

# Young People Shaping the Future Through Digital Transformation

/ 7<sup>th</sup> Youth Forum on the SDGs Implementation

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**@ UNICEF Innocenti**



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Office of Research-Innocenti



**UNICEF Innocenti:  
For Every Child,  
Answers**





# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

**1** NO POVERTY

**2** ZERO HUNGER

**3** GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

**4** QUALITY EDUCATION

**5** GENDER EQUALITY

**6** CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

**7** AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

**8** DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

**9** INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

**10** REDUCED INEQUALITIES

**11** SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

**12** RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

**13** CLIMATE ACTION

**14** LIFE BELOW WATER

**15** LIFE ON LAND

**16** PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

**17** PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



# The Challenge

## Progress Towards the Sustainable Development Goals 2023

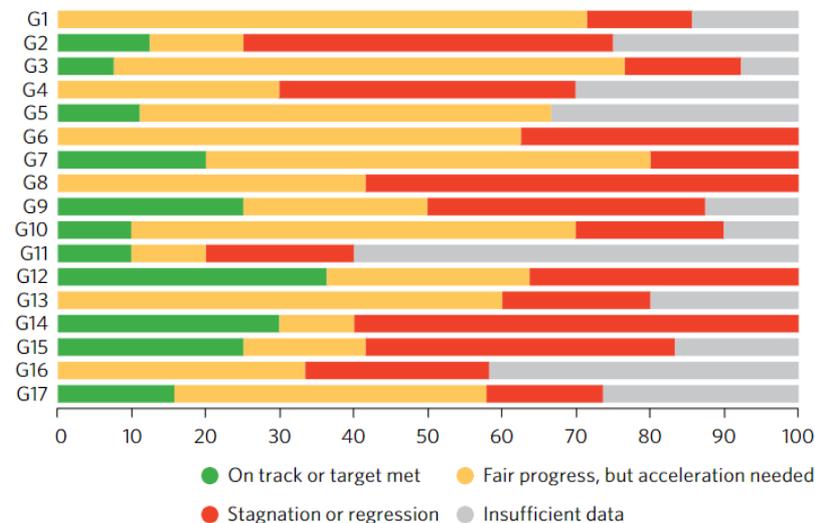
# Promise in Peril? Where Do We Stand Halfway to 2030?

Of the approximately 140 targets that can be evaluated, half of them show **moderate or severe deviations from the desired trajectory**.

More than 30 per cent of these targets have **experienced no progress or, even worse, regression below the 2015 baseline**.

Underscores the **urgent need for intensified efforts** to ensure the **SDGs stay on course and progress towards a sustainable future for all**.

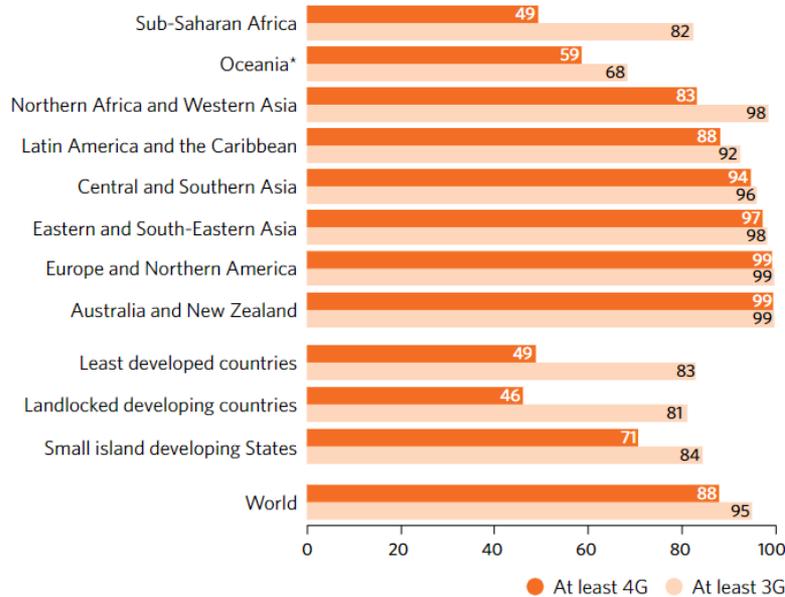
Progress assessment for the 17 Goals based on assessed targets  
2023 or latest data (percentage)



## Progress Towards the Sustainable Development Goals 2023

# More than 95% of the World Connected? But What About the Final Frontier?

Proportion of population covered by a mobile network, 2022 (percentage) \*



In 2022, **mobile broadband coverage of 3G or higher** was available to 95 per cent of the global population, a **significant increase** from 78 per cent in 2015.

However, **connecting the remaining 5 per cent** presents challenges. The **coverage gap** is 18 per cent in **sub-Saharan African** and 32 per cent in **Oceania**.

Particularly in **low-income countries**, there are **barriers to 5G deployment**, including **high infrastructure costs, device affordability, and regulatory and adoption constraints**.

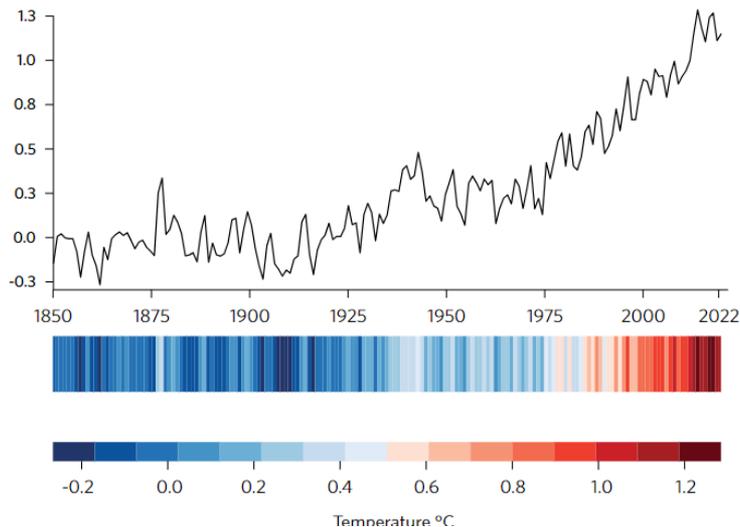
\* Excluding Australia and New Zealand

\*\* Data in this slide are drawn from *The Sustainable Development Goals Report - Special edition (United Nations, 2023)*

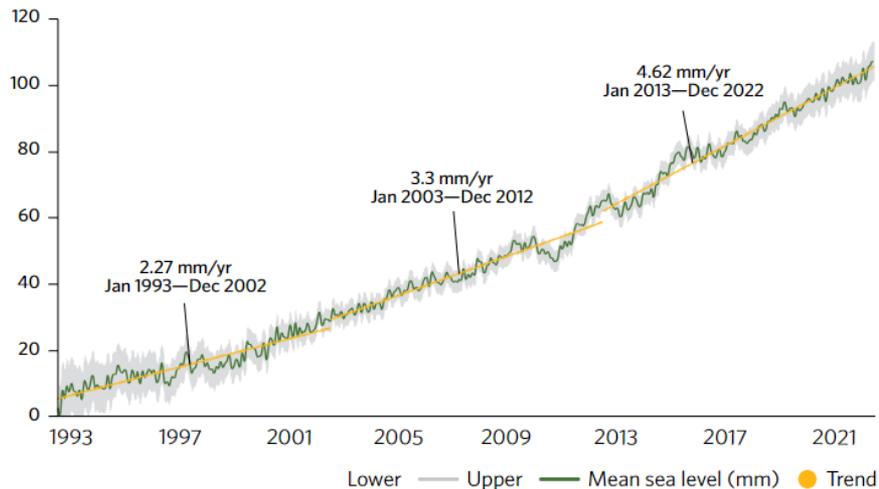
## Progress Towards the Sustainable Development Goals 2023

# Entering the 'Era of Global Boiling,'\* with record-setting rising sea levels...

Global annual mean temperature relative to pre-industrial levels (1850-1900 average), 1850-2022 (degrees Celsius)



Global mean sea level, 1993-2022 (millimetres)



Note: Based on satellite measurements.

\* UNSG António Guterres, *<Hottest July ever signals 'era of global boiling has arrived' says UN chief>* (2023)

\*\* Data in this slide are drawn from *The Sustainable Development Goals Report - Special edition* (United Nations, 2023)

# Against This Backdrop, Young People Today Are Facing More Complex Challenges

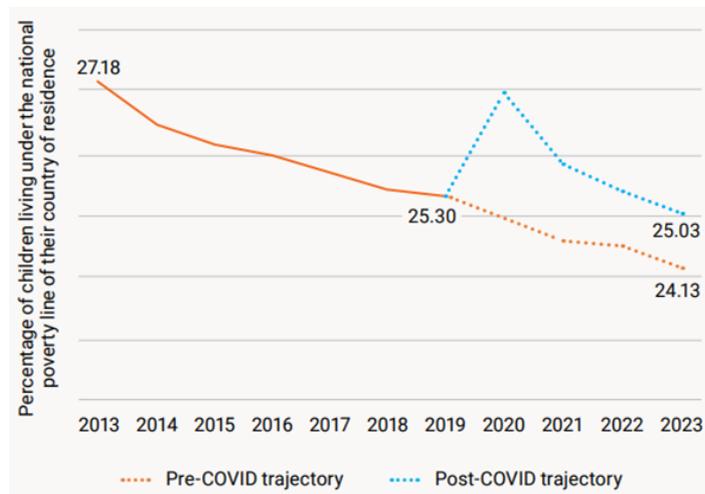
**Life satisfaction** for young people (ages 15 to 30) has declined between 2019 and 2021, while remaining steady for other age groups.

In 2023, one in four children will be **living below the poverty line**. We may now be on a permanently lower trajectory for reducing child poverty.

Data from 160 countries show that **young people are becoming more dissatisfied with democracy**.

In 2022, more than **12,000 protests took place globally** in connection w/ equitable access to food and energy. **Students and youth participated** in 600+ of them.

### Children Living Under National Poverty Lines, Pre-COVID and Estimated Current Trends

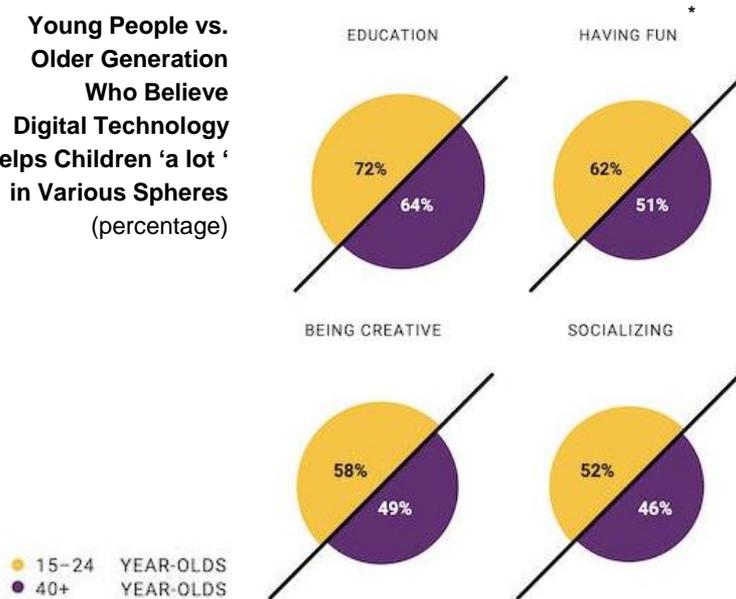


# The Opportunity

## Opportunity for Young People in Digital Transformation

# Yes, Young People are Born Digital Natives in a Large Part of the World Today

Young People vs. Older Generation Who Believe Digital Technology Helps Children 'a lot' in Various Spheres (percentage)



Worldwide, 75% of young people (15-24 years old) **use the Internet**, showing 10% more than among the rest of the population.\*

Overall, young people also see **greater benefits, and fewer risks**, from children's online lives compared with older generations.

About 77% of young people across 21 countries surveyed say **they use the internet daily**, versus just 52% for those over 40 years old.

\* ITU Facts and Figures, <Three-quarters of 15- to 24-year-olds use the Internet> (2022)

\*\* All Other data in this slide are drawn from the *Changing Childhood Project* by UNICEF x Gallup (2021).

Opportunity for Young People in Digital Transformation

**And That Uniquely Positions Young People as Shapers of Today and Tomorrow.**



# Our Experiment



***“Foresight is the innate human capacity to think about – to perceive – futures in a systematic way to imagine and engage with alternative futures and to then identify those futures which need to be shaped, nurtured and felt in the present.”***

—

**Maree Conway**  
**Founder, Foresight in the Present**



***“Meaningful youth engagement refers to how youth should be involved in decision-making and policymaking processes. (...) If the multilateral system is to be fit to deliver a present and future that works for all, then meaningful youth engagement must become the norm rather than the exception.”***

—

**UNSG António Guterres (2023)**

**Our Common Agenda Policy Brief**

**Meaningful Youth Engagement in Policymaking and Decision-making Processes**

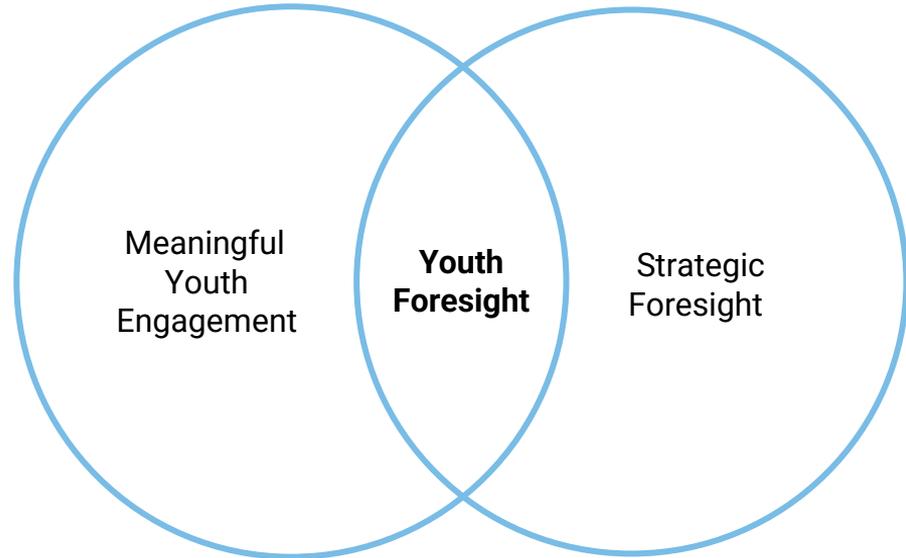
## Effective Youth Foresight emerges from the intersection of MYE & Strategic foresight

### What and Why

1. Process of anticipating change and preparing for what is possible
2. Looking beyond what is probable
3. Meeting young people "where they are"
4. Value of the future space and acknowledgment of young people's role

### Impact

1. Policy and social impact
2. Trends analysis and global discourse
3. Building agency and space
4. Shaping strategy *with* young people



UNICEF Innocenti's Youth Foresight Work

We Recruited 9 Young Foresight Practitioners as Fellows in 2022



**Fisayo**  
Nigeria



**Joshua**  
Germany



**Ricardo**  
Honduras



**Ijun**  
Republic of Korea



**Nourhan**  
Egypt



**Deona**  
United States  
of America



**Iman**  
Kenya



**Asra**  
Pakistan



**Jacob**  
United Kingdom



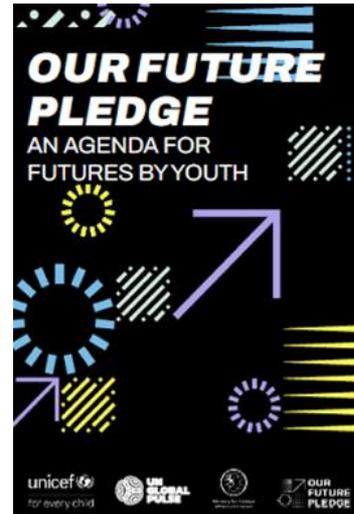
## UNICEF Innocenti's Youth Foresight Work

# Their insights contributed to two of UNICEF's Global Products in 2023



### UNICEF REPORT

## Prospects for Children in the Polycrisis



### YOUTH-LED REPORT

## Our Future Pledge: An Agenda for Futures by Youth

## UNICEF Innocenti's Youth Foresight Work

# Sparking the #OurFuturePledge youth-led social media campaign – both online and offline!



UN Youth Envoy @UNYouthEnvoy · Apr 8  
Want to learn what futures thinking/foresight is about & how young people can design the future they want?

Join @UNICEF Youth Foresight Fellows for the launch of the #OurFuturePledge campaign at 9 am EDT this Saturday

OUR FUTURE PLEDGE

APRIL 8 LAUNCH WEBINAR #OurFuturePledge campaign

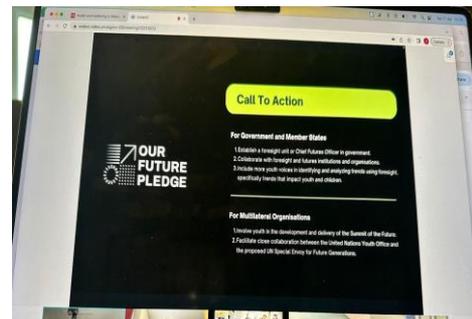
Youth Foresight Fellows are on a mission to promote greater access to foresight. This is why they created the #OurFuturePledge campaign. With this webinar, you will learn more about foresight, how this campaign was made, and how to get involved.

0:02 704 views



CHILDREN - #OurFuturePledge  
@UNICEFInnocenti @UNICEF - Blessyn Kure  
Honoured to be one of 50 global change-  
youtube.com

Hey everyone,  
Kindly check out the video I made for  
#OurFuturePledge



franciscoactivista · Follow  
Marta Gómez · La esperanza canta

franciscoactivista · Me siento muy contento de hacer parte de esta campaña de @unicefinnocenti #OurFuturePledge junto con 50 líderes de todo el #Planeta.

Creo que nuestra generación está llamada a enfrentar grandes retos relacionados con lograr un planeta más habitable para todos y que sea un planeta que ame la vida y creo que la primera tarea para empezar a tomar acción es imaginar un futuro más amable con todas las formas de vida. Los invito a pensar en eso mundo en el que queremos vivir con ecoesperanza y a que esta nos impulse a la acción para ser recordados como la generación que puso la vida en el centro de todo!

2,898 likes  
1 DAY AGO



EZECHIDINMA MARY  
FarmCAS Team Lead  
UNICEF #OurFuturePledge  
Changemaker

OUR FUTURE PLEDGE

# Scaling Up the Impact

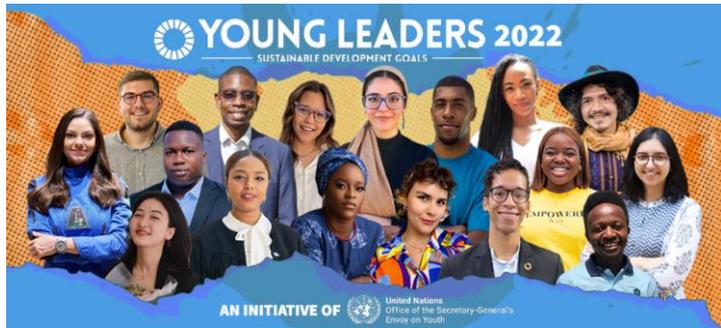
## Scaling Up the Impact through Digital Transformation & Climate Action

# Planned Leading Minds Conference on Climate Breakthroughs in 2024



# Scaling Up the Impact through Digital Transformation & Climate Action

## Let's Make This an Exciting Time to Be A Young Person!



# Thank you!

Sign up to our  
mailing list!



[ychoi@unicef.org](mailto:ychoi@unicef.org)