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Report of the United Nations Youth Office

United Nations Youth Office

Report of the Secretary-General*

Summary

The present report is the fourth report of the United Nations Youth Office since its formal establishment in accordance with General Assembly resolution [76/306](#) and presents the work of the Youth Office from 1 June 2025 to 31 May 2026, including the progress made on its strategic plan 2025–2028 and the implementation of the provisions in the Pact for the Future concerning youth.

The report highlights the Office's leadership in advancing the second phase of the United Nations Youth Strategy; supporting the high-level plenary marking the thirtieth anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond; coordinating system-wide implementation of Security Council resolutions on youth and peace and security, including resolution [2807 \(2025\)](#), and the tenth anniversary of the youth and peace and security agenda; and scaling up meaningful youth participation in intergovernmental processes on peace and security, human rights and sustainable development.

Despite being one of the Secretariat's leanest structures, the Office has expanded delivery on its mandate through sustained advocacy, stronger system-wide coherence and partnerships, and new flagship initiatives on meaningful youth engagement and mental health and well-being.

* The present report was submitted to the conference services for processing after the deadline in order to reflect the most recent information and data.



I. Introduction

1. The year under review marked the consolidation of the Youth Office as a fully operational entity across the Organization's three pillars: peace and security, sustainable development and human rights. Having completed its establishment phase and launched its strategic plan 2025–2028 in 2024, the Office moved into a period of delivery, translating the commitments of the Pact for the Future and the second phase (2025–2030) of the Youth Strategy, Youth2030 Phase 2, into tangible progress with and for young people.
2. The Office is guided by the recognition that the 2.6 billion young people aged 15–35 – the largest generation of young people in human history – are essential partners for multilateralism, peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
3. During the reporting period, the Office served as the institutional backbone for several landmark moments: the General Assembly's high-level plenary commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, held on 25 September 2025 pursuant to Assembly resolution 79/289; the tenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) on youth and peace and security; and the adoption of Security Council resolution 2807 (2025), reaffirming the centrality of young people to international peace and security and recognizing the Office's leadership on youth-related matters across the United Nations system.
4. Building on the intergovernmental framework of the Pact for the Future, the Office focused on embedding meaningful youth participation across intergovernmental processes, strengthening youth-inclusive policy frameworks and advancing advocacy so that young people can help to shape decisions affecting their lives and futures. The Office also intensified political engagement with Member States at United Nations Headquarters, in national capitals and through regional groups.
5. The Office expanded its communications and outreach, elevating youth priorities across the United Nations system through strategic campaigns, advocacy, events and digital storytelling. It grew its online presence, including through social media and newsletters, and translated complex policy processes into accessible content for young people, Member States and partners. These efforts advanced youth participation and intergenerational solidarity as core multilateral priorities, while mobilizing voluntary contributions to strengthen the delivery of flagship initiatives.

II. Strengthening system-wide coordination and accountability

Implementation of the United Nations Youth Strategy

6. Implementation of Youth2030 continued gaining momentum across the United Nations system, with 132 United Nations country teams and 64 United Nations entities actively advancing its priorities. Annual progress in 2024 was reported by all 132 country teams and 50 of the United Nations entities involved. The fifth annual *Youth2030 Progress Report*, launched in July 2025, provides a comprehensive overview of progress and marks the conclusion of the first phase (2018–2024). United Nations entities and country teams improved milestone performance scores (Youth2030 Scorecards) from 45% to 56% (2021–2024) and from 25% to 43% (2020–2024), respectively.¹

¹ See www.un.org/youthaffairs/en/youth2030/scorecards.

7. Youth2030 Phase 2, the action plan placing young people at the heart of accelerating progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and implementing the Pact for the Future, entered full implementation during the reporting period and is structured around six pillars: (a) meaningful youth empowerment and engagement; (b) implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals with and for youth; (c) knowledge and capacity-building for working with and for youth; (d) resource mobilization for the youth agenda; (e) transforming the workforce and organizational culture of the United Nations; and (f) strengthening accountability systems.

8. The Office provided strategic coordination and facilitated system-wide governance mechanisms, including the High-level Steering Committee for the United Nations Youth Strategy, the joint working group and its task teams, with the participation of entities at the global and country levels. The pilot phase of a system-wide youth marker, designed to track investments in youth across the United Nations system, is being advanced across selected entities and country teams, reinforcing accountability for the delivery of Phase 2.

9. To advance the youth agenda at the country level, the Office supported country teams in integrating youth priorities into country cooperation frameworks and facilitated peer learning across countries and regions on youth-relevant topics, including Youth2030 Scorecards for Phase 2 and youth advisory structures. Youth2030 progress data showed continued growth in youth engagement at strategic points in decisions shaping the work of the United Nations system, with engagement of networks of young women, girls and young persons with disabilities remaining a reporting priority across entities and country teams.

10. The Office and the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance continued to collaborate on workforce rejuvenation efforts in the Secretariat, including by making contributions to the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of human resources management reforms² and by identifying practical, resource-conscious and measurable actions to advance workforce rejuvenation through the attraction, recruitment and retention of young persons for careers at the United Nations.

11. A task team for Phase 2 of Youth2030, comprising representatives from 20 United Nations entities, curated a toolkit comprising practical resources for advocacy and action to help United Nations country teams, Governments and youth networks to advance the youth agenda, which will be available in 2026.

12. The Office worked closely with the Department of Global Communications to strengthen targeted outreach to young people globally, aligning narratives and leveraging existing capacities and resources to disseminate youth-related content more systematically through existing networks.

Pact for the Future Implementation Working Group on Youth

13. During the reporting period, the Office, in collaboration with United Nations partners and young people, advanced three recommendations under the section in the Pact for the Future on youth and future generations. Leading jointly with the International Labour Organization, the Office advanced a global youth investment platform under action 34 (a), developing an options paper and operational plan (2026–2027) that focuses on unlocking funding through existing mechanisms, mobilizing resources through partnerships and strengthening evidence and learning to scale up youth investment. Efforts are under way to integrate the platform's principles and the

² A/80/550.

Youth Marker into financing mechanisms and support youth-responsive financing at the country level. Leading jointly with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs under action 37 (c), the Office and young people also developed a plan to revitalize the United Nations Youth Fund, including an awareness-raising strategy to increase its visibility.

14. Additionally, the core principles for meaningful youth participation in intergovernmental processes and across the work of the United Nations were developed under action 37 (d) of the Pact for the Future through consultations with Member States, United Nations entities and youth organizations in a process that was co-led by the Office, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and young people. The core principles provide non-binding guidance to strengthen meaningful, representative, inclusive, and safe youth engagement across the work of the United Nations.

III. Engagement with United Nations country teams

15. In close collaboration with the Development Coordination Office, the United Nations Youth Office provided technical assistance to United Nations country teams across all regions, supporting emerging priorities at key programming moments, including the development of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, Youth2030 implementation reporting and the strengthening of national and regional capacities on youth engagement.

16. Youth engagement in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework continued to increase, building on its expansion in recent years. Youth2030 data showed sustained progress in youth participation in planning, monitoring and evaluation, and stronger links between youth priorities and national development strategies: participation in the Framework rose from 7% in 2021 to 57% in 2024 (an eightfold increase), the number of United Nations country teams with dedicated youth engagement mechanisms doubled from 20% in 2021 to 40% in 2024 and more than half of United Nations entities now involve young people in the process of shaping strategic plans.

17. The Office implemented actions to strengthen connections between the country, regional and global levels within the United Nations system, including launching the Youth2030 peer learning network for United Nations country teams. The network facilitates knowledge-sharing and collaborative learning on working with and for youth, accelerating Youth2030 Phase 2 and advancing the Youth Compass, the Office's flagship initiative for meaningful youth participation at all levels. The network comprises 368 representatives from 132 United Nations country teams and 13 network hosts, providing ongoing opportunities for peer exchange and continuous learning.

18. The Head of the Office conducted field missions in countries across a number of regions, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, France, India, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Nigeria, Panama, Paraguay, Portugal, Qatar, Sierra Leone, Spain, Switzerland, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, engaging key stakeholders, assessing local challenges, strengthening dialogue with youth organizations and movements and identifying practical solutions to advance youth development.

IV. Advancing youth engagement in intergovernmental processes

19. In line with its strategic plan and commitments in the Pact for the Future, the Youth Office continued to serve as a convener, amplifying the voices, visions and

contributions of young people in all their diversity while prioritizing the enhancement of youth participation in intergovernmental bodies, mechanisms and processes across the United Nations system.

High-level plenary meeting commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond

20. On 25 September 2025, the General Assembly, pursuant to its resolution 79/289, convened a high-level plenary meeting at United Nations Headquarters to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth. The Office served as the institutional backbone for the preparatory process, supporting the President of the General Assembly, convening stakeholders and coordinating engagement from other United Nations entities. The event was the first-ever high-level meeting dedicated to youth to take place during the official calendar of the high-level week of the General Assembly.

21. In the lead-up to the commemoration event, the Office coordinated a global series of dialogues using the “Youth lead” hashtag (#YouthLead) that were held between July and August 2025 under the Youth Compass, engaging more than 75,000 young people from over 180 countries. A first-of-its-kind youth foresight activity, held in partnership with the United Nations Futures Lab Network and the International Research Centre and International Child Development Centre, produced recommendations that were summarized in a report that informed discussions at the high-level plenary meeting, reinforcing the role of young people in shaping global policy priorities for the decades ahead.

Economic and Social Council youth forum

22. The Office worked with the President of the Economic and Social Council, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management and youth-led organizations, including the children and youth major group and the International Coordination Meeting of Youth Organizations, to prepare the Economic and Social Council youth forum for 2026. With nearly 1,500 participants, the forum was the most highly attended to date.

23. In collaboration with its partners, the Office organized a plenary session entitled “Youth leadership: a critical force in shaping a sustainable and inclusive future for all”, examining how the political and civic participation of young people can translate into meaningful influence, accountability and long-term impact. Participants in the session included young leaders, parliamentarians and senior experts.

24. On the sidelines of the forum, the Office, in partnership with the International Telecommunication Union, hosted a ministerial breakfast on youth-led movements and meaningful youth participation, thereby convening an intergenerational dialogue to foster collective action.

Commission on the Status of Women

25. At the seventieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held in March 2026, the Office continued its collaboration with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and feminist youth groups. Building on the virtual youth briefing and side events organized during the sixty-ninth session of the Commission, the Office ensured that young people’s contributions remain integral to discussions on accelerating progress towards achieving the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

26. The Youth Office, alongside the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, UNFPA, UN-Women, the European Union and the Permanent Missions of Malawi

and Portugal, held a side event for the official launch of the core principles for meaningful youth participation in intergovernmental processes and across the work of the United Nations.³ The core principles were developed under the mandate of action 37 (d) of the Pact for the Future, which requested the Secretary-General to develop core principles, in consultation with Member States and young people, for meaningful, representative, inclusive and safe youth engagement in relevant intergovernmental processes and across the work of the United Nations.

Other intergovernmental processes

27. The Office supported the meaningful participation of young people in several major intergovernmental processes during the reporting period, including:

- The Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development
- The high-level political forum on sustainable development
- The Second World Summit for Social Development
- The fifty-ninth and sixtieth sessions of the Human Rights Council
- The thirtieth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

28. Across regions, the Office supported the participation of more than 100 young people as speakers and formal contributors during intergovernmental processes, while mobilizing thousands more through its networks, thereby enabling in-person engagement, peer learning and sustained contributions to global governance, and underscoring the value of youth participation as a foundation for more inclusive, responsive multilateralism.

29. Through its engagement with more than 125 youth-led and youth-serving organizations as part of the Youth Compass, the Office also supported participation by providing accreditation assistance, matching youth profiles to relevant opportunities, building capacity for safe engagement and providing spaces for peer learning and the exchange of good practices.

V. Advancing the youth and peace and security agenda

30. The year 2025 marked the tenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution [2250 \(2015\)](#). Since then, the youth and peace and security agenda has grown into a system-wide priority, as shown by the publication of three successive reports of the Secretary-General and one independent progress report, and a growing global movement of young peacebuilders. To commemorate the milestone, the Office, in collaboration with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, UNFPA and the group of champions of youth and peace and security, convened a high-level stocktaking event that was held at United Nations Headquarters on 15 December 2025. The event brought together Member States, United Nations leadership, civil society and youth peacebuilders to take stock of implementation and chart a path forward.

31. In December 2025, the Security Council adopted its resolution 2807, in which it called for increased youth participation in peace processes at all levels. It encouraged Member States to adopt or strengthen national action plans on youth and peace and security, and recognized the role of the Youth Office in advancing the youth

³ Available at www.un.org/youthaffairs/en/news/youth-leadership-vital-contributor-sustainable-and-inclusive-future-all.

agenda across the Organization. The resolution also mandated continued support for youth briefers in the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, signalling the commitment of the United Nations to situating young voices at the centre of its deliberations.

32. Collaboration across the United Nations system on the youth and peace and security agenda deepened during the reporting period, building on the dedicated secretariat arrangement established in June 2025 by the Office, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and UNFPA.

33. The Office continued to provide technical support to the Member States' group of champions of youth and peace and security, reinforcing advocacy efforts and strengthening coordination across the United Nations system and with external partners. Beginning in 2026, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and UNFPA will also serve as co-secretariats for the group of champions.

34. In response to the mandate established in the Pact for the Future, the Office worked with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and UNFPA to support preparation of the second independent progress study on youth and peace and security. The study offers an opportunity to assess progress since the first study was published in 2018, identify persistent gaps and help to shape a more coordinated, youth-centred path forward at all levels.

35. Through its engagement with the Global Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security, the Office, with UNFPA, supported a dialogue on the 2025 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, enabling young leaders to share perspectives that helped to shape global peacebuilding. Two regional studies on youth participation in peace and security in the Middle East and North Africa informed a regional youth and peace and security workshop held in Amman in December 2025, bringing together young peacebuilders from the region and Italy, alongside regional partners and United Nations entities. The regional studies also informed national action planning processes and regional consultations for the second independent progress study on youth and peace and security.

“Hear us. Act now for a peaceful world” campaign and peace circles

36. On International Day of Peace in 2025, the Office convened the inaugural peace circle at United Nations Headquarters in partnership with the Department of Global Communications, marking the launch of the “Hear Us. Act Now for a Peaceful World” campaign and bringing together young peacebuilders, Member States, and United Nations partners to reflect on progress made and reaffirm their commitment to the youth and peace and security agenda. Anchored in the youth and peace and security agenda, the campaign showcases youth leadership as a driver of peace, justice and inclusion amid global polarization.

37. Since the campaign's launch, many peace circles have been held worldwide, including nine hosted by the Youth Office. A defining feature of the peace circles is meaningful youth inclusion, with at least half of participants having been under the age of 30. The insights generated are contributing to a growing body of youth-driven evidence that will inform the second independent progress study on youth and peace and security, along with other campaign outputs.

38. To mark International Youth Day in 2025, the Office led a global campaign on youth, peace and local action that ran from 12 August to 21 September 2025. The campaign positioned young people as equal partners in peacebuilding, prevention and inclusive governance. Thanks to the use of the “Youth lead peace” hashtag (#YouthLeadPeace), thousands of contributions were submitted from diverse contexts, with selected stories featured across United Nations platforms.

VI. Promoting human rights and inclusive participation

39. The Pact for the Future sets out concrete commitments to enhance meaningful youth participation at the international level. Complementing these, the Human Rights Council has continued advancing the agenda on youth and human rights, with the tenth anniversary of the Council's first substantive engagement on the issue to be marked in 2026.

40. Working with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and UNFPA, the United Nations Youth Office advanced structured and meaningful youth participation in the Human Rights Council. In June 2025, the Youth Office co-organized an expert round table in Geneva, which brought together youth advocates and Member State representatives in order to deepen discussions on institutionalizing youth participation within the Council, informing the forthcoming Human Rights Council resolution on youth and human rights. This was complemented by a dedicated side event during the Council's fifty-ninth session. The recommendations of the round table were presented during a virtual briefing, which was organized by youth participants with support from the Youth Office and OHCHR, to Member States' representatives of the core group of permanent missions on youth and human rights.

41. Efforts to strengthen commitments on the human rights of young persons of African descent in Latin America and the Caribbean were advanced through the Afro-Latin Caribbean Youth Congress, held in May 2026 in Colón, Panama, and co-organized by the Youth Office.

42. The Youth Office continued to promote meaningful and safe youth participation at the United Nations. Implementation of the internal protocol for preventing reprisals against young people engaging with the United Nations, developed in collaboration with OHCHR, was strengthened through briefings for young people in intergovernmental processes and new guidance material for safe participation. The Youth Office also provided substantive inputs to the report of the Secretary-General on intimidation and reprisals, highlighting measures to promote meaningful and safe youth engagement. In addition, age-sensitive data were included for the first time in the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation with the United Nations in the field of human rights, marking an important step towards improved visibility and accountability.

43. The reach of online training course entitled "Engaging safely at the UN", developed by the Office with the United Nations System Staff College, continued to expand. Updated with a new module on reprisals, it has reached over 3,800 young people registered on the E-Lounge platform. The course has a 93% average satisfaction score, with over 99% of respondents saying they would recommend it.

VII. Intergenerational leadership and participation in climate, civic and digital spaces

44. In partnership with Project Everyone, the Youth Office launched "Unscripted", an initiative to hold youth-centred meetings alongside major global events in order to reimagine intergenerational dialogue in practice. The sessions brought together diverse local and international young people and senior leaders in the fields of business, philanthropy and policy. Three sessions were held during the reporting period: Goals House, during the high-level week of the General Assembly (New York, September 2025); the Misk Global Forum (Riyadh, November 2025); and the Women Deliver 2026 Conference (Melbourne, Australia, April 2026).

45. As part of efforts to strengthen meaningful youth participation in climate action, the Office, with the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, supported and amplified youth-led networks and constituencies. This included regular coordination through the United Nations youth climate synergy group with youth non-governmental organizations, the Presidency Youth Climate Champion, and the Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change. With key partners, the Office also supported youth participation at the twentieth Conference of Youth and the thirtieth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and provided coordination and engagement support for the in-person retreat of the Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change in April 2026.

46. The Office continued to promote meaningful youth participation in public life and politics. It strengthened collaboration with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, including through the participation by the Assistant Secretary-General for Youth Affairs in the sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, held in Geneva in July 2025, and deepened engagement with the Club of Madrid. The Office also contributed to the work of the Inter-Agency Coordination Mechanism for United Nations Electoral Assistance.

47. As young people increasingly mobilize through digital campaigns, community-led action and protests, institutions face growing pressure to rethink how youth participation is understood and practised, with safety, accessibility and representativeness being paramount. In January 2026, the Youth Office convened a hybrid dialogue with the Learning Planet Institute on making meaningful youth engagement the norm, bringing together more than 600 youth leaders and institutions to reflect on what youth protests and movements reveal about participation and governance. Participants described a persistent gap between participation and influence, often characterized as “voice without influence”, and viewed formal policymaking mechanisms as slow, technical or inaccessible, with many seeing street and digital mobilization as practical alternatives for visibility, collective pressure and coordinated action, while recognizing the risks of civic activism and digital harms. The report on the results of the dialogue presents the Youth Compass as a practical framework for strengthening institutional capacity, reducing barriers to participation and enabling traceable impact so that meaningful youth engagement becomes a structural norm at all levels.

48. In response to the rapid evolution of digital technologies, the Youth Office advanced youth participation and protection in digital spaces. It contributed to key discussions, including at the Economic and Social Council youth forum and the eleventh multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals, on emerging pathways for youth civic engagement through social media and online participation. With the International Telecommunication Union and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, the Office supported the development of the “Protection through online participation” guiding principles⁴ to strengthen digital access to protection and support for children and youth. Working closely with the Office for Digital and Emerging Technologies, the Youth Office also advocated for the inclusion of youth-led initiatives on the United Nations Digital Cooperation Portal and continued to support youth engagement across United Nations digital technology spaces, including United Nations Open Source Week and the Internet Governance Forum.

⁴ Available at www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Cybersecurity/Pages/COP/POP.aspx.

VIII. Communications, outreach and public engagement

49. The United Nations Youth Office expanded its reach and visibility across social media, engaging young people, partners and stakeholders through accessible, youth-centred content. The channels of the Youth Office (@UNYouthAffairs) reached a collective following of over 1 million people across a number of social media platforms, reflecting a 17% increase compared with the previous cycle.

50. The Youth2030 Pulse newsletter, which curates opportunities for young people from across the United Nations system, continued to grow its readership. As at the end of the reporting period, the newsletter reached approximately 100,000 subscribers monthly, with an average open rate of 84% and a click-through rate of 10%.

51. The Youth Office's website⁵ served as the central hub for information about its work, resources for young people and opportunities for engagement with the United Nations system, with steady growth in traffic throughout the reporting period. Complementing the Office's social media and newsletter outreach, the site strengthens transparency, improves access to information and supports sustained engagement.

52. Since 2014, World Youth Skills Day has highlighted the importance of equipping young people with the skills necessary for employment, decent work, entrepreneurship and participation in an increasingly complex evolving world. In 2025, the Office partnered with the Permanent Missions of Portugal and Sri Lanka, together with the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), to host an event on the urgent need to integrate digital and artificial intelligence skills into learning systems, empowering young people to bridge digital divides, access emerging labour market opportunities and build inclusive, sustainable, peaceful and resilient societies. The Youth Office also partnered with Generation Unlimited to lead a global campaign for the observance of World Youth Skills Day, underscoring the full spectrum of competencies, from foundational literacy to advanced digital and artificial intelligence skills, needed for young people to adapt, innovate and lead in the future of work. Through multimedia content, youth spotlights and interactive digital engagement, thousands of young people and partners worldwide shared personal stories using the "Work Life Ready" hashtag (#WorkLifeReady), demonstrating how skills development can translate into livelihoods, entrepreneurship and leadership. By linking skills development with economic empowerment, the campaign reinforced the Youth Office's commitment to supporting young people to thrive, contribute to their communities and help to shape a more inclusive and sustainable future.

53. The Youth Office regularly engaged directly with student and academic communities through universities, schools and Model United Nations events, raising awareness about the work of the Organization with and for young people, and about opportunities to engage with that work.

IX. Flagship initiatives

54. The Office advanced the implementation of the United Nations Youth Compass and the initiative on youth mental health and well-being, which were both launched in 2025.

⁵ www.un.org/youthaffairs.

United Nations Youth Compass

55. The United Nations Youth Compass, the flagship initiative of the Office on meaningful youth participation, moved from design into delivery during the reporting period. Its purpose is to strengthen the access of young people, organizations, networks and movements to information, knowledge and opportunities; to enhance the capacities and practices of institutions to involve young people systematically at the national and intergovernmental levels; and to generate evidence that meaningful youth participation produces more inclusive and relevant policies.

56. The Compass is structured around four components: communities, competencies, champions and convenings. In 2025, the Compass served as the framework for the series of dialogues using the “Youth Lead” hashtag (#YouthLead) that informed the high-level plenary meeting commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth.

57. The first-ever United Nations youth townhall is scheduled to be held in December 2026 and will bring together Member States, United Nations entities, civil society, the private sector, academia, youth organizations and young people, from across sectors and regions.

58. The Youth Office launched a global survey across all Member States to understand how national laws, policies and institutional frameworks promote youth rights and facilitate meaningful youth participation in policymaking and decision-making, and to identify good practices that can foster learning and exchange across countries. Aligned with the Youth Compass and Youth2030, the survey provides a comprehensive overview of how youth engagement is embedded within national systems. The findings from the survey, key respondent interviews, focus group discussions and desk reviews will be launched as a report by the end of 2026.

59. The Youth Office collaborated with UNESCO to co-shape the first global survey of Governments and national youth and student organizations and facilitated data collection across countries. Drawing on the results of the survey, a report entitled “Lead with youth” published by the Global Education Monitoring Report Team examines the role of youth and students in education decision-making worldwide. The report offers a first global measure of youth participation in education governance, aims to strengthen youth engagement in policy dialogue and promote the inclusion of young people’s voices in shaping the next global education agenda. It was launched on 23 January 2026 at a high-level event marking the International Day of Education at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris.

Youth mental health and well-being

60. The Youth Office’s flagship initiative on youth mental health and well-being continued to advance system-wide efforts to promote youth-led solutions, advancing policy coherence and improving services for young people. Building on a strong evidence base and inclusive consultations, the initiative established a global ecosystem of partners, including more than 800 youth-led organizations reaching over 13 million people, alongside more than 10 academic institutions from different regions and more than 15 civil society networks and international organizations working on youth mental health and well-being. This process led to the development and validation of a framework on youth mental health and well-being, adopting a systems-based approach to mental health that examines the broader social, cultural, economic and environmental determinants that shape young people’s well-being.

61. The initiative enhanced a shared United Nations approach by establishing an inter-agency working group⁶ to align technical and policy efforts. It also helped to elevate youth mental health onto the global agenda, including through its high-level launch at the Second World Social Summit for Development, shifting the focus from examining individual symptoms to transforming systems of care, connection and community.

62. The initiative also advanced tangible policy and advocacy outcomes by fostering multisectoral collaboration. It supported the development of joint calls for strengthened policy action and investment in youth mental health, launched in partnership with the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund and UNESCO. In addition, the initiative contributed to global human rights processes, including by bringing together United Nations entities, partners, Member States and young people to provide inputs to the call by OHCHR for contributions on the impact of mental health challenges on the enjoyment of human rights by young people. This process was undertaken in response to Human Rights Council resolution 57/30, which requested OHCHR to conduct a comprehensive study on the issue for presentation to the Council at its sixty-third session. Through global campaigns and partnerships, including innovative outreach initiatives such as sport-based advocacy, the initiative amplified youth leadership and mobilized action. Overall, it has positioned youth mental health and well-being as a cross-cutting priority across the United Nations system, while laying the groundwork for sustained systems transformation and scaled-up support for young people worldwide.

Young Leaders for the Sustainable Development Goals

63. In 2025, the Youth Office launched the fifth cohort of Young Leaders for the Sustainable Development Goals.⁷ More than 33,000 applications were received from young people in over 180 countries, a sixfold increase compared with those received for the previous cohort, with selection supported by a distinguished panel of leaders from the entertainment industry, private sector, civil society and government.

64. The fifth cohort, comprising 17 young people aged between 16 and 33 years (12 female, 4 male and 1 non-binary), was officially announced on 24 October 2025, United Nations Day. It includes founders, community mobilizers, peacebuilders, entrepreneurs and creators working on cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, mental health, climate change and social inclusion. To prepare them for their term, the Youth Office provided training in communications and advocacy, safety and protection, media engagement, leadership and networking.

65. The cohort has taken part in several peace circles, collaborated with the Department of Global Communications on advocacy for the Sustainable Development Goals and participated in a range of events, including the Second World Summit for Social Development, the World Meteorological Organization "Next Generation of Climate, Weather and Water Leaders Day" and partner events such as the Misk Global Forum.

66. To remain connected with previous cohorts, the Youth Office established a regular newsletter providing updates and spotlighting current and former participants. Alumni took part in events that amplified their voices through platforms such as Change Now and the Normandy Peace Forum, and, in partnership with the Women's

⁶ Including the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Telecommunication Union and the United Nations University International Institute for Global Health.

⁷ See www.un.org/youthaffairs/en/meet-2025-cohort-young-leaders-sdgs.

International Forum, one alumnus received a youth award and engaged actively in the Commission on the Status of Women.

X. Strategic alliances and partnerships

67. The Youth Office has built an ecosystem of partnerships across the United Nations system that also includes Member States, civil society, youth-led organizations, academia, foundations and the private sector, multiplying its reach and deepens its impact.

68. During the reporting period, the Office maintained bilateral engagement with more than 90 permanent missions and regional groups. It has institutionalized its approach to Member State engagement, which includes an annual open briefing to all permanent missions, including focused thematic discussions, sustained bilateral outreach to permanent missions and capitals, and consultations with regional and thematic groups.

69. In September 2025, during the high-level week of the General Assembly, the Youth Office and Global Youth Mobilization announced a partnership to expand support for youth-led action worldwide. Through this collaboration, the Global Youth Mobilization network of six global youth organizations – collectively reaching over 250 million young people across more than 190 countries – will provide flexible microgrants and capacity-strengthening opportunities for young people, while the Youth Office will help to elevate youth voices in local, national and global decision-making processes through advocacy and engagement at all levels. Since its launch in 2020, Global Youth Mobilization has supported nearly 700 youth-led projects in over 125 countries, reaching 3.63 million community beneficiaries and engaging more than 605,000 young people in advancing the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

70. In November 2025, the Youth Office signed a one-year partnership with the Misk Foundation focused on jointly advancing youth leadership, skills development and global engagement, particularly in areas such as future-ready skills, intergenerational cooperation and platforms that amplify young people's contributions to global agendas. By scaling up key initiatives under the Youth Compass, the collaboration will leverage the innovation ecosystem of the Misk Foundation and the role of the Youth Office as convener in order to equip young people with the competencies, networks and opportunities needed to more meaningfully engage in global policy and decision-making spaces, ultimately contributing to more resilient and inclusive societies.

71. The Office continued to invest in sustained partnerships with youth organizations through joint advocacy initiatives, consultations and capacity-building, ensuring that youth-led organizations are present in multilateral discussions and recognized as partners in shaping policy solutions across the peace and security, development and human rights pillars of the Organization.

XI. Conclusion and way forward

72. This report confirms the consolidation of the role of the Youth Office and demonstrates that the reporting period marked a decisive shift from establishment to delivery at scale. The Office has strengthened its role as the system-wide anchor for youth affairs and as a catalyst for more coherent, accountable and inclusive action with and for young people across the United Nations system.

73. Looking ahead, the United Nations Youth Office will focus on overarching priorities to advance the implementation of its mandate for the period from 2025 to 2028, including: advancing meaningful youth participation as a standard practice across the United Nations system; strengthening system-wide accountability for working with and for young people through Youth2030; supporting the implementation of youth-related commitments in the Pact for the Future, including on youth and peace and security; expanding global advocacy and communications on youth priorities; promoting socioeconomic opportunities and investment in young people; convening the first-ever United Nations youth townhall; and broadening partnerships and resources commensurate with the scale of the mandate.

74. A central priority will be to advance the principles and practice of meaningful youth participation at the country, regional and global levels. This includes supporting more consistent standards for youth engagement, strengthening safe and inclusive participation mechanisms and ensuring that young people in all their diversity can contribute to decisions that affect their lives and futures.

75. Attention will be given to reaching young people who remain furthest from opportunity and decision-making, including young people in the least developed countries, rural and remote areas, conflict-affected settings and communities affected by poverty, exclusion and limited connectivity. The Office will work with partners across the United Nations system to address barriers linked to digital divides, language, accessibility, geography and resources, and to support approaches that combine digital engagement with in-person, community-based and locally grounded forms of participation.

76. The Office will continue to strengthen system-wide accountability for youth throughout Youth2030 Phase 2, including the operationalization of the updated results framework and scorecard and the continued roll-out of the Youth Marker, to support more consistent tracking of how United Nations entities work with and for young people and to identify gaps, good practices and areas requiring accelerated action.

77. Global advocacy and communications will remain essential to the Office's mandate. The Office will continue to elevate youth priorities across global policy debates, strengthen public understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing young people, and support narratives that recognize young people as partners, leaders and rights holders.

78. In line with the Pact for the Future, the Office will support the continued advancement of the youth and peace and security agenda, including through the finalization and launch of a second independent progress study, together with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and UNFPA. The Office will also support efforts to advance the implementation of Security Council resolution [2807 \(2025\)](#), with particular attention to the participation, protection and leadership of young people in peace and security processes.

79. The Office will further promote socioeconomic opportunities for young people in all their diversity, including through partnerships that support skills, decent work, entrepreneurship, civic engagement and youth-led solutions. Emphasis will be placed on future-ready skills, digital inclusion and the responsible use of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, to expand opportunities for young people and reduce inequalities.

80. The Office will continue to work closely with youth-led and youth-serving organizations, including the major youth constituencies and networks, as essential partners in shaping priorities, reaching diverse constituencies and grounding United Nations action in the realities of young people. At the same time, the Office will further develop partnerships with foundations, academia, civil society and the private

sector, including in areas such as artificial intelligence, digital transformation, future-ready skills and youth employment, while safeguarding the values of the United Nations.

81. The Office will convene the first-ever United Nations youth townhall in December 2026 under the United Nations Youth Compass, a global platform for intergenerational dialogue, youth leadership and collective action with a focus on connecting young people from diverse backgrounds to United Nations processes and advancing practical solutions to shared global challenges.

82. To enable delivery at scale, the Office will continue to expand and diversify voluntary contributions and partnerships, while safeguarding the integrity, impartiality and inclusivity of its mandate. Sustained and predictable investment will be essential to ensure that the Office can meet growing expectations from Member States and young people.

83. In this context, the following recommendations are made:

(a) Member States, the United Nations system and other stakeholders should further advance the principles and practice of meaningful youth participation, including strengthening safe, inclusive and adequately resourced mechanisms for young people to contribute to decision-making at all levels;

(b) The United Nations system should continue to strengthen accountability for working with and for young people throughout Youth2030 Phase 2, including through the use of the updated results framework, Youth2030 Scorecard and Youth Marker, and to ensure that youth priorities are reflected more consistently in planning, programming, reporting and resource allocation;

(c) Member States and partners should place particular emphasis on identifying and engaging young people who remain furthest behind, and on removing the barriers that prevent their meaningful participation. This includes young people in the least developed countries, rural and remote areas, conflict-affected settings, and communities affected by poverty, exclusion, limited connectivity and digital divides;

(d) Member States are encouraged to support and contribute to the first-ever United Nations youth townhall, including by enabling the participation of a diverse group of young people and by helping to ensure that the townhall serves as an inclusive, action-oriented platform for intergenerational dialogue, youth leadership and collective engagement with the United Nations;

(e) Member States and partners are urged to provide sustained, predictable and adequate resources to the United Nations Youth Office, commensurate with the scale and ambition of its mandate and the transformative vision for youth engagement.