



UNITED NATIONS  
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



INTERNATIONAL VIENNA  
ENERGY & CLIMATE  
FORUM 2023



# YOUTH SOLUTIONS DAYS

Leading up to the International Vienna  
Energy and Climate Forum 2023

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# INTRODUCTION

Under the umbrella of the International Vienna Energy and Climate Forum and its Solutions Week, Youth Solutions Days took place from 30 October until 1 November 2023. It mobilized youth to actively engage in climate action and the energy transition, building up their competences, knowledge, and network. Over 150 participants from more than 50 countries took part in the programme and all the activities were designed in consultation with youth and with youth in mind under the leadership of the Forum's Youth Steering Committee. The youth-focused three-day event was co-organized by UNIDO, Sustainable Energy for All in partnership with the City of Vienna and the Vienna University of Economics and Business. It enabled young people to take part fully and meaningfully in the International Vienna Energy and Climate Forum.

Kicking off on 30 October, youth representatives gathered at the campus of the Vienna University of Economics and Business to focus on the energy, environment, and economics nexus. They engaged in discussions by leading academics, took part in interactive workshops on several topics, and listened to key-note speeches of great personalities. On 31 October and 1 November, Youth Solutions Days moved to the Vienna International Centre for hands-on workshops, panel discussions, and other exciting events. Youth representatives also took guided tours of the City of Vienna to explore how it became a pioneer of green innovation. The topics of the workshops covered clean cooking, energy access and efficiency, industrial decarbonization, clean heating and cooling, gender-energy-climate nexus and the role of women in this sector, as well as the linkage between SDGs and its finance, impact, and innovation. Keynote speeches and panel discussions focused on green jobs and empowering the future generation. Furthermore, on the last day of the event, participants were able to engage in two interactive sessions centred on climate myths and their participation in a world climate simulation.



# MESSAGE FROM YOUTH TO DECISION-MAKERS



## CALL TO ACTION!

Young people worked with experts and each other to create calls to action in the areas of climate action and energy transition that are of special interest to youth.





# CALL TO ACTION

The time for  
transformative action  
is now!



**Value Chain of  
SDG – Impact**



**Finance for the  
UN SDGs**



**Clean Cooking**



**Energy Access**



**Energy, Climate and  
Development**



**Gender and Energy**



**Heating and Cooling**



**Women  
Changemakers**



# VALUE CHAIN OF SDG – IMPACT

The time for decisive,  
informed action is now!

- Accountability for inaction for all stakeholders.
- Interconnections between systems and countries:  
We need to do this together.
- Inclusion of voices within decision-making in each stakeholder group, especially marginalized communities.
- Representative of future generations.
- Scalability of inclusion, diversity of voices at all levels.
- Leave behind the theory, the excuses, the business case, and start ACTING!

## FINANCE FOR THE UN SDGS

- We need to rethink: the risk of doing nothing is higher than the risk inherent in SDG-related projects.
- High-impact projects may have higher risk. We need insurance schemes to protect against those risks and encourage high-impact projects, particular in the global south.
- The impact (not only CO2 reduction and the like) of investments needs to part of the price of investment.
- Climate insurance needs to be a part of granular impact investment, particularly for infrastructure.
- We need dedicated teams auditing SDG impacts.



# FINANCE FOR THE UN SDGS

- We need to lever investment into innovation from SMEs, particularly for impact on the granular level.
- Blended financing (government and private sector) will be critical for allocating funds to high-impact projects on a granular scale.
- Capacity-building for increasing awareness for impact outside of green transformation will be necessary.
- We will need education to advance the SDGs – the youth will be decisive!
- We need more transparency for what is labeled ‘green’, ‘impact’, or ‘sustainable’ – what are the specific investments in a fund?
- A country’s progress should not be measured by GDP only, but by broader metrics. Including natural capital, education, and other UN SDGs – diverse perspectives will be needed.
- Initiatives like ‘green’ or ‘blue’ bonds need to be strengthened.
- We need a requirement for impact investment for companies – something like 5% of revenue (following the example of India).
- Banks and institutional investors need education in impact (maybe as part of fit-and- proper assessments).
- Part of the financing for impact can be drawn from capital requirements for banks (similar to the Basel accords).
- There needs to be more ‘naming and shaming’ of investment into stranded assets.
- It is critical to consider the needs of young and other vulnerable groups in protecting from the downsides of negative externalities.



# CLEAN COOKING

- Prioritize awareness and education about the hazards of traditional cooking methods, especially targeting women and girls.
- Champion dialogues in developing countries to spotlight clean cooking as a pivotal development issue.
- Innovate business models and leverage IoT technologies to enhance affordability and accessibility of clean cooking solutions
- Explore novel approaches like shared cooking stations to bridge the gap in highly populated areas.

The time for  
transformative action  
is now!

# ENERGY ACCESS

We, the youth, call for the implementation of a strategic sustainable youth energy action plan that includes stakeholder consultation with key actors and shows where youth can play a role in SDG7. This document should be a first step for youth to have the opportunity to guide processes at regional and national decision-making levels and build to international levels. We also call for an accountability framework to measure progress on initiatives that we have consulted on, and the formalization of cross-regional dialogues.



# ENERGY, CLIMATE AND DEVELOPMENT

- Prioritize integrated action plans that address energy diversification, socio-economic impacts, and climate resilience, tailored to local needs.
- Support this vision by investing in education, technology, and infrastructure that foster energy efficiency and renewable adoption.
- Embrace the youth as partners, equipping them with the tools and knowledge to drive the transition.
- Foster international cooperation to overcome financial and technical barriers.



The time for decisive, informed action is now!



# GENDER AND ENERGY

- Embrace the youth's vision for a gender-equitable future by integrating women's voices in policymaking, investing in women-led clean energy solutions, providing young women with increased access to paid traineeships and job opportunities, supporting energy solutions that reduce gender inequalities and empowering women through education in STEM.
- Prioritize the development of technologies and infrastructures that address women's specific needs and enact gender-inclusive policies that ensure women's equal participation in driving sustainable and resilient energy systems.
- Act now for a fair, inclusive, just and balanced energy future.

# HEATING AND COOLING

- Prioritizing passive cooling solutions and efficient insulation - including for low-income neighbourhoods.
- Providing green credits for replacing AC with energy-efficient units.
- Using gender-disaggregated data and Internet of Thing applications to implement performance-based buildings regulation and incentivize sustainable behaviours.
- Rethinking our cities by investing in public transport infrastructure, using geospatial data, and increasing urban green and biodiversity to fight the urban heat island effect.
- Addressing issues such as affordability, infrastructure, and policy gaps to ensure that everyone has access to the cooling they need.

As youth, we urge policy-makers and industry leaders to involve us in policy and decision-making processes actively, ensuring our voices are heard and our ideas are incorporated. Invest in education and training, incentivize R&D and facilitate collaboration between youth and established sector stakeholders.

# WOMEN CHANGEMAKERS

- Private sector: If you do not engage and hire women (including in management roles), you lose customers and invaluable skills that women have.
- Policy-makers: You need to create an enabling environment for women at a national and global level to thrive, be it in training and skilling programmes, financing opportunities for women entrepreneurs and active engagement where our ideas are acknowledged and implemented.
- Youth: Youth is about being a changemaker, being proactive, thinking outside the box and outside the box, and e space. You are needed!





# GUIDEBOOK FOR MEANINGFUL YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

The guidebook compiles best practices and reflects on successful youth engagement in inclusive and sustainable industrial development. It provides guidance, entry points and practical recommendations for all UNIDO personnel, partners and stakeholders in planning and implementing youth-responsive projects, programmes and activities. It also raises awareness about the need to ensure that young people have a seat at the table where decisions are taken. It has the slogan of the youth advocates “Nothing about us without us” at its core.

Co-authored by the Youth Advisory Group (YAG) members, composed of enthusiastic, qualified and committed youth, this guidebook aims to make initiatives, projects, and implementations by UNIDO, its partners and stakeholders more youth inclusive and responsive. The guidebook aims at encouraging all organizations to do their part in meaningfully engaging with youth in the context of energy, climate change and industrial development.

By following the steps outlined in the guidebook, all UNIDO personnel, partners and stakeholders as well as other UN organizations can ensure that their work is more youth inclusive, and that they are better able to meet the needs of young people around the globe as well as reap the benefits of youth led innovation and new perspectives.

The guidebook provides a number of practical steps that can be taken to make UNIDO's work more youth responsive. These steps include:

- Understanding diverse youth needs and measuring data
- Providing training and capacity building to UNIDO personnel on youth issues
- Consulting and working with young people throughout the project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation process
- Creating opportunities for young people to create impact and take part in decision-making in UNIDO and partner organizations' conferences and events
- Investing in youth-led initiatives and organizations

By taking these steps, UNIDO can help young people take better action, catalyzing a new era of peace, prosperity and sustainability.





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