



2024 ECOSOC Youth Forum
**"Youth shaping sustainable and innovative solutions:
Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of crises"**

IDENTIFICATION	
Session title	Youth spark innovation: experiences from Asia and the Pacific of young people championing the Sustainable Development Goals
Session focus	Asia and the Pacific
Session leads	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY), Pacific Youth Council
Session UN co-organizers	International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), International Pharmaceutical Students' Federation (IPSF APRO) and SAARC Youth Platform
BACKGROUND & KEY ISSUES	
<p>In Asia and the Pacific, there are about 705 million young people aged 15 to 24, representing about 15 percent of the region's total population and 60 per cent of the world's youth.</p> <p>As the world rapidly approaches a more dynamic and complex future, something will never change: youth's limitless potential. With major global crises continuing to exacerbate poverty and disparities, a collective and intergenerational solidarity, focusing on the most vulnerable, is needed more than ever. In these challenging times, youth, in particular, are essential innovators and agents of change; their brave ideas, bold action, and genuine excitement and commitment are strong indicators that they are ready to overcome any barriers that stand in the way of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and upholding the overarching promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind.</p> <p>Yet, young people remain at the margins of policymaking. Youth-led innovations tend to be under-resourced and overlooked, and their unique talents, creativity, and entrepreneurial spirit continue to be</p>	

an untapped resource. Young people are essential to realizing inclusive and sustainable development and economic productivity.

Many young people across Asia and the Pacific are struggling to access quality education and decent employment opportunities. Youth employment challenges and persistent poverty force young people to migrate for better opportunities. Often, regular pathways for young people to migrate do not exist. At the same time, countries are affected by brain drain and the exodus of young people from rural areas. Young people are a major driving force for sustainable development in every country and the greatest asset that should not be lost. Furthermore, given the rapid aging of the population in the region, and since the youth of today will be the older persons of tomorrow, it is important to focus on harmonious and supportive intergenerational relations.

It is not just a moral imperative, but an economic necessity to unleash the energy, entrepreneurial spirit, and technological genius of the youth. The green economy offers an opportunity, not only to preserve the environment and increase resilience but also to foster decent youth employment opportunities, young people should have access to the right skills development and entrepreneurial opportunities, combined with supportive policies and effective employment services for connecting job seekers with job opportunities in the green economy. Intergenerational solidarity must ensure that young people can look at the future with hope and they can fulfil their expectations.

Against this backdrop, the Asia-Pacific regional session aims to spark conversation on the most pressing issues from a youth lens and explore youth-led solutions to **Goal 1** (No poverty); **Goal 2** (Zero hunger); **Goal 13** (Climate action); **Goal 16** (Peace, justice, and strong institutions) and **Goal 17** (Partnership for the Goals).

Building on the outcomes of the [2024 Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development \(APFSD\) Youth Forum](#) and the [Youth Climathon: Innovative Solutions for the Acceleration of Climate Action at the 11th APFSD](#), the discussion will highlight the role of young people and young professionals as innovators and will present key recommendations for effective intergenerational, intersectional, and gender-inclusive solutions to accelerate the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION

- To ensure that the views and voices of young people are meaningfully included in the main follow-up and review processes.
- To examine progress, gaps, and challenges in achieving SDGs 1,2,13,16, and 17 in the Asia-Pacific region from a youth lens and propose concrete recommendations to enhance progress, including promoting decent jobs for youth and fostering youth entrepreneurship.
- To highlight youth-led innovations and good practices of youth inclusion and engagement in decision-making.
- To share the [APFSD Youth Call to Action](#) to inform national, regional, and global intergovernmental forums.
- To celebrate youth leadership and allow young people to exchange ideas and forge new partnerships with policymakers and other stakeholders.
- To highlight good practices of intergenerational solidarity between young and older persons.

OVERALL FORMAT/STRUCTURE

Proposed flow:

- Welcome and opening remarks: 5 minutes
- Inspirational talk: 7 minutes
- Fireside chat(s) on Goal 1, 2, 13, 16, and 17 + moderated Q&A: 40 minutes
- APFSD-Youth Call to Action: 5 minutes
- Interventions from the floor: 10 minutes
- Wrap up and closing remarks: 3 minutes

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What progress, gaps, and challenges are there in achieving Goals 1, 2, 13, 16, and 17 in the Asia-Pacific region from a youth lens?
- What are the main youth contributions to Goals 1, 2, 13, 16, and 17, and what concrete, innovative, actions and recommendations are needed to progress?
- How can we foster meaningful and inclusive youth engagement, particularly of the most marginalized in the green economy?
- How can we leverage youth-led innovation and entrepreneurship?
- How do we ensure that disadvantaged groups are accounted for, and their knowledge leveraged to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and contribute to poverty reduction?
- Are there good practices from the region of intergenerational solidarity, building societies of all ages?

NAMES AND TITLES OF SESSION SPEAKERS AND MODERATOR(S)

Introduction and audience engagement (video and online polling): 5 minutes

Master of Ceremony:

- Mr. **Beniam Gebrezghi**, Programme Specialist, Civil Society and Youth, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) beniam.gebrezghi@undp.org

Inspirational talk: 7 minutes

- Mr. **David Chua**, Chief Executive Officer, National Youth Council, Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, Singapore/South-East Asia hasliza_ahmad@nyc.gov.sg

Fireside chats + moderated Q&A: 40 minutes

Guiding questions:

- *What are the areas of progress and challenges from a youth perspective related to SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16, and 17?*
- *What innovative solutions can young people bring for SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16, and 17?*

Moderator:

- Ms. **Mancharee Sangmueang-Skallevold**, Chairperson, International Pharmaceutical Students' Federation (IPSF APRO) chairperson@apro.ipsf.org

Panelists: 3 minutes per 4/5 panelists

- Ms. **Yang Xinmeng**, Key Opinion Leader, China Global Television Network (CGTN) *China/East,*

North-East Asia yang.xinmeng@cgtm.com

- Ms. **Richa Gupta**, co-Founder & CEO of Labhya Foundation richa@labhya.org
- Ms. **Lauren Pollock**, Manager - Youth Voice and Special Projects for Y Australia [Australia/Pacific lauren.pollock@the-y.org.au](mailto:lauren.pollock@the-y.org.au)
- Mr. **Juanquine Carlo Racho Castro**, President and Founder, Youth Service Philippines NGO and Coexister Philippines NGO Philippines/South-East Asia wracho.work@gmail.com
- Ms. **Ayisha Siddiqa**, **TBC** Co-founder, Polluters Out and Fossil Free University and United Nations Secretary-General's Youth Advisory Board on Climate Change Pakistan/South-South West Asia ayishasiddiqa@protonmail.com

Other potential panelists:

- Ms. **Yu Mon Mai Thin**, **TBC** Co-chair, Global Indigenous Youth Caucus (GIYC) Myanmar/South-East Asia mai.ungiycc@unmgcy.org; op@unmgcy.org
- Mx. **Buwo Ahmad Giras Wruhananing**, **TBC** President, United Nations Association of Indonesia, Indonesia/South-East Asia girasbowo@outlook.com

APFSD-Youth Call to Action: 5 minutes

- Ms. **Davila Talemaimaleya**, Pacific Youth Council Fiji/Pacific davila.talemaimaleya@gmail.com

Interventions from the floor: 10 minutes

Closing remarks: 3 minutes

- Mr. **Beniam Gebrezghi**, Programme Specialist, Civil Society and Youth, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) beniam.gebrezghi@undp.org

OVERVIEW OF PREPARATORY EVENT/CONSULTATION

This event will build on the outcomes of two major events that took place in February 2024:

- The [2024 APFSD Youth Forum](#): aligned with the theme of the APFSD and of the HLPF, it placed special emphasis on innovation solutions, including presenting a showcase of youth solutions during the event. As one of its major outcomes, the 2024 [Youth Call to Action](#) variously calls for innovation to address challenges, particularly in agrifood systems, and further calls for fostering a “culture of innovation.”
- The [Youth Climathon](#): challenged over 100 regional youth to develop innovative climate action solutions before the APFSD, ultimately presenting four solutions surrounding urban resilience, climate-smart agriculture, and natural ecosystem preservation to a multistakeholder panel at the forum. The energy, engagement, ingenuity, and dedication displayed by the participants proved the need and appetite to foster a “culture of innovation.”

These two events supported the identification of gaps and key priorities for youth empowerment and participation in governance in Asia-Pacific and recommendations will feed into the Asia-Pacific regional session of the 2024 ECOSOC Youth Forum.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS, SUGGESTED READING, IF ANY

- ILO (2022) Youth not in employment, education or training in Asia and the Pacific: Trends and policy considerations. https://www.ilo.org/asia/publications/WCMS_860568/lang--en/index.htm
- ILO and ADB (2020) Tackling the COVID-19 youth employment crisis in Asia and the Pacific. https://www.ilo.org/asia/publications/WCMS_753369/lang--en/index.htm
- ESCAP (2024) SDG Goal Profiles.
- ESCAP (2023) ESCAP Population Data Sheet 2023. <https://www.unescap.org/kp/2023/escap-population-data-sheet-2023>
- ESCAP (2023). Trends in social development: the future of work. <https://www.unescap.org/kp/2023/trends-social-development-future-work-asia-and-pacific>
- ESCAP (2023). Asia-Pacific Population and Development Report 2023. <https://www.unescap.org/kp/2023/asia-pacific-population-and-development-report-2023>
- ESCAP (2024). Youth Policy Toolbox. <https://yptoolbox.unescapsdd.org/>