

Summary DeclarACTION on Youth and Sustainable Urbanization 2.0

Preamble

The *DeclarACTION on Youth and Sustainable Urbanization 2.0* was adopted at the Children and Youth Assembly of the 12th World Urban Forum, held in Cairo, Egypt, from November 4–8, 2024. This document reflects the insights gathered through an extensive consultation process, including a global survey, focus group discussions, and interactive training sessions with youth from diverse urban contexts. Focus group discussions and workshops held at the Children and Youth Assembly and within the Future Generation Zone at the Forum further enriched the process, providing a dedicated platform for youth to share experiences and propose actionable solutions.

These participatory methods enabled young people to articulate their challenges, priorities, and commitments for fostering inclusive and sustainable urbanization. It serves as a roadmap for action, calling on governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector to meaningfully engage with youth in shaping urban futures.

Key Challenges Identified by Youth

- 1. Affordable Housing**
 - Housing remains a top concern, with many youth unable to access secure, affordable, and adequate living spaces.
 - Call to Action: Promote innovative financing, public-private partnerships, and policy reforms to expand affordable housing options.

- 2. Accessible and Sustainable Public Transport**
 - Reliable, efficient, and safe transport systems are essential for equitable mobility and economic participation.
 - Call to Action: Develop inclusive, low-carbon transport solutions that cater to youth and marginalized communities.

- 3. Participatory Urban Governance**
 - Youth voice and agency in urban planning are limited, leading to exclusion from key decision-making processes.
 - Call to Action: Institutionalize youth participation in governance through structured forums and representation in urban councils.

- 4. Reducing Inequalities**
 - Disparities in access to services, education, and economic opportunities disproportionately affect youth in informal settlements.
 - Call to Action: Implement inclusive growth strategies and prioritize investments in underserved areas.

- 5. Environmental Degradation and Climate Action**
 - Pollution, waste mismanagement, and inadequate green infrastructure undermine urban sustainability.
 - Call to Action: Accelerate efforts to combat environmental degradation through circular economy models, reforestation, and sustainable urban planning.

- 6. Accessible Public Spaces**
 - The lack of safe and inclusive public spaces limits youth development and community cohesion.
 - Call to Action: Rehabilitate and design public spaces that promote safety, accessibility, and cultural expression.

- 7. Disaster Risk Reduction**
 - Urban vulnerability to climate-induced disasters is a pressing concern for youth, especially in informal settlements.
 - Call to Action: Integrate resilience-building and disaster preparedness into urban development policies.

- 8. Safeguarding Cultural and Natural Heritage**
 - Youth value the protection of cultural and natural assets as integral to sustainable urban growth.
 - Call to Action: Foster partnerships to preserve cultural heritage and promote environmentally conscious tourism.

- 9. Women's Safety and Empowerment**
 - Women face heightened risks in urban spaces, including violence, harassment, and exclusion from decision-making processes.
 - Call to Action: Ensure urban planning and policies prioritize women's safety and empowerment, incorporate gender-responsive approaches, and address barriers to participation in urban governance.

Priority Actions for Stakeholders

- 1. Youth**
 - Advocate for inclusive policies and actively engage in local and global urban governance platforms.
 - Lead initiatives addressing climate action, waste management, and community development.

- 2. Local and National Governments**
 - Enact youth-responsive policies in housing, education, and employment.

- Provide platforms for structured youth participation in decision-making processes.
3. **United Nations and Intergovernmental Organizations**
 - Facilitate youth involvement in high-level policy discussions and provide capacity-building opportunities.
 - Advocate for the mainstreaming of youth perspectives in SDG and New Urban Agenda implementation.
 4. **Private Sector**
 - Support youth entrepreneurship through mentorship, funding, and partnerships.
 - Invest in sustainable urban projects, prioritizing renewable energy and green jobs.
 5. **Civil Society**
 - Amplify youth voices through advocacy, training, and resource mobilization.
 - Partner with youth-led organizations to address urban challenges collaboratively.

Collection Process and Methodology

This *DeclarACTION* was informed by a comprehensive engagement process, including:

1. **Global Youth Survey:**
 - Responses from over [insert number] youth worldwide, highlighting key urban challenges and priorities.
2. **Focus Group Discussions and Workshops: Held at the Children and Youth Assembly and the Future Generation Zone during the 12th World Urban Forum,** these sessions provided an interactive platform for youth to articulate their concerns, share experiences, and propose actionable solutions.
3. **Regional Focus Group Discussions:**
 - Interactive sessions conducted in [insert regions], bringing diverse youth perspectives to the forefront.
4. **Training and Knowledge Sharing:** Capacity-building workshops on the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda, fostering informed and actionable insights.

These participatory methods ensured inclusivity and represented the lived experiences of urban youth, forming the foundation of this declaration.

Commitment to Action

The youth representatives gathered at the 12th World Urban Forum reaffirm their commitment to driving meaningful progress in urban development. Recognizing the

urgency of the climate crisis and urban inequality, they pledge to work with all stakeholders to ensure cities are inclusive, resilient, and aligned with the goals of the New Urban Agenda and SDG 11: “Sustainable Cities and Communities.”

Through this *DeclarACTION*, youth call for collective responsibility and immediate action to build a sustainable urban future, ensuring that no one is left behind. This document serves as both a mandate and a blueprint for achieving shared aspirations for urban transformation.