



**ECOSOC
YOUTH
FORUM**

#YOUTH2030

8th Economic and Social Council Youth Forum

DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE

SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

**8 April 2019
CR 12, 4-6 p.m.
United Nations Headquarters, New York**

IDENTIFICATION	
Session focus	Sustainable Development Goal 4
Session title	You(th) Speak on Education: Empowered, Included and Equal
Session lead	Lily Gray, UNESCO
Session co-organizers	Victoria Ibiwoye, MGCY / SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee
	Elena Ippoliti, OHCHR
	Ilya Zhukov, UNFPA
	Alessio Baldaccini, UNHCR
	Amy Blomme, UNICEF
Session moderator	Victoria Ibiwoye, MGCY / SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee
Rapporteur	Victoria Ibiwoye, MGCY / SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee
Session note-taker 1	Alina Kirillina, UNESCO
Session note-taker 2	Daniela Maria Perez Obandos, UNHCR Global Youth Advisory Council
BACKGROUND & KEY ISSUES	

About 263 million children, adolescents and youth worldwide - one in every five - are out of school: 64 million of primary aged children, 61 million of lower secondary school age and 138 million of upper secondary age. This violates a fundamental human right and stalls progress towards all the [Sustainable Development Goals](#). Youth from disadvantaged backgrounds and/or low-income countries are far less likely to complete secondary education or gain skills for work through technical and vocational education and training, further deepening inequalities and exclusion. Youth account for the majority of the forcibly displaced, at a record level since WW2, with many seeing their educational opportunities cut short.

The digital revolution, combined with the interdependent and global nature of issues, from climate change to rising intolerance and violent extremism are increasing pressure on education systems to transform, and to give students the knowledge, competences and values they need to navigate a world of increasing complexity with opened mindsets and a sense of shared responsibility.

In this framework, the implementation of the [Sustainable Development Goal 4 \(SDG 4\)](#) is of utmost importance, as inclusive access to quality education and life-long learning opportunities have reciprocal linkages with almost all other SDGs and will play a key role in building peaceful, sustainable and resilient societies.

In this regard, the **ECOSOC Youth Forum's breakout session on the SDG 4**, organized by UNESCO, together with UN MGCY, SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee, OHCHR, UNFPA, UNHCR and UNICEF, will highlight the key role of education within the 2030 Agenda. The discussion will bring together young people from across the world to discuss the future of education and the role of youth for its making it a reality.

Young people are dynamic, resourceful, and powerful agents of change in their communities and they must be recognized as fundamental stakeholders in any development effort that aspires to be relevant, efficient and inclusive. Education is an investment in the future of both young people and the whole society. Therefore, the session will aim to reflect a youth perspective on SDG4 and its targets. In particular, the session will explore:

Centrality of education in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: interlinkages with other Goals

Education plays a key role in building inclusive, resilient and sustainable societies: it can help reduce exposure to economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters. It increases the productivity of individuals and strengthens the potential for economic growth. It helps eradicate poverty and hunger, contributes to improved health, promotes gender equality and can reduce inequality, it promotes peace, the rule of law and respect for human rights. Education empowers learners with skills for acquirement of decent work, and with knowledge of sustainable development issues, related to water and sanitation, green energy or the conservation of our natural resources, to live together sustainably.

According to UNESCO, 171 million people could be lifted out of poverty - a 12% drop in global poverty - if all students in low-income countries left school with basic reading skills. Studies have also shown that literate people are more likely to participate in the democratic process and exercise their civil rights, and that, if the enrollment rate for secondary schooling is 10% higher than the average, the risk of war is reduced by about 3%.

Conversely, progress in education affects progress in other areas especially for young people. Data from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics have revealed that the global learning crisis means that many young people lack the skills they need in the 21st century workplace.

Inclusion and equity in education

Our world is experiencing the biggest migration in since WW2 with an estimated 258 million people living in a country other than their country of birth — an increase of 49% since 2000 (UN DESA). It is crucial to better understand the influence of education on migration and forced displacement, as well as the complex challenges and unique opportunities that movements of people present for education systems and skills acquisition, decent work and the chance for a dignified life.

Among the challenges that out of school refugees face is a lack of recognition of academic and skills accreditation and certification in host countries. As a result, refugee youths are not given an equal playing field. Conversely, youth are also well-placed to take the lead in promoting tolerance and openness towards refugees and migrants starting in their own classrooms and schools.

The session will have a heightened focus on marginalized excluded (youth) groups such as refugees, displaced, stateless people and minorities, and especially girls and young women in fragile situations who face particular challenges related to access to quality education and suggest actionable recommendations to accelerate the progress on SDG-4 and make sure that no one is left behind.

Skills for the 21st century

All learners should have the opportunity to acquire, throughout life, the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that are needed to build peaceful, healthy and sustainable societies. Education must be relevant, with a focus on both cognitive and non-cognitive aspects of learning using adapted pedagogy and learning spaces.

Education must address pressing themes such as, climate change, human rights, gender equality, health, comprehensive sexuality education, sustainable livelihoods and responsible and engaged citizenship, as well as, giving youth the opportunity to learn skills such as, creative problem solving and digital literacy.

In the wake of the fourth industrial revolution, education has to transform, it is more urgent than ever that youth learn digital and human skills, which will help them adapt. Most of the focus on future skills has been in middle to high-income countries, but there is an urgent need

to make sure that opportunities to acquire future skills are also given to those who are by default excluded.

SESSION OBJECTIVES

The session will provide a platform for voices of young people, representing Member states, UN system, youth organizations and civil society to reflect on the future of education and develop collective ideas, solutions and innovations to advance the achievement of the SDG 4:

- Provide a platform for inclusive youth-centered discussion on the SDG 4, to be reviewed during the upcoming HLPF.
- Address the challenges faced by youth in the field of education, focusing on the needs of most vulnerable and marginalized.
- Emphasize the contributions youth can make to achieve the youth-specific targets of the SDG 4.
- Highlight success stories, networks and opportunities for youth development and engagement.
- Develop a set of concrete recommendations for acceleration of the progress on SDG 4.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Key messages of the session will inform the final statement of the ECOSOC Youth Forum, which will be made available to the ECOSOC High Level Segment and the High-level Political Forum in July and September 2019. The session-specific outcomes and recommendations will be made available online and will be shared with decision-makers of these events, processes and frameworks linked to the various sessions included in the agenda. The outcome will also contribute to all ECOSOC formal events, to be organized in 2019.

APPROACH USED TO GENERATE CONCRETE CONTRIBUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to ensure that the session is as interactive as possible participants will be invited to join smaller breakout groups each focusing on the themes:

- a) Role of education in the 2030 Agenda: interlinkages between SDG4 and other goals
- b) Inclusion and equity in education
- c) Skills for the 21st century
- d) Education throughout life and learning to live together

Each of the breakout groups will be facilitated by a representative from each of the session co-organizers UNESCO, together with UN MGCY, SDG-Education 2030 Steering Committee, OHCHR, UNFPA, UNHCR and UNICEF.

The group will be tasked to identify three actionable items to report back to the larger group in plenary. Each of the co-facilitators will inform the 2 note-takers on the items for inclusion of the items in the outcome of the session.

OVERALL STRUCTURE AND FLOW

16:00-16:05 – opening by the moderator.

16:05-16:15 – instruction by the moderator on the format; introductions by co-facilitators of 4 breakout group (identified in advance by co-organizers) on the focus of each discussion.

16:15-16:20 - participants are invited to select one breakout group discussion

16:20 - Breakout group discussions

The breakout group discussions will be formed on the 4 themes to guide meaningful youth engagement throughout the session. Participants will be provided with a one-pager that describes the themes and key questions.

16:20-16:30 –Facilitator explains how the brainstorming session will unfold - key question to address plus sub-questions to think about.

16:30-16:50 – discussion on the proposed questions

16:55-17:00 – based on the discussion, facilitator outlines key problem/statement and invites participants to share their thoughts using software for brainstorming/live survey (www.mentimeter.com)

17:00-17:05 - brainstorming and voting begins, facilitator invites participants to submit the response through software.

17:05-17:10 - facilitator announces the top 3 solutions.

17:10-17:30 – discussion on these three solutions.

17:30 – 17:45 – note takers put compile the takeouts from facilitators of each of the breakout sessions and share with the moderator.

17:45-17:50 - closing by the moderator, who shared key messages and 12 recommendations of the session identified.

17:55-18:00 – photo-op for all participants.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ***Role of education in the 2030 Agenda: interlinkages between SDG4 and other Goals***

Where can education create the biggest benefit for the SDGs?

- a. How can you as a youth and individual contribute towards achieving the SDGs with SDG4 as the driver in your countries/communities?
- b. How do we place young people at the center of decision-making process on SDG4 and how can they influence education system more generally?

- ***Inclusion and equity in education***

How can/do we address the root causes of exclusion and inequality in education?

- a. What are the challenges faced by marginalized groups and how to address them?
- b. How to make education system more inclusive and equitable?

- ***Skills for the 21st century***

How can youth learn to be more future and workforce ready, empowered, and respectful of others and the environment?

- a. What do the education systems/landscape in 2030 look like in your communities?
- b. What are the learning needs of young people and how should education system change to address them?
- c. Are the teachers/educators of today ready to develop the leaders we will need tomorrow? If not, how can youths take charge of our own education and learning together with educators?

- ***Education throughout life and learning to live together***

What ways/means of learning should youth advocate for?

- a. What solutions for second chances to an education for those who have missed out?
- b. Where can learning take place?
- c. How can non-formal learning pathways be more recognized?
- d. Share good practices on the global citizenship education and education.

PREPARATORY EVENTS

Preparatory consultations will be held ahead of the session with a view to inform its discussions and outcomes. These preparatory consultations may include webinars, online surveys and social media campaign.

SUGGESTED READING

1. [Sustainable Development Goal 4 and its targets](#)
2. [Incheon Declaration: Education 2030: Towards Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Lifelong Learning for All](#)
3. [A Youth Development Lens on Education 2030 \(SDG4\) - Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development](#)
4. [Brussels Declaration](#): Outcome of the Global Education Meeting (Brussels, 2018)
5. [Global Education Monitoring Report](#)
6. [Rethinking education: towards a global common good?](#)
7. [Education for Sustainable Development Goals: learning objectives](#)
8. [Global Citizenship Education: Topics and objectives](#)
9. [Strengthening the rule of law through education: a guide for policymakers](#)
10. [International technical guidance on sexuality education](#), UNESCO, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women and WHO, 2018
11. [What a waste: Ensure migrants and refugees' qualifications and prior learning are recognized](#), UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report, UNHCR, Education Above All, 2018
12. [Global Refugee Youth Consultations](#), 2016
13. [Turn the tide – Refugee education in crisis](#)
14. [Global Compact on Refugees](#)
15. [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#)

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

The meeting will also be streamed live on UN WebTV, and participants are encouraged to join the social media campaign. A social media pack to be shared among education partners and youth networks prior to the event.

Hashtag: #Youth2030 #Education2030

Social media handles: @UNESCO @Education2030UN @UNMGCY @UNHumanRights @UNFPA @Refugees @UNICEF @GEMReport