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# 6<sup>th</sup> Economic and Social Council Youth Forum CONCEPT NOTE

## Thematic Breakout Session

**“Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages”**

**30 January 2017  
CONFERENCE ROOM 12**

*2:30 – 4:30 pm*

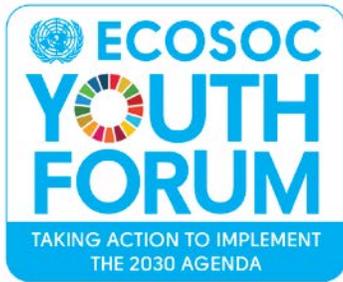
**United Nations Headquarters, New York**

### **1. Background and Context**

The 2017 ECOSOC Youth Forum focuses on how the 2030 Agenda can be implemented to ensure that the benefits of globalization are equitably shared. At a time when the world is struggling to respond to the negative effects of globalization, the Forum is creating a space to discuss the leading role youth can play in dealing with rising inequality.

The 2030 Agenda is built on the three pillars of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. As such, it is not possible to discuss the economic dimension of sustainable development in isolation from the other pillars. Investment in health services is essential for sustainable and resilient societies and communities. Poverty and inequality affect access to health services, and affordability is amongst the main barriers to accessing health services. Target 3 of the SDGs focuses on health, recognizing that ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all is essential to work towards sustainable development. To this end, Goal 3 sets ambitious targets on a wide array of issues including maternal mortality, access to sexual and reproductive health services, HIV and AIDS, malaria, TB and non-communicable diseases.

As young people are among those disproportionately unemployed, working poor and underemployed, recognizing and meeting their specific needs becomes even more important. Prioritizing the health and well-being of adolescents and youth is not only an imperative for their empowerment, but also a prerequisite for the attainment of the sustainable development agenda. Demographic changes in the world today mean that a historically large generation of healthy



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adolescents and young people can reach their full potential and contribute to the economic development of their countries. It is not possible to achieve sustainable development without adequate investments in adolescents and youth to unlock this potential.

Young people, particularly adolescents are now the focus of global health interventions as demonstrated by the launch of the Global Strategy for Women’s, Children’s and Adolescents’ Health following the adoption of Agenda 2030. The Strategy has been instrumental in bringing focus on adolescents yet much needs to be done to ensure the commitments are translated into action. To support the achievement of these goals, the UN is leading the international community in building the evidence and sharing knowledge on effective interventions. Accelerated Action for the Health of Adolescents (AA-HA!) Implementation Guidance, which will be launched in 2017, is one of the most important initiatives in this direction, as it will provide guidance to countries and programmes on how to meet the health needs of adolescents.

Young people are also at the forefront of advocacy for investment in health and instrumental in holding governments accountable. As the 2016 ECOSOC Youth Forum revolving around youth taking action to implement the SDGs has shown, youth are already engaged at all steps of this process. In the lead-up to the HLPF Review in 2017, the breakout session will explore interconnected themes of health and wellbeing.

## **2. Objectives**

This breakout session will provide a space for young people to discuss amongst themselves and with stakeholders, particularly member states and the UN system, the role young people can play to reach SDGs. The objectives of the session are to:

- Share knowledge on existing tools
- Gather perspectives from young people to help strengthen advocacy and accountability

In the wake of the HLPF review in 2017, the discussions will on one hand highlight the difference created by young people’s engagement at the local level and look for ways to ensure these efforts can translate to momentum towards the achievement of SDGs at the global level.

## **3. Flow of the Session and Issues at stake**

The 2 hour session will be conducted in a talk show format, with a moderator and panelists. Each panelist will address the issues listed below and then take comments and questions from the floor.



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The session will include welcome and opening by the moderator (5 minutes), introduction of the panel (5 minutes), brief remarks from the panel (10 min each), 2-3 rounds of interactive discussion among audience (50 min), and closing remarks by the panel and the moderator (10 min).

**a. Adolescent and Youth Health in the SDGs (Laura Laski, UNFPA)**

*What are the health priorities for adolescents and youth? What is the UN system doing to translate commitments into action?*

- Global Strategy for Women’s, Children’s and Adolescents’ Health
- Member states’ commitments in support of the Global Strategy
- Health priorities for adolescents (SRHR, Mental health, NCDs, HIV/AIDS...)

**b. Health in the 2030 Agenda (Jordan Jarvis, MGCY)**

*How is health related to other SDGs and the overall achievement of the 2030 Agenda? What are some links with other health related topics?*

- Links to other health related topics
- Links to other SDGs

**c. Supporting Member States in Implementing Priorities (David Ross, WHO)**

*What are the ways in which the UN is supporting member states to implement health priorities? How have young people been involved?*

- Global Strategy and Accelerated Action for the Health of Adolescents (the Global AA-HA!)
- Youth involvement in the development of the Global AA-HA! (Until May 2017)
- Youth involvement in accountability for the Global AA-HA! actions (After May 2017)

**d. Young people driving advocacy and accountability (Mimi Melles, PMNCH / Hayley Gleeson, IPPF - ACT!2015 Project Coordinator – or a national partner)**

*What are young people doing to advocate for action in health? How are they holding governments accountable? What can young people do to drive advocacy and accountability?*

- Launch of the Adolescent Health & Wellbeing Toolkit (developed by the PMNCH Adolescent & Youth Constituency)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The toolkit is a practical guide for young people to advocate for improved adolescent health and wellbeing. It focuses on advocacy and accountability at national level, including mobilizing for commitments to the Global Strategy.



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- ACT!2015: Youth-led, data-driven accountability for the SDGs and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS

**Conclusion: Moving forward (Moderator, Marie Hauerslev, IFMSA)**

*How can the ECOSOC Youth Forum contribute to a better representation of adolescents and youth in the World Health Assembly? What are the ways in which the outcomes of the Forum will be linked to the upcoming High Level Policy Forum in July 2017?*

**4. Questions for the Audience**

- What according to you are the global health priorities for adolescents and youth in the context of the SDGs?
- What according to you has worked well in driving action from young people and what are the lessons learned?
- What do you need to be able to effectively hold member states and the UN accountable for commitments related to health?
- What needs to be done to bring together efforts in health and other development sectors to maximise impact for young people?

**5. Suggested Reading Materials**

- The World Programme of Action for Youth - Click [here](#).
- The Global Strategy for Women's Children's and Adolescents' Health - Click [here](#).
- Health for the World's Adolescents (WHO) - Click [here](#).
- Global Accelerated Action for the Health of Adolescents (AA-HA!): Implementation Guidance - Click [here](#).
- Health of the World's Adolescents (UNICEF/Lancet) - Click [here](#).
- UNWOMEN Youth and Gender Equality Strategy - Click [here](#).
- The Gap Report (UNAIDS) - Click [here](#).
- Prevention Gap Report (UNAIDS) – Click [here](#)
- Realizing the Health and Well-being of Adolescents (British Medical Journal) - Click [here](#).
- All in to End Adolescent AIDS – Click [here](#)
- Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: on the Fast Track to Accelerate the Fight Against HIV and to End the AIDS Epidemic by 2030 – Click [here](#)
- ACT!2015 Negotiation Briefs and Advocacy Tools – click [here](#)