

# **The Russian Federation-UNDP Trust Fund for Development**

## **Concept of the Russian Federation-UNDP Trust Fund for Development Youth Window**

### *Background and rationale*

Opportunities provided to youth will define the future of most developing countries. Today's generation of young people is close to 1.8 billion – more than at any other time in history. Approximately 90% of them live in developing countries.

With over half of the world under the age of 30, young people are crucial for the success of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. More than 60 out of the 169 SDG targets reference young people explicitly or implicitly, with a focus on employment, empowerment, participation and well-being. The issue of youth unemployment is seen as an urgent task and unlike the most targets, its deadline is set for 2020:

- ✓ 8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training;
- ✓ 8.b By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment.

Youth is also featured prominently in various other goals and targets, including:

- ✓ 4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship;
- ✓ 13.b Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities.

Over 40% of the world's youth are either unemployed or have a job but live in poverty. Young people are especially likely to be among the working poor: in 2015, 16% of all employed youth aged 15 to 24 were considered working poor, compared to 9% of adults.

While the youth unemployment is worrisome, the quality of employment of those who are working may be of equal concern. Available data suggest that youth are more likely to work informally, without written employment contracts—often without social protection or regular remuneration.

The Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth was developed by 21 UN entities to join efforts to tackle the youth employment challenge and assist Member States in targeting and delivering on a crucial goal of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The capacity of the UN's work on youth has also been bolstered through the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development. With working groups on issues such as youth, peace and security, youth and volunteerism, youth employment, the aim of the Network is to increase the effectiveness of UN work in youth development.

UNDP supports partner country's capacity building and provides policy support with a focus on poverty, inequality and governance – issues highly relevant for the youth. Between 2012 and 2016, UNDP implemented over 600 youth-related projects in more than 120 countries. UNDP has adopted a special UNDP's Youth Strategy for 2014-2017 and one of its guiding principles is “optimizing youth volunteerism for development to engage young people in tackling development

challenges, gaining both skills and strengthening trust and solidarity in society, and creating opportunities for participation.” The Youth Global Programme for Sustainable Development and Peace (“Youth-GPS,” 2016-2020) is UNDP’s first global programmatic offer for youth empowerment for sustainable development and peace. The global programme has already supported more than 40 countries and co-convened regional and national consultation on youth, peace and security, with young peacebuilders and leaders in all regions of the world.

Giving youth a better start in the world of work remains at the top of the G20 agenda. Persistently high unemployment, particularly among youth, is considered as one of the main challenges to the global economy according to the St. Petersburg Action Plan adopted during the Russian G20 presidency in 2013. In the 2013 declaration G20 leaders confirmed their commitment to promote youth employment as a global priority and have asked the G20 Task Force on Employment to focus on strategies to address structural unemployment, especially among youth and the long-term unemployed.

In partnership with ILO Russia has been supporting projects aimed at strengthening skills development systems in partner countries, including development of sectoral approaches, improving professional training quality and relevance, activities on anticipating future skills needs, etc. Since 2013, the “Programme to strengthen the system of primary and secondary professional education and collaboration in the development of the employment markets in the CIS, Asia and the Middle East” has supported development of methods and foresight technology for predicting and evaluating future competency requirements in the hi-tech/fast-paced sectors of the pilot countries’ economies, created a communication platform for leaders of professional education systems, facilitated exchange of the best practices between international experts and employers aimed at defining the key problems of training and how to solve them, developed a system for the mass remote training of managers of professional education systems in the pilot countries and self-diagnostic instruments in primary and secondary professional education institutions. The Programme, administered by the Moscow School of Management Skolkovo, will continue till 2019.

In 2017, the G20 leaders launched the “G20 Initiative for Rural Youth Employment” to intensify efforts in promoting decent work and income-generating opportunities for young rural people in developing countries. The Initiative will, in alignment with developing countries’ strategies, contribute to creating 1.1 million new jobs by 2022 and to providing innovative skills development programmes for at least 5 million young people over the next five years. G20 leaders have committed to provide support within the six specific areas of action:

- Aligning with international and developing countries’ strategies and policies;
- Closing data and knowledge gaps;
- Promoting a skills revolution;
- Promoting rural youth employment in contexts of conflict, disaster, fragility, and violence;
- Improving equitable and sustainable access to land;
- Increasing Responsible Investment and Financing for Rural Youth Employment.

G20 Initiative “#eSkills4Girls”, also adopted in 2017, will promote participation of girls and young women in the digital economy. Digital technologies have great potential for achieving the political, economic and social empowerment of women and girls. The specific objectives are to globally increase women’s and girls’ access to and participation in the digital world and to boost relevant

education and employment opportunities in emerging and developing countries. The initiative aims to promote digital skills ranging, for example, from the ability to find and assess important content online to advanced user know-how like web programming.

Russia contributes to the global efforts on youth development and has been supporting a number of initiatives in developing countries where youth is a direct beneficiary, such as school feeding programmes with WFP, quality school education and vocational training initiatives, HIV and other health related projects, etc. Russia hosted the XIX World Festival of Youth and Students in October 2017 in Sochi. It was the largest event in the field of international youth cooperation that brought together more than 25 000 young people aged 18-35 from 188 countries. 5 000 volunteers from around the world, including UN volunteers, supported the event. It would be important to keep the legacy of the intensive Festival's educational and discussion programme and provide support to various initiatives aimed to facilitation of youth participation in implementation of the Agenda 2030.

UNDP and Russia signed the Partnership Framework Agreement on 23 January 2015. The Agreement sets a stage for a long-term strategic partnership between Russia as donor and global player and UNDP. The Russian Federation – UNDP Trust Fund for Development (TFD) supports development cooperation activities in developing countries around the world, with particular focus on the CIS region, and with specific emphasis on assistance to Low-Income and Lower-Middle-Income Countries. Priority areas of the Trust Fund include sustainable development, poverty reduction, rural development and other areas in which youth is a significant beneficiary.

The TFD Youth Window is established in line with the Russian Federation and UNDP vision and commitment for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to support human capital of the youth, their productivity, entrepreneurship and innovation potential as a driver of development.

### *Key priorities of the TFD Youth Window*

#### ***1) Goal and objectives***

The goal of the Youth Window is to support projects offering systemic development solutions to the youth as a target audience and agents of sustainable development. In particular, the Window will support formulation and implementation of tangible projects addressing various development challenges facing youth in the CIS and other regions, including by the wider use of Russian expertise and experience.

TFD Youth Window will support country-specific projects and regional/global projects for implementation in 2018-2021. *Country-specific projects* should be in line with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the UNDP Country Programme in the respective country. *Regional and global projects* can be prepared by respective UNDP Bureaus and presented to the TFD Steering Committee. In some cases it is envisaged that country-specific, regional and global projects could be developed by UNDP jointly with other international organizations, multilateral development banks, development agencies and countries.

## ***2) Young people as the main beneficiaries***

UNDP acknowledges the United Nations General Assembly (A/36/215, 1981) definition of youth as between the ages of 15–24. Considering how different individual countries define youth and taking into account a broader range of socio-cultural and contextual issues, it is proposed to use a flexible definition of youth to allow programming to be aligned to national and local realities. By ‘youth’, UNDP refers to young women and men, in all their diversity of experiences and contexts, taking into consideration the existing definitions of youth used at the country and/or regional level(s). In terms of programming, the Youth Window’s projects will focus principally on young women and men ages 15–24, but also include young men and women ranging from ages 25–30 (and even beyond through age 35), based on contextual realities and regional and national youth policy directives.

## ***3) Key thematic priorities of the Youth Window***

In line with the Russian Federation and UNDP’s vision, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and G20 initiatives, the Youth Window will support projects focusing on the following key thematic priorities.

### **1) Supporting youth employment and harnessing the youth innovation potential**

The priority includes activities aimed at enabling increased economic empowerment and enhanced long-term employability of young people. Specific initiatives might focus on building productive capacities of youth and creating an enabling environment for enhanced youth employment, employability and entrepreneurship, development of skills needed for successful long-term participation in the labour market, supporting youth entrepreneurship and business start-ups, including facilitation of the young entrepreneurs participation in value-chains creation and trade. Such activities can be general or sector specific, such as promotion of the green jobs for youth and innovative initiatives of green growth.

### **2) Promoting decent work, income-generating opportunities and improved wellbeing for rural youth**

Under this priority area, in line with the G20 Initiative for Rural Youth Employment, projects would support various activities to increase employment opportunities for rural young people, creation of predictable investment climate conducive to creating decent rural jobs, including green jobs, supporting entrepreneurship, strengthening access to markets and services, facilitation of young people’s participation in value chains creation and trade, especially in agriculture. Projects may also support relevant infrastructure and social services making rural areas more attractive for young people. Modality of comprehensive area development programs with focus on youth can be applied to support rural youth.

Given a variety of contexts and challenges the youth faces, projects should be locally-based and envision strong ownership by communities. Measures for rural youth employment should be gender-sensitive, as women are often among economically and socially disadvantaged young people.

Rural youth employment can be supported in contexts of fragility and protracted crisis as one of the measures enabling recovery and building resilience. Supporting youth engagement for peace and development, establishing integrated mechanisms for meaningful participation of youth in peace processes could also contribute to improved well-being of the rural youth.

Strengthened youth engagement in resilience building, in disaster preparedness and crisis response is also one of the prerequisites for long-term well-being of the youth in rural areas and projects introducing comprehensive disaster risk reduction and crisis response solutions that target youth populations are encouraged.

### 3) Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for young people

Endowing young people with a skillset for the productive employment, entrepreneurship and long-term well-being is essential and can be supported via ensuring equal access for young women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education. Specific activities may include supporting relevant national policies, institutions and frameworks, upgrading education facilities to provide inclusive and effective learning environments, supporting supply of materials and enhanced teacher qualifications, facilitating best practice exchange and application of innovative instruments for better vocational training, for example those developed by national authorities and ILO. Enabling equal access to education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and young women in vulnerable situations falls also under the priority.

### 4) Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for young people

As a development agency, UNDP focuses on addressing social, economic and environmental determinants of health, which are primarily responsible for health inequalities. Projects under this priority may be devoted to a variety of factors affecting health of the young people. Initiatives may focus on reducing inequalities and social exclusion that affect poor health, empowering young women and increasing the capacity of the young to realize their health and human rights, improving legal and policy environments, building human and institutional capacity to respond more effectively to HIV and other health challenges, building resilient and sustainable systems for health, promoting integrated development solutions to addressing the links between health, environmental degradation and climate change.

### 5) Development of the young people's digital skills and creation of the job opportunities for youth in the digital economy

Projects aiming to connect young people to job opportunities in the digital economy, leading to innovation, higher productivity and competitiveness, expanding markets, access to work and entrepreneurship opportunities can be supported under this priority. Projects can promote an enabling environment for youth to seize the employment and entrepreneurship opportunities offered by the growing digital economy, including by investing in development of the start-up infrastructure and digital entrepreneurship skills of the youth, such as online market research, strategic planning and business analysis, using financing and crowdfunding platforms, online

marketing. Activities may also aim at advancing digital skills related to online communication, digital financial services, technology development, machine learning, big data analysis, Internet of things, cybersecurity or blockchain technology.

Given that women in developing countries often lack the digital skills that are a crucial key to participating in the digital world and a prerequisite for access to many professions, projects are encouraged to have a clear gender strategy and engage young women as beneficiaries.

#### 6) Support to effectively integrate volunteerism within national frameworks, enabling better engagement of young people in development processes

Facilitating volunteerism, enhancing volunteer capacity and building volunteer infrastructure is one of the ways to support youth inclusiveness and sustainable development. Under this priority projects can be implemented that support creation of volunteer infrastructures and growth of volunteerism as a mean to build new, higher level skills of the youth, such as leadership, teamwork, problem-solving, management, creativity, easing labor market entry, bringing innovative, cross-generational and demographic solutions. Projects also may work to integrate volunteerism into development programming and mobilize an increasing number and diversity of young volunteers for various development related goals. Volunteers can be also involved in delivery of work with young people.

Projects proposals may address one or several thematic priorities and should stem from national demand.

#### **4) Geographic priorities**

The Youth Window will have a geographical focus on the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), with possibility of limited allocations to other regions and for global projects. The Steering Committee will set the specific geographic priorities for the Call for proposals.

Geographic focus is determined by the fact that youth in the CIS is facing various challenges and opportunities provided to youth will define the future of these countries. The phenomenon of the youth bulge – a considerable rise of youth share in adult population – is especially prominent in Central Asian states. For example, 70% of the population of Tajikistan are under the age of 30. Youth unemployment is widespread. Young women are more likely to be out-of-work and out-of-school than young men. In Central Asia “not in employment, education, or training” average is 37% for young women compared to 19% for men. In Armenia the average value of youth unemployment (age 15-24) in 2016 was 37.62%, which exceeded more than twice the general unemployment rate in the country (16.76%).

Support to youth is one of the important directions in national development strategies of the TFD Youth Window priority countries. For example, Armenian Development Strategy 2014-2025 recognizes the need to introduce motivational schemes to bring back the young people willing to reside in their communities. The issue of youth is so important for Tajikistan that the President has officially declared 2017 the Year of Youth in the country.

The Youth Window will support country-specific, regional and global projects including initiatives from Africa, Asia and Latin America as the regions with rising youth population. Proposals addressing the needs of the most vulnerable countries in all regions, including the small island states and landlocked countries, would be welcome.

### ***5) Projects application and approval process***

All projects would be selected on a competitive basis. Call for Proposals would be announced based on the decision of the Steering Committee. To apply for financing from the TFD Youth Window, UNDP Country Offices and Bureaus are required to prepare concise concept notes following a standard format (Annex1). Concept notes would be prepared and submitted in accordance with the process outlined in the Call for proposals. Supported by the Trust Fund Manager, the respective proposals will be reviewed within UNDP by an internal sub-committee comprised of technical experts, with participation of the respective Bureaus. In case of the positive decision of the Steering Committee, UNDP Country Office or UNDP Bureau then would prepare full project documents. The Steering Committee at its meetings will review, prioritize and make all funding decisions based on the full project documents received.

The following criteria will be applied in projects' assessment and selection:

- Alignment with the Youth Window priorities;
- Alignment with the national priorities;
- Use of innovative solutions;
- Participatory approach and partnerships, including complementarity and synergies with the ongoing initiatives funded by Russia and other partners;
- Use of the Russian expertise, when appropriate.

Projects introducing innovative approaches, including for example innovative result-based financial instruments, would be encouraged. Priority would be given to projects utilizing relevant Russian expertise, such as supporting youth entrepreneurship, social innovations, and volunteer infrastructures.

### ***6) Partnerships***

Project proposals should envision partnerships with all relevant stakeholders to ensure synergies and avoid duplication of efforts. Partnerships with Russia-funded projects and initiatives, both bilateral and in collaboration with UNDP and other international agencies, will be encouraged. For example, given the wide UNDP presence in partner countries, the projects can support adaptation and implementation of technical cooperation instruments and sectoral approaches developed under the partnership of the Russian Federation with ILO, such as mass remote trainings of professional education managers, at sub-national and local levels, and in area-based development projects in towns and local communities across the programme countries. Project proposals are also encouraged to foresee collaboration with initiatives by UNICEF, UNIDO, WFP, WHO and other agencies, especially those funded by Russia.

Partnerships with Russian NGOs, academia and other institutions are also encouraged to enable sharing of relevant Russian expertise. They can also act as implementing partners for relevant project's components or activities.

## ***7) Management of the Youth Window***

The UNDP will manage the TFD Youth Window in accordance with UNDP regulations, rules, policies and procedures, and the TFD Rules of Operation approved by the TFD Steering Committee. In accordance with the Agreement for the Establishment of Russia-UNDP Trust Fund for Development, overall leadership of the Trust Fund is provided by the Steering Committee that is comprised of the representatives of the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS, the UNDP Bureau for External Relations and Advocacy, the UNDP Bureau for Policy and Programme Support.

The Steering Committee in line with the TFD Rules of Operation will make strategic decisions on the priorities, performance and operation of the Youth Window including deciding on individual financial allocations, and on financing specific projects. Relevant Russian ministries and agencies can be invited to take part in the management of the Youth Window when considering issues within their mandates and competencies.

All projects of the Youth Window should follow the TFD's communication and visibility strategy and the monitoring and reporting guidelines.



## ANNEX 1 – Template of the Concept note for TFD Youth Window project proposal

### A. COVER PAGE

**Project Title:**  
**Implementing Partner:**  
**Project Location:**  
**Project Duration:**

Brief Description
<i>Briefly describe the overall development challenge and the expected results of the project.</i> 2-3 para.

Contributing Outcome (UNDAF/CPD, RPD or GPD):	Total resources required:	
		TFD Youth Window:
		Cofinancing
		...
		...

B. BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE (including alignment with the national priorities of the Programme countries)

C. PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (including alignment with the Youth Window priorities)

D. COMPONENTS, ACTIVITIES AND EXPECTED RESULTS (10 pages max)

Component 1....  
    Activity 1...  
    Activity2....  
Component 2....  
    Activity 1...  
    Activity2....  
Component 3....  
    Activity 1...  
    Activity2....

E. INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS AND EXPERTISE

F. PARTNERSHIPS (including cooperation with the Russian Federation)

F. PROJECT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

## G. SUMMARY BUDGET

H. DETAILED BUDGET (Should be presented as a separate file in excel sheet in a semi-year format).

		Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		
		first half	second half	first half	2nd half	1st half	2nd half	TOTAL (USD)
<b>Outcome 1:</b>								
<b>1.1</b>	<b>Output 1.1:</b>							
	Activity 1.1.1.							
	...							
<b>1.2</b>	<b>Output 1.2:</b>							
	Activity 1.2.1.							
	...							
<b>Outcome 2:</b>								
<b>2.1</b>	<b>Output 2.1:</b>							
	...							
	<b>Total for Outcome 2</b>							
<b>Outcome 3:</b>								
	...							
<b>Project Management and Technical Support</b>								
	General Management Services (8%)							
	<b>TOTAL</b>							