

CALL TO ACTION

TO CHAMPION YOUTH MAINSTREAMING IN ENERGY COMPACTS

to accelerate a just, inclusive and sustainable energy transition



The involvement and leadership of youth plays a pivotal role in the achievement of a just and inclusive sustainable energy transition—intrinsic to the goals of SDG 7. However, young people continue to face barriers in accessing quality education and training, inclusive financial mechanisms, and meaningful employment opportunities in the sector, that prevent them from leading, participating in, and benefitting from the sustainable energy transition. Oftentimes, young people are overlooked and excluded from decision-making processes in the field of energy, despite their active involvement in their communities and their ambition to take action towards the advancement of the 2030 Agenda.

The **Call to Action to Champion Youth Mainstreaming** — convened by UNIDO and the SDG 7 Youth Constituency, in partnership with Student Energy and BRICS YEA — calls on governments, the private sector, financial institutions, academia, civil society, and intergovernmental organizations to include youth dimensions in their Energy Compacts that support the advancement of their commitments.

The following recommendations are a follow-up of the [Call to Action](#) launched during the Vienna Energy Forum (VEF) Virtual Series in January 2021. The Call to Action urged stakeholders to take immediate action to develop a conducive environment that synergizes and complements avenues of youth engagement, and empower youth to contribute to the sustainable energy transition, as leaders and innovators.

Collectively and individually, the champions of this Call to Action aim to leverage inclusive youth leadership to accelerate action towards a just, inclusive and sustainable energy transition and progress towards SDG 7. The following is a (non-comprehensive) list of recommendations, co-designed by champions of this Call to Action, that highlight pathways to involve and empower youth, as well as mechanisms to mainstream youth dimensions into Energy Compacts. We invite and encourage stakeholders to consider the outlined recommendations when formulating or refining their Energy Compacts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Assess and strengthen national and regional ecosystems to promote and support youth empowerment and leadership, including meaningful youth participation in policy- and decision-making

- **Ensure that the needs, priorities and expertise of youth** are incorporated **at all stages** in the design of relevant policies, spaces, processes and educational programs through accountability mechanisms.
- **Enhance knowledge and raise awareness** of policy makers to (re)formulate youth-responsive energy policies, including those supporting youth-led initiatives.
- **Build partnerships** with youth, youth-led initiatives and associations; collaborate with them through formal and non-formal mechanisms.
- **Establish** formal and non-formal **engagement mechanisms** or **platforms** for youth inputs [1]. These include providing avenues and support for activities to collect, compile, or present the expertise of youth.

2

Provide equitable access to productive resources, such as finance, technical knowledge, entrepreneurial training, technical skills development and business development services for youth-led enterprises.

- **Enhance financial support** and market access for youth-led or youth-owned initiatives, campaigns and/or start-ups, by establishing equitable funding mechanisms or investing in platforms that offer an inclusive range of support to young people, such as accelerators and incubators.
- **Endorse or establish initiatives and partnerships** that support youth entrepreneurship and leadership on SDG 7, and provide special considerations for engagements with youth from underrepresented and marginalized communities, and youth from the Global South.
- **Develop opportunities** for youth to enhance technical knowledge and entrepreneurial skills, including networking and mentoring and learning opportunities.

3

Elevate youth participation in the sustainable energy workforce through the provision of career advancement avenues and the increase of entry-level jobs and training—designed with a youth-centric approach.

- **Provide access** to accessible, formal and non-formal **training and learning opportunities** for youth, including mentoring, networking, hands-on and peer-to-peer learning spaces, and **entry level positions**.
- **Implement youth-oriented workplace guidelines and policies**, including youth professional development mechanisms, university credit opportunities and relevant orientation for supervisors.
- **Establish partnerships** between schools, vocational training institutions, networks, academia and the private sector to ensure that academic skills are aligned with labour market needs.

[1] [Meaningful Youth Engagement in the Intergovernmental Energy Space. White Paper](#)

4

Generate knowledge, monitor and evaluate implemented measures

- **Collect age-disaggregated data**, conduct analysis on the state of youth involvement in the energy sector and the energy transition, and design data-informed policies and programs.
- **Seek youth involvement and inputs** in preparation of reports and publications.
- **Develop and disseminate knowledge products**, such as reports, webinars, case studies and articles that highlight youth leadership.

5

Champion diversity, gender equality, women's empowerment and inclusion

- **Conduct gender analysis** and **integrate gender dimensions** for the development, implementation and monitoring of all youth-related initiatives and programmes, ensuring that young women have equal opportunities.
- **Dedicate resources** towards implementing tools that address equity, equality and accessibility, and ensure the inclusive participation of underrepresented and less-privileged youth.
 - Offer free-of-cost learning opportunities and other measures that ensure equitable participation, such as offering Internet stipends for youth in remote communities.
 - Take into consideration linguistic inclusion for accessibility purposes.
- **Source expertise and build capacity on gender equality**, women's empowerment and inclusion of other marginalized groups in the design and implementation of policies, programs and other initiatives
- **Ensure youth representation** from a diverse demography, while providing special considerations for marginalized groups [2] and youth in the Global South.
- **Build diverse, impactful and sustainable partnerships** at all levels, with NGOs, civil society, financial sector, public and private sector, as well as academia, to ensure effective inclusion and diversity.

SAMPLE ACTIONS ^[3]

Recommendation	Actions	Examples
1. Assessing and strengthening national and regional ecosystems	A Identification of gaps in terms of inclusion of youth	<i>Conduct an annual analysis highlighting gaps in youth engagement within the institution and potential solutions to address identified barriers</i>
	Integration of ideas and perspectives from youth into the design and delivery of programs, strategies and policies	<i>Implement mechanisms to collect feedback from youth regarding the design and implementation of programs and activities</i>

[2] Including, but not limited, to women, indigenous communities, youth in remote and isolated areas, youth from religious and ethnic minorities, and LGBTQ+ youth.

[3] Please note that these actions are samples only, and not fully encompassing.

2. Providing access to productive resources for youth-led enterprises	B Development of capacity of policy-makers to design youth-responsive policies	Conduct mandatory training for policymakers on youth mainstreaming and best practices for the development of youth-responsive policies
	C Formation of sustained partnerships with youth organizations and youth-led initiatives	Create formal and accessible mechanisms for youth organizations to become partners for relevant product/research launches, stakeholder meetings, or other events and processes
	D Establishment of mechanisms and channels to consult youth views Inclusion of youth who lack connectivity or access to Internet and other communication channels	Set up an all-year platform that collects inputs from youth, such as an advisory council Host regular dedicated stakeholder meetings with youth groups Provide analogue methods for input submission, including volunteer deployment to low-connectivity regions and regions affected by conflict Provide Internet stipends and finance access to softwares for youth when needed
	A Dedication of a fair share of the relevant budget to support youth-led energy projects	Dedicate at least 10% of a capital/ investment fund to youth-led projects Organise pitch competitions, hackathons, grants or fellowships dedicated for youth-led projects Raise awareness on gender-lens investing principles to foster support of young women entrepreneurs
	B Endorsement of initiatives which are youth-led or disproportionately impact youth	Form partnerships with youth-led initiatives, youth-responsive incubator programs or organizations building entrepreneurial capacity in youth
	C Provision of capacity-building opportunities to develop entrepreneurial skills	Set up or invest in incubator or accelerator programs that provide targeted training as well as mentorship and funding to youth-led/owned projects and ventures

3. Elevate youth participation in the sustainable energy sector workforce	A Provision of training and learning opportunities for skills development	<p>Create energy industry-dedicated tracks in vocational schools and universities</p> <p>Establish paid internships and youth entry-level mobility schemes, taking into consideration marginalized groups and young women</p>
	B Design youth-responsive workplace guidelines in partnership with youth stakeholders	<p>Develop guidelines for HR, supervisory, and management roles on integrating entry-level youth workers</p> <p>Take into consideration the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) for guidance to ensure that workplaces, marketplaces and communities are gender-equal.</p>
4. Generate knowledge, and monitor and evaluate implemented measures	A Deployment of youth-sensitivity analyses on all projects and activities	<p>Collect age-disaggregated data on youth participation in activities and set youth-sensitive targets and indicators</p>
	B Involvement of youth in the preparation of reports and publications	<p>Consult youth for inputs on relevant publications, e.g. through the involvement of youth-led groups</p> <p>Feature youth dimensions in key reports, e.g. through the involvement of youth authors</p> <p>Pursue and promote youth co-authorship of publications</p>
	C Generation of youth-responsive knowledge products	<p>Highlight success stories of youth-led initiatives, e.g. through publications, webinars and press releases</p> <p>Publish and disseminate best practices on youth engagement</p>
5. Champion diversity, gender equality, women's empowerment and inclusion	A Conduct gender analyses and addressing critical gaps stemming from the analyses	<p>Conduct gender analyses and develop gender mainstreaming action plans, in collaboration with experts and stakeholders</p>

	B Provision of resources to empower youth diversity and inclusion	<p><i>Provide an inclusive range of financial support to marginalized youth, such as young women, girls of colour, such as through stipends, scholarships, or project funding</i></p> <p><i>Translate learning material and training programs, or provide support to overcome linguistic barriers</i></p>
	C Design and implementation of gender-sensitive policies, programs and other activities	<p><i>Involve external gender-experts or women's empowerment organizations in formulation of initiatives</i></p> <p><i>Include gender-responsive language in policies, activities, training, etc.</i></p>
	D Inclusion of youth from marginalized groups	<i>Develop tailored programs targeted at marginalized communities, such as in-person rural education programs developed jointly with organizations that are community-led</i>
	E Formation of sustained partnerships with diverse range of stakeholder	<i>Collaborate with partners across a broad range of disciplines and expertise, and leverage partnerships to ensure that local voices and perspectives are prioritized, e.g. include input from women in the design of gender-responsive programming</i>

JOIN THE MOVEMENT

National and local governments, intergovernmental organisations, companies, non-profit organisations, youth groups and other stakeholders are invited to adopt the suggested recommendations and join the official launch of the **Call to Action to Champion Youth Mainstreaming** during the UN High-Level Dialogue on Energy, taking place during the General Assembly in September 2021. Stakeholders are also encouraged to register their own Energy Compacts, committing to the youth inclusivity principles, and outlining their own actions toward the inclusion of youth in high-level decision-making discussions and energy transition pathways.

For more information, email sdg7qfp@unmgcy.org.

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