



UNICEF-UNDP Asia-Pacific Partnership for Young People's Empowerment 2021 HIGHLIGHTS & RESULTS

2021 was a formative year for the regional partnership.

Over the next 10 years of the Decade of Action (2020–2030), UNICEF and UNDP have committed to working jointly in 12 countries across Asia and the Pacific to support adolescents and youth skills and education, civic engagement, and entrepreneurship. By 2030, this partnership aims to impact the lives of 6.5 million young people and strengthen systems to indirectly reach 100 million young people.

Building off 2020's design phase, 2021 was a formative year for the partnership with technical teams at country level engaging regularly to address evidence gaps, co-design programmes, and develop strategies and partnerships focused on accelerating results for young people.

UNICEF and UNDP regional offices established a Coordination Secretariat led by Regional Technical Advisors and Resource Mobilization teams, with new support of a full-time Programme Coordinator, Resource Mobilization Associate and Communications Associate. The Secretariat provided technical support to country teams, including cross-country learning calls to develop a community of practice on adolescent and youth programming.

To kickstart the partnership, \$470,000 in seed funding was deployed from regional offices to country teams, and joint resource mobilization is ongoing targeting a shared pipeline of 35+ potential donors.

An investment of \$2.5 million in 2022 would expand efforts to enhance digital learning, employability, and meaningful participation of young people in climate and civic actions, focusing on girls and young women and more vulnerable groups.

2021 Achievements

Over 2 million adolescents and youth were reached with online and offline programmes and support to develop digital and 21st century skills, meaningfully participate in their communities, and to refine their businesses through the ongoing efforts and partnerships led by the individual agencies.

- Over **12,300 young people were engaged** in activities promoting meaningful participation, climate action, social innovation skillsets and digital learning through \$470,000 in seed funding and regional advocacy and programming.
- Approximately **32,000 young people were reached through online campaigns** and engagement associated with these activities.
- An estimated **1.8 million** are impacted indirectly through **ongoing systems-strengthening** work.

3 climate initiatives

promoting young people's climate action in schools, online, and at policy level and 3 joint funding proposals on similar themes submitted to the Green Shark Tank.

3 digital-first programmes

providing 21st century and digital skills to vulnerable adolescents and youth in Indonesia and Malaysia, reaching over 1.5 million young people.

4 youth councils engaged

in designing locally-relevant online and offline modules to promote practical and meaningful adolescent and youth participation at community, school, and local government level, with a focus on ensuring more vulnerable groups are included in decision-making processes.

5 new joint initiatives launched

including the Youth Environmental Living Labs in Malaysia, Generation Unlimited - ASEAN, Youth Engagement in Climate Action Platform, and an online Youth Practice School in Pakistan.

Over 7 regional and national events

where UNDP and UNICEF senior management and technical advisors highlighted the partnership to government, private sector, and youth partners.

In Malaysia

UNICEF and UNDP teams co-designed and launched a new participatory approach to engage young people in climate action and build their awareness on local environmental issues - **Youth Environmental Living Labs** (YELL). YELL promotes action-learning, localizes climate narratives to build a better understanding of the impact of climate change on young lives, and galvanizes a network of young environmental leaders across Malaysia.

The concept was developed with youth and government partners and launched in August. The first advocacy campaign under YELL, #BumiBelia, invited young people across Malaysia to share local narratives on climate change and environmental degradation through young people's perspectives. Winners will be announced at the end of 2021.

YELL's learning content is available online: the Environmental Action Starter Kit, Local Heroes Map, Inspirational Stories and more.



2021 was the pilot year for the **Youth Environmental Living Labs**, and teams are seeking funding and support to scale up via secondary schools across the country.

Seed funding was also used to adapt and expand the successful Youth Co:Lab curriculum to reach younger adolescents, 10-19 years old.

The first cohort included ideation and growth tracks with workshops and mentorship with experts to refine solutions/ideas before the top 10 finalists were selected. **400 young participants submitted proposals** for social businesses and innovative solutions to community challenges; 10 finalists will be chosen to pitch at a National Dialogue event in February 2022.

Accelerating results through digital platforms:
UNICEF Malaysia's KitaConnect and Future Skills for All

UNICEF Malaysia's digital approaches to civic engagement and digital skills building continue to expand and gain recognition as successful avenues to achieve results at scale.

@KitaConnect, developed in response to the 2020 COVID-19 lockdowns, reached 615,000 young Malaysians in 2021, including 5% young people with disabilities. The platform provides young people with access to peer to peer learning, expert-led discussions and a safe space to share issues that concern them.

@KitaConnect also serves as a de-facto online youth network, allowing UNICEF to share opportunities with thousands of young Malaysians through the platform.

Future Skills for All (FS4A), is an online teaching and learning platform aimed at strengthening provision and reducing inequalities in digital skills development, has ensured the continuity of learning during COVID-19. To date 900,000 adolescents and youth have accessed the programme.

The platform targets students in urban and rural communities and marginalized groups including children with disabilities. The content is also on Tik Tok and has garnered 14,500 followers and over 3 million views.

In 2022, in addition to scaling-up Youth Environmental Living Labs, the teams hope to expand the reach and content available on @KitaConnect and F24A platforms, noting their potential to promote greater efficiency for both agencies to reaching out to young people across the country.

In Indonesia

UNDP and UNICEF are expanding opportunities for meaningful participation in local and national policy dialogues reaching 1,600 young people through regional seed funding.

UNICEF Indonesia launched the **Mitra Muda Network**, a voluntary, national youth network serving as a platform for young people to engage regularly with UNICEF and UNDP and build their communication, advocacy and leadership skills through peer-led campaigns and activities. 130 members were signed on, including 19 young leaders as part of the Core Team, 61 individual members, and 50 U-Report Ambassadors. In its first year, Mitra Muda members participated in more than 60 online and offline engagements at local, national, regional, and global levels.

Teams in Indonesia also led a policy-focused workshop on SDG 13 and SDG 8 with the **Indonesian Youth Parliamentarian Caucus** of the House of Representatives involving 100 young leaders, co-designing a campaign with young people and developing policy memos which will be shared online by the end of 2021.

Using the 2021 Seed Funds, the Indonesia teams expanded proven programmes that support adolescents' meaningful participation in their communities using the Adolescent Kit to two disaster affected rural areas.

The Adolescent Kit builds 21st Century Skills and confidence and provides a safe space for girls and boys to discuss issues that affect and concern them. The main issues being raised by young people are: the need for adolescent-friendly mental health support, the impact of COVID-19 on their learning, and fears of being left behind in terms of learning and employment opportunities. As part of the process, young people work in teams to prototype solutions for issues they have identified.

557 adolescents (64% girls) have benefitted from The Adolescent Kit expansion. They are supported by 70 youth facilitators (57% female). At the end of the programme, they will present their prototypes to key decision-makers in their communities.

In response to ongoing lockdowns and 21st century skills-gaps for young Indonesians, **#GenerasiTerampil (Skilled Generation)** promotes awareness and 21st century skill-building opportunities for adolescents and young people. A series of 8 mini-podcasts and 2 talk shows were shared via YouTube with over 4,000 views.

Results have shown **micro-learning approaches to be interactive and youth-friendly** and will be expanded in 2022 via a U-Report chatbots, allowing young people to learn about skills and issues that matter to them, such as climate action, entrepreneurship (adapting UNDP Youth Co:Lab curriculum). By leveraging the U-Report network, content will reach thousands of young people across Indonesia. This content is now in user-testing to be launched in 2022.



Looking ahead to 2022, UNICEF and UNDP Indonesia will continue to invest in Mitra Muda and the national Youth Caucus, expand the e-learning platform for young people, conduct research on young entrepreneurs and green economic recovery, and host the Youth for SDGs Summit. **Greater investment in digital connectivity and developing closer links between employers and skills development** are also high on the agenda for Indonesia, yet require substantial financial support.

In Thailand

UNICEF and UNDP are jointly engaging with the **Children and Youth Council of Thailand (CYCT)** to enhance understanding and skill development for SDG-Action through social innovation and meaningful adolescent and youth participation. The agencies are working together to encourage co-creation between youth and local authorities to develop sustainable solutions that address local issues.

In 2021, seed funds were used to host two 2-day workshops on meaningful participation and social innovation with 50 participants from 5 municipalities, including 27 youth from Children and Youth Councils and 23 Municipality staff.

5 young teams then received seed funding and mentoring to implement their ideas. **There will also be follow-ups to support youth and local authorities to implement SDG-related projects at the local level.**

The activities complement ongoing, long-term strategy to strengthen CYCT's leadership, digital capacity and reach – enabling more marginalized groups to actively participate and benefit from CYCT platforms. Through a system strengthening approach, Thailand teams are supporting efforts to integrate meaningful participation across 5 provinces and the national council, indirectly reaching 360,000 adolescents and youth.



In 2021, UNICEF set the groundwork for this through a landscape analysis of young people's participation in Thailand and developing a digitalization plan in conjunction with CYCT and related Ministries. A workshop was held to build the capacity of 50 members of the CYCT and local government authorities on youth participation in policy making and in SDGs implementation. Activities and lessons learned are documented, and an online dissemination event is organized with local authorities to enhance policy dialogue on youth engagement and participation in local governance country-wide.

Looking ahead into 2022, partners will continue to work closely with the Child and Youth Council Thailand to roll out modular trainings on meaningful participation in schools and local governance through new online and offline workshops to be developed in 2022.

The Social Innovation Toolkit, funded via Generation Unlimited and developed in 2021, will also be rolled out into TVET schools, provided adequate partners and funding are secured.

In South Asia

Through regular collaborations, UNICEF and UNDP **Pakistan** launched a new initiative, the **Youth Policy Lab and Practice School**, a virtual space to provide adolescents and youth with skill-building courses to support meaningful participation and engagement on issues that concern them. With the support of regional seed funds, an initial round of 5 e-learning courses is being developed to be deployed on the site. **It is estimated that the site will reach 25,000 users, including young people, youth practitioners, researchers and policymakers.**

Lessons learned and course content from the Youth Practice School and the ASEAN-regional civic engagement modules are also being shared to help support quality and rapid content development. The Youth Policy Lab will also house an adolescent-led policy research challenge through which research capacity building and grant provision will be provided around thematic priorities identified in the UNDP-UNICEF Investment Case.



UNDP and UNICEF Pakistan hosted 2 competitions for young people to share ideas and develop action plans to tackle climate change and environmental waste in their communities, and to support cross-border peacebuilding and **social innovation with young people** in Afghanistan. These initiatives reached 115 young people (out of over 1,000 applicants) with intensive workshops, seed funding and mentorship and were implemented in coordination with the Ministry of Climate Change and local governments.

At the regional level,

The **Partnership Secretariat** was established with 3 new roles: Partnership Coordinator; Communications Associate; Fundraising Associate. The core team, led by the Regional Advisors from the 3 regional offices, has supported country teams through technical advice and partnership coordination challenges, primarily through quarterly update communications and calls. In addition, the regional team aims to serve as a resource hub to address regional evidence gaps, and as such published regional research, "**Adolescent Engagement & Skills Acquisition in Digital Spaces**".

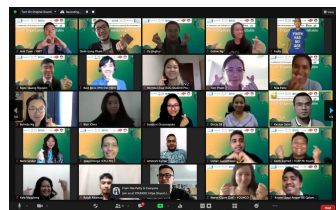
3 regional initiatives focused on partnerships, climate, and participation



In partnership with the ASEAN Business Advisory Council, the EU-ASEAN Business Council and Decent Jobs for Youth, UNICEF and UNDP co-hosted **Unlimited ASEAN** – a virtual forum bringing together 500 participants to accelerate results for adolescent and youth skilling, employment and entrepreneurship. **Serving as an inaugural event to contextualize Generation Unlimited for ASEAN, speakers included SAP, Microsoft, Capgemini, and Ericsson, with almost 50% youth speakers.** In 2022, partners will co-design with young leaders a regional GenU strategy, focusing on themes such as: adolescent girls' digital literacy and mentorship; employability; connectivity; and a regional public-private youth partnership.

Further, the agencies collaborated closely to expand **COVID-19 vaccine awareness** targeting young people by ensuring developed vaccine campaigns were channeled through popular online platforms (Google-Ads) as well as rolled-out at the community level to ensure inclusion of non-digitally literate youth using UNDP-partner funds.

In **Nepal**, responding to the need for adolescent and youth engagement in local and national level policymaking and decision making, UNDP utilized seed funds to develop locally relevant training for local government leaders on approaches to **adolescent and youth friendly local governance**. Following the development of the course, in consultation with young leaders and local governments, the pilot training will be rolled out in 7 provinces in early 2022, before reviewing results and scaling up. The training will also connect to **UNICEF's Child-Friendly Local Governance** approach of the Government of Nepal, which was supported by UNICEF.



To provide a safe inclusive space for young people to advocate for climate action in their respective countries, the **Youth Empowerment in Climate Action Platform (YECAP)** was launched. A collaborative effort, the platform is supported by the United Nations Development Programme's Climate Promise initiative, UNICEF, UNFCCC, the British Council, YOUNGO, the 2030 Youth Force and others. In 2021, over 11 major events and trainings were organized by YECAP, including a National Dialogue on Youth Empowerment in Climate Action, engagement at the Asia-Pacific Climate Week, and the YECAP Climate Hackathon. **The YECAP Fellowship Cohort #1 was led by 23 fellows, directly training and engaging over 9,700 young people and engaged with 28,000 more in Asia and the Pacific.**

Regional seed funding is also being used to **design, test, and roll-out interactive online and offline workshops for government officials, young leaders and students to come together and understand the whys and hows of meaningful participation.** These regional modules will draw from existing global guidance, but importantly, examples and visuals will come from the ASEAN context, allowing for greater relevance and understanding of the issues from an ASEAN perspective. Following testing in selected countries, the modules will be shared with country teams across the region.

Looking ahead: Challenges & Opportunities

Resource Mobilization

Following the development of the partnership investment case, and the Nepal-Pakistan investment case, UNICEF and UNDP resource mobilization teams from BRH, ROSA and EAPRO have coordinated to develop a joint pipeline, as well as leading outreach to agency-specific prospects. Regional level fundraising remains primarily focused on private sector partnerships.

Challenges

The partnership spans 5 countries and 3 regional offices, thereby it can be a challenge to seamlessly share information across the agencies and to operationalize funding or other shared resource agreements. Financial resources and partnerships in support of young people's participation and civic engagement remain limited, yet there is increasing scope and interest from both young people and private sector to promote digital avenues for engagement and learning. Procuring services at the local level is time consuming; the partners will explore the option of developing joint Long Term Agreements to be utilized by both agencies.

Opportunities for 2022

Reaching scale through systems, digital approaches, and development of shared tools

- Expand **digital platforms to build skills and awareness on digital literacy and 21st century skills**, through micro-learning, and alternative pathways with a focus on girls, young women and vulnerable groups.
- Co-invest in policy and programming support towards **Green Skills & Jobs for Young People**, including scaling up **Youth Environmental Living Labs** via secondary schools in Malaysia .
- Roll-out **young people's participation in schools and local governance learning modules for ASEAN** region.
- **Build capacity of national youth councils and online participation platforms**, enhancing inclusive leadership, strengthening organizational management to reach the most vulnerable.
- Bring together private sector, ASEAN, youth, and UN agencies to partner and invest in young people's development, **skills and employability through Generation Unlimited ASEAN**.
- Build evidence base and innovative programming on **young people's mental health, green entrepreneurship, civic engagement and climate action** at regional and national levels.

Developing a regional network of partners

Selected partners that drove forward results in 2021 results include:

Generation Unlimited	National Municipalities League of Thailand
ASEAN Business Advisory Council	Academic Institution
SIDA	SDG Move, Thailand
Citi Foundation	National Council for Child and Youth
SAP	Development, Thailand
ASEAN Youth Organization	Department of Children and Youth, Thailand
Malaysian Global Innovation and Creativity Centre	Ministry of Social Development and Human
Ministry of Environment and Water, Malaysia	Security, Thailand
Project Youths United for Earth, Malaysia	Ministry of Climate Change, Pakistan
Project I.D. Malaysia	Sindh Government, Pakistan
Ministry of Education, Malaysia	
Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC)	
Digi Telecommunications (DiGi)	
National Youth Council – Nepal	
Children and Youth Council Thailand	