

Welcome Package and Reader

Business Innovation for the SDGs Forum

13-15 December 2022 | Bangkok, Thailand

Strategic Intelligence Hub

for Youth Entrepreneurship
Ecosystem in Asia and the
Pacific

*A nerve centre for
strategic priorities for
policymakers*



WELCOME MESSAGE

Jonathan Wong

Chief of Technology and Innovation
United Nations Economic and Social
Commission for Asia and the Pacific
(ESCAP)



Entrepreneurs have been a source of innovation and economic dynamism in the Asia-Pacific region. However, this has often been to the detriment of the environment and society, with CO2 emissions increasing in step with the Industrial Revolutions and income inequalities growing.

In addition, the pandemic has quickly turned into a story of the haves and the have nots. The pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable. People at the base of the economic pyramid have suffered the most, unable to access and afford essential products and services and unable to make a living.

The pandemic has revealed a fractured economy in dire need of innovation. Building a new economic framework must be a priority if we are to build back better and meet the ambitions of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To do this, we need a shift from entrepreneurship to social entrepreneurship, business-as-usual to inclusive business, and investing for profit to investing for impact.

This shift is being led by a new generation of young entrepreneurs who are aligning profit with purpose. With the Asia-Pacific region home to 60 per cent of the global population aged 15 to 24, youth entrepreneurs remain the driving force for the socio-economic and environmental transformation that our economies urgently require.

From the Social Enterprise Promotion Act in the Republic of Korea to the Social Enterprise Act in Thailand, government policy can play a critical role in incentivizing and creating an enabling environment for young people to unleash their entrepreneurial spirit for people and planet as well as profit. As we chart out the pathways for a post-pandemic era, we look to the entrepreneurial and innovative spirit of the youth as a source of optimism and solutions. These attributes of our youth will be vital as we forge ahead in this Decade of Action to accelerate progress on the SDGs.

ESCAP's work on this agenda has focused on supporting governments to create an environment to support, enable and incentivize entrepreneurs to focus on people and planet alongside profit. We welcome this focus on policy and supporting policymakers and stand ready to work with you all on this important agenda.

WELCOME MESSAGE

Sharia Walker

Senior Youth Development Specialist
Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)



The global pandemic adversely impacted Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) member countries (MCs), in many cases rolling back and reversing the progress made on achieving many SDGs. This was especially evident in goals related to poverty alleviation gender equality, and unemployment rates particularly amongst vulnerable groups including youth, disrupted livelihoods and income generating activities. This called for a review of the IsDBs strategic priorities to better serve the critical needs of its MCs.

To maximize the impact of its efforts, the Bank has updated its Strategy and is focusing on two strategic pillars: 1) supporting inclusive human capital development, and 2) developing green, resilient and sustainable infrastructure. To implement the updated Strategy, the Bank is striving to support the empowerment of youth by ensuring inclusivity and harnessing their capabilities. Furthermore, the Bank is also exploring measures to support job creation by promoting entrepreneurship and youth led-MS-MEs by leveraging access to financial and non-financial services and fostering learning and capacity development amongst youth.

Young People dominate the unemployed population in many IsDB MCs. At the same time, with these country's demographic dividend and high volume of public consumption, youth entrepreneurship has the potential to mitigate youth unemployment, build robust and inclusive economic growth and contribute to sustainable development. Entrepreneurship does not only help young people acquire economic independence but allows them to drive job generation and well-being among their peers and communities.

In order to amplify the potential of youth entrepreneurship, it is crucial to understand the strengths and challenges youth-led businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs face through quantitative and qualitative data. Accordingly, IsDB and UNDP collaborated in developing the flagship knowledge product The State of Ecosystem for Youth Entrepreneurship for several IsDB-UNDP common member countries, including Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Maldives.

The aims of these research products are to strengthen the evidence base regarding actions needed to make entrepreneurship ecosystems more inclusive of youth-led enterprises, guide IsDB interventions to support youth-led enterprises at the country level, provide recommendations for strategic entry points to strengthen the enabling environment for youth entrepreneurship, and operationalize the findings and recommendations of the reports into youth focused Programs.

WELCOME MESSAGE

Sushil Ram

Programme Manager, Social Policy Development
Section,
The Commonwealth Secretariat



The Commonwealth is pleased to be working in partnership with UNDP, and ILO to create a 'new approach' to accelerate efforts in youth entrepreneurship in Asia and the Pacific to address high youth employment. We believe that we must be transformational in shaping this new approach if we are to achieve the SDG's related to youth employment and poverty by 2030. Transformation means not merely treating the symptoms but being bold enough to challenge the social, political, environmental, and economic root causes that are generating the youth employment challenge.

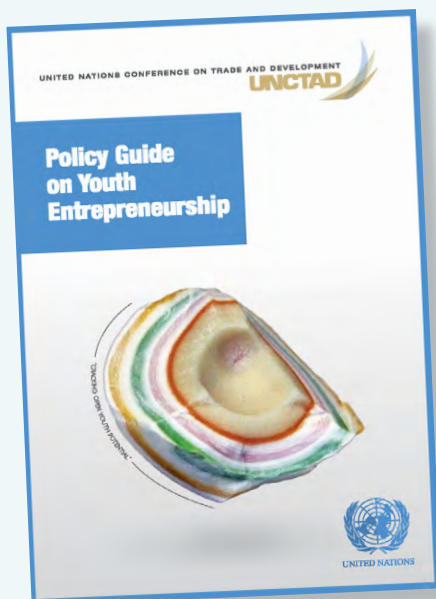
In a time where the Covid-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted youth, exacerbated socio-economic inequality and deepened youth unemployment, young people have shown agility and resilience in responding to these challenges with original and innovative solutions. As change-agents with an immense potential to drive socio-economic development, further collective action must be taken to support the efforts young people have made towards paving a way for post-pandemic recovery. It requires reshaping of the socio-economic ecosystem which supports our young people, and policies to support and sustain the dynamic and innovative environment central to supporting the kind of transformational shift needed for youth employment. These policies need to be an integral part of the wider set of strategies and policies for structural transformation and sustainable development, making coherence, coordination, and the whole of government approach essential.

As a proponent of global development, the Commonwealth has a long-standing track record in supporting youth entrepreneurship in member states. This includes the formation of networks of young entrepreneurs through the establishment of the Commonwealth Alliance for Young Entrepreneurs (CAYE). CAYE has played an important role in building the business and soft skills of young people in member states as well as providing an avenue for young entrepreneurs from across the Commonwealth to network and communicate.

In addition, through the publication of the Policy Guide on Youth Entrepreneurship, developed in partnership with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Commonwealth has played an important role in supporting governments in promoting youth entrepreneurship. This guide has served as an important tool for governments seeking to put in place policies that are conducive to creating an environment that will support youth entrepreneurship, including development of partnerships and networks across sectors (private and public) to achieve collective impact. Currently, the Commonwealth is also working directly with countries in the region, such as Brunei to help develop a youth entrepreneurship strategy and action plan.

This workshop is thus convened to serve as a regional platform to promote networking, knowledge exchange and strengthen efforts towards building an ecosystem conducive for youth social innovation and entrepreneurship. By providing a space in which new ideas for meaningful collaboration can be identified and inaugurated, this workshop serves as a contribution towards aiding policymakers in their task to strengthen youth participation and collaboration in the creation of sustainable development and entrepreneurship ecosystems across the Asia-Pacific region.

I wish you a productive and invigorating discussion and I am positive that the resulting outcomes from this workshop will serve to make meaningful and positive contributions to the lives of young people across the region.



[Click here to read the report](#)



[Click here to read the report](#)

WELCOME MESSAGE

Devika Iyer

Economic Policy Specialist – Employment
UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub



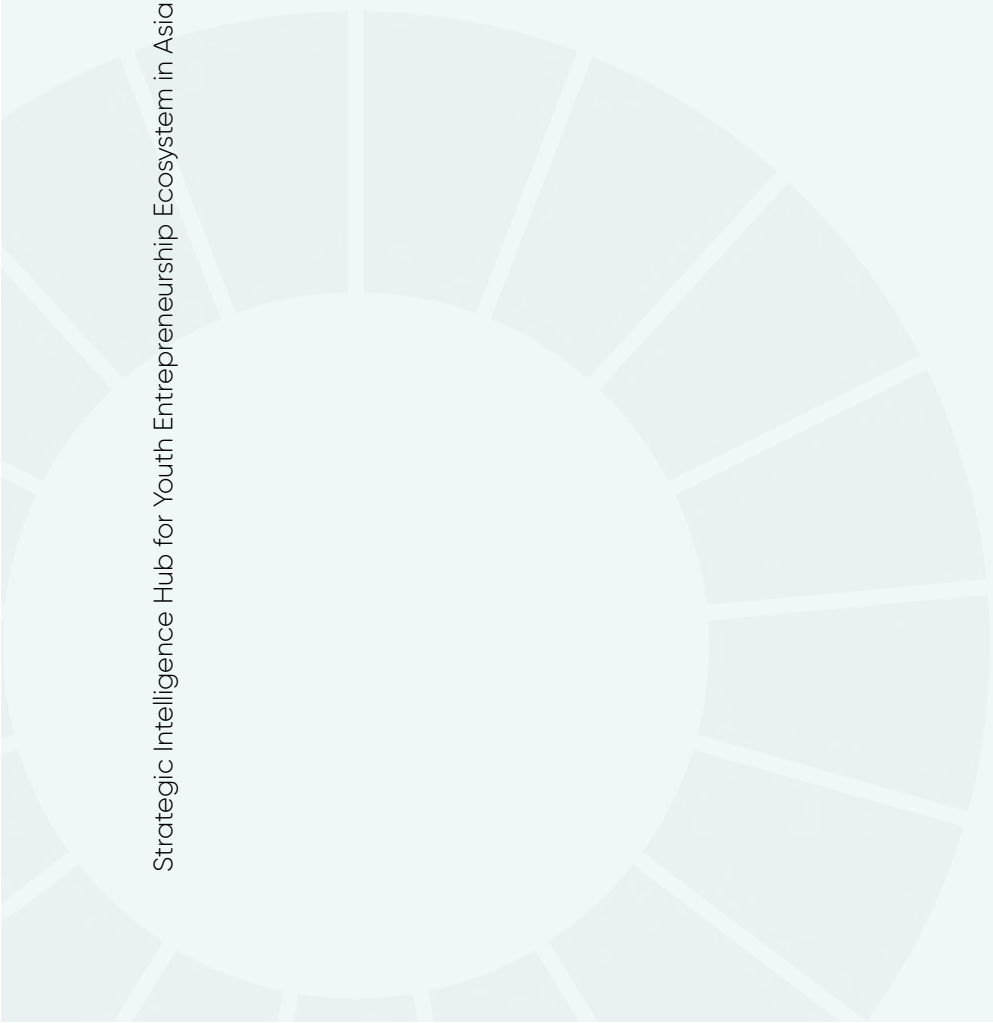
The Future of Work is being shaped by megatrends, including technological change, climate change, and demographic change. The application of new technologies like artificial intelligence, blockchain, and robotics, is unleashing productivity gains that is key to economic growth. Given the strong linkages between climate change and the world of work, countries across Asia-Pacific are embarking on a green transition of their economies, unlocking new business prospects and employment opportunities. The demographic transitions –with an increasing youth population in some countries and ageing populations in others—is incentivizing countries to rethink the nature of work. The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the shifts to the new ‘world of work’, including leveraging the potential of digital technologies and the green/blue economy to build the resilience of enterprises and workers.

UNDP’s approach to the Future of Work moves away from single point solutions to more integrated policy responses that are tailored to the needs of countries, including those in crisis, and in line with UNDP’s Strategic Plan 2022-2025. Anchored in the human development approach, UNDP advances a future of work that empowers workers to benefit from and contribute to job rich development pathways, enhances the productivity and resilience of micro, small and medium enterprises, and drives a just transition towards more decent and environmentally sustainable jobs.

Supporting youth entrepreneurship is a key element of UNDP’s approach to advance the future of work agenda and to promote inclusive economic growth. Along with partners, UNDP through its Youth Co:Lab initiative, works to catalyze and sustain youth-led startups and social enterprises across the region as well as strengthen the entrepreneurship ecosystem. To better understand the youth entrepreneurship ecosystem, UNDP in collaboration with partners develops diagnostics and analytical studies, employing traditional and innovative research approaches. UNDP also fosters South-South cooperation to shape upstream policies on youth entrepreneurship through advancing the objectives of the multi-partner

Strategic Intelligence Hub on youth entrepreneurship. Serving as a nerve center for UNDP and its partners like Citi Foundation, Commonwealth Secretariat, ILO, and others, the Strategic Intelligence Hub works to strengthen thought leadership and build a community of practice comprised of policy and programme leaders at the national, sub-national, and regional levels.

This Innovating Evidence-led Policy Making for Youth Entrepreneurship session, co-hosted by UNDP, CITI Foundation, Islamic Development Bank and Commonwealth Secretariat, is an excellent opportunity to share experiences between the Asia Pacific region and Latin America on the use and effectiveness of innovative diagnostics and analytical studies to understand the youth entrepreneurship ecosystem. The knowledge gleaned from this session will be important to inform our work to advance youth entrepreneurship in the region and contribute to the Future of Work Agenda.



WELCOME MESSAGE

Kelvin Sergeant

Enterprise Development Specialist
Decent Work Technical Support Team for East and South-East Asia and the Pacific



I am pleased to be associated with this Forum and to represent The International Labour Organization (ILO) on the strategic intelligence hub for youth entrepreneurship ecosystem in Asia and the Pacific and I welcome all participants. This forum comes at a time when I recently shifted to the ILO Asia-Pacific Office and so I am happy to hear about the issues and challenges which confront the youth entrepreneurs in the region and how best we can assist them in being successful and make valuable contributions to regional development.

The Covid-19 Pandemic has been hard on young people, and it still continues to affect them. Even before Covid-19, youth unemployment has been a concern among practitioners and policy makers. We accept that young men and women are the key to our future development which must be transformative and sustainable. Yet many of them seem to be left behind, and struggle to find decent employment opportunities.

The ILO remains committed to the promotion of decent work among our nation's youths and remain we are guided by the ILO follow-up action plan on youth employment 2020-2030, in collaboration with multiple partners, including through the UN Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth. The private sector needs to be included in these discussions also. Consultation with our constituents and stakeholders is of paramount importance.

What is clearly needed are policies and programmes for youths such as skills development or a youth entrepreneurship ecosystem which can release the potential of youth to lead innovation and provide solutions to the sustainable development challenges which confront us. These challenges such as climate change or digitalization, the platform economy or SME development will remain with us for some time.

Through collective efforts in addressing many issues, the hub will provide a platform for increased impact on youths and youth entrepreneurship in Asia and the Pacific.

Background on the Business Innovation for the SDGs Forum

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are transforming how the private sector contributes to inclusive and sustainable development: Corporations are realigning their priorities based on the SDGs. Innovative business models such as social enterprises and inclusive businesses are emerging, which purposefully aim to address social and environmental challenges, as well as provide products and services to those at the base of the economic pyramid. And financiers are shifting from investing for profit to investing for impact.

Government policies have played a key role in promoting these business innovations and in directing the private sector towards inclusive and sustainable development. For example, it is government regulation that led to the emergence of collective benefit and interest companies, which have an obligation to create positive impact on society and the environment. Similarly, targeted government policies are emerging to promote innovation within companies for a clean energy transition, supporting the ambitions of the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Against this backdrop, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and the Agencia Presidencial De Cooperación Internacional de Colombia (APC-Colombia) are organizing the Business Innovation for the SDGs Forum.

Objective

The Business Innovation for the SDGs Forum will create a space for knowledge exchange and sharing of best practices between policymakers from Asia-Pacific and Latin America with the overall aim of triggering South-South collaboration between the two regions on the topic of business innovation for the SDGs.

Participation

The Forum is designed as a platform for sharing between policymakers from Asia-Pacific and Latin America, who are involved in promoting business innovation for sustainable development, as well as other stakeholders engaged in business innovation for the SDGs in Asia-Pacific and Latin America.

AGENDA

Business Innovation for the SDGs Forum

13-15 December 2022 | Bangkok, Thailand

13 th December 2022	
09:45-10:45	High-level Panel 1: Effective Policymaking to Promote Business Innovation for the SDGs <i>Launch of Report on Policy Approaches to Promote Business Innovation for the SDGs</i>
10:45-11:00	Coffee Break
11:00-12:30	Thematic Session 1: Mobilizing Investment in the SDGs <i>Impact Investing and Foreign Direct Investment in the SDGs</i>
12:30-13:30	Lunch
13:30 - 15:00	Thematic Session 2: Innovative Finance for Gender Equality <i>Innovative financing mechanisms promoting gender equality</i>
15:00-15:15	Coffee Break
15:15-16:45	Thematic Session 3: Innovating Evidence-led Policy Making for Youth Entrepreneurship <i>Initiatives promoting youth entrepreneurship for the SDGs</i> <i>Co-hosted by UNDP, CITI Foundation, Islamic Development Bank and Commonwealth Secretariat with support from ILO.</i>
14 th December 2022	
09:15-10:45	High-Level Panel 2: Effective Policymaking to Catalyze Business Innovation for the Green Energy Transition <i>Launch of Report on Policies Promoting the Green Transition of Business</i>
10:45-11:00	Coffee Break
11:00-12:30	Thematic Session 4: Innovation for the SDGs in the Social and Solidarity Economy <i>Co-hosted by the ILO and the OECD</i>
12:30-13:30	Lunch
13:30 - 15:00	Action Session 1: Effective policy making for strengthening gender-diverse MSMEs <i>Co-hosted by AVPN</i>
15:00-15:15	Coffee Break
15:15-16:45	Action Session 2: Effective South-South Cooperation in Policymaking <i>Good practices for South-South Cooperation between participating policymakers.</i>

HUB OBJECTIVES

The strategic intelligence hub will serve as a nerve centre for regional development partners like UNDP, Citi Foundation, Commonwealth Secretariat, ILO and others to organise thought leadership and build a community of practice consisting of regional policy and programmatic leaders at the regional, national and sub-national levels. As the hub will continue to grow in membership and its scope of work beyond the pilot duration, private sector representatives and youth entrepreneurs will be invited to the hub as well.

01

Expand regional and national understanding of relevant policies, regulatory frameworks and requirements through a youth entrepreneurship lens to identify common and differentiated ecosystem challenges and enablers for various youth groups

02

Foster collective intelligence for South-South and triangular collaboration between government partners and other core stakeholders to bridge data evidence gaps and strengthen enablers for ecosystem development

03

Identify leverage pathways and offers for research and thought leadership to influence policy, programmes and partnerships development around thematic priority areas identified by the hub at the regional and national levels

04

Increase understanding of the Youth Co:Lab, Commonwealth Secretariat and the Youth Empowerment Alliance's support offers, including the ecosystem diagnostic methodology, and ways government actors can leverage key partnerships with development actors

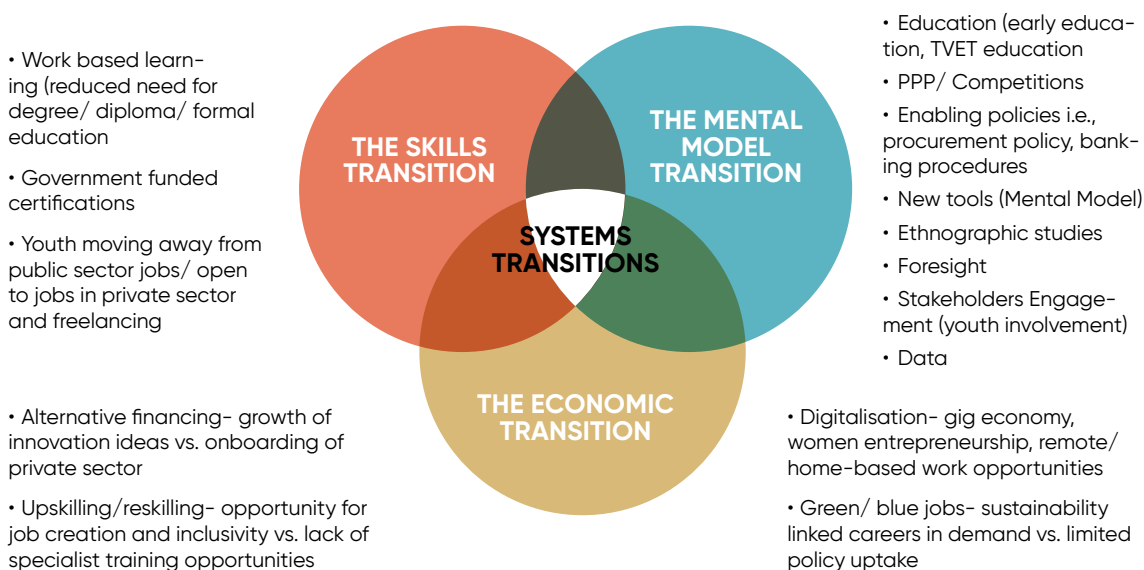
HUB ACTIVITIES

2022

Launch

The concept of strategic intelligence hub was presented at the Youth Co:Lab Summit in Singapore in July 2022 to 14 government representatives who engaged in discourse to scope out the vision and governance structure of the strategic intelligence hub and ideate south-south collaboration ideas on youth entrepreneurship policy programming within their country contexts and at the regional level. UNDP Bhutan and the country representatives presented findings of the ethnographic diagnostics research they administered for understanding the national youth entrepreneurship ecosystem and inspired other countries to also develop evidence-led policy actions in this regard. A reflection panel was conducted with private sector leaders from Samsung Electronics and Intel Corporation to highlight the need for the future of work and how young entrepreneurs could be supported through national and regional policy-making and targeted programming fostering public-private partnerships. The National Youth Council Singapore also arranged a showcase for the government representatives where they got an opportunity to interact with the senior council leadership and seek inspiration from the range of interventions being undertaken at the national level.

The following key policy trends emerged from the summit discussions around diagnostics and systems transition, identifying the key policy trends and change scenarios:



Based on discussion between government representatives from across Asia Pacific held during Youth Co:Lab Summit 2022 Singapore

Roll out

Convening

Since its Launch, the Hub is curating insightful and meaningful discussions around emerging policy themes in this space which would allow fostering a collaborative effort for youth entrepreneurship growth by the policy stakeholders, particularly showcasing lived experience of South-South co-operation. In this regard, government representatives and founding partners have been invited to express interest in curating policy discussions with key audiences and target stakeholders at national or regional levels as agreed upon during the summit. In November/December 2022, ILO and UNDP organised a webinar and collective intelligence workshop with development partners and policy representatives on digitalisation potential for youth entrepreneurship development.

Research

UNDP and other founding partners are informing policy discourse by building on national ecosystem diagnostics studies undertaken to date around youth entrepreneurship ecosystem(s) in Asia and the Pacific, and the sectoral need to focus on 'future of work' agenda. Young online UN Volunteers have been on-boarded to co-develop thematic research note(s) which will inform the focus of hub's membership discussions in 2023. One thematic research note focuses on the data inclusivity on youth entrepreneurship in national and regional contexts, and this is being co-developed in partnership with the Asia Pacific Economists Network of the UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub. The Hub is also supporting the roll out of diagnostics toolkit developed by UNDP and Islamic Development Bank to support national diagnostic assessment of youth entrepreneurship ecosystem(s) across the region.



SESSION CONCEPT NOTE



Session 02:

Innovating Evidence-led Policy Making for Youth Entrepreneurship

Background

Youth unemployment is one of the most pressing challenges faced in many countries globally with the total global number of unemployed youths estimated to have reached 73 million in 2022. Young people are more vulnerable to external changes (such as changes in climate, economic crisis, or political and social changes) and may have different needs and aspirations, depending on their local environment. The unemployment rate of young people in the Asia and Pacific region is projected to reach 14.9 per cent in 2022 while 20.5 per cent in the Latin American countries.

Besides these challenges, young people around the globe are now more connected, globally conscious, innovative and they have the capacity to develop solutions that contribute to the wellbeing and employment of other young people and their communities and a more sustainable future for all. Entrepreneurship is a potential solution to address socio-economic challenges young people face, unlock their potential as solutionists and provide them with opportunities to develop skills that are vital in the changing working environment.

To accelerate regional action, a strategic intelligence hub for policymakers is being developed to serve as a conduit for regional development partners in Asia Pacific like Commonwealth Secretariat, ILO and others to organize thought leadership and build a community of practice around youth entrepreneurship consisting of regional policy and programmatic leaders at the regional, national and sub-national levels. The concept of strategic intelligence hub was presented at the Youth Co:Lab (YCL) Summit in Singapore in July 2022 to 14 government representatives who engaged in discourse to scope out the vision and governance structure of the strategic intelligence hub and ideate south-south collaboration ideas on youth entrepreneurship policy programming within their country contexts and at the regional level.

One of the key barriers emerging from policy discussions with members of the strategic intelligence hub is the lack of contextually informed research to inform policy decisions for ecosystem strengthening for youth entrepreneurship and achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (particularly SDG 4.4). This will require shifting away from traditional data sources and developing innovative mechanisms to inform evidence-led policy making. At the YCL Summit, UNDP Bhutan and the country representatives presented findings of the ethnographic diagnostics research they administered for understanding the national youth entrepreneurship ecosystem and inspired other countries to also develop evidence-led policy actions in this regard.

In 2020, Youth Co:Lab and Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) partnered to pilot studies that assess the operating environment for youth entrepreneurs in two countries, Bangladesh and Indonesia. The studies tested a diagnostic framework developed to analyze the ecosystem for youth entrepreneurship through youth-lens, recognising that young people have specific strengths and vulnerabilities relative to adult entrepreneurs and provided recommendations to strengthen the ecosystem. Similarly, UNDP Bhutan explored the multi-dimensional nature of youth employment in Bhutan and undertook a systems portfolio mapping exercise to develop innovative strategies to overcome the challenges of the labour market. Youth Co:Lab has also been producing yearly thematic reports on youth entrepreneurship based on primary and secondary data sources, this year's report focusing on the catalytic role that the young social entrepreneurs in the Asia-Pacific region can play in tackling the climate emergency, and the support they need to amplify the potential impact of their climate actions and solutions.

These research studies have employed a multitude of traditional and innovative research methodologies and approaches including surveys, focus group discussions and interviews, stakeholder mapping analysis, systems approach, among others.

Session Objectives

The session will focus on the use and effectiveness of these research methodologies for accelerating policy action for the youth entrepreneurship ecosystem. A diverse panel discussion will engage representatives from countries which administered these diagnostic studies, youth entrepreneurs and development practitioners from across geographies, particularly in the regional contexts of Asia-Pacific and Latin America. This will help policymakers and practitioners understand the contextual factors, barriers and opportunities related to evidence-based policy making and ecosystem development.. The Youth Co:Lab/ IsDB guidance toolkit will also be launched at the session to share action-oriented tools and resources for development actors and policy makers interested in conducting an assessment or facilitating dialogues on the state of the ecosystem for youth entrepreneurship in any geographical and socio-economic context. This will also provide an opportunity to foster discourse on south-south cooperation around use of such research tools and policy design, i.e. in the Asia-Pacific region and Latin America contexts.

SESSION AGENDA

Mode:
In person and Virtual

Time Duration	Agenda Item	Responsibility
2 minutes	Session Welcome	Ms. Cissy Shen Partnerships and Programme Development Consultant, UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub
5 minutes	Scene Setting and Introduction to the Strategic Intelligence Hub	Ms. Devika Iyer Economic Policy Specialist – Employment, UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub
10 minutes	Keynote/ Launch of Guidance Toolkit for Youth Entrepreneurship Diagnostics	Ms. Sharia Walker Senior Youth Development Specialist, Islamic Development Bank (Online) Dr. Mohsen Gul Technical Lead, Strategic Intelligence Hub
40 minutes	Hotseat Panel Discussion Panelists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Sami Ahmed Managing Director, Start-up Bangladesh Limited, Information and Communication Technology Division, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Ms. Woro Srihastuti Sulistyaningrum ST, MIDS, Director for Family, Women, Children, Youth & Sports Affairs, Ministry of National Development Planning, Government of Indonesia (Online) 	Moderated by Ms. Cissy Shen , Partnerships and Programme Development Consultant, UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub Two rounds of questions/ 5 minute response per speaker

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Haaziq Ibrahim Co-Founder, DemiLaut • Dr. Mohsen Gul Technical Lead, Strategic Intelligence Hub • Ms. Panod (Toby) Srinual Founder, GendersMatter 	
5 minutes	Video Message from Young Entrepreneur	Ms. Marisol Del Campo Martínez , Commercial Director, iluméxico
15 minutes	Live Chat: Audience Q&A via Mentimeter	Ms. Cissy Shen Partnerships and Programme Development Consultant, UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub
5 minutes	Closing and call to action by Commonwealth Secretariat	Mr. Layne Robinson , Head, Social Policy Development, Commonwealth Secretariat (Online)
5 minutes	Closing and call to action by ILO	Mr. Kelvin Sergeant , Specialist on Job Creation and Enterprises Development, ILO Decent Work Team for East and South-East Asia and the Pacific

SPEAKER DETAILS

Woro Srihastuti Sulistyaningrum

Director,
Family, Women, Children, Youth and Sports
Ministry of National Development Planning/Bappenas

Mrs. Woro as the Director of Family, Women, Children, Youth and Sports at the Ministry of National Development Planning/Bappenas has the task of carrying out coordination and policy formulation, policy implementation, evaluation and control, as well as formulating development strategies across national planning sectors in the fields of family, women, children, youth, and sport.



In line with this, to optimize youth development, especially in employment issues, a National Strategy for Youth Entrepreneurship has been prepared by involving all stakeholders, both central and local governments, development partners, research institutions, academics, practitioners, the private sector, UN agencies and the youth community. The document is expected to become all stakeholders in the development of youth entrepreneurship both at the national and in the regions, which are expected to create jobs and encourage youth in the achievement of the Youth Development Index in Indonesia. She has also granted her support towards the Youth Co:Lab cause by supporting its programs, most notably through the National Dialogue and policy advocacy.



Sami Ahmed

Managing Director,
Startup Bangladesh Limited

Sami Ahmed is the Managing Director of Startup Bangladesh Limited, a Government of Bangladesh funded VC Company. Prior to joining as MD of Startup Bangladesh Limited, Mr. Ahmed was the Policy Advisor of the Leveraging ICT for Growth and Employment of the IT-ITES Industry (LICT-2) Project of the Bangladesh Computer Council, ICT Division. Mr. Ahmed's core responsibilities included Bangladesh IT-ITES Industry promotion and Talent Development.

He was the Executive Director of the Bangladesh Association for Software and Information Services (BASIS) and was instrumental in many policy reforms for the Industry and in organizing key ICT events in the country. Mr. Ahmed also worked at the a2i Project of the Prime Minister's Office where he was part of many national initiatives under the Digital Bangladesh platform and played several roles including leading the Innovation team.

Devika Iyer

Economic Policy Specialist – Employment
UNDP Regional Hub for Asia Pacific, Bangkok

Devika has over 15 years of experience at UNDP, in a range of areas including employment, social protection, development planning, and the poverty-environment nexus. She has worked at regional and global levels, supporting over 45 countries across Africa, Asia Pacific, Arab States, and Latin America and the Caribbean. She joined the UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub in March 2022, to provide policy advisory support in the area of Employment and Future of Work to countries in the Asia Pacific region.



Her previous assignment was with the UNDP Regional Hub for Arab States in Amman where she focused on providing policy support in the area of social protection. Prior to that assignment, Devika's role as Global Policy Specialist – Development Planning at UNDP HQ, entailed advising countries on mainstreaming the SDGs into their national and subnational development frameworks and developing tools and methodologies to support SDG implementation. For example, the Rapid Integrated Assessment tool has been applied in over 65 countries at national and sub-national levels. Devika has also worked with the joint UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative in Nairobi, providing policy support to countries on mainstreaming environment issues into national development planning frameworks. She has also worked with UNDP's Human Development Report Office in a research capacity, focusing on support to the development of national human development reports.



Layne Robinson

Head,
Social Policy Development
Commonwealth Secretariat

Layne Robinson is Head of Social Policy Development at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London, UK. He leads a team at the Commonwealth responsible for supporting the 56 countries of the Commonwealth with public policy in areas of youth development, health, education and sports.

The Commonwealth's social policy work strengthens cooperation on human development issues and develops policies and programmes to improve the lives of people in the Commonwealth. He has particular interest in measuring outcomes/progress on youth development; in the Commonwealth he led the of the first global Youth Development Index that measures progress in youth development across 183 countries; he also led the work with young people to develop the Commonwealth Youth Council. Prior to leading the Commonwealth Youth Programme he work on youth and policy develop in Jamaica and the Caribbean.

Sharia Walker

Senior Youth Development Specialist
Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)

Sharia Walker describes herself as a "curious global citizen". She is the Senior Youth Development Specialist at the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), and has led substantial Youth Development initiatives at IsDB: including developing the Bank's first Youth Development Strategy and mainstreaming youth development and empowerment throughout the Bank's projects and programmes. Sharia has a MA in Education Management and a second MA in Peace and Justice with a specialization in Conflict Management and Resolution and is a California certified mediator.



She is also an entrepreneur, before joining the Islamic Development Bank Sharia established the first privately owned alternative dispute resolution consultancy firm in Saudi Arabia where she offered mediation, negotiation, and conflict resolution advisory services to government entities, civil society, private sector, and SMEs



Haaziq Ibrahim

Co-founder, DemiLaut



DemiLaut is an Indigenous-led social enterprise that advances sustainability. It seeks to secure the livelihoods of traditional Malaysian fisherpeople while also promoting marine biodiversity and food security.

Haaziq is an engineer by practise and entrepreneur by chance. He is the founder of #DemiLaut, a social enterprise project supported by UNDP Youth Co:Lab in modernising and digitising the traditional fisheries, by improving and developing lean circular models to empower traditional fishers to self-govern their livelihood and earning alternative income by contributing to the governance of fish food security and the impact of climate change on the ocean.

With experiences as a Project Manager / Consultant for Entomo Labs, a National HealthTech service provider to the Ministry of Health's Malaysia and transiting into Dataswift.io as a product manager, a Cambridge-based company developing products on a decentralised self-sovereign data technology.

Kelvin Sergeant

Enterprise Development Specialist
Decent Work Technical Support Team for East and South-East Asia and the Pacific

Mr. Kelvin Sergeant is the Senior Sustainable Enterprise Development Specialist for East and South East Asia and the Pacific, based in the ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team (DWT) in Bangkok, Thailand. He was previously based in New Delhi, India and the Caribbean as Sustainable Enterprise Development and Job Creation Specialist. Before joining the ILO, Mr. Sergeant was employed as Economic Affairs officer in the Economic Development and Integration Unit at the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).



He has over twenty (20) years working experience in both the public and private sector combined; and was a lecturer at the University of the West Indies and UWI Open Campus and served as Academic Director at ROYTEC – UWI school of Business and Applied Studies Limited. He also lectured in courses for the University of New Brunswick, Canada.



Dr. Mohsen Gul

Technical lead for the design of the SIH,
UNDP

Dr Mohsen Gul is a senior research manager at the Cambridge Institute of Sustainability Leadership at the University of Cambridge (UK). Mohsen brings over a decade of experience working in multilateral development organisations, including as a senior climate innovation specialist at the Asian Development Bank and senior technical advisor for UNDP Pakistan.

Mohsen has led several socio-environmental research and policy advocacy projects in multiple countries and regional contexts, including on the youth entrepreneurship ecosystem in Africa with British Council. Mohsen currently supports the UNDP Asia Pacific and partners as the technical lead for the Strategic Intelligence Hub.

Ms. Cissy Shen

*Partnerships and Programme Development Consultant
UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub*

Cissy is passionate about helping young people become positive agents of change and drive substantial impact in their communities. As the Partnerships and Programme Development Consultant for UNDP in Asia and the Pacific, Cissy leads youth partnerships outreach for private and public sector stakeholders, and provides programme development support for youth empowerment initiatives across the region.



Prior to joining UNDP, Cissy has worked in the public sector and in the youth civic engagement space, developing programmes and curriculums for students and policy-makers. She started her career working with Indigenous youth in Australia, examining innovative ways of embedding traditional cultural knowledges and perspectives into tertiary education curriculum.

Cissy has a Bachelor's Degree in Human Science from Macquarie University in Australia.



Ms. Panod (Toby) Srinual

Founder, GendersMatter

Specializing in writing on gender issues and intersectionality issues, Panod Srinual has founded GendersMatter, the first startup media agency in Thailand that directly deals with gender issues and intersectionality issues through a variety of media platforms; Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Tiktok.

GendersMatter provides service in crafting advertising articles related to gender issues along with original illustrations. Besides, GendersMatter also offers a workshop in support of diversity in workplace. Our previous clients and partners are Line, UNDP, ChangeFusion, Transgender Health Access Thailand, and other impactful corporates and NGOs.

In 2021, Srinual has her two books launched. The first one is Toey's Story: Transgender Person Welfare and National Progress. And the second one is A Memoir of A Trans Woman In Northeast Thailand. Both of the books have been awarded for its socially impactful content; Society of Young Social Innovators Award and Common School Fund Award respectively. Later the next year, having been shortlisted for People Award 2022 for gender advocacy, Srinual has made her name as the first transgender person in the list.

NATIONAL RESEARCH:

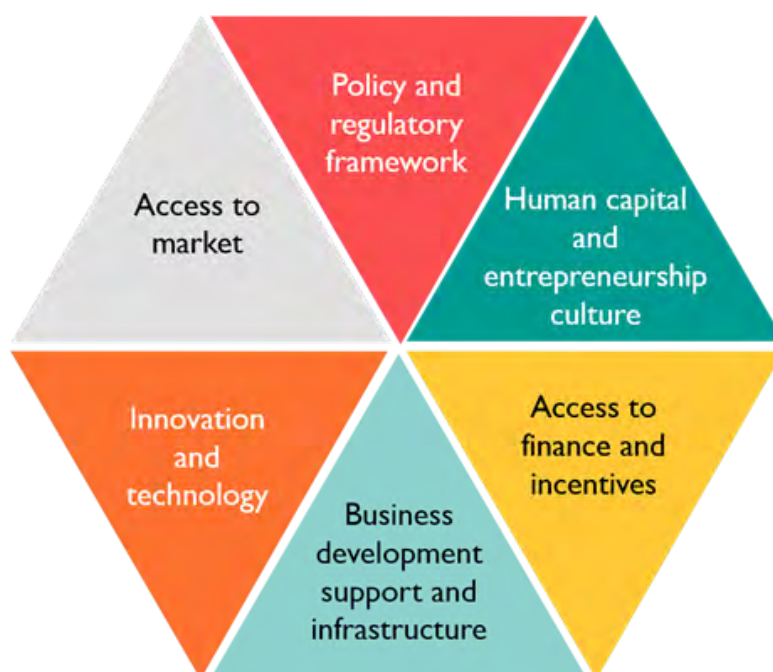
Youth Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Diagnostics

The Youth Co:Lab initiative co-led by UNDP and Citi Foundation – and the Islamic Development Bank partnered in 2020 to jointly produce national research studies on the state of the ecosystem for youth entrepreneurship. The first studies were produced in Bangladesh, Indonesia and Singapore and new studies are currently being conducted in the Maldives and Pakistan.

The studies aim to strengthen the understanding of the state of the operating environment for youth-led enterprises, the ecosystem enablers, barriers, and opportunities for youth entrepreneurship, through gender and inclusion lenses across six domains, including:

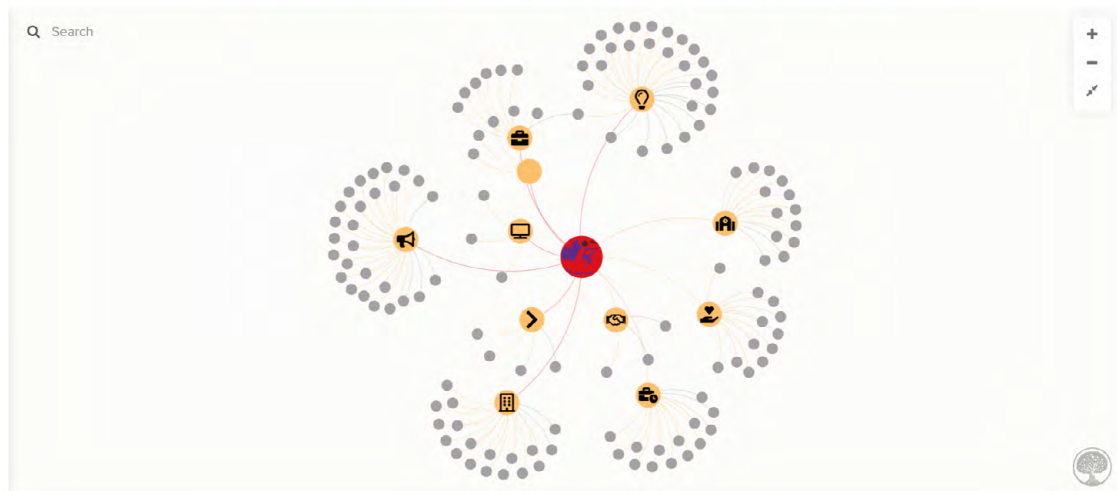
- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) Policy and regulatory framework | 4) Business development support and infrastructure |
| 2) Human capital and entrepreneurship culture | 5) Innovation and technology |
| 3) Access to finance and incentives | 6) Access to market. |

The framework is informed by past research and policy advocacy work by Youth Co:Lab and IsDB building on previously used research frameworks and tools.



The studies apply a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods through secondary and primary data analysis. They diagnose evidence-based recommendations on areas for intervention and means to strengthen the ecosystem. In this way, the studies aim to contribute to evidence-based programme and policy development. They also include stakeholder mapping analysis to support the operationalisation of the recommendations of the studies.

Indonesian Youth Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Map

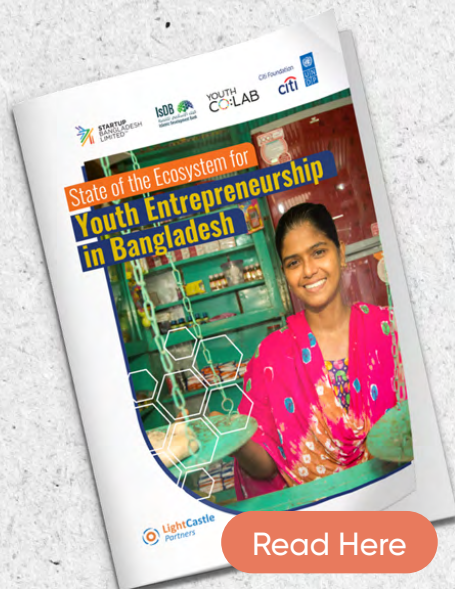


In 2022, Youth Co:Lab and IsDB are launching a Toolkit to provide actionable guidance to policymakers, development practitioners, researchers and young people interested in conducting an assessment or facilitating dialogues on the state of youth entrepreneurship in any geographical context.

The toolkit is based on the pilot assessments and lessons learnt from national studies conducted by Youth Co:Lab, IsDB and country partners in Bangladesh and Indonesia.



READING MATERIAL


[Read Here](#)

State of the Ecosystem for Youth Entrepreneurship in Bangladesh

This study produced by Youth Co:Lab in partnership with Islamic Development Bank and Startup Bangladesh Limited provides data-driven recommendations to strengthen the enabling environment for youth-led enterprises and amplify their potential in Bangladesh. This is the first research conducted using Youth Co:Lab's new youth entrepreneurship ecosystem diagnostic framework.


[Read Here](#)

State of the Ecosystem for Youth Entrepreneurship in Indonesia

Young people dominate the unemployed population in Indonesia: three-quarters of unemployed people were youth in 2019 and COVID-19 has further exacerbated the challenges young people face. UNDP – under the Youth Co:Lab initiative co-led by UNDP and Citi Foundation – the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) commissioned this study to provide data-driven recommendations to strengthen the ecosystem for youth entrepreneurship in Indonesia.


[Read Here](#)

State of the Ecosystem for Youth Social Entrepreneurship in Singapore

Youth in Singapore are increasingly using social entrepreneurship to take action for a better and more sustainable future. To fulfil their potential, it is crucial to understand the enabling factors and challenges they face along their journey. Led by Youth Co:Lab, a joint initiative of UNDP and Citi Foundation, this study assesses Singapore's youth social entrepreneurship ecosystem and generates key recommendations.


[Read Here](#)

Climate Concern to Climate Action-the Role of Young Social Entrepreneurs

Youth Co:Lab undertook this research to better understand the catalytic role that the young social entrepreneurs in the Asia-Pacific region can play in tackling the climate emergency, and the support they need to amplify the potential impact of their climate actions and solutions.


[Read Here](#)

Business Integrity for Young Entrepreneurs

An important priority of the SDGs is youth employment, and in particular, decent jobs for youth, whereby young women and men have access to decent, productive work, everyone benefits, and our future is more prosperous. To achieve this, it is critical for young entrepreneurs, setting up their businesses for the first time, to get started on the right foot. The purpose of this Toolkit is to contribute to this goal by encouraging young people starting their own businesses to operate with integrity from the outset.


[Read Here](#)

Addressing gender barriers to entrepreneurship and leadership among girls and young women in South-East Asia

This report analyses how girls' and young women's capacity and agency for entrepreneurship and leadership are shaped by their household, community, and wider ecosystem as they move from adolescence into adulthood. The research strengthens the evidence base on how to advance gender equality in Asia-Pacific through tackling the gender-related barriers that adolescent girls and young women face.

FLAGSHIP CASE STUDY

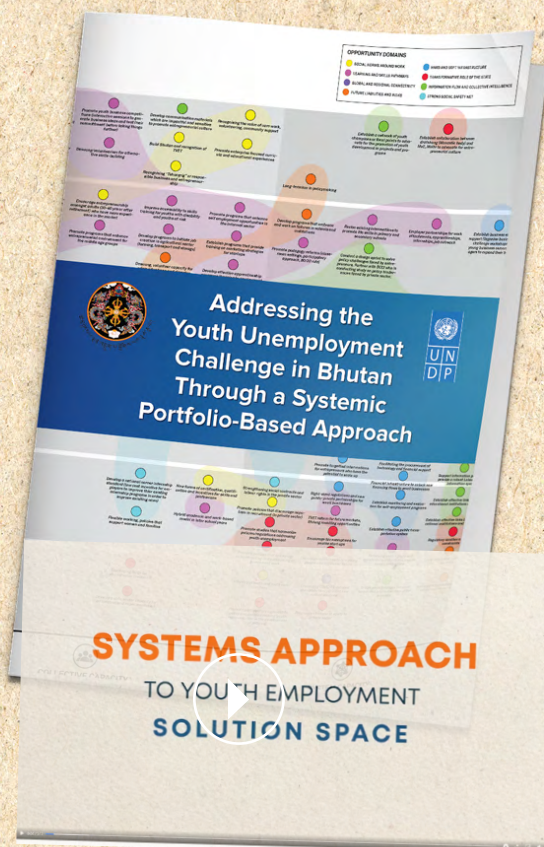
Systems mapping of youth unemployment

Understanding the wicked challenge of youth unemployment through a systems approach: The problem space. This report captures the journey and results of Bhutan's work with partners on tackling youth unemployment through systems thinking and practice.


[Read here](#)
[Watch the video here](#)

Addressing the youth unemployment challenge in Bhutan through a systemic portfolio-based approach

Youth unemployment is a complex, multifaceted challenge and impacted by multiple, interconnected factors. Hence, tackling it requires a systemic portfolio-based approach. This video presents interventions for systemic and transformational change proposed in the new report.


[Read here](#)
[Watch the video here](#)

YouthForesight knowledge platform


[Website Link](#)

ILO Peer Learning Hub

[Website Link](#)




ILO x ADB report Tackling the COVID-19 youth employment crisis in Asia and the Pacific

[Read here](#)



ILO (2022) Youth not in employment, education or training in Asia and the Pacific: Trends and policy considerations

[Read here](#)



Growing green: Fostering a green entrepreneurial ecosystem for youth

[Read here](#)

SESSION HOSTED BY THE STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE HUB:

Youth Co:Lab was co-created in 2017 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Citi Foundation. Youth Co:Lab aims to establish a common agenda for countries in the Asia-Pacific region to empower and invest in youth, so that they can accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through leadership, social innovation and entrepreneurship.

Learn more at youthcolab.org or follow [@youthcolab](https://twitter.com/youthcolab)

UNDP is the leading United Nations organisation fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality, and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and the planet.


Learn more at undp.org or follow [@undp](https://twitter.com/undp)

The Citi Foundation works to promote economic progress and improve the lives of people in low-income communities around the world. The Citi Foundation invests in efforts that increase financial inclusion, catalyze job opportunities for youth and reimagine approaches to building economically vibrant communities. The Citi Foundation's "More than Philanthropy" approach leverages the enormous expertise of Citi and its people to fulfil its mission and drive thought leadership and innovation.

Learn more at citigroup.com/citi/foundation or follow [@Citi](https://twitter.com/Citi)

The Islamic Development Bank is a multilateral development bank (MDB), working to improve the lives of those we serve by promoting social and economic development in 57 Member Countries and Communities Outreach in Non-Member Countries, delivering impact at scale.

Learn more at isdb.org or follow [@isdb_group](https://twitter.com/isdb_group)



The Commonwealth is an association of 54 independent countries, comprising large and small, developed and developing, landlocked and island economies. As the main intergovernmental body of the association, the Commonwealth Secretariat works with member governments to deliver on priorities agreed by Commonwealth Heads of Government and promotes international consensus building. It provides technical assistance and advisory services to members, helping governments achieve sustainable, inclusive and equitable development. The Secretariat's work programme encompasses areas such as democracy, rule of law, human rights, governance and social and economic development.

Learn more at thecommonwealth.org or follow @CommonwealthSec

ESCAP serves as the United Nations' regional hub promoting cooperation among countries to achieve inclusive and sustainable development. The largest regional intergovernmental platform with 53 Member States and 9 associate members, ESCAP has emerged as a strong regional think-tank offering countries sound analytical products that shed insight into the evolving economic, social and environmental dynamics of the region.

Learn more at unescap.org or follow @UNESCAP

ILO brings together governments, employers and workers of 187 member States, to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men.

Learn more at ilo.org or @ILO

