

UN-HABITAT YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE

BACKGROUND

The UN-HABITAT Youth Advisory Board (YAB) comprises 12 advisors, two per UN-HABITAT region elected by the youth at the World Urban Youth Assembly to serve for a period of two years. The YAB shall include one youth observer representing young people with disabilities, and two observer members; One observer representing youth from informal settlements and one external advisor appointed by UN-HABITAT.

The YAB is made up of youth aged 18-32 years who seek to increase youth involvement in UN-HABITAT initiatives. The Board advises UN-HABITAT on strategies to engage young people in sustainable urbanization and urban development; and may represent youth in local, national and international fora. The input from the YAB helps UN-HABITAT develop appropriate policies across the agency to address issues related to youth empowerment and development. The Board also advocates and seeks to strengthen youth participation and youth-led initiatives in UN-HABITAT and Habitat networks.

The YAB was established at the World Urban Forum IV held in Nanjing, China on 1 and 2 November, 2008¹ and launched at the 22nd Session of the UN-HABITAT Governing Council in April 2009. The mandate of the YAB includes;

- I. Provide strategic advice to UN-HABITAT on urban youth-led development on issues of concern to young people focused on urbanization, unemployment, human settlement and advance measures on how to address them.
- II. Advise UN-HABITAT on the development and dissemination of best practices to promote the engagement of youth in matters that relate to the effective operation and improvement of the agencies' strategy on mainstreaming youth participation in human settlements work. Advocate for inclusion of young people in different levels of UN-HABITAT decision-making. Support the implementation of the youth strategy across the agency.
- III. Represent and facilitate youth input at local, national and international gatherings and share experiences from such gatherings with other young people to encourage youth involvement in the decision making processes in their regions. Provide feedback for relevant policy formulation and programming.

¹To better integrate the views of urban youth into the World Urban Forum., effective August 2009, the World Urban Youth Forum has been transformed to the World Urban Youth Assembly.

- IV. Promote youth participation and input in UN-HABITAT's work through organizing youth events on youth issues, informing and mobilizing young people to participate in UN-HABITAT activities.
- V. Support the planning, organizing, and hosting of youth workshops during UN-HABITAT's Governing Council, World Urban Forums and World Urban Youth Assemblies.
- VI. Conduct youth surveys and engage with regional youth networks on issues affecting urban youth and make recommendations to UN-HABITAT to guide the development of strategies, policies and programmes.
- VII. Contribute to the UN-HABITAT policy development and publications by:
 - Contributing articles on urban youth issues and concerns
 - Encouraging youth and youth-led organizations in their regions to document and share their experiences and lessons learnt, towards the development of UN-HABITAT knowledge based on youth led-development best practices, tools and publications.
 - Disseminate UN-HABITAT youth strategy, and other publications.
- VIII. To encourage and support effective and meaningful participation of young people in youth-led development initiatives and programmes to strengthen UN-HABITAT response to policy and programme development for the urban youth.
- IX. Support UN-HABITAT with the design and implementation of urban youth platforms and sustainable urbanization partnerships by reviewing and discussing topics of interest and providing input into the conference sessions and activities.
- X. Advocate for affordable urban housing, good governance, and human settlement issues in youth organizational, networks and constituencies.
- XI. Ensure the availability of three representatives to the International Advisory Committee of the UN-HABITAT's Opportunities Fund for Urban Youth-Led Development².
- XII. Provide quarterly reports to UN-HABITAT detailing activities and impact at local, national and global levels of the above-mentioned tasks and responsibilities related to urban youth-led programmes and sustainable urbanization. On completion of their mandate provide a detailed briefing to UN-HABITAT.

² Also known as the Urban Youth Fund

XIII. In carrying out their duties the full board may meet twice annually. The meetings will include the following:

1. Orientation and Training Meeting to be held at the World Urban Youth Assembly
2. Youth Advisory Board Annual Work Plan Retreat (Governing Council Sessions) to review and project the board's activities and project interventions and budget and travel requirements.
3. The board shall hold regular meetings via a telecommunication network to be facilitated by UN-HABITAT.

XIV. Each board member shall ensure availability to attend the Governing Council, the World Urban Youth Assembly and other youth focused meetings, as required by UN-HABITAT.

B• RESPONSIBILITIES OF UN-HABITAT

- I. Members of the YAB will not receive any remuneration from UN-HABITAT. However, the organization shall provide funding for expenses incurred by members in fulfillment of the following responsibilities; participation in Governing Council, World Urban Youth Assembly and other meetings arranged by UN-HABITAT.
- II. Provide the Youth Advisory Board with information and documentation on UN-HABITAT and related UN institutions whose work relates to the Youth Advisory Board's fulfillment of its responsibilities focused on youth-led development, sustainable urbanization and human settlement issues. Meaningfully engage the Youth Advisory Board in the planning of youth activities.
- III. Provide access to conference calling capability to support Board meetings. UN-HABITAT shall coordinate and manage communication of the Youth Advisory Board.
- IV. Facilitate training and capacity building in the areas of fundraising, advocacy, media, decision-making and policy-making to enable board members to fully and effectively fulfill their responsibilities, as outlined above.
- V. Provide an enabling environment for the Youth Advisory Board to liaise and collaborate with UN-HABITAT Regional Offices and relevant youth focal points on urban youth-led development.
- VI. Promote synergies and linkages between the Youth Advisory Board and UN-HABITAT global programmes and initiatives.

C• ELIGIBILITY

I. All young people who satisfy the following criteria and have successfully passed the pre-selection process can be elected to the Youth Advisory Board of UN-HABITAT. To ensure gender and regional representation, the Youth Advisory Board shall consist of one male and one female youth from:

- Africa
- Asia Pacific
- Europe
- Latin America and the Caribbean
- North America
- West Asia

The Board shall also include; One external youth observer representing young people with disabilities, appointed by the Board, one external youth observer from informal settlements and one external advisor appointed by UN-HABITAT³ to support the work of the Youth Advisory Board. These external observers shall serve a two year term.

- II. Candidates shall be between the 18 and 32 years old at the time of the elections.
- III. All participants of the World Urban Youth Assembly are eligible for nomination in a region with proven residency of five (5) years or longer.
- IV. Candidates must be members of youth-led or youth-servicing organizations and have access to youth networks within their regions.
- V. For communication purposes, candidates must have good oral and written skills in English. Fluency in other United Nations languages is an asset.
- VI. Candidates should have access to, and be reasonably proficient in, worldwide communication technologies.
- VII. Candidates must be available and accessible for conference-calls with the Board and UN-HABITAT representatives and be able to avail themselves for Board activities.
- VIII. Board members shall serve for a maximum of one two-year term, provided they fulfill their responsibilities as detailed above.

D• ELECTION OF MEMBERS

- I. Relevant information regarding the Youth Advisory Board elections policies and processes will be made available to all young people in UN-HABITAT respective regions. Nomination forms will be published on UN-HABITAT (website?) three months before each World Urban Youth Assembly. Applicants will publicly declare their candidacy and present themselves to UN-HABITAT prior to the World Urban Youth Assembly through an online and or hardcopy application form and motivation letter.

³ External advisors to the Board must have extensive experience and practical knowledge of youth led development issues and must be over the age of 32.

- II. Board members shall be elected in either on-line or at a plenary at the World Urban Youth Assembly. Each region will have a maximum of three male and three female candidates.
- III. Each participant of the World Urban Youth Assembly will have one country one vote within their region.
- IV. The top male and female candidate in each region will be confirmed as an Advisor to the Board.
- V. Election of the Youth Advisory Board shall be completed within the World Urban Youth Assembly.
- VI. UN-HABITAT will encourage participants to aim for gender, age and geographic / cultural diversity and vigorously promote the call for applicants to the Youth Advisory Board through its partner networks.
- VII. The newly elected Youth Advisory Board shall be validated at the end of the World Urban Youth Assembly, with a public commitment made by each new member. The Board shall also be presented (represented?) at UN-HABITAT Governing Council Sessions.
- VIII. The Youth Advisory Board shall not discriminate on the basis of disability, religion, creed, sexual orientation, national, and ethnic or social origin.

F• REMOVAL AND RETIREMENT OF MEMBERS

If an Advisor resigns or does not satisfactorily fulfill his / her responsibilities (including remaining in contact with both UN-HABITAT and Youth Advisory Board for a period of three months without a reasonable explanation), the Board may vote by simple majority to remove and replace the member. The Advisor may be replaced and his/her term completed by the candidate who received the second and third highest amount of votes at World Urban Youth Assembly where they were elected.

UN-HABITAT may launch a call for applicants to the Board to fill vacant positions due to member withdrawal and removals should the second and highest ranking candidates not be available to serve.

G• DECISION-MAKING

Each member of the UN-HABITAT Youth Advisory Board shall have one equal vote.⁴ Externally appointed advisors/observers will have observer status and no voting power.

H• CHANGES TO THESE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Changes to these guidelines can only be made by UN-HABITAT, in consultation with the Youth Advisory Board. Recommendations for change may be made

⁴ Decisions will be made by simple majority.

directly to UN-HABITAT from members of the Youth Advisory Board and participants of the World Urban Youth Assembly for internal review and consideration.