



Major Group for
Children and Youth
the space for children and youth in the United Nations



Side Event at the 2025 Development Cooperation Forum The Road to IFA Reform: Role Of Youth & Addressing Emerging Issues

Event title:

Side Event Information

Organizer: Children and Youth International (ECOSOC accredited)

Co-organisers:

Co organizers: Children and Youth International (ECOSOC accredited), [Major Group for Children and Youth - FFD Youth Constituency](#), [March for Our Planet Movement](#), Program yoUr Future (PUF) (approached), UNFPA (approached), Permanent Mission of the EU to UN (Approached)

Event abstract:

Young people today make up more than 40% of the global population and are set to bear the greatest impact of broken financial systems. At the same time, youth are also the changemakers, driving transformation both on the ground and within the UN system. Convened by the CYI, Major Group for Children and Youth - FfD Youth Constituency and in partnership with other organizations, interested UN partners and member states, this panel will focus on the role of young people in the reform of the IFA and feature discussions on how FfD finance architecture is evolving/must evolve to address contemporary and emerging issues in light of complex and interconnected challenges of climate, technology/AI and others.

The event plays a crucial role in the context of the 2025 Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), which aims to reimagine and reshape international development cooperation. At present, one of the most pressing challenges to realizing the ambitious targets of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Agenda is the significant financial gaps that hinder progress. In an era where the voices of young people are increasingly pivotal, youth constituencies assert that any transformative change in global finance must prioritize the inclusion of youth perspectives. Young people are not just passive observers; they are integral to the evolution of the global financial system. Since the inauguration of the Agenda2030 in 2015, youth have cultivated a profound understanding of contemporary challenges such as



climate change, technological disruption, and pervasive socio-economic inequalities, issues that are frequently neglected by the existing financial framework.

Aligned with the [core objectives 1 and 3](#) of the **2025 DCF**, the session will focus on promoting better alignment between international development cooperation and nationally identified sustainable development needs, vis-a-vis the role of youth. It will also align with the theme of the Panel 1 of the DCF on *Making development cooperation work for today's world* especially with respect to the children and youth perspective; and Panel 5 on *Strengthening the coherence of international development cooperation to make it fit for purpose*, especially as the session touches on the role of young people in addressing emerging issues.

Drawing from the successful youth mobilization led by MGCY during the SDG Summit 2023 and the ongoing consultations for the Summit of the Future 2024 (including 30+ youth consultations), the panel will address two key priorities:

- **Youth in Financing Commitments:** Examine the role of youth and their priorities in implementing the financing commitments laid out in the Pact for the Future, sharing youth constituency positions on IFA reform and its intersection with climate finance.
- **Evolving Finance Architecture:** Initiate discussions on how the FfD finance architecture is evolving and must continue evolving to address interconnected challenges, exploring financing models such as state-to-state funding, state-to-non-state funding, non-state-to-non-state funding, and the role of youth within these modalities.

The session will not be a one-time event, but rather integrated as part of the youth roadmap to FFD conference in Spain which includes moments such as the ECOSOC Youth 2025 (of which MGCY is co organiser) and the planned FFD Youth Assemblies.

A 2-3 page policy read comprising key messages from the session will be generated. It is expected to have other groups, networks, UN agencies and others as speakers/partners of the event. Panel Format. The event format would be an inter-generational panel comprising 3 youth reps, 1 or 2 reps from UN, one from member state, and one from academia/think tank). It will start with scene setting by the moderator followed by two rounds of questions (outlined above in the description). Under each question, 2-3 panelists will serve as lead discussants making short presentations followed by interventions (discussions) from the floor. Focus will be



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laid on keeping this session interactive and dynamic, using tools such as mantimeter, videos, etc.

Event website:

More details will be added on - <https://www.unmgcy.org/dcf-2025-side-event>

Structure:

The following moderators and speakers in a gender and regionally balanced manner.

Moderator:

Mr. Arpan Patel (FfD Youth Constituency, MGCY)

Speakers:

1. Two youth representatives addressing different questions:
 - a. **Charlie Zong**: Rep from youth sub committee for summit of the future: outlining how the process of youth engagement for the Summit of the Future was and how we can learn more from it
 - b. Video message by **Judy Kipkenda, Co-chair of the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus**: exploring the importance of funding mechanisms that reach grassroots level and barriers faced by community-led organizations in accessing financing
 - c. Roadmap for meaningful youth engagement in lead-up to Spain FFD Conference
2. **Name TBC**: One representative from member state (either EU or a Nordic country): explaining how the financing towards community and youth organizations can result into positive action
3. **Mariengela Parra (TBC)**, UN DESA: elaborating the process for FFD and focus on the role of stakeholders
4. **Anita Thomas (invited, TBC)**, NGO Committee on Financing: what are some of the key CSO priorities ?
5. **Name TBC**: Representative from academia/ thinktank: key demands of the CSO on IFA reform and what are some key sticking points



Annex: Linkage with SDGs

Historically, the need for youth engagement has been recognized; as far back as 1995, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/50/81, which called for the “Full and effective participation of youth in the life of society and in decision-making.” In light of this, enhancing youth financial literacy and fostering their active involvement in shaping the future of global finance is paramount. Such engagement leads to informed financial choices, increased financial security, and improved overall well-being, empowering young people to take meaningful roles in the economy while significantly contributing to the achievement of the SDGs in the following critical areas:

1. Economic Empowerment and Poverty Reduction (SDG 1):

- *Improving livelihoods:* Youth equipped with financial knowledge can adeptly manage their resources, establish entrepreneurial ventures, and make strategic investments. This, in turn, can elevate their income potential and reduce poverty levels. Engaging youth in the development cooperation process enhances transparency and efficiency, ultimately magnifying the effectiveness of Official Development Assistance (ODA) in combating poverty and promoting economic growth, as highlighted in “Panel 1: Making Development Cooperation Work for Today’s World.”

- *Resilience to economic shocks:* It is essential for youth to be prepared to navigate financial hardships, such as unemployment or unforeseen expenses, thus bolstering their resilience to various forms of poverty.

2. Quality Education and Decent Work (SDG 4 and 8):

- *Entrepreneurship and innovation:* Young entrepreneurs are often vulnerable to financial risks when launching new ventures, which can stifle creative ideas and decelerate economic advancement. This dynamic will be further examined in Panel 2: “Improving Modalities to Better Respond to Evolving Needs, Vulnerabilities, and Priorities.”

- *Informed career paths:* Education and career opportunities must evolve in tandem with the skills that are projected to be in demand in future job markets, ensuring that youth are adequately prepared for the challenges ahead.



3. Gender Equality (SDG 5):

- *Closing the gender gap and increasing economic opportunities:* Empowering youth, particularly young women, to engage in more inclusive financial decision-making can unlock economic opportunities and foster greater participation of women in financial endeavors outside the household domain, particularly in low-income and least developed countries (LDCs).

4. Responsible Consumption and Production (SDG 12):

- *Informed consumer choices:* Financially literate youth are more inclined to make judicious decisions regarding their spending, saving, and investing behaviors. This not only promotes personal financial health but also contributes to the development of a fair and sustainable economy.

5. Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10):

- *Financial inclusion:* It is vital that technological advancements serve as catalysts for promoting financial inclusion, empowering marginalized communities to access essential financial services without succumbing to overwhelming debt burdens.

6. Climate Action (SDG 13):

- *Investing in green solutions:* Armed with financial literacy, young people are increasingly inclined to invest in environmentally friendly technologies and sustainable practices. It is crucial to promote initiatives such as green taxation and incentivize behaviors that support climate action and environmental stewardship.

The current landscape presents a unique opportunity to incorporate the insights and creativity of youth into the reform of international financial architecture like never before. Their distinct perspectives, vested interest in the future, and remarkable capacity for innovation and mobilization position them as pivotal players in this transformation. With a surge in financially literate youth, we can anticipate a wave of financial products and services better aligned with the rapidly shifting needs of a dynamic world, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and sustainable future for all.