

National Workshop

“Youth Engagement in Institution Building and Public Services Delivery for Sustainable Development After the Pandemic”

Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire
7-9 December 2022

1. Background

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development articulates a negotiated international strategy to support human well-being. It is guided by a spirit of global solidarity and partnership aimed to mobilize the necessary resources to lift the poorest and most vulnerable out of poverty, under the principle of ‘leaving no one behind’.

Strong public institutions and efficient service delivery are crucial to the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Thus, the importance of building transparent, accountable, innovative, and citizen-oriented institutions to accomplish sustainable development. The 11 principles of effective governance established Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA), particularly the principles of leaving no one behind; non-discrimination; broad participation; and intergenerational equity, are critical to support improvements in local governance capabilities to reach the SDGs.

Young people represent most of the population in the developing world, accounting for more than 70 percent of the population in many countries. The median age in Cote D’Ivoire today is 18.9 years.¹ Therefore, it is important to engage this large part of the population in global efforts to achieve intergenerational equity and sustainable development. Young people need to believe that they have a stake in society and a viable future. They also need to see society believe and invest in them. A key commitment on the UN Secretary General’s Report “Our Common Agenda”, pledges to listen to and work with the youth by removing barriers and promoting meaningful, diverse, and effective youth engagement.²

The workshop is organized in collaboration with the Ministry for Youth, Professional Insertion, and Civic Engagement, the National Youth Council, as well as UNDP and UNFPA in Côte d’Ivoire. It will also involve other relevant national stakeholders in the government, NGO sector, civil society, and academia.

¹ See Worldometer. Available at: <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/cote-d-ivoire-population/#:~:text=The%20median%20age%20in%20C%3%B4te%20d'Ivoire%20is%2018.9%20years>, accessed on 21 April 2022.

² See “Our Common Agenda”, Report of the Secretary General of the United Nations. Available at: https://www.un.org/en/content/common-agenda-report/assets/pdf/Common_Agenda_Report_English.pdf accessed on 21 April 2022.

This workshop is part of a pilot to a large initiative that aims to build on, and consolidate, previous work undertaken by UNDESA on “Youth Citizenship and Civic Engagement in Times of Pandemic” in this country (2021). It also builds on the activities undertaken by DPIDG, in cooperation with the APRM, on enhancing the integration of the 2030 Agenda into national policy frameworks, including the operationalization of the 11 principles of effective governance for sustainable development.

2. Objectives

The overall objective of the activity is to enhance the capacities of government officials working for and with youth as well as the capacities of youth-led civil society to contribute actively to support the implementation of the SDGs, through more effective institutions and efficient public services delivery after the pandemic.

Specific objectives will be: (i) to reinforce the role of youth-led civil society organizations in strengthening public institutions and services delivery and mitigating the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic; (ii) to enhance public officials’ understanding of how to harness the energy and productivity of the younger generation to support the achievement of the SDGs; and (iii) to support youth organisations to develop their capacity to intervene and contribute to their communities after the pandemic.

3. Target Groups

The workshop will bring together 65 young leaders from diverse youth-led civil society organizations operating in various regions of the country. It will also include about 15 to 20 government officials from the Ministry of Youth and other relevant government institutions, as well as from the UNCT, NGOs and academia working on issues pertaining to youth engagement and institutional building.

4. Activities of the Workshop

The workshop will be a face-to-face interactive event with several training modules focusing on issues such as: (i) The 2030 Agenda and its implementation in the post-pandemic period; (ii) Understanding youth engagement and participation in the implementation of the SDGs; (iii) Strengthening public institutions and services delivery in fragile contexts; amongst others. The sessions will be organized in plenary and group discussions. It will involve training, role-playing exercises, mapping of SDGs, and open dialogues between youth, policymakers, and practitioners. Resource persons drawn from academia, government, the UNCT, and civil society will deliver training modules and facilitate group discussions.

5. Expected Outcomes

- Strengthen values of citizenship and civic engagement, of solidarity and social cohesion of young people through engagement in institution building and public services delivery.
- Strengthen the understanding of government officials of the role young people in supporting policy development and government interventions in institution building and public services delivery.
- Develop the capacity of young leaders to mobilize and train their peers to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Reinforce young people’s citizenship and civic engagement in their communities.
- Promote open dialogues and exchanges between the policymakers and practitioners with youth-led civil society groups from across the country.

