

Concept Note

6th Sustainable Development Goals Youth Summer Camp

16 – 19 August 2022, Yonsei University International Campus
Incheon, Republic of Korea

Organized by the United Nations Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD) of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), the Ministry of Environment (MoE) of the Republic of Korea, and the Korea Environment Corporation (K-eco) in partnership with the Design Factory Korea (DFK) of Yonsei University.

1. Rationale

Since the adoption of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September 2015 at the United Nations General Assembly, UN Member States have taken voluntary actions to achieve this transformative agenda. However, the rate of global progress is not keeping pace with the aspirations of the member states, and societies are still confronted with daunting challenges such as climate change, inequalities, environmental degradation, energy crises, lack of public services, and most recently, COVID-19 pandemic that has drastically impacted societies at all levels. To address these problems, it is imperative for all stakeholders to take immediate action and accelerate initiatives. At this decade of action, one stakeholder – ‘Youth’ is of primary importance in forging leadership, ideas, momentum, and hope to facilitate change and build constructive solutions.

According to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, young people hold the key to creative solutions, and as digital natives, they can drive innovation and accelerate progress. Young people are essential partners for development as they amplify outreach and multiply impact.¹ Thus, youth actively striving to further advance their knowledge, skills and mindsets for sustainable development is vital to the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Decade of Action.

Acknowledging the role of youth in sustainable development, organizations and governments alike have established strategies to raise youth’s awareness and capacity for the SDGs. For instance, “Youth 2030: The United Nations Youth Strategy” was launched in 2018 by the UN Secretary-General to enlarge the youth’s participation in peace and security, human rights, and sustainable development. It also seeks to strengthen the UN’s capacity to engage young people and learn from their innovative views, insights, and ideas in more ‘coordinated, coherent, and holistic manner’². The UN also has a youth network, Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) Youth, for conducting peer-learning programmes to improve youth engagement and knowledge. With more opportunities to pioneer innovative solutions to address the world’s biggest challenges, young people can be a major driving force for the implementation of the SDGs.

In this context, UNOSD has developed the capacities of youth on Sustainable Development since the office’s inception a decade ago. With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, UNOSD began organizing the SDGs Youth Summer Camps annually to empower youth leaders to think critically and get engaged in implementing the SDGs. Since its first summer camp in 2017, UNOSD trained nearly 200 youth thus far.³

2. Objectives

The objectives of the SDGs Youth Summer Camp will include, but are not limited to the following:

- Build and enhance knowledge of selected youth on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

¹ Retrieved from: [Deputy Secretary-General's video message on the Initiative for Revival and Sustainable Development 2021: Youth Empowerment Initiative Webinar | United Nations Secretary-General](#)

² Retrieved from: <https://www.unyouth2030.com/about>

³ UNOSD has organized four Summer Camps thus far, with the following number of participants per session: 37 participants in 2017, 40 participants in 2018, 41 participants in 2019, 41 participants in 2020, and 38 participants in 2021. In total, 197 youth participants were trained.

- Development;
- Foster youth leadership skills, with design-thinking, critical-thinking, and engagement through dialogues and exercises on SDG implementation specifically on SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 15 (Life on Land), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals);
- Provide opportunities for networking among youth; and
- Expand the host institution's partnership with youth leaders for the SDGs.

3. Methodologies

The 6th SDGs Youth Summer Camp will be held at the Yonsei University International Campus located in Incheon, Republic of Korea. This will be the first in-person summer camp ever since the COVID-19 outbreak. This year's summer camp will focus on SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 15 (Life on Land), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) which are selected from thematic areas of the 2022 High-Level Political Forum⁴.



The programme will use a Design Thinking methodology which is a user-centric approach in developing accelerated solutions. Through the methodology, the participants will be able to learn how to contribute to the progress for achieving the SDGs by understanding the problems from other's point of view (understand and empathize), redefining the problems (reframe) and creating innovative solutions (ideate, prototype, and test) to address challenges. The design thinking approach allows participants to utilize empathy, systems-thinking, and critical-thinking skills to develop skills in ideation, creative thinking, collaboration, negotiation, evaluation, advocacy, and leadership.

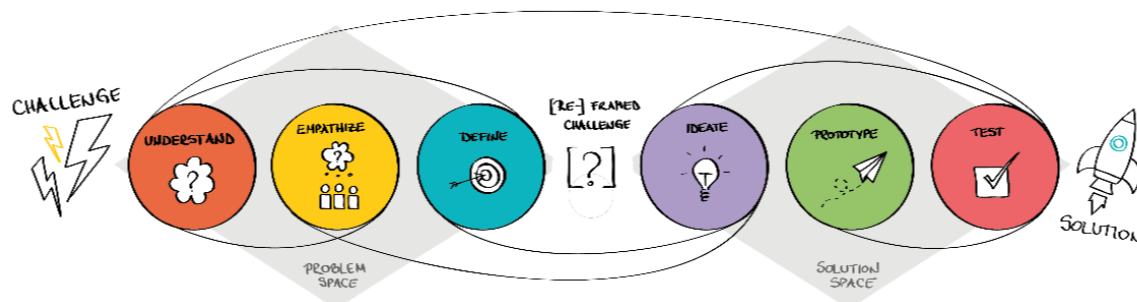


Figure 1. Stanford D-School Design Thinking Methodology to Develop Effective Solutions in the Decade of Action⁵

4. Learning Outcomes

After taking part in the 6th Youth SDGs Summer Camp, students will be able to

- Communicate on the role of youth in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- Gain knowledge on SDG 4, SDG 15, and SDG 17 and its interlinkages with other SDGs
- Understand design thinking methodology as a tool to accelerate effective SDGs implementation
- Apply design thinking to the development of prototype solutions to advance the SDGs

5. Participants

⁴ SDGs Knowledge Platform: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf>

⁵ Integrated Consulting Group. Design Thinking Methodology. Retrieved from <https://www.integratedconsulting.eu/insights/design-thinking/>

Those who are born between 1994 and 2004 are eligible to apply regardless of their nationalities by submitting application forms and other required documents via google form. Proficiency in English is required for all participants.

The participants who wish to participate in the event from abroad must cover their own expenses for transportation to and from the venue (accommodation and meals provided by organizers). The organizers will select a maximum of 50 participants based on their motivation, capacities and English proficiency while considering gender and geographical balance.

6. Structure and Agenda

The organizers will invite experts and practitioners from international organizations, academia and government sector to share their insights on achieving the SDGs and facilitate productive dialogues with the participants. The programme will mainly be facilitated by professors and the teaching assistants from Design Factory Korea of Yonsei University who are highly specialized in teaching and applying design thinking methodology into practice. Their knowledge, skills, and experiences will ensure overall quality of the summer camp and motivate the participants to be fully engaged.

The sessions will include group works to allow much interaction among the participants and host an open platform to share creative ideas on how to design and apply practical approaches to the SDGs implementation. All sessions will be conducted in English.

The detailed programme will be shared in coming days.

7. Organizers

This event will be organized by UNOSD, the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea, Design Factory Korea of Yonsei University, and the Korea Environment Corporation.