



U.N. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Proposal to add an 18th SDG recognized by the United Nations

The Future of the World Is Unsustainable
if the Future for *Youth* Is Uncertain



Our proposed SDG 18 Youth Equity icon

Proposed Icon - Overview

Title: *Youth Equity:* Providing equitable access to resources and opportunity for global youth. The future of the world is unsustainable if the future for youth is uncertain.

Color: Purple is recognized as a color that represents transformation, solidarity, strength and power. Our movement embodies the meaning of this color. The hex code is #9c48b4.

Symbology: We are separating the meanings of ‘equality’ and ‘equity’ by showcasing an equitable distribution of resources based on individual need for a common purpose. The individuals are represented as gender neutral so as to be inclusive of all genders.

Scope: We propose to be inclusive of the United Nations’ definition of youth (15-24 years old) within our scope but also wish to expand on this range to include all peoples under the age of 35 so that the demographic range will be from years 15-35 in age.

Targets and Indicators:

SDG Target	Indicators
Goal 18. Achieve youth equity and elevate youth contributions to society and the natural ecosystem	
18.1 Make efforts to significantly increase the level of youth leadership, including in the private sector and multilateral institutions	18.1.1 Participation rate of Youth Office in global agenda settings 18.1.2 Proportion of young people in managerial positions 18.1.3 Participation rate of children and young people in (youth) organizations 18.1.4 Proportion of youth organizations (compared to parent organizations) 18.1.5 Proportion of youth representative or young people on boards of directors

	18.1.6 Proportion of people who identify themselves as global, national and/or local youth advocates
18.2 Substantially increase youth representation at the global, national, and local level of law- and policy making	<p>18.2.1 Proportion of seats held by youth in (a) global agencies, (b) national parliaments and (c) local governments</p> <p>18.2.2 Number of legislations created and/or introduced by young advocates</p> <p>18.2.3 Number of countries with laws and regulations that promote political and/or apolitical youth engagement</p> <p>18.2.4 Proportion of young people in (international, supranational, and/or national) advisory boards and/or delegations</p>
18.3 Strengthen efforts to safeguard and protect sustainable environments as a result of decision-making that impacts multiple generations into the future	18.3.1. Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for youth equity and the Seven Generations Principle
18.4 Ensure that all youth have universal access to interpersonal development, leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes	<p>18.4.1 Proportion of children and young people who are confident:</p> <p>(a) In their Social Emotional Learning (SEL), i.e., positive identity, self-management, (academic) self-efficacy, social skills, social capital; and</p> <p>(b) In their skills and youth leadership development</p>
18.5 Substantially increase youth training in financial literacy and access to independent banking, including resources, investments, loans, and options	<p>18.5.1 Participation rate of youth and in formal and non-formal financial education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex</p> <p>18.5.2 Proportion of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level</p>

	<p>of proficiency in functional (a) financial literacy and (b) financial numeracy skills, by sex</p> <p>18.5.3 Extent to which (i) financial literacy education and (ii) education for independent banking are mainstreamed in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment</p> <p>18.5.4 Proportion of young people who qualify as having debt distress</p> <p>18.5.5 Proportion of young people who believe financial decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability, and population group</p>
<p>18.6 Adopt enforceable legislation for creating and ensuring a universal safe environment on the internet for youth and children</p>	<p>18.6.1 Proportion of population that feel safe and that their data is protected on the internet</p> <p>18.6.2 Proportion of population subjected to (a) cyber violence, (b) psychological violence, (c) sexual violence virtually, and (d) physical violence that arises from cyber violence in the previous 12 months</p> <p>18.6.3 Existence of independent human rights institutions that specialize in internet governance</p> <p>18.6.4 Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for internet safety including privacy and data protection</p>

Preamble

To prepare for post-2030 Goals, we focus on youth to ensure they are included because their world should be in their hands.



We are surrounded by a myriad of global challenges; challenges that our generations and the generations to come will be burdened with for their entire lives. In tandem with the COVID-19 pandemic, the growing populations of the global youth are being dubbed “*lost generations*.” Data indicates that the age cohort of 15-24 years old will substantially grow by roughly 11% from 2020 to 2050¹, putting increasing pressure on the world to respond to the needs of the younger generations.

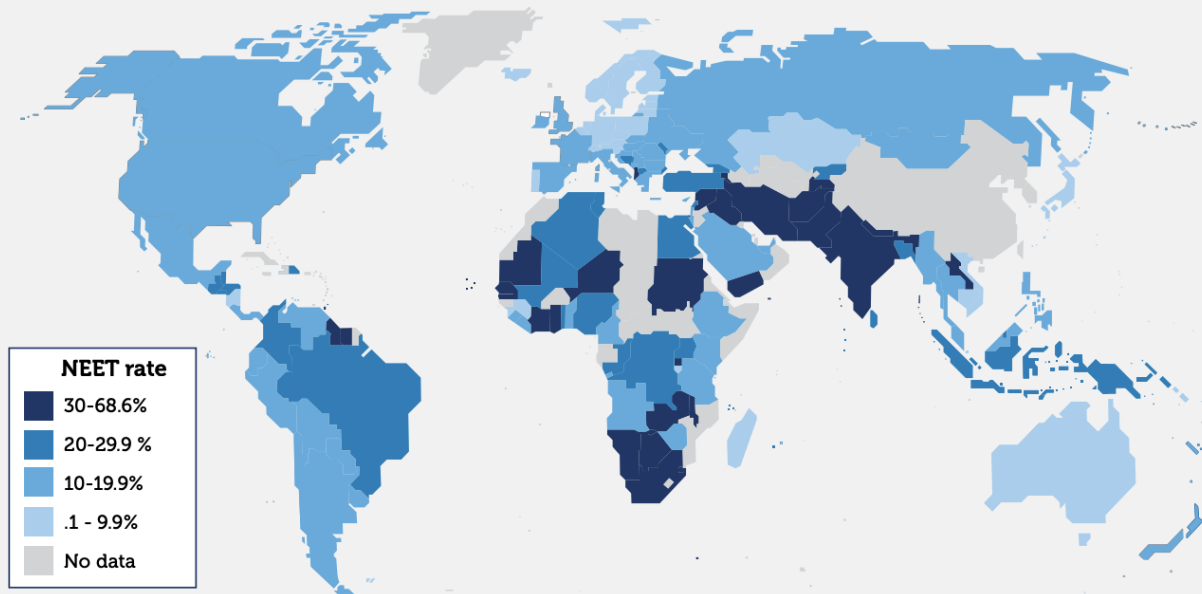
Despite the positive trajectory for the growth in youth populations, the stability of current and future livelihoods remains uncertain. We are spending the prime years of our education and workforce entry during an economic cataclysm, social fragmentation, political unrest, and the continually impending threat of the climate crisis. Rates of youth not in employment, education, or training (NEET) are persistent and are stunting the ability for upcoming generations to fully develop. To briefly highlight this injustice²:

- **1 in 5 youth** are not acquiring livelihood skills through education or work
- Worldwide NEET rate sex aggregated: **30% women and 13% men** (ILO, 2019) youth are not acquiring livelihood skills through education or work
- Youth NEET is still understated as **data is not available for all countries**

¹World Youth Report 2020

²World Youth Report 2020

**FIGURE 6. YOUTH NEET RATES,
MOST RECENT ESTIMATES (2000-2018)**



Source: DESA, based on ILOSTAT, country profiles.

The boundaries shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

These statistics are only a mere glimpse to the real conditions youth are experiencing around the world. As our actions today dictate our future circumstances, we must ask, why are youth not prioritized or valued for their contributions to global discourse on the impending future that impacts them the most?

Our youth are uniquely united to protect our future global circumstances like no prior generation needed to be. The globalization facilitated by technology and digitization has served as a means for intellectual and informational proliferation, arguably the most successful human innovation of our time. Through this unprecedented exposure to new perspectives and lived experiences, we have developed unparalleled, macroscopic empathy. We feel that this integration into a globalized community has given us a cogent sense of global civic responsibility which is a perspective needed for designing global agendas and mandates.

As we continue to progress in this decade of action to develop global solutions, it is imperative that we prioritize posterity. Youth has always had an important role in our

society, and action from young generations is needed more than ever for achieving common prosperity.

Our Proposal

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals provide an essential framework for identifying the material challenges in the world in addition to catalyzing international goal setting. We are proposing the addition of the newfound Sustainable Development Goal, SDG 18 Youth Equity, as it encompasses all global challenges that stand before us as a symbol our commitment to our future for the future of humanity.

The Global Futurist Initiative, with the collective effort from other youth organizations, have been curating and identifying transformative benchmarks to effect change for making "SDG 18 Youth Equity" an adoptable concept in the current and next Global Goals to follow. However, with the aim of ensuring our movement is as meaningful as possible, we are solely focused on following a framework that can result in the application of SDG 18 Youth Equity.

Youth conditions are different and respective to different communities, nations, and regions throughout the world. We believe the most transformative action can take place by coalescing the global youth community around a similar movement but have the idea come to fruition with the pertinent aspects that are most conducive to development for that population in scope. We are outlining the foundation to SDG 18 Youth Equity but leave it to the stakeholders to structure the applicability of the goal. Furthermore, we believe this approach will spur small-scale change, a vital beginning to a global movement.

The development of targets and indicators can follow our framework with the addition and/or exclusion of themes outlined in this proposal. As for constructing measurable goals, we recognize the lack of coverage and data that would allow us to understand the differences in youth communities. For that reason, we believe leveraging local stakeholder engagement for drafting tailored goals and targets will provide the most constructive method of generating change. **As fellow youth ourselves, we do not wish to prescribe but to guide and aid in the development of youth.**

Our value proposition is focused on the following ideals that encompass themes from previous youth manifestos:

- **Accessibility:** Ensuring youth have equitable access and ability to use resources essential for a quality livelihood
- **Inclusivity:** Ensuring all youth and their respective conditions are accounted for in global discourse
- **Accountability:** Ensuring there is accountability and candidness in all initiatives, work, efforts, and movements with youth
- **Empowerment:** Ensuring that youth are given the ability to build power and elevate their voices

2030

Youth Equity is an integral part of all our global challenges that is currently lacking proper representation and acknowledgement. As youth are growing up in a world periled with growing challenges, global goal setting and solution building must take into account the consequences there will be on the younger generations. For this reason, we are proposing to have this goal be implemented into the current scope of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Post 2030

The goals and ideals behind SDG 18 Youth Equity will extend beyond 2030 and be a consistent challenge and endeavor for humanity to attain. Differences in intergenerational quality of life will be an ever-changing dynamic for every community and nation around the world. We are striving to implement something we call ‘temporal justice’, safeguarding our future for the future of others to come well after us.

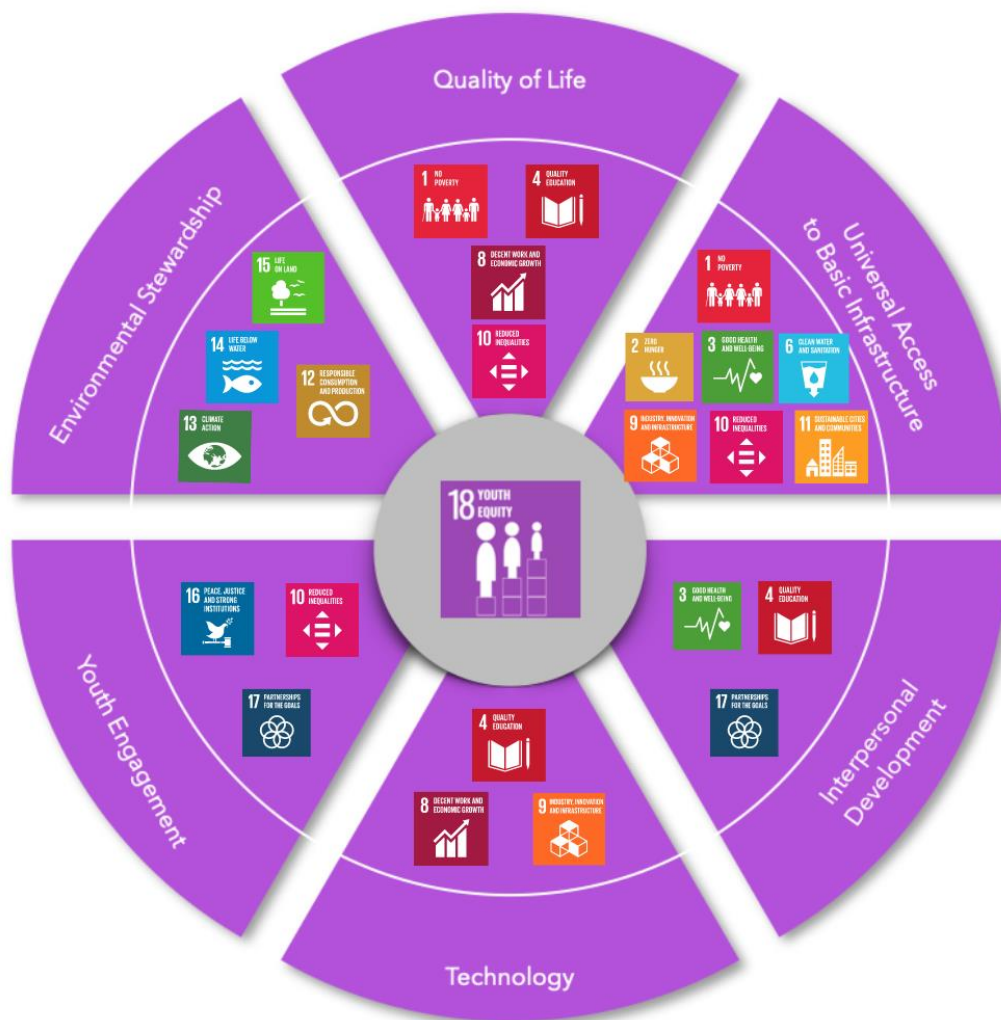
It is imperative that goals constructed beyond the deadline of 2030 are similar in nature to the initial goals outlined by the United Nations. They must have both locally

applicable and globally ambitious intermediate targets that are measurable and enforceable.

Pillars, Targets, and Indicators

After conducting extensive research, we propose SDG 18 Youth Equity to be multidimensional in nature, reflecting the realistic circumstances our youth are facing around the world.

Due to the breadth of SDG 18 Youth Equity, we have divided this goal into six pillars that all constitute the meaning of *EQUITY* to youth around the world.



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- A. Environmental Stewardship
 - a. Environmental Justice - Intersectionality
 - b. Climate Action
 - c. Biodiversity and Conservation (terrestrial, marine)
 - B. Quality of Life
 - a. Education
 - i. Ensure all youth of every age have equal access to primary, secondary education
 - b. Employment Generation
 - c. Training
 - C. Universal Access to Basic infrastructure
 - a. Health & Safety
 - i. Sanitation
 - ii. Drinking water
 - b. Financial Services
 - c. Public Services
 - i. Data
 - ii. Societal Rights
 - D. Interpersonal Development
 - a. Social emotional learning (SEL)
 - i. Positive identity
 - ii. Self management
 - iii. (Academic) self efficacy
 - iv. Social skills
 - v. Social capital
 - b. Youth development programming
 - i. Youth leadership development
 - ii. Skills and leadership development³
 - c. Universal Access
 - d. Cyber safety
 - i. Mental health

³https://www.youthpower.org/sites/default/files/YouthPower/resources/Brief_4_FINAL_edited_2-17%20pdf.pdf

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- ii. Privacy issues
 - iii. Data
 - e. Digital skillset
 - E. Youth Engagement
 - a. Essential Resources
 - i. Ensure essential conditions for youth representation (through youth advisory boards⁴ and youth advocacy groups⁵)
 - b. Capacity Building
 - i. Facilitate short- and long-term engagement opportunities for youth engagement⁶
 - c. Sustaining Structure
 - i. Promote intergenerational exchange to strengthen youth organizational autonomy⁷

We expect each pillar to consist of several targets with their own respective indicators.

As youth build this forward-looking framework, we aspire to use this document and symbol of change as a point of collaboration and further engagement. Therefore, the material proposed below is dynamic, and our initiative aims to include as much input as possible from youth, including but not limited to youth activists, grassroots networks, organizations, governmental entities.

⁴ <https://safelaskans.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Youth-Leadership-Toolkit-National-Resource-Center-for-Youth-Development.pdf>

⁵ <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/TAG/game-plan/approaches>

⁶ https://www.youthpower.org/sites/default/files/YouthPower/resources/Brief_4_FINAL_edited_2-17%20pdf.pdf

⁷ <https://safelaskans.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Youth-Leadership-Toolkit-National-Resource-Center-for-Youth-Development.pdf>

Appendix

- A. For additional information on the interconnectedness of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, please refer to the publication [here](#). This has informed our approach to further develop SDG 18 Youth Equity.

Content by Global Futurist Initiative
