



WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT

ISTANBUL • 23-24 May 2016

Transforming Humanitarian Action with and for Young People

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

Core Responsibility Three of the Agenda for Humanity

“Qatar is conceptualizing the establishment of a regional capacity building hub to work with interested youth and those groups already engaged in humanitarian action to increase their capacities, knowledge and active participation.”

H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar

Photo: UN Photo-Marco Dormino

I. Overview

More than 30 humanitarian partners – governments, non-governmental organizations, UN agencies and the private sector—signed the [Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action](#) at the World Humanitarian Summit. This unprecedented commitment aims to guarantee that the humanitarian system addresses the priorities and participation of young people.

More than 60 partners made commitments to the compact, which has five key actions for accountability:

1. Ensure humanitarian programmes contribute to the protection, health and development of young women, young men, girls and boys.
2. Support systematic engagement and partnership with youth in all phases of humanitarian action, especially decision-making and budget allocations.
3. Strengthen young people’s capacities to be effective humanitarian actors, and support local youth-led initiatives and organizations in humanitarian response. This includes young refugees and internally displaced persons living in informal urban settlements and slums.
4. Increase resources to address the needs and priorities of adolescents and youth affected by humanitarian crises and use the new gender and age marker for better tracking and reporting.
5. Generate and systematically use age- and sex- disaggregated data relevant to young people in humanitarian context.

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II. Key outcomes/themes

The chair of this special session, Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), opened by stressing that the 1.8 billion young people are a solution. “We can no longer afford to leave young people behind,” he said. Citing the increased risk of gender-based violence and threats of human trafficking, early marriage and of dying during childbirth, he noted, “Together we must ensure that adolescent girls have access to life-saving sexual and reproductive health services.”

Participants agreed that it is time to make the humanitarian system work for young people, by engaging them, addressing the risks they face, and maximizing their ability to help rebuild and re-energize their communities and countries.

Three youth speakers shared their experiences of humanitarian aid. Chloe Reynaldo from the Philippines, a survivor of Typhoon Haiyan, called for urgent action to address the protection and sexual and reproductive health needs of adolescent girls and young women and to ensure a more inclusive and participatory involvement of youth in every aspect of humanitarian action, from planning to implementation. The role of young people as first responders was highlighted repeatedly. Ehab Badwi from Syria said: “I nearly lost my life but learned the importance of humanity, determination and the need to save lives”. He added, “Peace is the best solution.”

H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar, noted that his government was very pleased that the international agenda increasingly focused on youth as contributors to peace, development and security. He further noted that young people play a key role in advancing commitments from the World Humanitarian Summit, and also the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement (climate change).

H.E. Justine Greening, Secretary of State for International Development of the United Kingdom, noted that as most humanitarian work was with young people, it was illogical not to put them at the centre of our thinking. Noting that most young people miss out on education and other social services when caught up in conflict and humanitarian crises, she called for greater action to engage young people and meet their needs, including through the new [education in emergencies platform](#) that was launched at the Summit. Ms. Bärbel Kofler, German Commissioner for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, said it was important that the humanitarian community not only support special programmes for youth but also mainstream youth in everything it is doing.

The IKEA Foundation and Benetton’s Sustainability Committee also spoke in support of the compact. The IKEA Foundation’s Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Per Heggens, noted that the IKEA Foundation was looking for new and innovative opportunities to support

additional youth initiatives in emergency preparedness and response. Ms. Chiara Mio, chairwoman of the Sustainability Committee of Benetton said, “All women, particularly adolescent girls, should be granted sexual and reproductive health and rights. We immediately accepted UNFPA’s invitation to collaborate on the safe birth campaign. This partnership will amplify UNFPA’s message: childbirth should be safe everywhere.”

III. Way Forward

The session concluded with the promise of a follow-up meeting with all partners to begin to work together to transform the Compact into action on the ground, guided by solidarity, investing in humanity and leaving no one behind. Signatories of the Youth Compact agreed to meet in New York in July 2016 to define next steps.

IV. Speakers

Moderator:

- His Excellency Jakaya Kikwete, former President of Tanzania and Chair of the UN Secretary General’s High-Level Panel on Global Response to Health Crises

Speakers:

- Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director of the UNFPA
- Mr. Ahmad Alhendawi, United Nations Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth
- Ms. Chloe Reynaldo, youth representative from the Philippines
- Ms. Victoria (last name not provided), young human rights activist from El Salvador
- Mr. Ehab Badwi, youth representative from Syria
- H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar
- H.R. Justine Greening, Secretary of State for International Development of the United Kingdom
- Ms. Bärbel Kofler, German Commissioner for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs
- Mr. Per Heggens, Chief Executive Officer of the IKEA Foundation
- Ms. Chiara Mio, Chairwoman of the Sustainability Committee of Benetton
- Mr. Volker Türk, Assistant High Commissioner for Protection of UNHCR
- Mr. Scott Teare, Secretary General of the World Organization of the Scout Movement
- Mr. Essa Al Mannai, Executive Director of Reach Out to Asia
- Mr. Kadir Topbaş, Mayor of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality in Turkey
- Mr. Bas van Rossum, Chair of the Youth Commission of the International Federation of the Red Cross/Red Crescent



- Ms. Afshan Khan, Director for Emergency Programs of UNICEF
- Ms. Yamina Djacta, Director of the New York Office of UN-Habitat