



Subregional Forum for Youth Participation in Policy-Making
for East and North-East Asia
15-17 August 2011
Incheon, Republic of Korea

Background

The United Nations has long recognized that the imagination, ideals and energies of young people are vital for the continuing development of the societies in which they live. In 1995, the United Nations Member States adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY), a blueprint for national and international strategies to address more effectively the problems faced by young people and to increase opportunities for youth participation in society. General Assembly resolution of December 2009 (A/RES/64/130) reiterates the importance of youth in decision-making: “the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, require the full and effective participation of young people and youth-led organizations, and therefore encourages Member States to ensure the full and effective participation of youth in the life of society and in decision-making processes”.

Youth participation in decision-making is one of the 15 priority areas of WPAY. Promotion of youth participation in all spheres of life in society and in decision-making processes at all levels can benefit both young people and the decision-making bodies including national Governments and intergovernmental bodies. Policies can better address the problems related to youth if young people’s perspectives, reflecting the reality lived by them, are taken into account. Involving young people in decision-making processes strengthens young people’s understanding of issues at stake as well as their sense of responsibility towards being part of the solution.

The East and North-East Asian subregion is facing challenges which are more and more complex: Rapid urbanization and industrialization, widening social and economic disparities, domestic rural-to-urban and international economic migration, high youth unemployment, population ageing, need for new growth engines while having to establish sustainable consumer behaviour and lifestyle. Even though these issues are tackled by today’s leaders and citizens to the best of their abilities, many of them will continue to be resolved by the next generations. Capacity building for youth as well as for Governments to work with youth will ensure continued ability of the society to face these complex and interrelated issues.

In order to promote “full and effective participation of youth in the life of society and in decision-making”, WPAY proposes the following actions:

- Developing and/or strengthening opportunities for young people to learn their rights and responsibilities, promoting their social, political, developmental and environmental participation;
- Encouraging and promoting youth associations through financial, educational and technical support and promotion of their activities;
- Encouraging increased national, regional and international cooperation and exchange between youth organizations.

The present Forum aims to promote youth participation in policy-making by providing a platform for sharing experiences and best practices, identifying effective tools for youth participation, and creating a community of practice across the East and North-East Asian subregion.

Objectives of the Subregional Youth Forum

- Sharing and reviewing good practice of collaboration between youth organizations and policy-making bodies.
- Formulating action plans on effective youth participation on 3 topics: Youth Unemployment; Development and the concept of “Gross National Happiness”; and Sustainable Development.
- Identifying ways to channel youth views to policy-making.

Organizers

- UN ESCAP Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia in collaboration with Incheon Metropolitan Government

Expected Participants

- Seventy youth between 18-26 years of age from the Member States of East and North-East Asia, including China, Japan, Mongolia, Republic of Korea and Russian Federation.
- Participants of the “Global Model United Nations 2011 (GMUN)” from the subregional countries are invited to apply, and extend their stay in the Republic of Korea to attend this Forum, which takes place immediately after GMUN.

Programme (Tentative)

Day 0 : Sunday, 14 August 2011	
	Arrival and registration
18:00 - 19:00	Dinner and orientation
Day 1 : Monday, 15 August 2011	
Field Trip (to DMZ and/or Seoul)	
Day 2 : Tuesday, 16 August 2011	
08:00 - 08:30	Breakfast
08:45 - 09:15	Opening Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening Address (Mayor of Incheon City) (TBC) • Welcoming Remarks and Introduction to the Work of SRO-ENEA (Peter Van Laere, Director, SRO-ENEA)
09:20 - 10:00	Dialogue between Incheon City Youth and the Youth Forum participants from the Subregion (Facilitated by Mayor of Incheon City) (TBC)
10:00 - 10:20	Coffee/Tea Break
10:20 - 11:50	Session 1 : Youth Participation and Inter-Generational Cooperation
12:00 - 13:00	Lunch
13:30 - 15:30	Session 2 : Sharing Experiences of Youth Participation (A panel of youths from Australia and France)
15:30 - 15:50	Coffee/Tea Break
15:50 - 17:40	Session 3 : How to make youths' voices heard: Identifying available tools and tips for youth participation in policy-making
18:00 - 20:00	Networking Dinner, with entertainment by participants
Day 3 : Wednesday, 17 August 2011	
08:00 - 08:30	Breakfast
09:00 - 10:30	Session 4 : Thematic group work on effective youth participation in policy-making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Unemployment • Development and the Concept of "Gross National Happiness" • Sustainable Development
10:30 - 10:50	Coffee/Tea Break
10:50 - 12:00	Session 5 : Formulation of Action Plan by each thematic group
12:00 - 13:00	Lunch
13:30 - 15:30	Session 6 : Presentation of Action Plans

15:30 – 16:00	Coffee/Tea Break
16:00 – 17:30	Wrap-up and Conclusion
18:00 – 18:30	Farewell Dinner
Thursday, 18 August 2011	
08:00 – 08:30	Breakfast
	Departure for Incheon Airport

Notes:

- **GMUN** = Global Model United Nations 2011, taking place in Incheon on 10-14 August. It is organized by another section of the UN, called Department of Public Information in New York. (Official website: www.un.org/gmun)
- **WPAY** = World Programme of Action for Youth, available at: <http://social.un.org/index/Youth/WorldProgrammeofActionforYouth.aspx>

Thematic group work: As part of the two-day workshop, participants will work together to make action plans towards effective youth participation on one of the three topics that they have chosen on the Application Form (Youth Unemployment; Quality of Development and “Gross National Happiness”; and Sustainable Development).

Selection of participants: Selection will be done through application form screening, with a possibility of follow-up telephone interviews. Preference will be given to young people who are part of existing youth groups (formal and informal) working on social, economic, and environmental issues relevant to the subregion.

Selection criteria:

- Represents an existing youth organization
- Geographical and gender representation
- Answers to the two essay questions on the application form

While the organizer aims at capitalizing on the presence of GMUN participants in Incheon, GMUN participants are requested to fill in the application form, and the selection of participants to the Subregional Youth Forum will be solely based on the above criteria.

Cost of participation: There is no participation fee. Air transportation will be provided by the organizer. (GMUN participants are kindly asked to extend their flight departure dates accordingly.) Accommodation and meals will be provided to all participants for the whole duration of the Forum. Each participant will be responsible for personal expenses.

Visa to the Republic of Korea: Each participant is responsible for applying for and obtaining a visa at the nearest Embassy or Consulate of the Republic of Korea. The organizer will send all participants a Letter of Acceptance to support their visa applications. Please retain the receipt of your visa application fee and submit it to the organizer after your arrival in Incheon for reimbursement.

In the future, SRO-ENEA will provide support to up to 3 participants to attend intergovernmental meetings of regional or global scale to present youth perspectives on relevant social, economic, and environmental issues.

Procedure:

The youth organizations whose representatives have participated in this Subregional Youth Forum will be sent a “call for subregional youth statement” prior to such meetings. It will then be up to the youth groups across the subregional countries to collaborate with one another in forming a “subregional youth statement” on the topic of the meeting, and submit it to SRO-ENEA for consideration for invitation to the intergovernmental meeting. A Subregional Youth Statement needs to be formed through collaboration of youth groups in at least 3 countries of the subregion, in order to be eligible for consideration.

ESCAP Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia (ESCAP SRO-ENEA) was established in May 2010 in Incheon, Republic of Korea, as a Subregional Office of United Nations ESCAP (headquarters in Bangkok, Thailand) to strengthen development work of the United Nations. SRO-ENEA is mandated to cover 6 Member States of the East and North-East Asian subregion, and its programme of work includes social, economic and environmental issues which are particularly relevant to the subregion. SRO-ENEA is also the Secretariat of the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC), which is the only intergovernmental platform for cooperation on environmental issues that exists in this subregion.



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