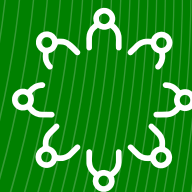




RIYADH 2020
URBAN



Youth Empowerment for Prosperous and Inclusive Cities



Inclusive Prosperous Communities

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List of Definitions and Acronyms

COVID-19 – Coronavirus Disease

LGBTQIs – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning (or: queer), Intersex

NEET – Neither in Employment nor in Education or Training

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

ICT – Information and Communications Technology

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

SMEs – Small and Medium Enterprises



About Urban 20

Urban20 (U20) is a city diplomacy initiative that brings together cities from G20 member states and observer cities from non-G20 states to discuss and form a common position on climate action, social inclusion and integration, and sustainable economic growth. Recommendations are then issued for consideration by the G20. The initiative is convened by C40 Cities, in collaboration with United Cities and Local Governments, under the leadership of a Chair city that rotates annually. The first U20 Mayors Summit took place in Buenos Aires in 2018, and the second took place in Tokyo in 2019. For 2020, Riyadh City is the Chair city and host of the annual Mayors Summit. The first meeting of U20 Sherpas was convened in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on the 5th – 6th February during which the foundations were laid for the U20 2020 Mayors Summit in the Saudi capital later this year.

About the Urban 20 Taskforces

As U20 Chair, Riyadh has introduced taskforces to add additional structure and focus to the U20. These taskforces explore specific priority issues and bring evidence-based solutions to the final Communique.

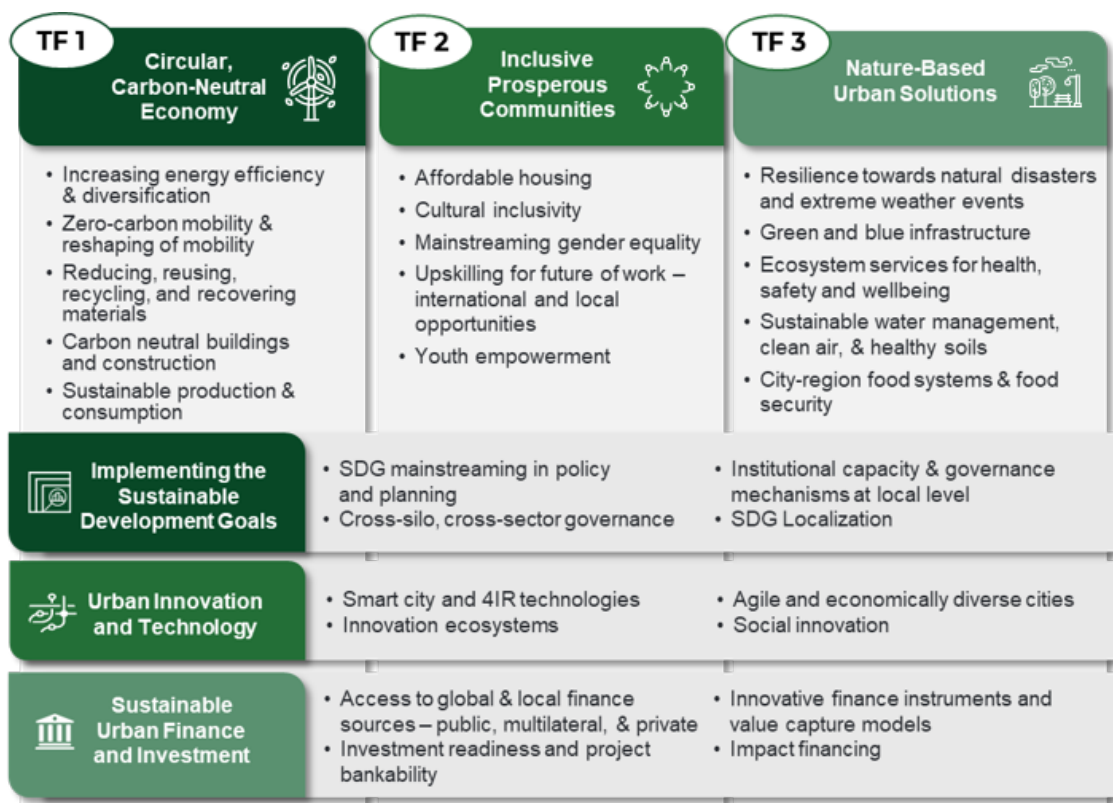
Each taskforce has commissioned whitepapers led by chair cities, and with input from participating cities and knowledge partners. These whitepapers help us build an evidence-based, credible and achievable set of policy recommendations.

Taskforces activation

The taskforces workstream was an innovative and recent introduction to the three-year-old U20 initiative by the chairmanship of the city of Riyadh this year. Three thematic taskforces, each guided by one of the U20 Riyadh 2020 overarching themes of Circular, Carbon-neutral economy, Inclusive Prosperous Communities, and Nature-based Urban Solutions, were officially launched and activated during the U20 First Sherpa meeting back in February. During the meeting, the U20 priority topics that fell within the three overarching themes and intersecting with the three cross-sectional dimensions of Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, Urban Innovation and Technology, and Urban Finance and Investment were prioritized and refined through the statements delivered by all attending cities. The top 5 topics were then chosen to be the focus of whitepapers for each taskforce.



The top 5 topics under each of the three taskforces and cross cutting dimensions were then chosen to be the focus of whitepapers for each taskforce:



Cities and Partner Engagement

The vast majority of the twenty-three cities who attended the first Sherpa meeting, representing 12 G20 countries, along with the U20 Conveners, agreed to the importance of having taskforces as interactive platforms to produce knowledge-based and evidence-based outcomes that can effectively feed into an actionable U20 Communique. During and following the meeting, several cities demonstrated interest in volunteering in the capacity of chairs and co-chairs, leading and overseeing the activities of each taskforce. The cities of Rome and Tshwane co-chaired Taskforce 1 on Circular, Carbon-neutral Economy, Izmir

Taskforce 2 on Inclusive Prosperous Communities, and Durban on Nature-based Urban Solutions. Others expressed interest to participate in the taskforces, some in more than one, both during and after the meeting.

Alongside interested U20 cities, several regional and international organizations proffered to engage in the work of the taskforces, in the capacity of knowledge partners, to share their knowledge and experiences with cities in producing whitepapers. Some of the knowledge partners volunteered to play a leading role as Lead Knowledge Partners, supporting the taskforces' co/chairs in review and guidance.



All participants who actively took part of the taskforces were subject matter experts nominated by the cities and knowledge partners and have enriched the taskforces' discussions with their know-how and experiences. In over 3 months, all three taskforces, with great effort and commitment from all their participants, produced a total of 15 evidence-based focused whitepapers, bringing about more than 160

policy recommendations addressing the national governments of the G20 Member States.

The taskforces content development efforts is comprised of 23 U20 cities and 31 U20 knowledge partners. The 100+ experts and city representatives produced 15 whitepapers which widely benefited and informed the development of the first draft of the communique.



Content Development

Under the leadership and guidance of the chair city, Izmir, and the lead knowledge partner, Metropolis, the work of Task Force 2 kicked off with an orientation for all participants in mid-March.

During the period between March and April, the participants of Taskforce 2 presented more than 24 concept ideas and 11 concept notes and developed initial outlines for the whitepapers

focusing on topics of interest. Teaming up into five author groupings, the cities and knowledge partners developed five outlines of whitepapers. Refined and revised outlines were then developed into draft whitepapers that underwent several iterations for development and finalization, ensuring that each paper delivers a set of concrete and targeted policy recommendations that address the different U20 stakeholders.



The five whitepapers under Taskforce 2 (listed below) explore priority topics on affordable housing, mainstreaming gender equality, socio-cultural inclusion and cohesion, upskilling for the future of work, and youth empowerment, and are titled as follows:

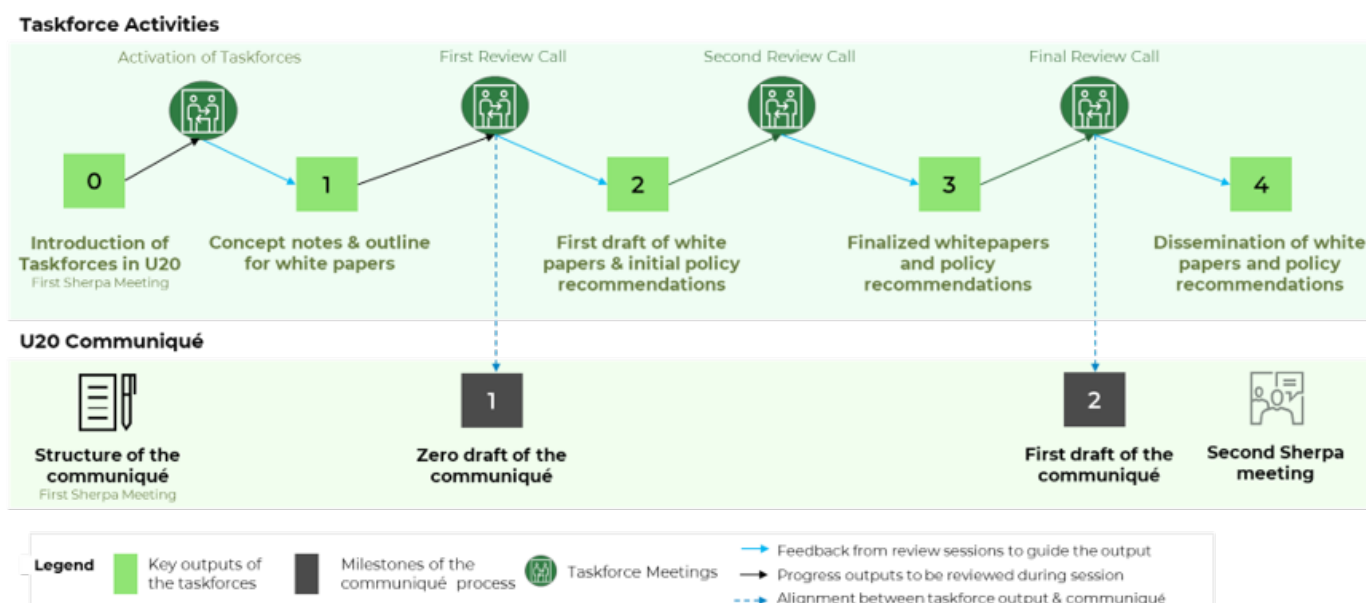
1. “Securing affordable housing delivery in cities: investing for better outcomes”

2. “Removing barriers to mainstreaming gender equality”

3. “Urban inclusiveness, safety nets and social compacts in the time of a pandemic”

4. “Inclusive creative economy and the future of work”

5. “Youth empowerment for prosperous and inclusive cities”



Along the taskforces timeline of activities, three review meetings were held where co/chairs and lead knowledge partners presented and discussed with the U20 Executive Team the progress and findings of the taskforces they represent, leading to the U20 Second Sherpa meeting that took

place during the first week of July. Parallel to the taskforces activities, the first draft of the U20 communiqué was developed by the U20 Executive team incorporating recommendations presented at the third (and final) review meeting.



About the Inclusive Prosperous Communities Taskforce

Cities need to provide indiscriminate access to opportunities and services for all the diverse people that live, work, and play in them to prosper. Cities need to empower all citizens to thrive, by preparing them for the future of work and overcoming the digital divide, ensuring cultural inclusivity and integration, and providing safe public spaces and infrastructure.

The U20 taskforce on Inclusive Prosperous Communities, addresses challenges and priorities covered in global agendas that are faced by cities and these include affordable housing, mainstreaming gender equality, socio-cultural

inclusion and cohesion, upskilling for the future of work and youth empowerment. Cities face daily challenges on the fronts of inclusivity, equality, accessibility, and cohesion and have been the epicenters of the recent COVID-19 pandemic worldwide.

Cities are the melting pots of different social and cultural textures are at the heart of the G20 nations' power. Cities are in constant action to provide and ensure urban social safety nets and social protection to urban residents, far before the pandemic and are today, in a tougher position to prevent potential deterioration and speed up a healthy recovery. The priority topics addressed by this Taskforce are at heart of the cities' battles, where each topic is portrayed in focused whitepapers that describe the situational challenges, present opportunities for change and improvement, and design action-driven sound recommendations.

12 cities

U20 Participating cities

Barcelona	Mexico City
Berlin	Montréal
Guangzhou	Riyadh
Johannesburg	Strasbourg
Madrid	

Chair city

Izmir

U20 Observer cities

Amman
Dammam

15 knowledge partners

Knowledge partners

- Arab Urban Development Institute (AUDI) and Global Observatory linking Research to Action (GORA Corp.)
- Brookings Institute
- Indonesia Creative Cities Network
- International Finance Corporation
- Lee Kuan Yew Center for Innovative Cities
- Mansueto Institute for Urban Innovation
- National Institute of Urban Affairs
- The Chicago Council on Global Affairs

Lead knowledge partner

Metropolis

- World Economic Forum
- World Enabled
- UN-Habitat
- UCLG - Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights
- University of Pennsylvania, Perry World House



About the Authors & About the Contributors



Acknowledgement Note

The U20 Chair, Riyadh, would like to thank all authors and contributors for sharing their knowledge and experience on this topic; the chair city, Izmir, for their guidance; and the lead knowledge partner, Metropolis, for their support in the development of this whitepaper.

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Mr. Onur Eryüce is committed to strengthen economic, social and cultural ties between cities from Turkey and the European Union through international cooperation. In 2011, he played a pivotal role in the foundation of the Association of Social Democratic Municipalities (SODEM). The organization was set up to foster strategic partnerships among Turkish municipal leaders and their European counterparts. SODEM led to great impact and increased city level interactions among urban stakeholders and communities. In April 2019, he was appointed as the Counsellor to the Mayor by the Izmir Metropolitan Municipality Assembly; one of the largest Mediterranean port cities with 4.5 million inhabitants. In his new function, Onur is engaged and focused on linking Izmir and its local communities to the global value chain and global cooperation networks. Onur prior objective and driver are to improve the growth, governance, and finance of the city.



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Disclaimer note

The views, opinions, positions and recommendations expressed in this White Paper are developed under the chairmanship of the City of Riyadh as U20 Chair City 2020 and are those of the authors and contributors, including contributing U20 cities and partners. They do not necessarily represent the views of all the U20 cities or any of its chairs, conveners, and partners. Many of the references in this White Paper will direct the reader to sites operated by third parties. Neither the institutions nor the authors of this White Paper have reviewed all the information on these sites or the accuracy or reliability of any information, data, opinions, advice or statements on these sites.



Executive Summary



Executive Summary

There are more people under the age of 25 today than ever, totalling to nearly 3 billion or almost four-tenths of the total global population. The global economic and demographic patterns that we observe today deserve an increased focus on youth empowerment. Youth experience the challenges of employment and economic inclusion differently, or more acutely, than other population segments. Therefore strategies to be adopted by governments should recognize and proactively address the challenges concerning youth. Under current circumstances where inequality has not only persisted, but in many instances widened, with substantial numbers of people, including youth, excluded from full participation in economic, political and social life, developing viable and innovative ways to empower youth is extremely crucial for the future of democratic and inclusive cities.

In this whitepaper, while surveying the demographic, economic, political and social dimensions of the prosperity of youth on national and international levels, we accentuate the urban level. Accordingly, we shift the unit of analysis towards cities, and evaluate challenges and opportunities within the scope of cities. Our study benefits mainly from experiences, literature surveys and past research from prominent institutions and U20 stakeholders.

Young people typically suffer from low income and irregular work patterns in addition to the devastating effects of unemployment that affect their ability to become emancipated and independent from their families. Globally, the present challenge lies in simultaneously creating jobs for the bulging youth population and addressing related problems such as skills acquisition and working poverty.

The permanence of unemployment and working poverty can make youth vulnerable to social exclusion, as youth entering labour markets with limited job prospects, underdeveloped vocational skills, and insufficient education, are at risk of long-term unemployment, intermittent employment, and lower wages. On that score, education and vocational training are crucial tools for enhancing a young person's prospects in labour markets. While the relationship between education and employment has become much more pronounced recently, education must be recalibrated so that young people can put their skills to productive use under shifting circumstances. Additionally, the local and national governments need to develop tools to bridge the gap (supply and demand) in jobs/education through formal communication schemes with the private sector, academia and local governments.



Executive Summary

Developments in the field of technology have produced multifaceted consequences with regard to the prosperity of young people who mostly do not have an established position in labour markets. It is more likely that they experience issues in navigating the challenges posed by skills development and are thus excluded from the opportunities technological innovation creates. Given the tendency in industry for technological automation to render increasingly larger sections of the labor force redundant, a substantial decrease in demand for labor in particular industries seems to have more devastating repercussions on young men and women. Based on our analysis, we recommend developing and incentivizing youth's participation in lifelong learning programs, outside of formal education, that will allow them to update their skills frequently, particularly technology competencies highly required by employers globally. Another effective response would be promoting the creation of specialized educational institutions such as Coding Schools, by actively funding them and ensuring equal access for men and women, LGBTQI youth, ethnic minorities, refugees and minority groups.

Youth are vastly underrepresented in political institutions both nationally and locally. Administrative bodies demonstrate a lack of

ability to include the demands of youth and open up satisfactory spaces of representation. Understanding what young people care about can be an important first step towards engaging with them effectively. Promoting energetically participatory governance, where youth can be supported in all civic dimensions would be a right step to take.

The social dimension of youth empowerment requires that the needs and demands of youth segments that are not visible at first glance are included in the policy making process. For example, young people who are not involved in employment, or who are not in formal education, can be considered in this category. Similarly, it should not be overlooked that specific youth sub-groups such as young women, LGBTQI youth, ethnic minorities, or refugees may each have particular issues, needs and demands.

Finally, COVID-19 exacerbated the existing problems and increased the necessity to take action for youth empowerment. The effects of COVID-19 on the future development of youth from all angles remain to be measured. Yet, ensuring the availability of resources to manage the current short-term effects on quality of education and the availability of job opportunities for youth is a must.



Background



Background

There are more people under the age of 25 today than ever, totalling nearly 3 billion or almost four-tenths of the total global population; 1.2 billion of that total are between the age of 15 and 24.¹ It is expected that seven in 10 people will live in urban areas by 2050.² Every year, the world's urban population increases by approximately 60 million people. Most of this growth is taking place in low- and middle-income countries. Since cities attract young people due to their opportunities for employment, education and other needs, the population structure of inner urban areas has been increasingly rejuvenated.

The process of urbanization on a global scale has made the consideration of the role and situation of youth within this transformative process an increasingly urgent task, as it is clear that the empowerment of young men and women is an essential priority for the democratization of urban governance, and for rendering it more inclusive. Behind this imperative lies a simple yet striking demographic dynamic: the global “urban age” has also brought about the rejuvenation of the urban population.

As the notion urban age refers, more than half of the world's contemporary population lives in urban areas. What is even more compelling is that the vast majority of new additions to the urban population are in developing countries. Both the number and populations of metropolises are growing at the highest rate in such countries.

From a demographic perspective, one of the most significant features of developing countries is that they have a very young population. Expressed as the “youth bulge” in the literature, this phenomenon produces complex results, simultaneously engendering complex problems, while also generating unprecedented opportunities.

The phenomenon of the rejuvenation of urban populations produces advantages as the reproductive power of societies increases. Yet, it would be misleading to assume that the economic potential of cities has been fulfilled in terms of the needs of an increasing youth population. Even though the global trends of population distribution and urbanization bring to the fore a great potential for the prosperity of cities, the extent to which this potential will be actualized is contingent on social, economic and political models created on the urban and national level. In light of this, the present Since there is no universally agreed international definition of the youth age group and while the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines children as persons up to the age of 18, the present paper defines youth as persons aged between 15 and 24.

In light of this, the present document aims to illustrate the significance of the empowerment of young men and women for democratizing urban governance and rendering it more inclusive.

¹ Since there is no universally agreed international definition of the youth age group and while the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines children as persons up to the age of 18, the present paper defines youth as persons aged between 15 and 24.

² United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). *World Population Prospects 2019: Highlights*. New York: United Nations Headquarters.



Introduction



Introduction

Problem Statement

The global economic and demographic patterns that we observe today deserve an increased focus on youth empowerment, since the process of urbanization on a global scale has made the consideration of the role and situation of youth within this transformative process an increasingly urgent task. Youth experience the challenges of employment and economic inclusion differently, or more acutely, than other population segments, and therefore strategies to be adopted by governments should recognize and proactively address the challenges concerning youth. Furthermore, this is especially true for cities in emerging and developing countries where youth concentration is highest and urbanization is most rapid.

In the last decade, there has been a recognition that the urban youth population (persons aged between 15 and 24 years) in the developing world is growing at a rapid rate. By 2050, seven in 10 people will live in urban areas. Every year, the world's urban population increases by approximately 60 million people. Most of this growth is taking place in low- and middle-income countries. There is currently a demographic phenomenon called “youth-bulge” in the developing world that has led to more people under the age of 25 today than ever, totalling nearly 3 billion or almost four-tenths of the total global population; 1.2 billion of that total are between the age of 15 and 24. These young men and women live, by and large, in cities and towns; the cities of the developing world account for over 90 percent

of the world's urban growth, and youth account for a large percentage of those inhabitants. It is estimated that as many as 60 percent of all urban dwellers will be under the age of 18 by 2030.³

The notion of youth bulge denotes a demographic transition wherein “populations experience a growth in youth as a share of the population”, as the relative number of children decreases due to the decline in fertility in line with economic development, industrialization and urbanization. Although the youth bulge can be considered a gift, it also generates complicated problems in line with the social conditions prevailing in the countries where it is occurring. Magnifying economic problems such as youth unemployment, underemployment and high-dependency ratios, this demographic phenomenon increases the potential and motives for political unrest, instability and disenfranchisement. Furthermore, in contexts where the problem of representation intersects with other axes of societal life such as gender, ethnicity or migration, social and political frictions might become stronger and more evident, with considerable risks for social cohesion, development and peace. All in all, under current circumstances where inequality has not only persisted, but in many instances widened, with substantial numbers of people, including youth, excluded from full participation in economic, political and social life, developing viable and innovative ways to empower youth is extremely crucial for the future of democratic and inclusive cities.

³ United Nations (2018). World Youth Report. New York: United Nations Headquarters.



Introduction

Overall Aim

The present document aims to demonstrate the significance of the empowerment of young men and women for democratizing urban governance and rendering it more inclusive. To do so, it gives a comprehensive account of the state of the youth at a global scale, while shifting the analytical lens towards developing countries that experience currently much more pressing issues regarding youth. The question whether youth bring economic welfare or poverty, political stability or instability, social order or disorder to societies is intrinsically tied to the question of whether young men and women are adequately supported in social, economic, and political terms by the local and national policymakers.

In this whitepaper, while surveying the demographic, economic, political and social dimensions of the prosperity of youth on national and international levels, we accentuate the urban level. Accordingly we shift the unit of analysis towards cities, and evaluate challenges and opportunities within the scope of cities.

Outline

The paper begins with elaborating on the details of current demographic trends, and evaluates the implications of the particular phenomenon that we call “youth bulge”. Secondly, it discusses the general economic dynamics that are most relevant to youth, focusing on employment issues both in developed and developing countries. In line with this account, the following three sections

will deal with the educational problems young persons face, reflect upon specific challenges and opportunities stemming from novel technological advancements, and finally relate these dynamics to the field of entrepreneurship. Afterwards, the paper focuses on the political repercussions of the general dynamics discussed and underscores the intrinsic relationship between political stability/cohesion and the prosperity of youth.

The more inclusive and participatory political systems do have more potential to engage youth and to build more stable, prosperous and democratic societies. We then move on to analyze the social aspects of youth empowerment, putting emphasis on the diverging conditions, needs and demands of groups such as women, LGBTQIs, refugees and youth with disabilities. These groups are not visible at first glance, but it is obvious that being young and being in one of these groups makes life harder, necessitating bringing the challenges, the demands, and the needs of these groups to light. The last subsection of this part focuses on how the world will look in the wake of Covid-19, and addresses the particular challenges the young population encounters during the pandemic in terms of economic, political and social issues.

Finally, the whitepaper ends by reflecting upon key strategic issues and policy options that could be addressed by policymakers across the world in their efforts towards building the inclusive cities of tomorrow.



Introduction

Methodology

Given the multidimensional nature of the issue at hand, the analytical process, upon which the policy options enabling the empowerment of youth will be built, should be holistic. This compels us to adopt a broader perspective, rather than examining individual cases in excessive depth. Although we put more emphasis on developing countries due to the specificity of the demographic phenomenon we are facing, we aim to build a framework that transcends singular national contexts. This means that our study benefits mainly from experiences, literature surveys and

past research from prominent institutions and U20 stakeholders. On that score, making a due diligence around certain themes – for example, work, participation, social interaction and related topics – to identify appropriate policy options and recommendations, we have analyzed the issue of youth empowerment from the perspective of cross-cutting themes, and referred to inspiring case studies in order to exemplify various challenges in specific contexts, picture opportunities and potentials, and describe lessons learned.⁴

⁴ For similar initiatives undertaking a comprehensive approach to areas such as participation, information, inclusion, access to rights, youth work and mobility, see: Youth 20 initiative by the G20; “Self Assessment Tool for Youth Policy” developed by the Council of Europe; “8 Standards for a Quality of Youth Policy” produced by the European Youth Forum; and “100% Youth Cities”, a project developed by a Portuguese organization, Salto.

The background of the slide features a dark green, semi-transparent image of several wind turbines in a field. On the left side, there is a large, bright green circular graphic element. The title 'Challenges and Opportunities' is centered in the upper half of the slide, framed by two horizontal white lines with vertical end caps.

Challenges and Opportunities



Challenges and Opportunities

Urban Age and Youth Bulge

More than half of the world's contemporary population lives in urban areas. What is even more compelling is that the vast majority of new additions to the urban population are in developing countries. Both the number and populations of metropolises are growing at the highest rate in such countries. From a demographic perspective, one of the most significant features of developing countries is that they have a very young population. Expressed as the “youth bulge” in the literature, this phenomenon produces complex results, simultaneously generating complicated problems, while also generating unprecedented opportunities.

Referring to a demographic pattern where the share of children and youth rises within the overall population, youth bulge is a critical concept in understanding the relationship between demographic configurations and broader issues. As countries develop economically, changing the composition of productive sectors towards more industrialized activities and increasing the level of urbanization, they experience a demographic transition. Hence the relative number of children decreases, whereas the share of youth increases. This demographic phenomenon in time paves way for a rise in the share of senior citizens, as can be observed in developed countries, creating concerns around intergenerational issues in terms of justice, solidarity and so on.

There are more people under the age of 25 today than in history. Young people aged between 15 and 24 make up around 15 percent of the global

population (1.2 billion). Any analysis of the pressing issues our world experienced today should thus consist of a demographic aspect, since age cohorts share similar experiences based on their economic and political conditions. For instance, the age structure of a population and the relative share of youth are important to consider because these are determining factors in the growth of the labour force. Or, from a political point of view, large numbers of unemployed youth are viewed as potential reasons by states for instability, social unrest and political mobilization, as was the case in the Arab uprisings of the 2010s.

Notwithstanding the challenges it poses, youth bulge may also be considered in terms of the opportunities it induces. For the growth of a country's youth population as a share of the total population presents potentialities that must be acknowledged and processed through evidence-based policy tools. For instance, in terms of economic activities, as the youth population increases, the working-age population progressively makes up a rising share of the overall population, and this, in turn, leads to a decline in the share of dependent children. Since the relative abundance of working-age people can lead to increases in the level of financial savings, productivity and overall economic growth, this transition in the demographic structure can be regarded as a potential contribution to the welfare of a country. Yet, the actual realization of this potential is contingent on a country's abilities and preferences, because it requires mobilizing effective resources to be channelled to investments in human capital.



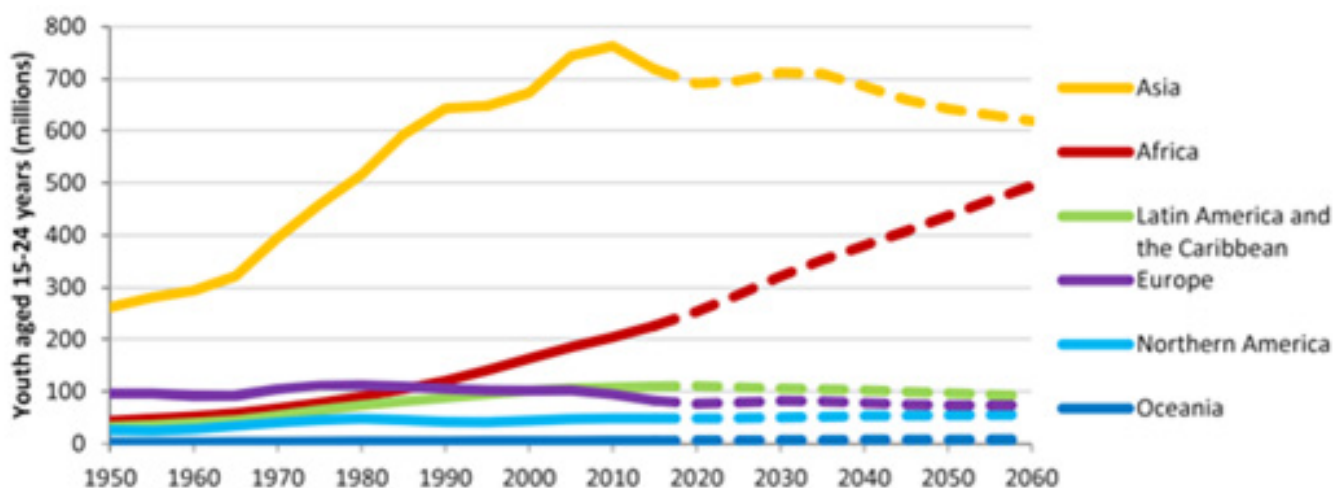
Challenges and Opportunities

As regards to the contemporary demographic developments across the world, we see a complex structure that points to regional and national differences (Figure 1). While the population of young people is growing on a global scale, the age structure of the population, and thus the relative size of the youth population, varies extensively. In the most developed countries, where we have been observing a permanent decrease in fertility rates for decades, the share of the youth (persons between 15 and 24) in total population is on the decline, whereas senior persons over age 60 make up a relatively greater share. Similarly, most developing countries, particularly countries

that are called “emerging economies”, have seen their youth population peak and now their older working-age populations are on the rise. In contrast, other regions that consist of the least developed economies, such as sub-Saharan Africa, experience a proper youth bulge wherein persons between 15 and 24 comprise nearly 20 percent of the total population. This share is expected to remain stable over the next decades. In other developing regions such as Latin America and the Caribbean, West Asia, and South-East Asia, despite the relative decline, the proportion of the youth in the total population is still sizable (Figure 2).⁵

Figure 1.

Youth aged 15-24 years, by region, 1950-2060



Source: United Nations (2013). World Population Prospects: The 2012 Revision.

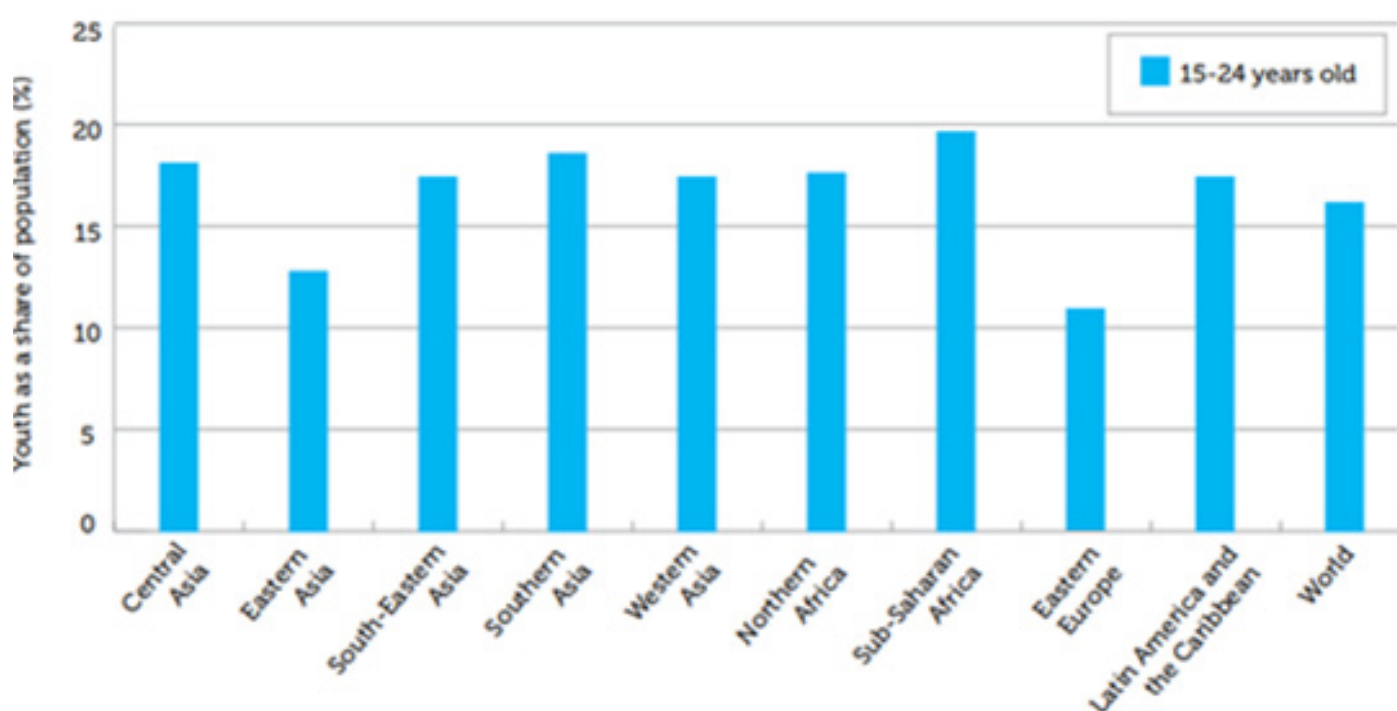
⁵ United Nations (2018). World Youth Report. New York: United Nations Headquarters.



Challenges and Opportunities

Figure 2.

Youth as a share of the total population by region, 2015



Source: United Nations (2013). World Population Prospects: The 2012 Revision.

Unemployment, Under-employment, Informality and Working Poverty

Access to decent work is crucial not only for young people but also for their communities, countries and the world as a whole. However, young people typically suffer from low income and irregular work patterns in addition to the devastating effects of unemployment that affect their ability to become emancipated and independent from their families.

Globally, the present challenge lies in simultaneously creating jobs for the bulging youth population and addressing related problems such as skills acquisition and working poverty. Globalization of economic activity, and the development of novel industries, along with changing economic systems, and technological innovations, have opened up new opportunities in the labour market for young people, especially in developed countries. However, thanks to the swift and dramatic changes in the nature



Challenges and Opportunities

of work, young persons increasingly face more challenging issues that compel them to adopt novel skillsets. The need for a permanent improvement of skills and abilities is closely connected with the fact that economic growth alone is no longer adequate to facilitate youth employment and promote sustainable long-term development strategies.

Even though unemployment figures do not enable us to comprehend the totality of the economic issues youth face, it is still one of the most important indicators used in analyses of labour market dynamics, particularly as regards the problem of transition from education to work in considering youth unemployment. According to the International Labour Organization's figures, in 2019, the global rate of youth unemployment was estimated at 13 percent, which means nearly 68 million people between the ages of 15 and 24 were actively searching for work but were unable to find a job on the global scale (Figure 3)⁶. These figures suggest that the global financial crisis has led to a substantial increase in youth unemployment from 11.5 percent in 2007, and that the relative economic recovery following the crisis has not led to a decline in youth unemployment. On the other hand, while the overall level of youth unemployment has been

steady in the post-crisis period, it is also evident that youth unemployment trends have evinced severe variations on the regional scale. For instance, Latin America and the Caribbean region have witnessed the sharpest increase during this period, while East Asia, South-East Asia and the South Asia regions have the lowest rates of youth employment.

There are considerable differences in terms of the patterns and nature of youth unemployment between developing and developed countries. In the former, youth mostly face an employment situation that is characterized by informality, and therefore experience job insecurity, low wages and restricted opportunities for career building, the total of which reinforce the experience of insecurity. Furthermore, these youths are trapped in a vicious cycle of poverty, since they face challenges relating to the cost of education due to their marginalized circumstances. These circumstances force many young people to leave school at a quite early stage of their formal education. For young people lacking a formal educational foundation, however, initial experiences in the labour market reproduce disadvantageous conditions and eventually undermine the options for social mobilization.

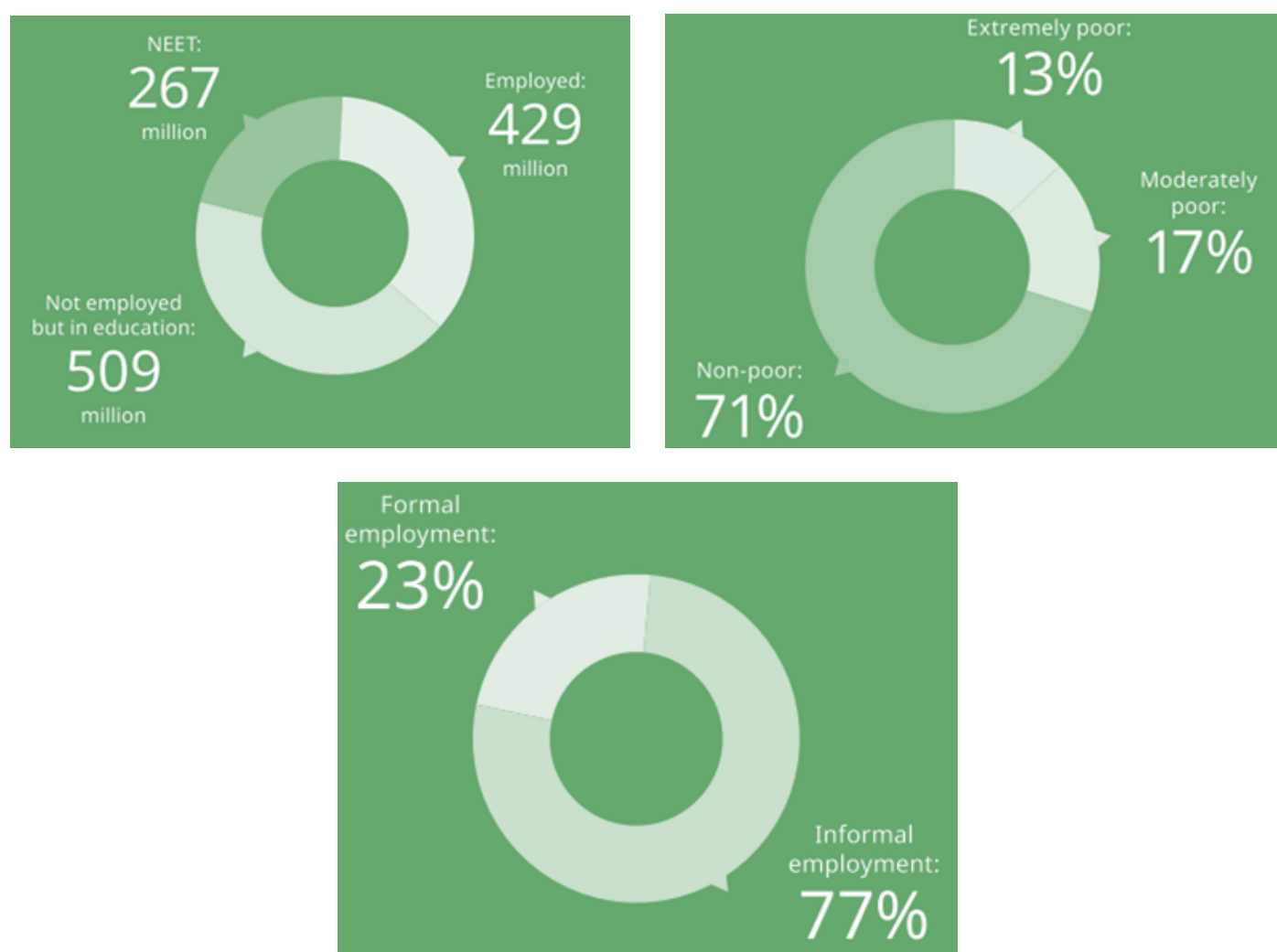
⁶ International Labour Organization (2020). Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020. Geneva: International Labour Office.



Challenges and Opportunities

Figure 3.

Overview of the global labour market for youth, 2019



Source: International Labour Organization (2020). Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020.



Challenges and Opportunities

Unemployment is solely one aspect of the economic issues youth experience. Even though it is more difficult to define and demonstrate in empirical terms, underemployment is another challenge that has direct and severe impacts on the economic wellbeing of youth. Those employed in under-waged jobs, those who are working in low-skill jobs, and part-time workers who are unable to find full-time jobs can be included in this category. Youth forms a considerable proportion of these precarious workers, because, as they are newly entering the labour market, young persons are more prone to disenfranchising employment patterns such as internship, apprenticeship, part-time work or short/limited contracts. Combined with the macro dynamics of economies that do not permit high increases in labour demand, this trend in labour markets pushes young people, more than their adult counterparts, towards part-time and low-wage jobs that often fall into the category of involuntary employment and do little to make use of their acquired skills⁷. Since young people trapped in financial insecurity are not able to meet their basic needs, they are more at risk of being unable to break the vicious cycle of poverty. This is the case even among youth in developed countries. Moreover, underpaid and part-time jobs such as internship programmes exclude the poorest sections of youth who cannot afford to work for little, aggregating the level of income inequalities among youth in the long run.

As new entrants to labour markets, young persons are more likely to be found in informal jobs. Working in the informal sector, however,

makes them economically, socially and politically vulnerable, because of the lack of protective mechanisms such as formal work contracts, social insurance schemes and other benefits. Furthermore, informal jobs typically reduce the chances of young persons to improve their mastery of the skills that are necessary for career building in more formal employment. This again creates a vicious cycle that traps employees in more insecure and vulnerable conditions, which in the long run diminish their chances of transitioning to formal employment.

All in all, young people suffer excessively from working in low-skilled jobs, which make them more prone to working poverty than adults. Large numbers of youth, particularly in the developing world, are not able to find decent employment and thus, are living on incomes that are below the poverty line. According to the International Labour Organization, the share of employed youth living in poverty is estimated to have decreased substantially since the early 1990s. Yet, the rate of decline has been slower than that of the adult population. Moreover, if the moderately poor are included in the calculation, then this figure means 156 million young workers were living in poverty across the world in 2016.⁸ With regard to regional differences, data for 2016 indicate that Sub-Saharan Africa had the highest share (70 percent) of the working poor among economically active youth. While South Asia had the second worst score (50 percent), North Africa and South-East Asia had similar patterns (25 percent).

⁷ United Nations (2018). World Youth Report. New York: United Nations Headquarters

⁸ International Labour Organization (2016). World Employment and Social Outlook 2016: Trends for Youth. Geneva: International Labour Office.



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On the other hand, Central and West Asia, and the Latin America and Caribbean regions, had relatively lower shares of working poor among their youth (8.9 and 10 percent, respectively). The East Asian region has witnessed a significant decline in one decade, from 33 percent in 2007 to 13.8 percent in 2016. These figures, however, do not mean that working poverty among youth is a problem peculiar to developing economies. In the most developed countries as well the share of the working poor among economically active youth is higher than that of adults.

Last but not least, it should be underlined that the economic issues that we touch upon here do not have identical impacts on various subgroups of youth. It is evident that young women and youth from socially disadvantaged groups experience challenging outcomes in terms of employment patterns more disproportionately. Due to the presence of social exclusion and discrimination in the workplace, and more generally in economic activities, young women, youth from ethnic and religious minorities, persons with disabilities, migrants and LGBTQIs, suffer more from work-related problems such as job insecurity, working poverty, informality and exploitation.

Case Study: Rio de Janeiro⁹

The Schools of Tomorrow (Escolas do Amanhã) program started in 2009 under the leadership of Rio's Municipal Secretariat of Education with the aim of reducing dropout rates in the most violent neighbourhoods of the city. It is currently operating in more than 155 schools, with more than 6000 active teachers, and is benefiting more than 105,000 students. Results have been impressive: between 2008 and 2011, school drop-out rates within Schools of Tomorrow were reduced by 37 percent, versus 11 percent in regular public schools. Schools of Tomorrow are also performing better on standardized tests than before; and there are exceptional cases like the School of Tomorrow in Taquara, which has the city's second highest score and is within Brazil's top five performing schools.

The key of the Schools of Tomorrow initiative has been its comprehensive approach. Beyond basic education, these schools aim to offer beneficiary children the opportunity to build civic values and expand their opportunities to play sports, learn from cultural activities, and experience a healthy alternative lifestyle beyond the violence they see in their local communities. This initiative has required financial resources, but more importantly, it has required a shift in the educational model towards a more comprehensive approach that encourages more proactive schools, teachers, and students.

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⁹ 10urb.im: for just and inclusive cities. <http://www.urb.im/c130805>



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Case Study: Rio de Janeiro

These are the six main pillars of the Schools of Tomorrow, which ensure that beneficiary children grow up to be healthy, competitive, and capable:

- Ensuring the full-time engagement of children: When not studying, children are encouraged to participate in alternative activities such as art, sports, or science. Currently, the Schools of Tomorrow offer more than 50 alternative activities for children to learn from.
- Promoting science courses: The Schools of Tomorrow expand children's involvement in the sciences by offering them access to science labs and the possibility to conduct experiments and research with the help of experienced teachers.
- Expanding basic health coverage: In order to ensure the children's wellbeing, each School of Tomorrow is equipped with its own basic health team of several nurses. Each school also benefits from periodic visits from health teams, which include a doctor, a nurse, a dentist, and an oral hygiene assistant.
- Building capacities among teachers: Given the special social conditions of these schools, teachers receive training in conflict resolution and in management of effective school dynamics.
- Expanding the "educational neighbourhood": In each School of Tomorrow, there is one school officer that liaisons with community members and NGO representatives to expand activities with local residents. This strategy ensures that the neighbourhood becomes the extension of the school, by teaching children positive behaviours while outside school.
- Working with local partners and volunteers: This strategy targets parents and grandparents to encourage them to become active supporters of role model behaviours inside and outside the educational facilities.

Youth Education, Skills Acquisition and Entrepreneurship

The permanence of unemployment and working poverty can make youth vulnerable to social exclusion, as youth entering labor markets with limited job prospects, underdeveloped vocational skills, and insufficient education, are at risk of long-term unemployment, intermittent employment, and lower wages. On that score, education and vocational training are crucial tools for enhancing a young person's prospects in labour markets.

Since they need relevant skills, knowledge and competencies, building prosperous career paths requires better options for skills acquisition. While macro dynamics such as globalization, technological advancements, and the changing work environment lead to an increase in demand for skilled labor, the role that education plays also changes in tandem. Hence, the intrinsic relationship between education and employment becomes much more pronounced. Since



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employment is the foundation of any prosperous country, building up relevant and sufficient options for education and training for youth, thanks to which they can put their skills to productive use, is crucial under current circumstances. Support for the education and training of youth is a key pillar on which economic prosperity is built, and through which deep-seated economic inequalities can be dissolved.

Globally, in the last decades we have witnessed considerable advancement towards universal education, which we can trace through the increase in primary and secondary school enrolment (Figure 4). Even though secondary and tertiary school enrolment still remains low in many developing countries due to insufficient infrastructure, and the lack of affordable and accessible school systems, it is evident that the average years of primary school enrolment are rising on a global scale. What is more pressing however, is that education and training systems are not properly preparing young persons to meet the demands of labour markets under the more challenging conditions of a globalized world economy. In other words, the lack of decent and relevant education that is crucial to developing skill sets reinforces the economic vulnerabilities and social perils youth suffer. According to UNESCO, in the 2000s, despite the considerable increase in schooling, the quality of education declined on an unprecedented scale, primarily due to the inadequacy of trained personnel. Moreover, again despite the fact that upper secondary and tertiary level education enrolment increased significantly in the new millennium, challenges relating to educational access, quality and content persist (Figure 5).¹⁰

While youth unemployment is considerably high in many economies, many young persons across the world regard entrepreneurship as a suitable path towards economic prosperity and social status. In creating their own employment opportunities, they seek to navigate the world of business and survive the challenges of a globalized world economy. Entrepreneurship however should not be taken as a homogenous category, since there are major differences between “necessity” and “opportunity” entrepreneurship.¹¹ While the former denotes persons who are forced into self-employed because of economic necessity, the latter consist of persons who are seeking to take advantage of economic prospects by taking steps into the world of business.

Against the backdrop of the abovementioned discrepancy between conventional educational systems and methods and the skill sets required by a globalized economy, targeted education models such as entrepreneurship education are becoming more vital for youth in both developed and developing countries. Yet approaches to youth entrepreneurship might vary widely among various economic contexts. In general terms, it may be suggested that training programmes on entrepreneurship include basic skill sets such as creating a business plan, running a business and managing business finance. As with other forms of education, such educational tools are effective in accordance with the quality, content, duration, and depth of the programme adopted. Moreover, due to the manifest differences in the nature of necessity and opportunity entrepreneurship, the training programs should thus consider differing needs.

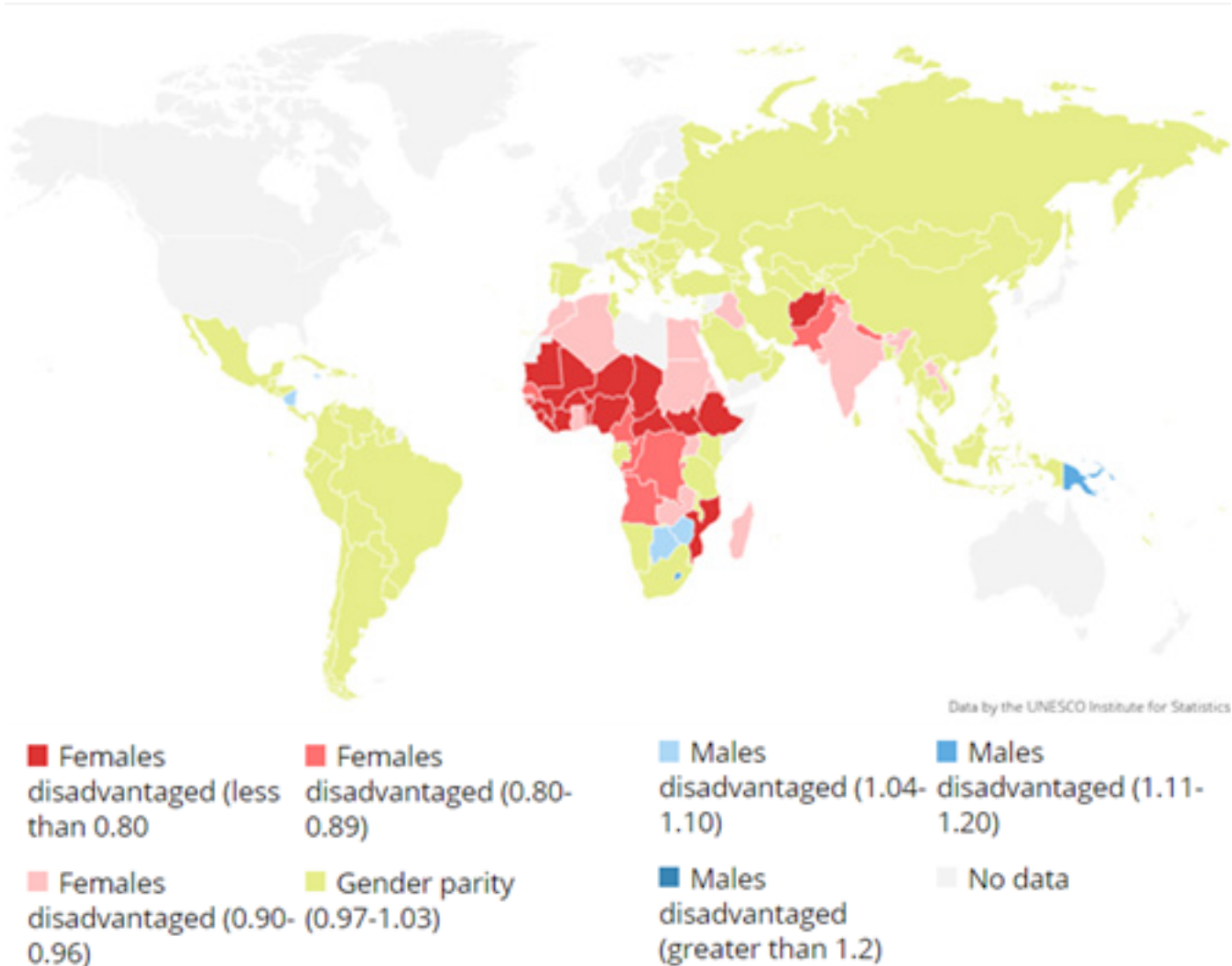
¹⁰ UNESCO (2012). *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2012—Youth and Skills: Putting Education to Work*. Paris; UNESCO (2013). *The Global Learning Crisis: Why Every Child Deserves a Quality Education*. Paris; UNESCO (2016). *Global Education Monitoring Report 2016—Education for People and Planet: Creating Sustainable Futures for All*. Paris.

¹¹ United Nations (2018). *World Youth Report*. New York: United Nations Headquarters.



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Figure 4.
Youth/adult literacy rate, 2016



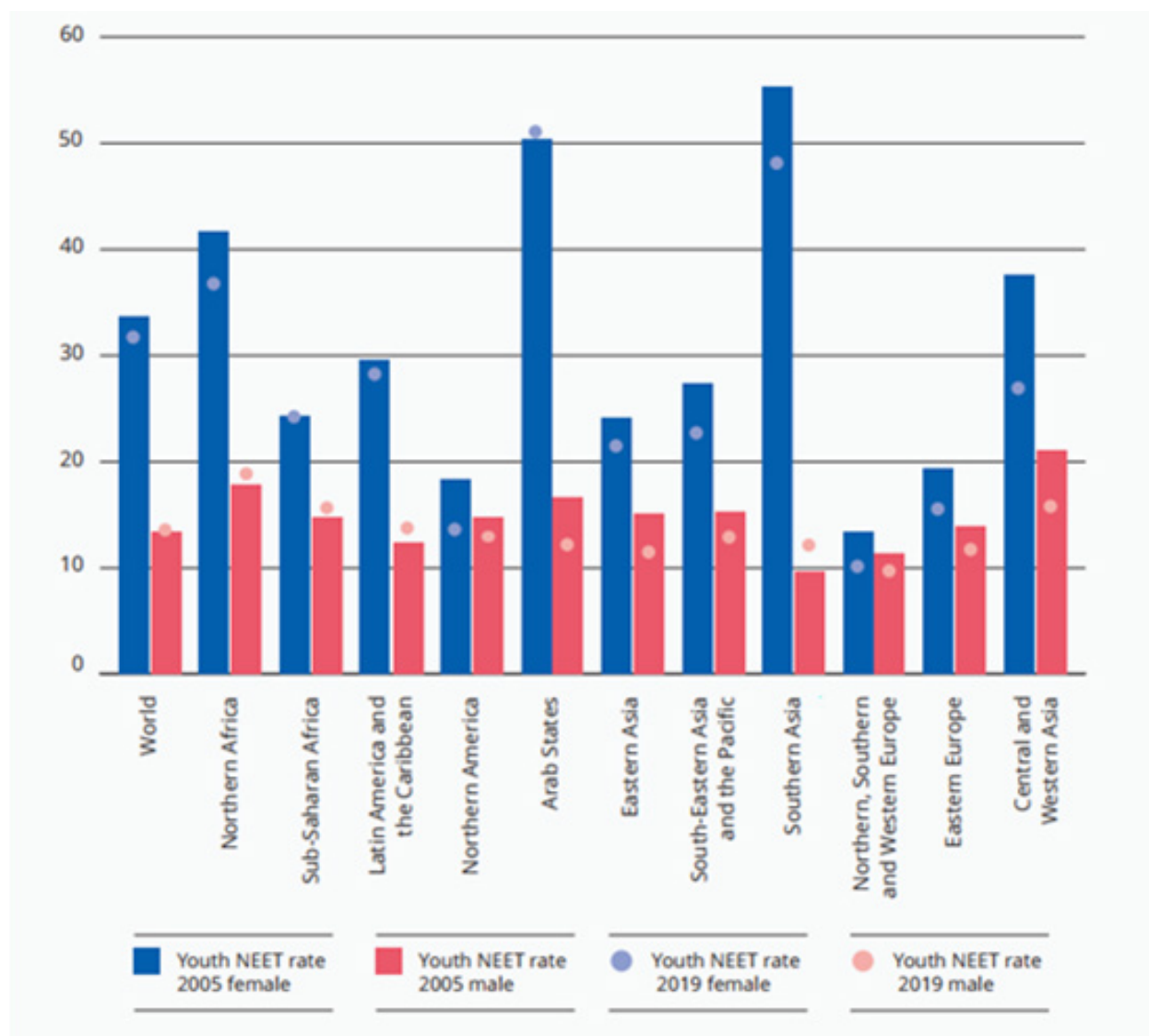
Source: World Bank, Women, Business, and the Law 2020 Report



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Figure 5.

Youth NEET rates (neither in employment nor in education or training in the youth population), 2005-2019



Source: International Labour Organization (2020). Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020.



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Case Study: İzmir¹²

The main objective of the program entitled “Job Factory” (Meslek Fabrikası) is to empower unemployed youth and women. Furthermore, Job Factory aims to collaborate with public vocational high schools in order to improve their organizational capacity. The larger objective of the program is to lead vulnerable and disadvantaged groups into local business enterprises by educating them in line with the relevant stakeholders’ preferences. The İzmir Metropolitan Municipality also has projections to found the first university specializing exclusively in agriculture in Turkey, so that the comparative economic advantages of İzmir could be maximised through the active collaboration of academia, city government and the business community.

Case Study: Portugal¹³

In Portugal, the Empreende Já program has been created and regulated under the Resolution of the Council of Ministers, which approved the National Implementation Plan. Youth Guarantee (NIP-GJ), as part of a measure of the National Youth Plan, refers to the strategic objective of “Promoting the activation and sustainable integration into the labour market of unemployed young people, including through the creation of the own job”. The program was developed into two editions (2016-2018), with the main objectives:

Promoting an entrepreneurial culture centered on creativity and innovation by supporting the development of projects aimed at setting up companies or social economy entities;

Support the training of young NEETs through training by increasing their employability levels; and

- Support the formation of companies or social economy entities; and support job creation by and for young NEETs.

It was a program of relevant local interest, as the evaluation of each project always took into consideration the community where young people wanted to implement their business project or association (for the evaluation of this criterion it was relevant if the entity that would be constituted would produce goods or services using local providers as well as whether the entity would provide a useful service to the community).

Young people with selected projects for six months received for six months a grant of IAS 1.65 (about EUR 700), financial support for up to 250 hours, tutoring for up to 30 hours and personal accident insurance. After these six months and upon evaluation of the acquired knowledge and the Business Plan presented, the projects selected for implementation received 10,000.00 EUR.

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¹² İzmir Metropolitan Municipality. <https://www.ibbmleslekfabrikasi.com/?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>

¹³ <https://juventude.gov.pt/emprego/empreende-ja/paginas/empreende-ja.aspx>



Challenges and Opportunities

Case Study: Portugal

The 182 constituted entities were associated with the (direct) creation of 202 jobs. After about a year and six months (because we are talking about two editions of the program) about the constitution, 172 entities (94.5 percent survival rate) and 192 jobs (95 percent income rate) are preserved. Looking at the remaining participants in the EJÁ (and not just those who took action 2), 10.2 percent are, at the time of the last control, in education or training processes,

57.1 percent integrated in the market. 32.7 percent returned to a NEET situation (excluded from education, training or employment). From these results we look at possible contributions of the measure with a view to “achieved changes”:

- The contribution to a (notable) decrease in youth unemployment: from 31.95 percent in 2015 (year of application) to 20.30 percent in 2018;
- The contribution to raising the level of employability (read as a young person's potential to integrate into the labour market) of young people who participated in the program (through the acquisition / development of skills and experience).

Case Study: Saudi Arabia

In Saudi Arabia, more than 50 percent of the Kingdom's population is under the age 25. This makes the influence of an empowered youth majority on the future of national development of Saudi Arabia of great relevance and importance. Today, the leadership is focused on fostering creativity, dynamism and youthful innovation, steering away from stagnation and corruption. From a survey carried out on a thousand Saudi citizens, a total of 84 percent believe that youth empowerment positively impacts cross-sectoral national development, vital to the Kingdom that is transitioning and transforming into an economy less dependent on oil revenues and more dependent on economic diversification.

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Challenges and Opportunities

Case Study: Saudi Arabia

Saudi Youth Corps is an initiative that aims to strengthen the community engagement levels of youth of Saudi citizens. This initiative is designed to create an organization that supports the youth with opportunities to cause change and impact in their communities with the use of tools that include: projects designed and developed by the initiative itself or community projects in partnership with community partners; regular leadership trainings conducted for members of the initiative; and a mentorship program where senior Youth Corps member and alumni coach junior members and new recruits.

On youth entrepreneurship, the Misk Global Forum Entrepreneurship World Cup (EWC) was launched in 2019 to be the largest global entrepreneurship competition in the world. The Misk Global Forum was established by the Kingdom's Crown Prince to discover, develop and empower young people in Saudi Arabia, and beyond to become active participants in the future economy. The international EWC initiative was hosted by the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) for the global finalists' event, where six out of 100 were Saudi youth finalists. Today, EWC is a network of around 187 countries and more than 100,000 entrepreneurs.

Another recent initiative is the Saudi Young Leaders Exchange Program 2020 (SYLEP 2020) is a three-week multi-phased leadership program that will be held from July 1-21, 2020, in the United States for 40 undergraduate Saudi students or recently graduated university students between the ages of 21-26. The theme of SYLEP for 2020 is "S.T.E.A.M.": science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics. SYLEP 2020 seeks to build leadership skills, civic responsibility, appreciation for cultural diversity, and community engagement and volunteerism among Saudi university students. Students will also be taught how individuals, non-governmental organizations, and government entities address community needs through public-private partnerships.

With a young leader next in line to rule the Kingdom and the already vivid groundwork that is being prepared focusing on the future and power of the youth through the series of different initiatives and programs, the building and strengthening of the community, social, and political roles of the youth is expected to continue and weave into the policies and culture of the Kingdom for several years ahead.



Challenges and Opportunities

Technology and the Prosperity of Youth

Developments in the field of technology have produced multifaceted consequences as regards to the prosperity of youth, paving the way to both novel opportunities and challenges. In line with the dramatic changes in production, trade, transportation and management systems under the circumstances of a globalized economy, technological innovation has had impacts on the nature of work. More specifically, the advance of Information and Communication Technologies has both created novel types of jobs and changed the required skill sets. At a first glance, young persons, who are usually more accustomed to such technological changes and eager to explore and use them in their everyday life practices, seem to be in an advantageous position in comparison with adults. Through adopting digital techniques into their labour process, youth has the potential to gain the upper hand in increasingly competitive labour markets.

Technological innovation, however, should not be taken as a neutral factor, as it requires mobilizing financial and other kinds of resources to acquire the novel skills it demands to utilize effectively. Even though young persons are better positioned

than their senior counterparts due to their aptitudes and capacities, many of them face challenges in terms of obligatory retraining programmes. Since they mostly do not have an established position in labour markets, it is more likely that they experience issues in navigating the challenges posed by skills development and are thus excluded from the opportunities technological innovation creates. Moreover, given the tendency in industry for technological automation to render increasingly larger sections of the labour force redundant, a substantial decrease in demand for labour in particular industries seems to have more devastating repercussions on young men and women. In brief, technological innovation and automation are putting youth under more pressure than adults that have not had such dramatic experiences at earlier stages of their life cycles. One may suggest that the issue of redundancy due to technological innovation is a long-seated problem that the working population has had to adapt to at least since the earlier decades of the industrial revolution. Yet, it should be noted that the challenges born out of the latest developments are unprecedented in terms of scale, quantity and modality.



Challenges and Opportunities

As of today, prospective economic dislocation relating to technological innovation and automation has produced a potential surplus labor force not only in conventional industries, such as manufacturing, but also in agriculture and services. Therefore, currently youth must navigate the challenges of swiftly changing labour markets in fields as disparate as legal practice and academia, to care labour, and low-skill service jobs. This paradoxical nature of the results of technological automation creates dramatic impacts, prospects and challenges not only for those employed in manufacturing, but also for the overwhelming majority of the youth. It would be misleading to assume the impacts of technology are identical in terms of regional and national contexts. Even though the gap between developed and developing countries, in terms of the technological infrastructure, is diminishing, access to technological tools remains an issue that must be acknowledged by policymakers in order to alleviate the economic exclusion faced by many young persons living in extreme poverty all around the world.

The following explanation from a recent International Labour Organization report captures the multidimensionality of the matter policymakers have to cope with:¹⁴

Many high-income countries have set up systems for collecting big data by linking databases on jobseekers and registered vacancies, as well as by gathering data on elements such as job matching, unemployment insurance, training,

wages, benefits and compensation for industrial accidents and occupational diseases. New technologies have also been widely adopted by public employment services in developing and emerging countries, albeit at a lower level: mostly in job intermediation platforms. In some cases, new technologies are being used to look beyond qualifications in job matching. In Flanders (Belgium), artificial intelligence is used to match jobseekers with job offers on the basis of their skills, location and preferences, and they have an app called the “Digital Advisor” to help school-leavers improve their job interview skills through online teleconference sessions. Estonia is a notable example of the increasing use of new technologies in public employment services, as it is part of an “e-government” environment that relies on the secure Internet-based data exchange. A digital signature allows all citizens to log on to a common data platform where they can access most public services, including employment services.

Consequently, given the dramatic depth and pace of the changes spurred by technological innovation and automation, policymakers must address the ways in which institutional environments and policy sets are revised so that young workers are rendered more resilient against the distressing effects of technological advancements such as job loss, economic exclusion, income inequality, and increased poverty. On that score, youth education may have a life changing impact as long as it creates novel systems that are able to undertake structural changes, providing youth with the required capacity, skills and mindset.

¹⁴ International Labour Organization (2020). Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020. Geneva: International Labour Office, p. 131. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_737648.pdf



Challenges and Opportunities

Case Study: Helsinki¹⁵

Digitalents Helsinki enables young people to participate in an inspiring community that creates innovation and builds expertise through experimentation. This involves, for example, coding, software development, game development, graphic design, new media, service design and testing of new technologies. Participants make commissioned work for businesses partners of the project. Concepts, products and branding are created and tested with the help of professionals and mentors from the ICT and digital media industries. Digitalents Helsinki is a joint venture with local businesses developed by the City of Helsinki. The project is located at the Maria01 start-up campus and brings together aspiring youth, established professionals, businesses and educational organizations; the common denominator being a digital frame of thinking and creative drive.

The background for Digitalents Helsinki is based on the San Francisco model, developed when the research projects of the Stanford and Berkley universities, together with garage companies, created the greatest developments the digital industry has ever seen. The basis of companies such as Google, Apple and Intel were created at this time. The aim of the project is to provide young people the required skills to obtain employment with the participating companies or on the open job market. Recognizing the value of youth involvement in the development and creation of digital platforms and creative environments is key to the project. The focus group consists of people between the ages of 18 and 29. Digitalents Helsinki consists of an intensive academy period (3 months) teaching tools and methods, followed by real customer projects deepening the learning in practice, motivating and orienting participants to a growth mindset, productive teamwork, and independent problem-solving. Digitalents Helsinki also organizes events, where young people can establish a professional network and learn from experienced professionals.

Digitalents Helsinki maintains a continuous dialog with ICT companies to keep up to date in this fast-changing industry. The lead agency for the project is the City of Helsinki, which provides both resources and financing. The project is administered jointly by the Economic Development, Culture and Leisure and Education divisions of the city council. Additional government support is provided by the Public Employment and Business Services, and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland. The city works collaboratively with local ICT and media companies. 100+ young people have completed the program with a success rate of 65 percent, either employed or moved on to further education.

¹⁵ use: urban, sustainability, exchange. <https://use.metropolis.org/case-studies/digitalents-helsinki>. See also, Digital Skills Map. <https://digiskillsmap.com/en/projects/digitalents-helsinki>



Challenges and Opportunities

Case Study: United Arab Emirates¹⁶

The “One Million Arab Coders” initiative, launched in the United Arab Emirates in October 2017, seeks to provide free training in coding and web development to 1 million young Arabs. The aim is to jump-start the modern technology sector in the Arab world and ensure that it stays up to date. The program consists of three phases lasting two years. The first phase involves registering on its official website as a student or tutor. Prospective students are asked about their motivations and aspirations so that the most appropriate courses for them can be identified. The second phase is a three-month online course covering various aspects of web development (e.g. mobile apps, front-end and full-stack web development, data analysis). The third stage consists of more specialized courses and vocational training. There are monetary incentives to encourage students to persevere with the training and complete it, which is always a major problem in online education. Because all the training is provided online, the program is attractive to young people who have study-, work- or family-related responsibilities. The main challenges are targeting and ensuring that participants complete all the courses they have signed up for.

Political Aspects of Youth Empowerment

Despite the dramatic demographic changes that have had redefined the social and economic circumstances youth experience on a global scale, it is evident that youth are vastly underrepresented in political institutions both nationally and locally. Administrative bodies, both nationally and locally, demonstrate a lack of ability to include the demands of youth and open up satisfactory spaces of representation. According to the UNDP, young people between the ages of 15 and 25 constitute a fifth of the world’s population.¹⁷ Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) reports that people between the ages of 20 and 44 make up 57 percent of the world’s voting age population but only 26 percent of the world’s members of parliament (MPs). Young people under 30 represent only 1.9 percent of the world’s MPs, and

more than 80 percent of the world’s upper houses of parliament have no MPs aged under 30.¹⁸ Therefore young men and women mostly find themselves marginalized from mainstream politics and decision-making processes, and are often disillusioned with political leadership and political institutions. Participation in town hall type meetings, planning and design charrettes and policy consultations have, however, a mixed record in terms of their long-term costs and benefits at citywide level.

Even though young people seem to express considerable reluctance to interact with the conventional methods of political participation, it is evident that they are more endowed with alternative tools to access the public sphere through active use of new technologies and new forms of political activism.

¹⁶ International Labour Organization (2020). Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020. Geneva: International Labour Office. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_737648.pdf.

¹⁷ United Nations Development Programme. (n.d.) Enhancing Youth Political Participation throughout the Electoral Cycle: A Good Practice Guide. New York.

¹⁸ Inter-Parliamentary Union (2016). Youth Participation in National Parliaments: 2016. Geneva.



Challenges and Opportunities

As has become much more pronounced with their overt participation in campaigns concerning ecological issues, or in democratic demonstrations during the Arab Spring, youth explore novel and creative ways of political engagement in order to draw the eye of the national authorities to their demands.

Therefore, understanding what young people care about can be an important first step towards engaging with them effectively (the environment can be considered one of these issues, for instance). Responding to their demands and enforcing their basic and vital human and political rights requires opening up spaces and adopting strategies for the endorsement of youth political participation and engagement. When participatory processes work well, a strong sense of ownership and buy-in can be greatly enhanced, and the decision-making process can achieve greater transparency and accountability. These processes tend to work best at the neighbourhood or district level, where the issues at stake have already been on the agenda of grass roots and community organizations for some time. That is to say, the issue is not merely one of participation in planning or policy formulation, it is one of enabling and empowering youth to

make decisions that make a visible and tangible difference to public life and to have the opportunity to engage in life-long learning.

Political parties can still be important pathways towards formal political structures for youth political engagement. But to establish inclusive policies and mechanisms that effectively support the civic engagement of young people, it is important to better understand the perceptions, voices and demands of youth, their degree of engagement with formal political structures, and the capacities of youth-led organizations, networks and informal groupings to support the civic engagement and participation of young people.¹⁹

New ways of social and political involvement appear to be emerging especially among young people. Technology can be the enabler of the process, which involves reaching youth, motivating them to be part of decision making, and giving them the power to decide on new policies to address their problems. Thus, understanding what young people care about can also be an important first step towards engaging with them effectively. Therefore, the redefinition of micro-scale democratic participatory mechanisms based on new technologies is needed.

¹⁹ United Nations Development Programme. (2014) UNDP Youth Strategy, 2014-17. New York.



Challenges and Opportunities

Case Study: Boston²⁰

Through the participatory budgeting program entitled “Youth Lead the Change”, youth received the opportunity to collect ideas for capital projects, distil those ideas into concrete proposals, hold a citywide vote to determine which projects would get funded, and directly determine how \$1 million should be spent to improve Boston for everyone. Boston’s mayor sought a way to empower youth (age 12 to 25) to become active participants in the civic affairs of their city government. His solution involved a process of participatory budgeting. This process empowered youth to get engaged and indicated that they can affect real change in their communities. This initiative promotes civic engagement, changes social behaviours, increases trust and communication between youth and local government, and promotes education on budgetary and democratic processes. The goal was to teach youth about city building and the budgeting process, and to gain leadership and professional skills. Boston became the first American city in which youth have been empowered to decide on a portion of their city’s capital budget. Over 450 ideas were generated, over 1,500 young people cast a vote, 14 projects made it to the ballot and seven were selected by the youth as winners for implementation. The goals of Boston’s Participatory Budgeting project are to:

- Help ensure the capital plan reflects the priorities, interests and energy of Boston youth.
- Teach youth about the city-building (and budgeting) process as well as provide education around the innovative use of crowdsourcing platforms.
- Engage future leaders in developing and planning City of Boston infrastructure to allow for community building and increased community ownership.
- Engage populations that are traditionally underserved such as homeless youth, disconnected youth, those from low-income families or with socio-economic barriers.
- Foster increased partnerships between the City of Boston and Youth Serving agencies.
- Main results of the Youth Lead the Change initiative include:
 - Civic Engagement and Open Government: Over 1,500 young people cast a vote. For many it was their first time engaging in a voting process.
 - Community Process, Economic Development and Contribution to City Planning: Education regarding the city budget process and capital planning took place at all idea collection assemblies. Throughout the process, over 450 ideas have been submitted to improve Boston. Ideas not feasible for execution through this process were forwarded to various city departments to take under consideration for future projects and planning.

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²⁰ use: urban, sustainability, exchange. <https://use.metropolis.org/case-studies/youth-lead-the-change-participatory-budgeting-boston>



Challenges and Opportunities

Case Study: Boston²¹

- Youth Investment in Environment and City Infrastructure: Youth Lead the Change encouraged residents to review their communities and consider projects based on need, feasibility, and sustainability. Projects were designed to improve communities, public safety, outside environments and school environments.
- Reduce Barriers to Participation: Material was translated into different languages as often as possible and idea collection assemblies were held in accessible venues. Target areas included populations that are traditionally underserved. Text messaging and online idea gathering was used to reach those that were unable to attend assemblies.
- Participants cited a broader awareness of needs in other neighbourhoods throughout the city and a better understanding of government processes and democracy in general. Many participants reported gaining specific skills including leadership, teamwork, networking, communication and professionalism. Many participants also expressed feelings of power or control or reported that their voices had truly been heard.

Social Aspects of Youth Empowerment

The social dimension of youth empowerment requires that the needs and demands of youth segments that are not visible at first glance are included in the policy making process. For example, young people who are not involved in employment, or who are not in formal education, can be considered in this category. Similarly, it should not be overlooked that specific youth sub-groups such as young women, LGBTQI youth, ethnic minorities, or refugees may each have particular issues, needs and demands. These diverging demands and needs can be met by redefining micro-scaled democratic participatory mechanisms in a more institutional context and on larger scales.

Marginalized segments of youth such as women, LGBTQIs, rural or indigenous persons, and displaced or refugee youth often benefit more poorly from formal education systems, that is,

they face problems in acquiring skills that would help them realize their aspirations. Despite the relative advancement in the global level of school attendance, such groups still face barriers to accessing opportunities through formal educational systems, and experience problems in terms of the quality of education. For instance, globally, the female-to-male literacy ratio for young persons aged between 15 and 24 (0.85 by 2016) suggests that formal education still needs reforms to alleviate such discrepancies. Even though there has been a substantial improvement in terms of gender parity at the upper secondary education level in many regions and countries, young women still have to confront peculiar barriers in the field of education. Apart from structural impediments stemming from patriarchal values and poverty-related conditions, early marriage and pregnancy contribute to further excluding young women from schooling.

²¹ UNESCO (2016). Global Education Monitoring Report 2016—Education for People and Planet: Creating Sustainable Futures for All. Paris.



Challenges and Opportunities

As regards tertiary education participation levels, regional differences still remain sizable. While the gross enrolment rate in Europe and the North American region is around 75 percent, it is dramatically lower in Southern Asia (23 percent) and sub-Saharan Africa (8 percent).²² Unsurprisingly, gender disparities and income inequalities do have direct impacts on tertiary enrolment levels.

The same study indicates that the gap between women and men is time sensitive, that is, the enrolment gap between men and women widens by the time they complete their post-secondary education. It would not be misleading to assume that such gender-based discrepancies would have a direct negative impact on the prosperity of youth in a globalized world economy wherein labour markets are inclined to be much more competitive and polarized. Another study by the United Nations suggests that gender-based violence deeply affects education attendance and quality.²³ It is estimated that one-third of women worldwide have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at some point in their lives. Given that much gender-based violence occurs in the home, violence is a significant factor that has direct repercussions on women's experiences of education. Gender-based violence is also a pressing matter for LGBTQIs. For the latter, psychological, physical and sexual violence are common, and thus do have impacts on educational attainment. It is also evident that youth with disabilities face more problems in terms of school attendance and attainment than those without disabilities, as is possible to trace through figures relating to dropout rates, illiteracy rates, and school progress. While educational institutions

specifically designed for children with mental and intellectual deficiencies are not common in many parts of the world, those who are able to attend such institutions must cope with the poor quality of education due to lack of technical, physical and educational capacity in such facilities.

It is an overarching fact that women are much more disadvantaged than men in terms of employment patterns, no matter at what age they are. Such disadvantages are much more pronounced for young women. On a global scale, young women do suffer more than young men from economic and social problems related to unemployment, even though women's level of labour force participation is globally much lower. For instance, in the Arab states and the North African region, unemployment rates for young women are higher (40 and 38.7 percent, respectively) than the corresponding rates for young men (21.4 and 26 percent).²⁶ This discrepancy might be attributed to women's labour market decisions that are often shaped by patriarchal norms and restrictions (Figure 6). In countries, where unemployment among young women is high and the gender gap is remarkable, it is also the case that young women are often excluded from opportunities available in private industries dominated by men, and hence provided limited options in public sector jobs. Such social norms and restrictions do also avoid women expanding their employment opportunities, and eventually lead them out of labour markets, as young women are forced to conduct unpaid care labour (i.e. domestic work, care of children and elderly, etc.).

²² UNESCO (2016). Global Education Monitoring Report 2016—Education for People and Planet: Creating Sustainable Futures for All. Paris.

²³ UNESCO (2015). The World's Women 2015: Trends and Statistics. Paris.

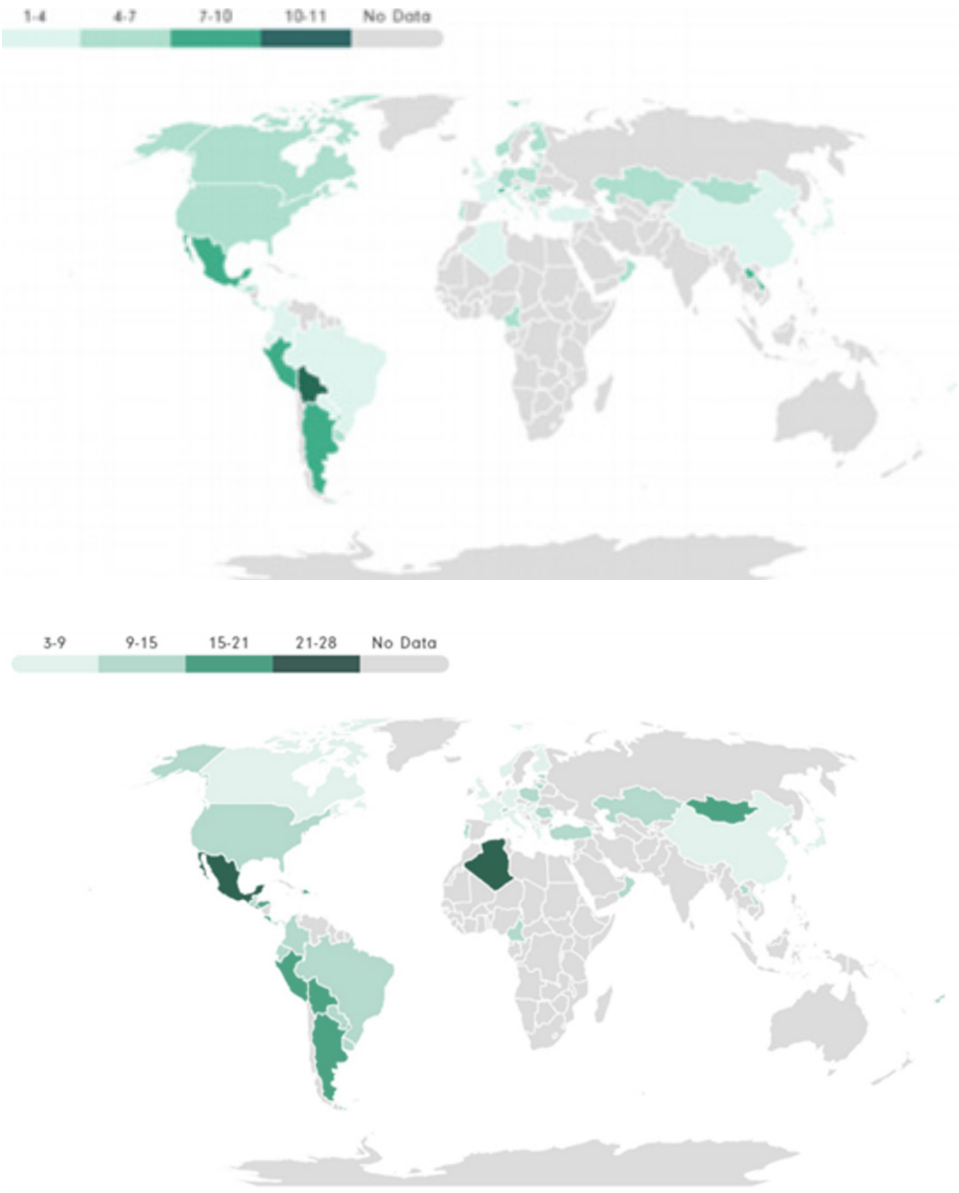
²⁴ United Nations (2018). World Youth Report. New York: United Nations Headquarters.



Challenges and Opportunities

Figure 6.

Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic chores and care work, by sex, age and location (age 15-24)



Source: The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women



Challenges and Opportunities

The educational disadvantages that we mention above produce employment issues for young persons with disabilities as well. While the unemployment rate among such persons is considerably higher than it is for those without disabilities, those who are employed have to navigate challenges such as job insecurity, lower income and informality. As documented by the International Labour Organization, persons with disabilities are much more inclined to experience poverty and the lack of access to decent work.²⁵ Whereas unemployment among young persons with disabilities is one major problem that is partly because of structural impediments regarding education. Finding quality employment in accordance with their skills is another problem that those who are economically active have to deal with.

As a United Nations study suggests, young people are involved in military conflict both as victims and as perpetrators of violence, and are thus affected by the devastation of wars and military conflicts more than other sections of the population.²⁶ They are disproportionately affected by the emotional and psychological stress of wars and displacement. As regards their chances of building a prosperous life, this burden creates deep-seated disadvantages as they are usually forced out of formal educational systems. Moreover, the severe economic devastation brought by wars and conflict situations

undermines their prospects to obtain decent work or build up a career in the long run.

Last but not least, migration-related issues have substantial impacts on the livelihood and prosperity of youth. For young men and women, the migration journey not only denotes economic difficulties, social exclusion and political repression, but also consists of hopes of decent work and a secure life. From the point of view of those who migrate within a country or across countries, migration is seen as a prospect for creating better conditions to avoid widespread unemployment, job insecurity and working poverty problems youth have to face more than adults. Additionally, migrant-receiving countries, particularly developed countries with an aging population, often benefit economically from this movement. The presence of mutual benefits however does not usually translate into a positive political climate, and rather produces social, economic and political frictions and collisions between host and migrant communities, giving room for extremist, radical and hate speeches and practices, which are feeding into populist interventions and put at stake social cohesion. The rising discontent, in turn, endangers the livelihood of migrants, more particularly that of young migrants, as they have to cope with pressing issues in labour markets combined with problems of social exclusion and disenfranchisement.

²⁵ International Labour Organization (2015). Decent Work for Persons with Disabilities: Promoting Rights in the Global Development Agenda. Geneva: International Labour Office.

²⁶ United Nations (2016). World Youth Report on Youth Civic Engagement. New York: United Nations Headquarters.



Challenges and Opportunities

Case Study: Bangalore²⁷

India's landmark Right to Education Act shows the country's increasing investment in, and emphasis on, free education for all. The goals are to improve the school system, quality of teaching and student attendance. At the primary school level, significant strides have been made in enrolment, particularly in urban areas. However, many at-risk youth forego secondary school, opting instead to work or attend night school. If they do continue their education, their job prospects rarely stretch beyond avenues they have seen their parents or local community members take: tailors, carpenters, drivers, maids or factory workers.

Mentor Together, a program launched in Bangalore in 2009, has set out to expand these options. By matching mentees with mentors, the organization helps young people understand where their potential is, how they should choose a career and how they could stand out. Mentors are recruited through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs and are matched with mentees, youth from government-run or NGO homes or from disadvantaged areas in Bangalore. Criterion for matching involves many factors, including living within navigable distances given traffic issues in the city and knowing the same language. Many mentees come from villages and may not even know Hindi, the national language. Mentors go through a rigorous selection and training process that "orients them on the styles of mentoring, trust and relationship building techniques and the program rules." Mentor Together has additional resources for mentors to access, depending on the agreed upon goals of the pair. The focal points range from life skills to career and academic planning to community problem-solving. The mentoring program shows that education is not the silver bullet in changing the lives of disadvantaged youth. Young people need to learn how to translate their education into a better future and to see opportunities beyond their own neighbourhoods. They need role models who can encourage and excite them. And they need a map: doable steps that mentees can take toward realizing their goal, but only with little guidance in the right direction.

The World after COVID-19

Even though it is not currently possible to know the long-term consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, yet it would not be misleading to state that it has already exacerbated the existing problems and increased the necessity to take action for youth empowerment. While children and youth are not the face of this pandemic, its broader impacts on children and youth risk being catastrophic and among the most lasting consequences for societies as a whole. In addition

to poor children and youth, there are other vulnerable populations for whom the effects of the pandemic risk being especially severe and whose protection warrants special attention. A billion people worldwide live in slums and informal settlements without adequate housing. Standard physical distancing and lockdown measures risk accelerating the spread of the pandemic among these populations, who often lack piped water and hand-washing facilities at home and rely on communal sanitation facilities.

²⁷ urb.im: for just and inclusive cities. <http://www.urb.im/c130805>



Challenges and Opportunities

Those same measures again risk destroying the livelihoods of these people, with severe effects for their children. The enforcement of movement restrictions and physical distancing measures can serve as a cover for discrimination and violence against these and other vulnerable groups. Of the world's 13 million child refugees, those who reside in camps or crowded settlements face similar challenges. They, along with 1 million child asylum-seekers and 17 million internally displaced children worldwide, are among those most likely to be excluded from social protection, and to be negatively affected by movement restrictions that may keep them from obtaining a more secure status. Youth with disabilities are among those most dependent on face-to-face services – including health, education and protection – which have been suspended as part of social distancing and lockdown measures. They are the least likely to benefit from distance learning solutions. Youth living in institutions and detention – including child migrants – face a different kind of vulnerability. Their continued care is easily put in jeopardy at a time of crisis. Youth living in places of active conflict also deserve urgent support. Contested authority over these settings poses self-evident challenges for instituting measures to control and mitigate the spread of the virus. Lockdown measures risk ensnaring children and youth in unsafe situations.

More than 1.5 billion students are out of school. Widespread job and income loss and economic insecurity among families are likely to increase rates of child labour, sexual exploitation, teenage

pregnancy, and child marriage. Stresses on families, particularly those living under quarantines and lockdowns, are increasing the incidence of domestic violence. As the global death toll from COVID-19 increases, large numbers of youth will be orphaned and vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. For many, the COVID-19 crisis will mean limited or no education, or falling further behind their peers. More than 91 percent of the world's students are out of school, due to school closures in at least 188 countries.²⁸ The crisis has exposed vast disparities in countries' emergency preparedness, Internet access, and availability of learning materials. Although much focus has turned to online learning platforms, many public schools are not set up to use them or do not have the technology and equipment to provide online teaching. Nearly half of the world has no Internet access.²⁹

Added family stresses related to the COVID-19 crisis – including job loss, isolation, excessive confinement, and anxieties over health and finances – heighten the risk of violence in the home, including both between partners and by caregivers against children. The United Nations secretary-general has reported a “horrific” global surge in domestic-based violence linked to COVID-19 and calls to helplines in some countries have reportedly doubled. Child abuse is less likely to be detected during the COVID-19 crisis, as child protection agencies have reduced monitoring to avoid spreading the virus, and teachers are less able to detect signs of ill treatment with schools closed.

²⁸ United Nations (2020), Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Children. New York: 11-12.

²⁹ Human Rights Watch. “COVID-19’s Devastating Impact on Children”, April 9, 2020, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/04/09/covid-19s-devastating-impact-children>.



Challenges and Opportunities

Experts estimate that the global total of COVID-19 deaths could eventually reach 10 to 40 million, which will inevitably leave many children without one or both parents or other caregivers.³⁰ Orphaned children and youth are particularly vulnerable to trafficking and other exploitation, including sexual exploitation, forced begging, and selling goods on the streets. Older children often drop out of school to try to support younger siblings.

The global economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 crisis, including massive global job losses, is likely to increase rates of child labor and child marriage. Globally, an estimated 152 million children were already engaged in child labor

before the COVID-19 pandemic, with 73 million engaged in hazardous work. Research has shown that child labour is highly associated with financial shock experienced by a family, such as illness, disability, or a parent's loss of employment. The COVID-19 crisis also heightens the risk of online child sexual exploitation. Europol has reported that law enforcement partners are reporting "increased online activity by those seeking child abuse material," as a result of COVID-19. Children are spending more time online due to school shutdowns and may be anxious or lonely because of isolation and confinement, making them more vulnerable to online predators.

³⁰ Human Rights Watch. "COVID-19's Devastating Impact on Children", April 9, 2020, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/04/09/covid-19s-devastating-impact-children>.

The background of the slide is a dark green color. On the left side, there is a large, curved, lighter green shape. In the center, the word "Recommendations" is written in white. Above and below the word are two horizontal white lines, each with short vertical bars at its ends. The background also features a faint, semi-transparent image of a hand holding a pen over a document, with a magnifying glass positioned over the document.

Recommendations



Recommendations

Youth Participation in Decision Making

As the processes of demographic transition and urbanization on a global scale has made the consideration of youth an increasingly urgent task, policymakers at various levels need to find innovative ways to take young persons' needs, demands and methods into account. Overcoming the challenges faced by the youth today requires adopting a novel perspective suitable to strengthen the ties between young people and the relevant institutions, and other segments of society. In supporting the development and independence of young individuals, policymakers need to identify a creative and sustainable model that young men and women of various social backgrounds can take as an example.

Accordingly, National Governments should:

- Create synergies of institutional cooperation at international, national and local levels, so that young men and women can realize their potential to become active citizens in a secure and peaceful society, to know their rights and responsibilities, and to feel safe and supported in a world characterized by multifaceted ambiguities.

While local governments should:

- Promote energetically participatory governance, where youth can be supported in all civic dimensions.

Promoting Active Citizenship

Currently, against the backdrop of mounting instability, social unrest and political mobilization, policymakers and administrative bodies, which tend to demonstrate a lack of ability to include the demands of youth, need to promote active citizenship among youth and open up satisfactory spaces of representation. Promoting active citizenship, by definition, includes formulating policies and institutions to further the social empowerment of young men and women.

Accordingly, national governments should:

- Promote and facilitate the inclusion of all young people in policy formulation, including those from minority and vulnerable groups, by establishing a strategic approach for encouraging youth participation practices in all issues that have an impact on them.

On the other hand, local governments should

- Support and foster innovative approaches to promote active citizenship of young people through establishing structures that will enable effective engagement mechanisms for public decision making; funding disruptive proposals addressing youth ideas and needs and encouraging best practices exchanges and peer learning.



Recommendations

- Design autonomous, localized, evidence-based and practically sustainable policy packages to include the youth more actively in decision-making and the implementation stages of policy. Novel technological tools can become the enablers of this process, which ultimately aims to reach youth and motivate them to be part of governance systems, by giving them the power to decide on new policies for their problems. In establishing structures that would enable the active participation of youth, city-level initiatives assume a particular priority in an increasingly urbanizing world.
- Promote service learning as a key lever to encourage youth to actively participate in their local community. Universities and schools could be encouraged to foster service learning as an important element of youth's learning journey.

Educating for the Future

In a world where the longstanding dynamics of globalization, technological innovation, and the transformation of work are producing novel and challenging consequences for youth, policy-makers should create suitable conditions for the physical, mental, and moral development of young men and women, and develop ways to enhance their abilities and skills in line with such changes. Since employment is the foundation of any prosperous country, and while the relationship between education and employment has become much more pronounced recently, education must be recalibrated so that young people can

put their skills to productive use under shifting circumstances. In addition to formal educational systems, national and local governments can put effort into refashioning the existing social infrastructure, such as youth education centers, cultural houses, and education camps, by benefiting from technological innovations. Such tools should be oriented towards providing specialized, task-oriented, sustainable, and creative consultancy services to young individuals. These institutional and organizational measures must be attuned to the particular and diverging issues, needs and priorities of specific youth sub-groups, such as young women, LGBTQI youth, ethnic minorities, or refugees, in a way that ultimately supports anti-discrimination actions.

As such, National Governments should:

- Provide incentives to universities and schools to promote community-service learning as a key lever to encourage youth to actively participate in their localities as an important element of their learning journey.
- Bridge the technological gap in vulnerable populations, making the Internet more accessible, and accordingly should promote youth technology centres that would provide access to technological tools.
- Develop equal access to services and opportunities for both genders and minority groups, taking into account their particular needs and demands.



Recommendations

And Local governments should:

- Develop and incentivize youth's participation in lifelong learning programs, outside of formal education, that will allow them to update their skills frequently, particularly technology competencies highly required by employers globally.
- Promote the creation of specialized educational institutions such as Coding Schools, by actively funding them and ensuring equal access for men and women, LGBTQI youth, ethnic minorities, refugees and minority groups.

Improving the Prosperity of Youth

As youth population growth and the economic trends of the post-2008 financial crisis era are producing negative effects that disproportionately affect young people, policy-makers at various levels should present satisfactory responses to the tremendous challenges of the global economy, and improve the living conditions of young people in both developed and developing countries. In order to ensure that young people can lead their daily lives without anxiety for their future, and to empower them in their efforts to navigate the challenges of an increasingly insecure economic life, local and national governments must increase incentives to enhance job availability and the level of employment.

Accordingly, local and national governments need to provide incentives for corporations and SMEs that provide employment opportunities for young people with disabilities and other youth

groups with vulnerabilities. They need to develop tools to bridge the gap (supply and demand) in jobs/education through formal communication schemes with the private sector, academia and local governments. Furthermore, institutional support can be designed and implemented to enhance the financial literacy of youth, which is crucial to encourage them to become entrepreneurs. Notwithstanding the fact that approaches to fostering youth entrepreneurship might vary widely between various economic contexts, policymakers should pursue educational tools and programmes that include basic skill sets such as creating a business plan, running a business, and managing business finance in an effective manner. Again, technological innovations can be used in such efforts to train generations with advanced research and analytical skills, and to encourage young men and women to become infopreneurs.

Accordingly, National Governments should

- Establish structures and promote the development of tools to bridge the gap between the demand and supply of skills needed for employment through formal communication schemes and coordination among the private sector, academia and governments.
- Provide incentives for corporations and SMEs that provide employment opportunities for young people with disabilities and other youth groups with vulnerabilities.



Recommendations

And Local Governments should:

- Secure digital access for young women and girls in an enabled and safe environment by improving infrastructure, including remote and rural areas, ensure access to STEM (science, technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education and training to improve digital skills, and develop gender-sensitive ethical guidelines on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other digital technologies.
- Encourage technology institutions and companies to include women in the research, design, and development of digital technologies.
- Promote youth entrepreneurship by creating programs for youth that will build soft skills needed to thrive in self-employment and provide funding (e.g. seed capital in the form of grants and loans) based on outstanding ideas and scale up potential.
- Offer incentives and targeted programs to increase the number of young women-owned and young women-led companies, including in e-commerce and STEM.
- Incentivize the investment community to incorporate a gender lens in their decision-making across all asset classes and foster the development of gender-responsive business loan officers and investors (including women angel investors and venture capitalists) with a view to increasing women's access to capital.

Improving the Wellbeing of Youth in the Post-Corona Era

Local and national governments, by definition, have the duty of improving the social, physical, and mental wellbeing of young persons by developing

relevant health services and ensuring their access to rehabilitation opportunities. Yet, the latest pandemic has paved the way to novel conditions against which governments at various levels must take immediate and long-term measures, not limited solely to the field of health policies. The effects of COVID-19 on the future development of youth from all angles remain to be measured. Yet, ensuring the availability of resources to manage the current short-term effects on quality of education and the availability of job opportunities for youth is a must.

As such, both National and Local Governments should:

- Assess the long-term consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth development and prepare to support their economic, physical, and mental health needs through strengthening group-specific, comprehensive and sustainable safety nets and social services to alleviate the shattering effects of external shocks. In that regard, providing economic assistance, including cash transfers, to low-income families can be extremely crucial in helping young persons to meet their basic needs without resorting to early marriages, dropping out of school, or working poverty.
- Prioritize efforts to continue education using available technology that should not be taken for granted, given the severe economic discrepancies among the youth.
- Reorient pandemic-related measures in line with the specific needs and conditions of specific youth sub-groups such as young women, LGBTQI youth, ethnic minorities, or refugees.



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