

UN-Habitat Youth Advisory Board
Terms of Reference
DRAFT – June 7, 2023

BACKGROUND

The UN-Habitat Youth Advisory Board (YAB) comprises 18 advisors: 12 youth advisors to provide critical input from the perspective each of UN-Habitat's six regions, plus 6 mentor advisors with youth work experience in thematic areas critical to urbanization. YAB advisory are appointed by UN-Habitat to serve for a period of 2 years.

The YAB is convened in partnership with the Balıkesir Metropolitan Municipality, under the auspices of Mayor Yücel Yılmaz. Balıkesir provides logistical and capacity support to the Youth Advisory Board for the period of 2022-2025.

The Board advises UN-Habitat on strategies to engage young people in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda. The input from the YAB helps UN-Habitat develop appropriate policies and practices across the agency to address issues related to youth empowerment and engage young people directly in development. The Board also advocates for and seeks to strengthen youth participation and youth-led initiatives in UN-Habitat and its partner networks.

The first YAB was established at the World Urban Forum IV held in Nanjing, China on 1 and 2 November, 2008 and launched at the 22nd Session of the UN-Habitat Assembly in April 2009.

A MANDATE OF YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD

- I. Meaningfully engage young people in UN-Habitat with the goal of advancing the inclusive achievement of the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- II. Provide strategic advice to UN-Habitat within the framework of urban [youth-led development](#) on issues of concern to young people, particularly advancing meaningful engagement of urban youth in research, planning, governance, implementation and monitoring of the policies and practices of local authorities.
- III. Advise UN-Habitat on the development and dissemination of best practices to promote the engagement of youth in matters that relate to the effective operation and improvement of the agencies' strategy on mainstreaming youth participation in all substantive aspects of human settlements work, the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- IV. Ensure that youth concerns are inputted into local, national and international policy gatherings, and to facilitate the involvement other young people at those forums. This

also includes providing feedback for relevant policy formulation and programming from both regional and thematic perspectives.

- V. Share experiences from such gatherings with other young people globally, with the goal of encouraging them to seek involvement in governance processes in their regions.
- VI. Promote youth participation and input in UN-Habitat's work through co-organizing youth events on youth-related urban issues, informing and mobilizing young people to participate in UN-Habitat activities.
- VII. Support the planning, organizing, and hosting of youth workshops during UN General Assembly meetings, UN-Habitat Assemblies, World Urban Forums, World Urban Youth Assemblies, high-level forums on the SDGs and other events similar in scope and theme.
- VIII. Contribute to the UN-Habitat policy development and publications by:
 - Authoring articles on youth issues and concerns for UN-Habitat public information channels
 - Contributing key input into UN-Habitat publications from a youth perspective
 - Encouraging youth and youth-led organizations in their regions to document and share their experiences, best practices, lessons learnt, tools and publications to add to UN-Habitat's knowledge database in the sphere of youth led-development.
 - Disseminating timely and accurate information about UN-Habitat Strategic Plan, Priorities of UN-Habitat's Executive Director, UN-Habitat's Youth Strategy, and other core policy statements of the agency.
- IX. Monitor on UN-Habitat's commitment to youth engagement through an biennial report detailing progress in and outcomes of above-mentioned tasks and responsibilities related to urban youth-led programmes and sustainable urbanization.
- X. On completion of their mandate provide a detailed briefing to UN-Habitat.
- XI. In carrying out their duties the full board will meet at least twice annually, but likely more frequently. The meetings will include the following:
 - Orientation and training Meeting to be hosted by Balikesir Metropolitan Municipality, Turkey.
 - Youth Advisory Board Annual Work Plan Retreat (UN-Habitat Assembly Sessions) to review and project the board's activities and project interventions and budget and travel requirements.
 - The board shall hold regular meetings via online E Meeting platforms to be facilitated by UN-Habitat and the Balikesir Metropolitan Municipality.

- XII. Each board member shall ensure availability (virtually or physically) to attend the UN-Habitat Assembly, the World Urban Forum and the Youth Assembly, and other youth focused meetings, as required by UN-Habitat.
- XIII. The YAB will work closely with the Balıkesir Metropolitan Municipality to ensure the quality of the outputs are assured.

B RESPONSIBILITIES OF UN-HABITAT

- I. Members of the YAB will not receive any remuneration from UN-Habitat. However, the organization shall provide funding (with prior approval) for expenses incurred, as budgets allow, by board members fulfilling their responsibilities to participate in the policy forums such as the UN-Habitat Assembly, the ECOSOC Youth Forum, World Urban Forum Youth Assembly and other meetings arranged by UN-Habitat or the United Nations.
- II. Provide the Youth Advisory Board with information and documentation on the work of UN-Habitat and of related UN institutions which is required to fulfill the Youth Advisory Board's responsibilities focused on youth-led development, sustainable urbanization and human settlement issues.
- III. Meaningfully engage the Youth Advisory Board in the planning of youth activities.
- IV. Provide access to telecommunications infrastructure to support for virtual meetings, and coordinate and manage communication of the Youth Advisory Board.
- V. Facilitate training and capacity building in the areas of fundraising, advocacy, media, decision-making and policymaking to enable board members to fully and effectively fulfill their responsibilities, as outlined above.
- VI. Enabling the Youth Advisory Board to liaise and collaborate with UN-Habitat Regional Offices and relevant youth focal points on youth-led development.
- VII. Promote synergies and linkages between the Youth Advisory Board and UN-Habitat global programmes and initiatives.
- VIII. Work with Balıkesir Metropolitan Municipality, the official sponsor of the YAB from 2023 – 2025, to assure that the YAB runs efficiently and effectively.

C ELIGIBILITY

- I. Youth advisor candidates should be between the 18 and 32 years old at the time of candidacy.

- II. Youth Advisor candidates must be members of youth-led or youth-serving organizations and the must be able to demonstrate access to youth networks within their regions.
- III. Mentor advisor candidates can be any age, however they must have significant experience working with youth, combined with knowledge of a human settlements related thematic area
- IV. Both youth and mentor candidate candidates should ideally have good oral and written skills in English. Fluency in other United Nations languages is an asset.
- V. Candidates should have access to, and be reasonably proficient in, communication technologies.
- VI. Candidates must be available and accessible for conference-calls with the Board and UN-Habitat representatives and be able to avail themselves for Board activities.
- VII. Board members shall serve for a maximum of one two-year term, provided they fulfill their responsibilities as detailed above.

D SELECTION OF MEMBERS

- I. The current Youth Advisory Board will develop regional short lists and have a whole group meeting to select final list for consideration, taking into account preferences expressed through global youth input mechanism and other requirements in these terms of reference
- II. All members of the Youth Advisory Board shall be appointed by UN-Habitat from a pool of vetted eligible candidates who are between the ages of 18 and 32.
- III. For at least 50% of the youth advisors, their appointment will be guided by the preferences expressed through a global youth input mechanism.
- IV. The exact design of the global youth input mechanism is at the discretion of UN-Habitat.
- V. UN-Habitat shall target at least 50% of youth advisors being under 24 years of age.
- VI. UN-Habitat shall ensure that at one male and female person are selected as youth advisors in each of the six regions.
- VII. To ensure advice has a globally balanced perspective, the Youth Advisory Board shall have members who are actively working or reside in all six UN-Habitat regions:

- Africa
 - Asia Pacific
 - Europe
 - Latin America and the Caribbean
 - North America
 - West Asia/Arab States
- VIII. UN-Habitat will work to ensure that the board has at least 1 youth advisor from a least developed country.
- IX. UN-Habitat shall select 3 mentor advisors on the basis of expertise in urbanization policies of high interest to young people.
- X. UN-Habitat shall select a further 3 mentor advisors on the basis of their expertise in working with youth, or who were past YAB board members.
- XI. Mentor advisors will have no age restrictions.
- XII. Relevant information regarding the Youth Advisory Board selection policies and processes will be made available to young people in all six regions through digital platforms.
- XIII. Candidacy application shall be made available on UN-Habitat's website.
- XIV. The Youth Advisory Board shall not discriminate on the basis of disability, religion, creed, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, and ethnic or social origin.

F REMOVAL AND RETIREMENT OF MEMBERS

- I. If an Youth Advisor or Mentor Advisor resigns or does not satisfactorily fulfill his / her responsibilities (including remaining in contact with both UN-Habitat and Youth Advisory Board for a period of three months without a reasonable explanation), the Board may vote by simple majority to remove and replace the member.
- II. The Advisor may be replaced and his/her term completed.
- III. UN-Habitat also has discretion to remove board members if necessary.

G DECISION-MAKING

- I. Each of 12 youth advisory board members shall have one equal vote in relation to YAB business.
- II. Mentor advisors can participate as board members but have no vote

H CHANGES TO THESE TERMS OF REFERENCE

- I. Changes to these guidelines can only be made by UN-Habitat in consultation with the Youth Advisory Board.

- II. Recommendations for change may be made directly to UN-Habitat from members of the Youth Advisory Board for internal review and consideration.