffered from the consequences of COVID-19. Growing inequality, combined with uncertainty surrounding schooling and the end of the COVID-19 crisis have plugged young people into despair and disillusionment. The worst outcomes of climate change have started to unfold. Climate change is causing a tremendous skill and knowledge gap for youth who can no longer work in the traditional fields because of droughts, floods, stronger hurricanes, and the consequences thereof. The economic uncertainty increases the growing disparity.

### CLIMATE CHANGE IS THE BIGGEST GLOBAL HEALTH THREAT OF THE 21ST CENTURY IMPACTING THE HEALTH OF CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

The accelerating health consequences of climate change are impacting the livability of many spaces, particularly in the Global South. The changing climate has ravaged the health and well-being of billions of people, directly through extreme weather events that cause severe injuries and heat-related deaths. Indirect impacts can also arise from air pollution leading to cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, as nine out of ten people breathe in polluted air worldwide, according to the World Health Organization. Climate change is also shifting our ecosystem, compromising our global food systems and water supply, leading to malnutrition and exacerbating hunger and poverty in developing countries. Such ecological changes also drive the emergence of zoonotic diseases such as Ebola, Avian influenza and now the novel coronavirus, COVID-19. Environmental degradation also increases forced migration and civil conflict between nations due to the increasing scarcity of key resources while at the same time impacting our economies, access to healthcare, social structure and mental health.

### CLIMATE ACTION AND REFORMS RELATED TO TRANSPORTATION GO HAND IN HAND

The United Nations (UN75) Dialogue facilitated by the Global Youth Coalition for Road Safety revealed that there is a distinct lack of prioritization by governments to ensure the safety and sustainability of the current mobility system with a people-centered approach, especially since adolescents and youth are the most impacted by the intersecting crises of climate change and road safety. The dialogue also highlighted the need to break the silos between youth climate and road safety activists and promote a collaborative approach to collectively influence the shaping of healthy, clean, safe and sustainable cities.<sup>9</sup>

"Cars and other vehicles are the largest contributors of harmful greenhouse gasses in our atmosphere. We have trouble not just with safe and accessible mobility, but also with the safety of their environments. We have seen and lived the harsh realities on the ground."

**Maolin Macatangay, Philippines**





## METHODOLOGY

Methodology consisted of desk research and secondary reports that were consulted based on insights received from informal conversations with activists from across the globe on the topics of climate justice (ACP YPN, Global Shapers and secondary reports from international youth organizations.) Specifically, conversations that were held at World's Youth for Climate Justice side-event at COP26 on the 10th of November 2021 with around 20 participants. This event included people from Colombia, the Netherlands, Solomon Islands, Curacao, Nigeria and more. The COP26 side-event Youth and Climate Action organised by European Climate Pact and the Youth Sounding Board also served as a starting point for our desk research because of the attendance of multiple YSB-members who also contributed to this report.

The insight the team gained from those conversations served as insights for further desk research. Reports that we consulted are: The Global Youth Statement on the Conference of Youth from the COY21 and the Global Youth Climate Action Declaration report of 2019. The Climate Justice team formulated its recommendations both based on these reports and on our own lived experiences from across the world (Colombia, Netherlands, Egypt, Brazil and Jamaica).

Additionally, secondary data collected from the International Federation of Medical Students' Association during the United Nations (UN) Climate Change Conference (COP25) and the Global Youth Coalition for Road Safety during the UN 75th Dialogue was utilized. The survey was done by the IFMSA COP16 delegation ten years ago and was distributed in public areas during both weeks of COP25. They received 278 responses. The data analysis of the responses proved a statistically significant increase in non-governmental organizations (5.32/10 in 2019 vs 3.85/10 in 2011;  $p < 0.0001$ ) and Party delegates' (6.04/10 in 2019 vs 4.77/10 in 2011;  $p = 0.0006$ ) views about the importance of health in climate negotiations and outcomes.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS FACE BARRIERS IN COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE** due to their lack of capacity, the threat to their personal safety and a lack of clear, direct structural support that enables their effectiveness. It is imperative that the European Union (EU) commits to invest both technical and financial support for youth who are championing causes of sustainability and climate justice. Special attention should be given to young people or youth-led organizations from the Global South, small island developing states, black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) and LGBTQI+ individuals who are disproportionately facing the impact of a climate crisis that was not initiated by them.



"With the climate crisis, the future frightens me. I don't want to bear children or start a family, or dream long-term because of climate anxiety."

**Iwalani, Tuvalu**

**THE EU MUST ENGENDER INTERSECTIONALITY** and be mindful of issues relating to gender and sexual orientation, health, race, socio-economic background and geographic location as a part of the climate agenda and its decision-making processes. This approach should also act as the framework that the European Commission primarily utilizes to allocate funding and support.

**THE EU MUST PROVIDE SUPPORT TO THOSE WHO HAVE BECOME MAIN TARGETS FOR PERSECUTION**, in response to threats to personal safety. This may entail the mobilization of existing and creation or expansion of networks of human rights defenders to assist in this task which could include making the activists visible.

**THE KNOWLEDGE GAP IN AREAS OF ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY** and interdisciplinary climate action must be bridged. This gap has been exacerbated with the COVID-19 pandemic and the closing of educational institutions.<sup>10</sup>

**THE CLIMATE CRISIS CANNOT BE REMOVED FROM ISSUES OF HEALTH.** The climate crisis is a health crisis. Acting on climate change generates health benefits such as cleaner air, fewer non-communicable diseases and better mental health. Health co-benefits additionally offer strong arguments for transformative change across many priority areas such as adaptation and resilience, energy transition, clean transport and active mobility, food systems, and finance. Moreover, the health sector and health community are trusted and influential - yet often overlooked - climate actors that can enact the needed transformational change to protect people and the planet. Priority must be given to combating climate change as a human health issue and it must include the people who are leading these initiatives within their own countries. Having health as a foundational part of addressing the climate crisis will help quantify the negative externalities that climate action has on the EU neighbourhood's safety.

<sup>7</sup> Fourteen-year-old environmentalist shot dead in Colombia. Available online: <https://english.elpais.com/usa/2022-01-18/fourteen-year-old-environmentalist-shot-dead-in-colombia.html> (Accessed on 28 January 2022).

<sup>8</sup> Rorato AC, Picoli MC, Verstegen JA, Camara G, Silva Bezerra FG, S Escada MI. Environmental Threats over Amazonian Indigenous Lands. *Land*. 2021 Mar;10(3):267.

<sup>9</sup> Global Youth Coalition Members Identify Key Road Safety Issues During the UN75 Dialogue. Available online: <https://claimingourspace.org/blog/global-youth-coalition-members-identify-key-road-safety-issues-during-the-un75-dialogue>. (Accessed: 28 January 2022).

<sup>10</sup> Gasparri G, El Omrani O, Hinton R, Imbago D, Lakhani H, Mohan A, Yeung W, Bustreo F. Children, Adolescents, and Youth Pioneering a Human Rights-Based Approach to Climate Change. *Health and Human Rights*. 2021 Dec;23(2):95.





## PEACE, SECURITY AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Peace, Security and Humanitarian Action are pillars of youth engagement all over the world. Both within the EU and globally, unprecedented numbers of youth organizations dedicate themselves to providing relief to and/or engaging young people in the creation of peaceful and just societies. Youth are, however, facing a number of challenges when they engage in humanitarian assistance and in the promotion of peace and security.

Not only are they underrepresented at the institutional level - in conflict-resolution, security dialogues and in high-level humanitarian decision-making, but they also face challenges at the local level, when providing aid to those in need, especially as regards security. Further challenges are posed by the existing lack of funding that youth organizations face. When coupled with the lack of recognition, these challenges can result in a deadlock, preventing forms of concrete action.

## FINDINGS

### YOUTH WORKING IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION AND YOUTH LIVING IN CONFLICT SETTINGS FACE SECURITY ISSUES

The issue of lack of security was mentioned both by youth organizations working in humanitarian action that don't feel safe and supported by the authorities when carrying out their work and by youth living in conflict settings. Youth groups consulted by the YSB members in Nigeria mentioned threats to safety, activities of armed groups in northeastern Nigeria and brutality from police and other law enforcement agents. They also mentioned how many schools have been closed down due to fear of armed group attacks and how young people are being targeted for recruitment by such groups. As many armed actors are young people, it was reported that security agents also threaten many innocent young people through illegal arrests.

### THERE IS A LACK OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (CSO) NETWORKS AND CROSS-SECTORAL COOPERATION AND COORDINATION

Youth organisations working in humanitarian aid and peacebuilding deal with the lack of cross-NGO support and peer-to-peer learning schemes to upscale their impact and to be integrated in the larger sector. This leads to the proliferation of small projects that could have otherwise been synergized with other projects to create an even bigger impact.



### YOUTH LEADERS LACK INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND RECOGNITION AND EXPERIENCE GATEKEEPING BY ADULTS

Young people interviewed expressed the feeling of exclusion from critical policy conversations. In contexts where security issues are volatile, like Nigeria, there are few elected youth representatives because it is costly to contest for elections due to high cost of nomination forms and campaign costs. Even when the government occasionally organizes youth consultations, elderly people or partisan youth tend to present themselves as youth leaders and thereby deny youth leaders space to express themselves. Lack of young people's inclusion in decision-making can also be expressed in the form of tokenism and exploitation of youth lived experiences by institutions and organizations.

### LACK OF FUNDING, RESOURCES, AND TECHNICAL KNOW-HOW NEGATIVELY AFFECT THE SUSTAINABILITY OF YOUTH-LED HUMANITARIAN WORK

Funding opportunities that target youth organizations are too few or come with too many unrealistic and unachievable conditions. Many of these funding opportunities are also short-term, which limits the project executions to mere quick and unsustainable band-aid solutions instead of encouraging much needed long-term planning. The absence of funding also results in a largely voluntary and unpaid commitment to humanitarian work and peacebuilding, also causing problems of sustainability and long-term effectiveness. This results in many projects being abandoned for the lack of able and willing staff as well as in lack of accountability and reliability within youth organizations. A parallel challenge — youth organizations often lack the skills, the expertise and the knowledge needed to apply for grants or for resource mobilization in general. They equally lack guidance from institutions that fund youth-led projects.

"When our government receives aid from foreign donors after a calamity, we would often only get a portion of what was actually allotted for us. Our government officials steal their share. It's unfair."

Nancy, Country of residence withheld



### CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DISRUPTION ARE PUSH FACTORS FOR MIGRATION

Almost all those consulted reported experiencing at least one extreme climate event in the past five (5) years. From the mentioned events, higher mean temperatures, decrease in rainfall and irregularities in seasons were the most popular. When asked if they would migrate if the extreme events increased in the next few years, 87.3% responded that they would not.

However, when given a scenario where their resident area became uninhabitable due to climate change and environmental degradation, 62.5% responded that they would definitely move out of the country, while 18,8% would only consider leaving the country. The two most popular indicators to pick a new country would be economic opportunities and capital available for the move. The political atmosphere and cultural similarities were also mentioned among important features of a possible host country. Finally, the main reason indicated for possible migration would be the physical dangers of staying in the regions with frequent and severe extreme events.

Among the indigenous groups consulted, there was a very strong preference to stay in their territory, because of heritage, cultural and spiritual connection with their land. However, if they were to migrate, it would be because their means to survive would be endangered (for example: agriculture, fishing, collecting and hunting). Most of them would try to stay near their current residences rather than migrating far away.

## METHODOLOGY

Consultations and focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with representatives from France, Palestine, Nigeria, Brazil, Israel and Commonwealth countries. In-person interviews, remote interviews (phone calls and texts), online consultations and surveys were carried out, with participants aged 18-29.

More specifically, in Nigeria, a consultation was carried out in Yobe, Borno and Adamawa state, with participants of the EU-funded “Nigeria Youth Community Peacebuilding Project”, in Hausa language. In Brazil about 15 different ethnic groups were consulted, ailing from different states, namely- São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Pernambuco, Minas Gerais, Mato Grosso, Amazonas. In total, 90 young people were directly consulted through surveys, focus groups, in-person and remote interviews. However, we estimate that more than 300 young people were consulted indirectly, through an organization’s representative.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### THE FOLLOWING ARE THE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING YOUTH LIVING IN HUMANITARIAN CRISES AND CONFLICT AREAS:

- (i) ensure access to healthcare, especially sexual and reproductive health;
- (ii) ensure access to justice and protection from human rights violations;
- (iii) ensure protection of young activists;
- (iv) technology should continue being leveraged to make education more accessible, impactful, equitable, resilient, inclusive, and adaptable for youth and children in vulnerable situations;
- (v) protect young people and schools from being targeted by armed groups, and harassment of youth by security operatives;
- (vi) advance youth-friendly and youth-oriented funding opportunities targeting youth-led organisations in conflict-prevention efforts, conflict-affected areas and post-conflict scenarios.

### THE FOLLOWING ARE THE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING YOUTH ENGAGED IN PEACE-BUILDING:

- (i) ensure formal youth participation in peace and security processes;
- (ii) promote and advance young people’s role in conflict prevention;
- (iii) promote green peacebuilding (e.g. efforts aimed at building more peaceful relations through environmental cooperation, natural resource management, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction);
- (iv) support the creation of safe physical spaces where the sides can meet, have discussions and bring ideas forward;
- (v) allocate budget to create educational materials, including campaigns against misinformation as well as humanization both or all sides of the conflict;
- (vi) promote participation of international partners to facilitate dialogues and generate spaces that, without external interference or welcome arbiters, would otherwise be unlikely.

### THE FOLLOWING ARE THE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING YOUTH WITH A REFUGEE AND MIGRANTS BACKGROUND:

- (i) protect young migrants against violence;
- (ii) advance educational and labor opportunities for migrant youth;
- (iii) support migrants in access to legal aid;
- (iv) engage with refugee youth and caregivers within refugee camps to jointly co-create and deliver humanitarian responses;

(v) create a paradigm shift in how we approach participation, capacity building and ownership of humanitarian-action programming. This shift requires a focus on support, guidance and investment in youth-, caregiver- and community-led programmes, that acknowledges and makes best use of their knowledge and experience, in addition to creating participation indicators to monitor and evaluate outcomes for continuous improvement.

(vi) vaccination and COVID-19 interventions should be prioritized for refugee and migrant youth and children.



“I get bullied a lot. I get questioned with hostility about my religion and my background. My classmates don’t call me by my name. They call me the “Iraqi guy” the “Iranian guy” or the “Syrian guy.”

**Fakhri, Country of residence withheld**

**TO CHANGE THE PARADIGM AROUND ENVIRONMENTAL-CLIMATE MIGRATION** from the security to the development agenda, it is necessary to invest in mitigation and adaptation measures to, first of all, contain the source of migration. Sometimes this is not possible, as there might be situations when there is no option but to migrate, especially with climate change and its effects. It is necessary then to view migration as an adaptation strategy, not framing it as part of humanitarian agenda, but as a part of development agenda.

### MIGRATION AS AN ADAPTATION STRATEGY SHOULD BE SUPPORTED WITH:

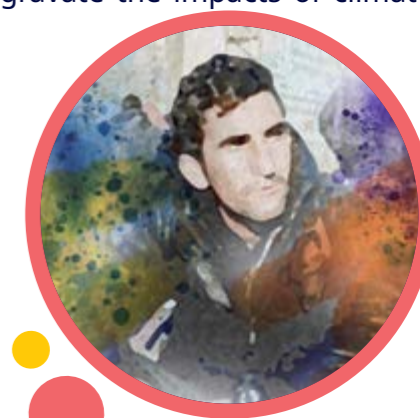
- (i) assistance to plan the displacement, helping the displaced persons and planning how the destined location will accept them;
- (ii) consulting the ones displaced to understand where they would like to go, as it might be easier for the displaced and for the host community if there are cultural similarities between them.

An ad hoc agreement must be discussed and implemented by the international community to facilitate international migration caused by climate change-environmental disruption. The displaced persons must be at the center of the discussions and negotiations.

**INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES SHOULD BE SUPPORTED FINANCIALLY**, since most of them already have projects to mitigate and adapt the impacts of climate change (reforestation projects; sustainable agriculture, known as agroforests; revitalization of water sources). There should be political support as well for these communities, since many of them are threatened by illegal miners, informal settlers or landgrabbers, illegal loggers and ranchers — agents which aggravate the impacts of climate change.

“The armed conflict took everything from me, my friends and my family. I used to dream of being a popular singer. I have the talent but I no longer have the drive. The citizens of the country I took refuge in refuse to recognize me as an equal. It’s like I am no longer human.”

**Caleb, Country of residence withheld**





## ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION AND SKILLS

It is becoming increasingly difficult for young people to achieve financial stability due to the global economic uncertainty and complexities of the modern labour market. The situation is made worse by the fact that the current schooling system and its educational policies are outdated and are on the brink of a collapse. Young people across the globe are finding it increasingly difficult to rely on this outdated and underfunded education system to prepare them for modern jobs and future industries.

The attempts of local governments and international organizations to mitigate these challenges have not made the situation better because their initiatives and policies are not reaching the affected youth. The problems, from how to advertise economically empowering opportunities to what languages should be used to reach different segments of youth, are novel and require a pragmatic approach.

There is a silver lining nonetheless. Young people are more hopeful than ever that they can rise above all these challenges and come out stronger. They are looking towards entrepreneurship and science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) education as promising opportunities.

## FINDINGS

### OUTDATED SCHOOLING SYSTEMS AND EDUCATION POLICIES ARE THE BIGGEST HINDRANCE FOR YOUTH IN THEIR JOURNEY TOWARDS ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

The schooling system and education policies are geared towards traditional industries and jobs and do not address the current socio-economic realities. This outdated approach to education is preventing youth from becoming an integral part of the modern economy. While jobs have transformed and skill requirements have changed, the educational system has largely remained the same.

"I may have physical impairments but my mind is as sharp as any other individual. Still, there are very few prospects for getting employed."

Iverem, South Africa



### MAJORITY OF ECONOMICALLY EMPOWERING OPPORTUNITIES BEING CREATED GLOBALLY ARE NOT REACHING ALL SEGMENTS OF YOUTH

The systems designed for the dissemination of information, especially when it comes to educating youth about economically empowering initiatives, are not working. Lack of awareness regarding the available employment opportunities is a major barrier on the road to financial stability for most young graduates. As most opportunities are advertised through the internet and in English, the unavailability of the internet in underdeveloped countries is putting that demographic at a big disadvantage. The International Trade Center pointed out that only a small fraction of youth are aware about the range of funds and grants available that they can benefit from.

### YOUNG GRADUATES STRUGGLE TO GET EMPLOYED BECAUSE OF UNREALISTIC PRIOR WORKING EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS

Majority of decent and well-paying job opportunities require 4 to 5 years of professional experience, which young graduates do not have. This situation exists because the education system is just not doing its job when it comes to equipping students with important skills that are in demand in the market. Another major reason is that small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the educational institutions are not always aligned regarding required knowledge and skills that have to be taught in schools. This unrealistic prior working experience requirement has also been used to justify slave wages given to entry-level positions as well as unpaid internships.

### EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ARE IN DESPERATE NEED OF FUNDS AND EQUIPMENT

Almost 60% of the respondents stated that they do not have access to good quality education, neither offline nor online. According to the experiences of the majority of respondents, the reason for the poor state and quality of the educational system was the lack of funds the educational institutions have. This shortage of funds has resulted in a failing infrastructure and very low wages for the teachers. For online education, the state of affairs is even worse because the cost of the internet is high, its accessibility is limited and the infrastructure to commence online classes is completely missing. Internet-enabled smartphones and gadgets are also expensive and not subsidized, especially for students from low-income communities.

### THE LOW MINIMUM WAGE IN MOST COUNTRIES DOES NOT ENABLE YOUTH TO PURSUE AMBITIOUS GOALS

Almost 80% of the respondents believed that the minimum wage in their country was not sufficient to lead a comfortable life or provide a cushion to try out their entrepreneurial ideas. This is also a clear indication of people not being able to afford basic amenities, which requires the immediate attention of international organizations and local governments.

### ACCESS TO ECONOMICALLY EMPOWERING OPPORTUNITIES IS HIGHLY SKEWED TOWARDS PEOPLE FROM FINANCIALLY STRONG BACKGROUNDS

The majority of the youth consulted are convinced that young people from low-income communities do not have equal access to opportunities to become financially independent when compared to youth from high-income families. Insights from the consultations with experts and youth organizations show that this disparity exists because youth from well-off families have access to high-speed internet, better schools, connections within the industry and better financial backing, while their counterparts from low-income families do not enjoy such privileges and have to prove themselves in a completely uphill battle.

## LACK OF AWARENESS ABOUT ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE INNOVATION ECONOMY WEAKENS THE ROLE OF YOUTH AS POTENTIALLY STRONG ECONOMIC ACTORS

Most of the youth consulted feel that they need basic education regarding entrepreneurship and how to start their businesses. Another shared sentiment is that the educational institutions need to incline youth towards job creation instead of a job seeking mentality. The lack of mentors and role models in this area also limits their capacity to move forward with their business ideas.

## MAJORITY OF YOUTH IS HOPEFUL AND RESILIENT

One silver lining seen during the consultations and the survey result is that almost 75% of the youth consulted believes that attaining financial stability is possible and well within their reach if the right policies are enacted and implemented.

"I come from a generation of farmers but we are poor. Farmers are poor. I don't want to be a farmer. Many of my friends my age do not see any hope in staying a farmer."

Agung, Indonesia



## METHODOLOGY

Initially, international youth organizations were consulted for their expertise on the economic empowerment of youth through education and skills. In addition to this, experts at the International Trade Center shared with us their expertise regarding designing a survey that can take into account the different geographical realities and language differences of its audience. Different strategies to get the maximum amount of data from different regions were also shared.

The survey created was answered by 117 participants in total. 61.3% of respondents were in the age bracket of 15-25 years old, 31.1% were 26-35 years old, and those greater than 35 years old were 7.6%. 69.2% of the participants were affiliated with a youth organization. 76.5% of the responses were from Africa, 8.4% from Asia, 7.6% from South America, 5% from Europe and 2.5% from North America.



"The surest investment is the investment made in education. Each of us are raw materials who can become, through the process of transformation, the final product of leadership."

Stephane Ponou, Cote D'Ivoire

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**THE EDUCATION SYSTEM NEEDS TO EVOLVE TO CATER TO THE MODERN ECONOMY.** Priority should be given to STEAM education and the amelioration of curriculum across countries to empower youth for the modern industries. Modern subjects should be introduced that will prepare youth for the jobs of the next 50 years. STEAM education and skills-based training should be subsidized by the government to level the playing field for youth across different financial backgrounds.

**MODERN EDUCATION ALSO REQUIRES THAT TEACHERS EVOLVE AT THE SAME SPEED.** As teachers are considered the backbone of a good education, better teacher training and methods need to be introduced to transform education.

**INTERNSHIPS AND VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCES NEED TO BE INCENTIVIZED AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL.** This will enable students to be aligned with the demands and expectations of the labour market by the time they graduate.

**INTERNET AVAILABILITY TO YOUTH NEEDS TO BE ENSURED** to increase access to opportunities, with more budget assigned towards rural areas and underdeveloped regions to meet the accelerating demand. In particular, students from low-income communities and/or families should have access to internet-enabled smartphones, electronic devices, and gadgets through subsidies.

**GOVERNMENTS SHOULD WORK ON IMPROVING THE EASE OF DOING BUSINESS FOR SMES AND YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS TO CONDUCT BUSINESS.** To catalyze entrepreneurship, loans and venture capital should be made easier for young people to acquire. Providing financial capital to competent entrepreneurs and SMEs will also result in more job opportunities becoming available to youth since these SMEs employ more than 45% of youth. Too many compliance requirements and taxes on new businesses slow down the growth of SMEs, therefore they should be minimized. Moreover, scholarships for innovators and high-performing entrepreneurs should be introduced at the college level.

**THE MINIMUM WAGE NEEDS TO BE INCREASED** in line with the rising inflation and set according to a specified global standard of living.





## HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



The COVID-19 pandemic has proved that sustainable development cannot be advanced without the prioritization of human health. The pandemic has had a profound impact on the health of young people, in particular on their mental health. This has underscored the urgency of addressing the health needs of adolescents and youth during the pandemic and beyond. Youth face challenges regarding their mental health, sexual and reproductive health, road safety, and the COVID-19 pandemic. The intersection between health issues and issues of SOGIE must also be addressed. The integration of evidence-based data on the most prevalent health issues which affect young people is fundamental to empower the facilitation of the meaningful engagement of young people in policy-making, advocating for the health of current and future generations.

“My two brothers have died. They had a high fever and red rashes on their body. People say it was dengue but we never really knew. The hospital is a 3 hour walk from where we live and we do not have money to pay a doctor. We rely on folk healers. That’s the best we have.”

**Palesa, South Africa**



## FINDINGS

### SOGIE-BASED DISCRIMINATION NEGATIVELY AFFECTS THE HEALTH OF YOUNG LGBTQI+ INDIVIDUALS

LGBTQI+ individuals have shown elevated rates of smoking and alcohol drinking in comparison to their cis-gendered heterosexual peers. Many research publications have opined that this phenomenon is due to the high levels of stress, stigma, and discrimination that LGBTQI+ youth face daily. Likewise, the risks of suicide and the prevalence of mental health illnesses are higher among LGBTQI+ youth than their cis-gendered heterosexual peers. 12% of LGBTQI+ young people had a higher risk of suicide attempts than 5.4 percent of cis-gendered heterosexual teens. Further, suicidal thoughts, planning, attempts and suicide itself were more likely to be reported by LGBTQI+ individuals at younger ages.<sup>11</sup>

### DESPITE ROAD TRAFFIC CRASHES BEING THE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH AMONG YOUTH, THE ISSUE IS GIVEN LITTLE ATTENTION

Road traffic crashes have been the leading cause of death of young people aged 15-29 for more than a decade. Children and adolescents are most impacted on their way to educational institutions. Despite this, the road safety agenda does not rank high on most governments’ agenda. According to a survey by the World Health Organization, “as motorization increases globally, many countries are not giving sufficient attention to the needs of vulnerable groups of road users in their transport policies. Many of the proven interventions being implemented globally – such as the use of seat-belts and child restraints, vehicle standards, and crash tests – are relevant to car occupants, not to pedestrians.”<sup>12</sup>

### VACCINE INEQUALITY HAS CAUSED COVID-19 INFECTIONS AMONG YOUTH TO INCREASE AND IS BECOMING A BARRIER TO ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND MANY OPPORTUNITIES

Vaccine inequality continues to persist. With rich countries hoarding vaccine supplies, poor countries have been made to wait too long. Six countries in the Latin America and Caribbean region have yet to reach the COVID-19 vaccination of 20% of their populations.<sup>13</sup> According to the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, less than 5% of the population has been fully vaccinated.<sup>14</sup> In this backdrop, rich countries have already rolled out booster vaccine shots. In many countries, due to lack of vaccine supply, young people are not prioritized in vaccination programs. This has led to youth being more susceptible to COVID-19 infection.

## METHODOLOGY

Consultations and focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with representatives from the Philippines, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, Nicaragua, Sweden, Germany, Tunisia, Colombia, Malaysia, India, Sri Lanka, Peru, Botswana, South Africa and Bangladesh. In-person interviews, remote interviews (phone calls and texts), online consultations and surveys were carried out with 140 participants aged 18-29. This process was complemented with desk research and complementary data.

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<sup>13</sup> Most countries of the Americas reach COVID-19 vaccination target by end of year. Available online: <https://www.paho.org/en/news/13-10-2021-most-countries-americas-reach-covid-19-vaccination-target-end-year>. Accessed (28 January 2022).

<sup>14</sup> Adepoju P. As COVID-19 vaccines arrive in Africa, Omicron is reducing supply and increasing demand. *Nat. med.* 2021.

"Our mission as health professionals is to enable people to enjoy life to their fullest potential. This requires a healthy sustainable environment where we can all prosper."

Saad Ukkas, Morocco



## BARRIERS TO ACCESS TO SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES EXIST AND HAVE BEEN EXACERBATED BY THE LACK OF RESPECT FOR DATA PRIVACY

Rapid service reconfiguration and the adoption of remote methods of managing patients, telephone consultations, telehealth, home delivery of testing or treatment for sexually transmitted illnesses and contraception, have led to problems of confidentiality and privacy for young people living at home, especially during the pandemic. Other barriers include inadvertent disclosure of sexual activity due to the lack of privacy of telephone calls and more visibility of youth by carers. Limited access to online devices, lack of credit or data on mobile phones, and a poor household internet connection are further potential barriers. Youth with intersecting vulnerabilities such as mental health concerns, learning disability, and language barriers may struggle with navigating new ways of accessing sexual healthcare, aggravated by the interruption of their usual professional career support. This issue on access is exacerbated by cultural stigma against sexual reproductive health and rights among young people.



"Political participation is the last thing on my mind. I need food and clean water. Everyday is a struggle to survive."

Ezina, Yemen

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**IT IS IMPORTANT TO DEVELOP BEST PRACTICE COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS** that focus on promoting healthy and sustainable behavioral change among youth by collaborating with civil society organizations and the media.

**BARRIERS TO MEANINGFUL YOUTH PARTICIPATION** can lead in general to distress and anxiety within the youth sector, which many policy frameworks overlook. The omission of "youth" in many declarations and frameworks demonstrates an evident lack of progress. There must be a recognition of the needs, perspectives and engagement of youth who are the most impacted by policy decisions as well as consideration of the well-being of young activists at the frontlines. A holistic framework of youth inclusion can help to improve the well-being of young people.

**RECOGNIZE AND ADDRESS THE GENDERED DIMENSIONS OF HEALTHCARE AND SERVICES PROVIDED** by addressing health issues deeply rooted in SOGIE-based discrimination.

**ENSURE THE ACCESSIBILITY OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES** by influencing or assisting countries to provide the necessary funding for the provision of culturally relevant, accessible, affordable, nondiscriminatory, and confidential mental health services for and with young people. This includes mainstreaming mental health services across all healthcare and social systems, both online and offline.

**PUSH FOR THE INCORPORATION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT** as a subsidiary course or subject or as a series ad hoc training sessions for primary or secondary level of schools and creation of support groups with peer-to-peer approaches. There is likewise a need to develop and sustain a Mental Health & Psychosocial Support Network (MHPSS) or support their establishment in schools, workplaces and other communities.

**GIVE DUE ATTENTION TO ISSUES OF ROAD SAFETY** by driving governments and multinational, regional and national bodies towards strengthening their efforts and implementing pragmatic measures to reduce road traffic deaths and injuries. This must also include commissioning studies and research on road safety that are pedestrian-centric.



"My family does not believe that mental health illness exists. They say it's all in my head. I want to go see a doctor but I don't have my own money."

Jose, Brazil





## FINAL WORD

**A document that will lay out general principles for the European Union's external action on youth, must, at its core, give primacy to the inputs coming from young people themselves. Youth have long suffered from being relegated to tokenistic and decorative roles. They have been invited to consultations or dialogues that only result in documents or communications that ultimately disregard the voices of the sector and make decisions without them at the core.**

**Young people cannot be considered as "add-ons" to adult-led initiatives. Young people are a constituency who hold uniquely critical perspectives and skills necessary for informing and driving health policy, service delivery, and research. Barriers to meaningful youth participation can only be addressed by an action plan that has been created through processes that, in themselves, have tried to transcend such barriers.**

**A genuine EU Youth Action Plan is one that is co-created and is of youth by youth and for youth.**

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Black Students of the University of São Paulo (Coalition).  
Burundian Youth for a Brighter Future  
ClassNotes Inc.  
Commonwealth Students Union  
Edulimitless  
Equal Education  
Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Alumni  
Global Shapers  
Greenpeace  
Hans Charity Home  
Huk kallpalla  
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REBOOT Philippines  
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Solidarity and Development Initiative Cameroon  
Surf Ghana  
Teach Connect  
Teens-4-Teans Community  
Tekoa Itakupe (indigenous group of the Guarani Mbya ethiny)  
The Border Hub  
The Global Youth Coalition Road Safety  
The International Federation of Medical Students' Association  
Think Green  
United Nations Envoy on Youth Office  
United Peruvian Youth  
University of the Philippines Marine Biological Society  
University of the Philippines Paralegal Volunteers' Organization  
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Young Health Advocates, Ghana  
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Youth Coalition for Girls, Indonesia

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