



7th Economic and Social Council Youth Forum CONCEPT NOTE

Thematic Breakout Session

“Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”

30 January 2018

3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Room 8

United Nations Headquarters, New York

Background and Context

Water is at the core of sustainable development. Water resources, and the range of services they provide, underpin poverty reduction, economic growth and environmental sustainability. From food and energy security to human and environmental health, water contributes to improvements in social wellbeing and inclusive growth, affecting the livelihoods of billions.

Access to water and sanitation are recognized by the United Nations as human rights, reflecting the fundamental nature of these basics in every person’s life ([UN 2010](#), [UN 2016](#)). Today, 2.1 billion people lack access to safely managed drinking water services and 4.5 billion people lack safely managed sanitation services ([WHO/UNICEF 2017](#)). Without safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities at home and in places of work and education, it is disproportionately harder for women and girls to lead safe, productive, and healthy lives.

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the world now has an ambitious Sustainable Development Goal 6 to “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”. This goal includes targets on drinking water and sanitation that were a part of the Millennium Development Goal Framework, but also incorporates new targets on water quality, wastewater, water scarcity, water and ecosystems along with water resources management. SDG 6 represents an unprecedented opportunity for the international community to make great strides towards securing sound water resources for the future.



The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Agenda embraces the involvement of youth in building sustainable and resilient communities. Youth are engaged in a dialogue that gives them a unified voice in a global conversation that encourages youth to pursue and address the challenge of providing safe drinking water and sanitation for all.

Session Objectives and Expected Outcomes

- Share critical and reflective analysis and experiences of young people affected by and working in areas associated with the Human Right to Water and Sanitation. Create more awareness about the Human Right to Water and Sanitation (GA Res 64/292, Agenda 2030)
- Develop a forceful Youth Water Statement to inform the High-Level Political Forum's SDG 6 thematic review in 2018;
- Seek renewed commitment from partners to support the implementation and monitoring of SDG 6;
- Strategize on how to further promote the message of SDG 6 and the Human Right to Water and Sanitation;
- Create an active Youth constituency to advocate for World Water Day (March 22) and World Toilet Day (Nov. 19) campaigns:
- Develop a position on how Youth can contribute to the Water Action Decade 2018 – 2028 to be launched on World Water Day 2018 (March 22).



Key Words Youth; Water; Sanitation; SDG 6; Right to Water; Water Scarcity; Wastewater; water resources management; water and ecosystems; water financing; cooperation and participation in water management; transboundary

- 3 Key messages:**
1. Global frameworks, national policies and local realities are often insufficiently aligned, which is a major bottleneck for achieving water and sanitation for all, and SDGs;
 2. SDG 6 is a critical opportunity for the international community to secure water resources for the future. Youth are key actors that can push this process ahead;
 3. World Water Day (March 22), World Toilet Day (Nov. 19) and the Water Action Decade 2018 – 2028 are all times for youth to engage in water and sanitation advocacy. Youth are a critical target audience for these campaigns.

Session Co-Lead Organizer UN-Water (represented by co-moderator World Youth Parliament for Water) and the United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth SDG 6/Water & Sanitation Working Group

Session Structure and Format The session is designed as interactive allowing more time for discussion and exchanges among the participants. The session will start off with two presentations of case studies from youth to showcase examples of action. The audience will be divided into groups of 8 people + moderator to discuss the guiding questions and come up with recommendations to be presented towards the end of the session.

- Guiding questions**
- What are the lessons learned by youth from the present water and sanitation issues?
 - What are the ways by which youth can positively impact on the present water and sanitation problems?
 - What effort can be made by youth to create or develop decent and sustainable technique or structure to improve access to safe water and proper sanitation in rural and urban communities?
 - What parameters should the governments and the private sector take into consideration to boost the quality of safe water and proper sanitation in rural and urban communities?
 - What policies should be promoted or introduced to increase access to safe water and proper sanitation in rural and urban communities?
 - What opportunities does the adoption of Sustainable Development Goal 6 provide?
 - Do youth know enough about water and ecosystems?
 - What aspect of the present policy, where in place, has been hampering access to safe water and proper sanitation in rural and urban



communities?

- What are the current challenges to effective implementation of water and sanitation policy?
- What are the possible models that can be developed to address the present water and sanitation problems?
- What can be done to strengthen the synergy among water and sanitation scientists, industry and government?

**Suggested
Program**

(90 minutes)

- 10' Welcome
- 5' Introduction by Moderator of the session format
- 5' Youth action case study #1
- 5' Youth action case study #2
- 5' Q&A for presenters
- 50' Roundtable Moderated Discussions
- 15' Open floor discussions and exchanges
- 5' Final recommendation and session wrap up