



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

IDENTIFICATION	
Session title	Feeding The Future: Youth and Sustainable Food Systems for All
Session focus	SDG 2
Session co-leads	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD) and Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY)
Session co-organizers	World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Youth NGOs (YOUNGO) - Food and Agriculture Working Group, Youth Representatives to the SENA Group of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, and World Food Forum (WFF) Youth Policy Board
BACKGROUND & KEY ISSUES	
<p>Globally, there are 1.2 billion of young people aged between 15 and 24, and 88 percent of them live in developing countries and specifically in low- and low-middle income economies. The potential returns of investing in young people are boundless in terms of food security, poverty reduction, employment generation, as well as peace and political stability (IFAD, 2019; WFP, 2022).</p> <p>Young people are key agents of change, with enormous innovation potential for their societies. They are already at the frontline to build more sustainable agrifood systems and are best placed to rejuvenate the sector. Yet, they continue to face age-based disadvantages and in some cases, marginalisation.</p> <p>Widespread unemployment and underemployment affect youth more than the general population. Youth are three times more likely than adults to be unemployed, with a global youth unemployment rate of 15.6 percent, corresponding to 75 million youth (ILO, 2022). Furthermore, while rural areas suffer from structural problems and some challenges may be common to all rural populations, rural youth remain especially disadvantaged. Re-engaging youth in agriculture requires addressing the numerous constraints that they face when trying to earn a livelihood. Among others, they include insufficient access to skills development and education; limited access to resources such as land; and low levels of involvement in decision-making processes. Rural youth are also typically excluded from those institutions that provide access to financial services – such as credit, savings and insurance – which further hinders their ability to participate in the sector. Further, specific groups of youth, such as young women, Indigenous youth, adolescents, youth living in humanitarian or crises contexts, young migrants, young</p>	

refugees, young people with disabilities and other minorities who are potentially marginalized and in fragile situations, are exposed to further disadvantages and vulnerabilities.

A central principle of the 2030 Agenda is the assurance that “no one will be left behind” and the universal nature of the 2030 Agenda entails that youth should be considered across all goals and targets. The outcomes of the 2023 SDG Summit highlighted that the lack of progress towards the SDGs is global, but it is abundantly clear that developing countries and the world’s poorest and most vulnerable people are bearing the brunt. SDG 2, although fundamental to the 2030 Agenda and the commitment to leave no one behind, is among the goals that have suffered setbacks in recent years. The 2023 State of Food and Nutrition Security in the World (SOFI) estimated that between 691 and 783 million people faced chronic hunger in 2022, affecting around 9.2 percent of the world population in 2022, compared with 7.9 percent in 2019 (FAO, 2023).

Globally, young people are calling upon governments to involve them in policy and decision-making processes at global, regional, national and local levels. The need to create an enabling environment that allows them to fully contribute to the growth of their countries and territories is key. **The path to more sustainable and resilient agrifood systems cannot be achieved without young people’s engagement and contribution.**

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF SPOTLIGHT SEGMENT

The spotlight session will set the scene for the discussions during the session and will provide the audience with the latest info and data on SDG 2 besides sharing with the participants the results of the early exploration of the topic conducted via a pre-forum dedicated survey.

OBJECTIVES OF SESSION/PLENARY

The session aims at:

- Showcasing and discussing youth-led best practices and scalable solutions related to SDG 2.
- Discussing young peoples’ role in the implementation of SDG 2 and their inclusion in national youth consultative bodies.
- Identifying practical steps to take young people and future generations meaningful engagement systematically into account in global decision-making processes.

The outcomes of the session are also expected to feed into future avenues in 2024 and beyond.

OVERALL FORMAT/STRUCTURE

The session is led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD) and the Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY), and co-organized by the World Food Programme (WFP); Youth NGOs (YOUNGO), World Food Forum (WFF) Youth Policy Board; Youth Representatives to the SENA Group of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub; and, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

The session will feature different young leaders who will present and discuss with the overall participants, their experiences, best practices, and recommendations in relation to SDG 2.

Young people's recommendations provided both at the session and via the pre-session survey, are expected to lead to important messages, knowledge sharing and ideas, related to the impact and further implementation of SDG 2.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What are the youth-led innovative solutions that can be adopted to accelerate progress toward ending hunger, achieving food security and nutrition, and promote sustainable and resilient agrifood systems?
- How can youth contribute to better leverage the interlinkages between SDG 2 and other SDGs to create synergies that amplify the impact of interventions and foster a more holistic approach to sustainable development at global, regional and local level?
- What would be your key recommendation to policy makers to systematically include youth so to build more inclusive, sustainable and resilient agrifood systems?

NAMES AND TITLES OF SESSION SPEAKERS AND MODERATOR(S)

Youth speakers:

- Nikita Bhusal, YPARD USA Country Representative
- Yazmeen Wardman, Global Indigenous Youth Caucus
- Wenhao Deng, Zhongke Dynamics (Beijing) Technology
- Lana Weidgenant, ProVeg International
- Vanessa Garcia Polanco, National Young Farmers Coalition
- Aisha Hamman, Lift Africa Foundation

Youth moderator:

- Beatriz Guimarães Almeida, Youth specialist, Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO)

OVERVIEW OF PREPARATORY EVENT/CONSULTATION

To generate as much participation as possible from youth, the session's team, will develop a related survey. Recommendations from the online survey will enable inputs from a wide audience of young people and results will be presented during the spotlight part of the SDG 2 session.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS, SUGGESTED READING, IF ANY

Selected publications/studies:

- FAO, 2023. The State of Food and Agriculture - Revealing the true cost of food to transform agrifood systems. <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cc7724en>
- FAO-IFAD-UNICEF-WFP-WHO, 2023. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World. <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cc3017en>
- FAO, 2023. Hear it from the countries - Rural youth action plan – good practices. <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cc3942en>
- WFP, 2022. WFP's role in youth employment <https://www.wfp.org/publications/wfps-role-youth-employment-2022>

Related websites and webpages:

- FAO Rural Youth webpage. <https://www.fao.org/rural-youth/en>
- Global Indigenous Youth Caucus. <https://www.globalindigenouyouthcaucus.org/>
- World Food Forum. <https://www.world-food-forum.org/>
- YOUNGO. <https://unfccc.int/topics/education-youth/youth/youngo>
- YPARD. <https://ypard.net/>
- Major Group for Children and Youth. <https://www.unmgcy.org/>
- UNIDO. <https://www.unido.org/>

