

Title

Youth Empowered! Enabling youth through social protection: Education, Employment, Environment

Abstract

Organised by youth, this side event brings young people into the conversation of social protection. We, the youth want to explore how we are impacted by lack of social protection in the areas of education, employment, and our capability to respond to environmental challenges. Lack of effective and efficient social protection systems is detrimental to youths' potential, and drives inequalities within societies. Youth are an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, and their inclusion in society, which begins with social protection, is essential in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals and ensuring no one is left behind.

Background

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the importance of social protection in reducing inequalities, achieving sustainable development, and eradicating poverty. Establishing social protection systems, including floors, empowers individuals by preventing them from entering the cycle of poverty through improved resilience to environmental, as well as social challenges such as unemployment, access to healthcare services, and access to education. Unfortunately, these systems seldom focus on the specific needs of young people.

Millions of youth worldwide experience inequalities and challenges to social inclusion which adversely affect their access to education and employment. This leads to disempowerment and perpetuates the cycle of poverty. In the interest of building strong, inclusive societies equipped to respond to economic, social and environmental challenges in the long-term, States need to recognise their responsibility to be transparent and accountable in their investment in social protection for youth. Access to health services, education and decent job opportunities for young people, especially the most vulnerable groups, must be implemented universally.

This year the Commission on Social Development will be reviewing the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY), and the 2019 HLPF will review three of its priority areas; education, employment, and environment, highlighting the need for the conversation of social protection for youth within these domains to take place. This event will echo the vision of Youth 2030: The United Nations Strategy on Youth, which envisages a “world that recognizes young people’s agency, resilience and their positive contributions as agents of change.” We hope to foster a discussion between youth, Member States, Non-Governmental Organisations and UN agencies, addressing the need for states to implement social protection that considers our specific needs as young people and involves us in the process so that we can ensure we are given the basic platform needed to thrive.

Objective & Expected Outcomes

With youth at the forefront of the discussion, this side event will be an interactive, effective and efficient dialogue between youth, Non-Governmental Organisations, and UN agencies. While drawing the attention of participants to problems that beset those who are being left behind, we hope to showcase how youth are helping to empower each other and what more needs to be done to ensure universal access to social protection. The speakers on the panel will:

- Address systemic, gendered, and socio-economic issues perpetuating inequalities for youth within existing social protection systems.

CSocD57 SIDE EVENT CONCEPT NOTE

- Discuss education, employment, and the environment, highlighting how strong social protection systems, policies and floors can alleviate vulnerabilities within these areas and empower youth facing related challenges
- Examine the need for a universal, inclusive system that engages youth within policy process, implementation, and coverage.
- Discuss the need for youth participation in economic, political and community life, emphasising the role of young people in facilitating social and economic development, challenging social norms, and creating innovations that lead to development for all.
- Showcase the critical and invaluable role of youth as agents of change.

Proposed Speakers

1. Devopriya Dutta, Coordinator at Tarumitra (India)
2. Apefa Adjivon, Founder & Executive Director of The Pearl Project (Ghana - Canada)
3. Saphira Rameshfar, Representative to the United Nations, Baha'i International (Australia)
4. Diallo Fousseynou, TVET/CNOS Representative (Senegal - Italy)

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