TOGETHER FIRST
A global system that works for all

ID:	Is anonymous?	Is organisation?
295	No	No

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Yes	GCF

First name:	Last name:
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Global catastrophic risks mitigated	Risk multipliers managed	Implementation timeframe
Climate change	**Institutions that lack inclusivity or accountability**	**Medium**
Eco-system collapse	**Poverty and inequality**	
Pandemics and anti-microbial resistance	**Conflict or political violence**	
Weapons of Mass Destruction		
The threat from new and emerging technology		
Unknown risks		

Youth advisory body in the UN

To increase inclusivity and accountability of the UN system, and in light of the long term consequences of the actions of the UN young people are an essential stakeholder for the UN to engage in a structural and meaningful way, which is why the UN needs a youth advisory body.

DETAILS

“Young people are an enormous asset to our societies. We must cherish them, invest in them and empower them.” - António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General

In order to increase inclusivity and accountability to the UN system, and in light with the long-term consequences of the actions and decisions within the UN system young people are an essential stakeholder for the UN to engage with in a structural and meaningful way.

Drawing from experience from the Council of Europe where young people are organised in an advisory council, elected by other young people, and empowered with equal decision-making rights as their counterparts (governmental representatives dealing with youth) we wish to propose a reformed agenda for youth involvement within the UN system. The Council of Europe’s ground-breaking co-management system is a living example of participatory democracy. It is grounded in the principle that those best placed to devise youth policy are the young people themselves, working in tandem with those responsible for it, i.e. governments. The co-management structure used in the Council of Europe is a place for common reflection and co-production, it combines the voice of young Europeans and that of the public authorities in the member States responsible for youth issues, leading to a sharing and evaluation of experience. The structure won “The Future Policy Bonze Award 2019” given by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with the support of the Office of the UN Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and Youth Policy Labs,

Creating a youth-advisory body connected the UNGA to formally engage with institution would create the opportunity to enhance the transparency and effectiveness in which the UN involves young people and youth civil society. Ensuring that there is sufficient funds and structural support for young people to engage both with the UN, as well as with the constituency consisting of young representatives of youth organisations the would allow for the resolutions and decisions taken in the UN to a greater extent reflects the rights and needs of young people, the generations who will need to live with the decisions taken for all of their lives.

Seeing that less than 2% of the world’s parliamentarians are to be considered young, it is crucial that young people, through youth organisations and networks can elect their own representatives. Through the UN major group for children and youth young people are organised and are already today mobilising and influencing the agenda of the

UN. However, in order to be effective, the right recourses and formal recognition as an official advisory body would mean that more young people from diverse backgrounds could access the avenues of participation and decision-making within the UN and that young people are not seen as an external stakeholder but as core business for throughout the UN system.

A youth advisory body would have a two folded mandate, firstly to ensure that the work the UN does on youth is on point and meets the needs and rights of young people. It would support the implementation and follow-up of the UN youth strategy and ensure a bottom up approach as well as develop different standards to promote youth participation and young people's access to rights in the member states. In addition, the youth advisory body should also be mandated to mainstream youth across the UN system, ensuring that young people are represented in all areas that concern youth, and that young people with different backgrounds are heard in the development of the UN system, the implementation of the UN Agenda 2030 and all other strategic operations of the UN. The Advisory Council on Youth should report to the General Assembly of the UN and closely cooperate with the member states on topics relating to the three pillars of the UN.

How will this proposal alleviate poverty and inequality?
By ensuring that young people are heard and involved in matters that concern them would immediately address the inequality in today's political system where the political representation of young people is very low. By involving young people as a resource, better and more effective policies can be developed which will further strengthen the reach and impact of the UN.

How will this proposal reduce conflict and political violence?
By involving young people as bearers of peace and recognising their role as an important stakeholder in conflict management and mitigation conflicts can, as addressed in the UN Security Council resolution 2250, help reduce and prevent conflicts and political violence.

WIDER IMPLICATIONS

Enhancing inclusivity and accountability in national and global governance

By ensuring that there is a transparent and democratic representation of young people directly connected to the UNGA will enhance inclusivity and accountability in global governance in a direct way.

Alleviating poverty and inequality

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Reducing conflict and political violence

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THEORY OF CHANGE

Implementation strategy

An advisory council should be set up by cooperation between UNGA, the Secretary Generals' envoy on youth, the UN major group for children and youth and regional youth bodies such as the European Youth Forum and the Iberoamerican Youth Organization.

Political will exists to realise this proposal

Current youth movements have made a compelling case to include youth in decision-making with strong support from many member states. On the other hand, youth inclusion is often tokenistic and insincere, which can further disenfranchise youth from global governance and democratic life. Therefor it is important that the structure set up is fully funded, sustainable and transparent with a clear mandate.

MITIGATING RISKS

Mitigating unknown risks

Including young people in decision making and analysis of the challenges facing humanity and the earth will lead to better mitigation of all global catastrophic risks, as well as more legitimacy and grass-root connection to the decisions made at UN-level.