

United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development¹

Terms of Reference

Purpose:

In the spirit of UN coherence and cooperation, the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development, aims to increase the effectiveness of UN work in youth development by strengthening collaboration and exchange among all relevant UN entities, while respecting and harnessing the benefits of their individual strengths and unique approaches and mandates.

In the framework of the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) and its 15 priority areas, the Network will advocate for, support and review progress on the implementation of UN Resolutions, Conventions and the internationally agreed development goals that are youth-related. The Network will also contribute to increasing the understanding and visibility of the UN System's work on youth development. For the representatives of each entity, the Network will:

- Provide a forum for cooperation and support.
- Provide an opportunity for ongoing exchange of information on their work on youth development, including through knowledge management initiatives and tools.
- Strengthen and support cooperation to promote youth development, through joint advocacy and initiatives and other forms of cooperation.
- Draw on the members' networks and relationships with governments, youth-led and youth-focused organizations, donor agencies, civil society organizations, multilateral organisations and others, to advance youth development.

¹ The Network includes entities whose mandate includes children, adolescents and youth. The United Nations defines "children" as between 0 and up to the age of 18 years (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 1) and "adolescents" between 10 and 19 years of age (WHO: http://www.who.int/child-adolescent-health/OVERVIEW/AHD/adh_over.htm). The UN General Assembly defines "youth" as those persons between 15 and 24 years and "young people" as those between 10 and 24 years of age. These definitions were adopted during the International Year of the Youth in 1985 (<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N96/771/43/PDF/N9677143.pdf?OpenElement>) In addition to these agreed international legal definitions by the United Nations and its agencies, each national government has its own definition and age-threshold for defining children, adolescents, young people and youth based on the local context

- Facilitate and support youth involvement and participation in the UN System and its programmes or initiatives at all levels.

The main objectives of the Network are:

- To identify key joint priorities and plan collaboratively to implement related initiatives based on the entities' work plans, within existing resources.
- To share good practices and expertise and to promote effective cooperation among the entities in programming at country (UNDAF) and regional levels.
- To identify global strategic opportunities (events, campaigns, initiatives, resources), ensure coordinated input, facilitate and support sustainable follow-up mechanisms.

Membership

Membership of the Network shall consist of United Nations entities whose work is relevant to youth development.

The Network shall be composed of representatives identified by the Heads of the entities. Additional members can be invited by the co-chairs of the Network.

Representatives should have broad knowledge and experience of the United Nations system and of the work of their entities on youth development.

Membership in the Network implies a commitment to participate regularly, to have the ability to take decisions, as appropriate, on behalf of their entity, consult with youth networks and to share information in a timely fashion to enable and facilitate coordination and cooperation.

Methods of operation

The Network will hold regular meetings at UNHQ, with telephone/video conferencing to other Duty Stations. The members of the Network will provide updates of their work in advance of the meetings. The agenda of the meetings will be reflective of the Network's collaborative planning and other emerging issues. A meeting of the entities' representatives will be held on an annual basis, when possible in the context of another youth meeting. Online networking and a knowledge-sharing platform will be used.

The Network will have two co-chairs. The United Nations Programme on Youth will be a permanent Co-Chair of the Network and, as such will coordinate administrative functions of the Network and will provide support and continuity to the other Co-Chair and the

Network as required. The second Co-Chair of the Network will be selected by the members and will rotate on an annual basis.

The Network will proactively support, encourage and cooperate with relevant interagency initiatives. Thematic sub-groups among members will be encouraged.

The Co-Chairs may invite to its meetings, after consultation with other members of the Network, experts and organisations whose knowledge may contribute to its work. The participation of youth-led and youth-focused organisations and networks will be particularly encouraged.

The Network will promote the development of similar United Nations Inter Agency Networks on Youth Development at the regional and country level and work with these entities to ensure global and cross regional coordination of collaborative initiatives.

All participants in the meetings are responsible for covering their own costs.

The Network shall keep a record of its proceedings which will be circulated to the members.

Adopted in Paris, France, on 19 February 2010