

Global Perspectives

The international CSO leadership forum

Engaging a #NewGeneration

Conference Themes

Theme 1	<i>Communities</i>
Theme 2	<i>Supporters</i>
Theme 3	<i>Talent</i>

1 BACKGROUND

The tenth Global Perspectives conference took place from the 31 October to 2 November 2018 in Berlin. It brought together about 130 participants from national and international civil society organisations (CSOs), businesses, multilateral organisations, donors and governments. The conference had three themes:

- Communities: The people we work for and with.
- Supporters: The people who support us, financially or with their time.
- Talent: The people who work in our organisations.

Throughout the conference we utilised those themes and aimed at providing a space for leaders to explore new approaches to engaging a #NewGeneration in civil society work. Our aim was achieved by showcasing thirty-two projects from thirty organisations around the world which provided an understanding and encouraged peer-to-peer learning exchange opportunities.

1.1 KEY NOTE SPEECH

The rousing opening speech from Paula Peters, VP of change.org, challenged all the conference participants to rethink how we should let young people engage us, rather than how ICSSOs can engage them. This was a call for a fundamental shift in power and control over resources, campaigns and messages, and bureaucratic accountability.

1.2 Co-HOST UNICEF

UNICEF launched '[Generation Unlimited](#)' initiative to bring multi-lateral, government, private sector, CSO stakeholders and youth-led movements together to co-create new solutions for young people aged 10-19 to have a greater sense of their own agency by 2030 through access to school, learning/training or age-appropriate employment opportunities. Specifically, the initiative will address:





- (i) secondary age education with accredited and flexible learning opportunities for young people who cannot access regular school,
- (ii) Skills and employability,
- (iii) Empowerment, with a focus on girls, including civic engagement.

During Global Perspectives UNICEF presented Co-Creating Solutions report, the report brought together over 60 organizations from all sectors to review and evaluate the first cycle of solution co-creation undertaken by Generation Unlimited.

1.3 FUTURE SCENARIO

In this session the participants attempted to identify the characteristics of a CSO 12 years from now and they concluded that a CSO who successfully engages a #NewGeneration will be radically different from the skills, structures and ways of the ones working today, this provoked a discussion on the major transformations needed in a short space of time to remain relevant. The CSO of 2030 will be cause-driven, focused on campaigns, and working cooperatively to amplify the work of partner organisations. Further, it will be radical, intergenerational, deploying devolved peer-to-peer accountability and develop consensus decision-making communities in both their workforce and amongst supporters. This requires increasingly virtual and digitally-empowered intercultural teams and a hugely diverse range of formal and informal partnerships with donors, businesses and movements/CSOs. Using fast mobilisation of reactive flexible funding to respond to both spontaneous actions and multiple simultaneous climate-change induced natural disasters. For more details please see [Future Scenario outcome document](#).

1.4 CHALLENGING THE MAINSTREAM

These sessions focused on the golden projects in the civil society sector when working with communities or as supporters or as experts on talent acquisition. We showcased twelve organisations who challenged their context and excelled such as World Economic Forum, Oxfam International, Jaago, Save the children and Mobilisation lab. Those organisations were chosen because their work is unique in relation to their context and their work challenges the traditional methods of planning and implementation and more importantly they are youth led.

1.5 WHAT'S NEW OUT THERE

This session kicked off the second day and showcased the work of three inspiring young leaders. Under Supporters we had Sawsan Chebli who is the State of Berlin Delegate to the Federation and Permanent Secretary for Active Citizenship and International Relations. She delivered a talk on civic engagement and international politics. Under Communities we listened to Anshul Tewari who is the founder of Youth Ki Awaaz, India's largest social justice media



platform for young people to address and engage on critical issues. He spoke about key tactics and tools used to mobilise millions of young people around key issues affecting India. He focused on how he did his work in relation engaging communities. The participants were able to get a general understanding of how to build a digital media advocacy platform and the power of bottom up community building. Under Talents we listened to Maha Babeker who is an activist promoting women's rights in Sudan, presented her work. Her talk shed the light on how youth in Sudan reclaimed a connection to their individual and authentic voices through non-violent activism. It also showed how young people in Sudan can challenge the perpetration of human rights abuses and sow the seeds for sustainable peace by using the tools necessary to speak up and speak out against Gender based Violence.

1.6 EXPLORE AND INNOVATE

This session offered organisations a space to explore solutions to their most pressing challenges to engage a #NewGeneration. We chose to have this section to allow for a deeper analysis of the different challenges facing the civil society today. The sessions were 'A Next Generation Internet to serve the #NextGeneration' lead by Next Generation Internet, 'Sustainable WASH systems through music, sports and art' lead by Viva Con Agua and 'Youth Power for Youth Rights: A conversation about developing and implementing a youth strategy in an inter-generational organisation' lead by Amnesty International.

1.7 CAMPFIRE SESSIONS

These sessions aimed to foster learnings from the participants by providing an intimate, small format that focused on dialogue and networking. The facilitators typically spoke for 10-15 minutes about a specific topic and then assisted in fostering a group discussion which encouraged peer to peer learning for the remaining time. Some of these sessions were 'Engaging youth in intercultural exchange – best practices and challenges' lead by Youth for Understanding and Soliya, 'How to increase women's leadership in CSOs?' lead by the International Civil Society Centre, 'Falling Forward: Lessons Learned in Youth Engagement' lead by Civicus, 'What future for civil society and how important is youth engagement?' lead by Forus International.

1.8 FUTURE SKILLS WORKSHOPS

These workshops were dedicated to towards building talents to match the demands of the future. We see that the working environments are constantly changing, developing skills and talents are important to able to face everyday challenges. Some of these sessions were 'Higher tech demands for higher digital skills lead' by NetHope, 'Is social innovation only about solving social problems?' lead by the Amani Institute, 'Why everybody is talking about



behaviour change and what is in it for you' lead by the Collaborating Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production.

1.9 WHAT WE DO NEXT, HOW AND WITH WHOM?

This was the closing panel which helped to connect the three days of the conference and provided insights and key learnings participants gained throughout the conference. This panel provided a clearer image for the future and what civil society organisations needed to do to get better at to successfully engage a #NewGeneration in their work. The panellists were Jennifer Morgan, Executive Director of Greenpeace, Napoleon Garcia, Generation Unlimited Youth Council Board Member and the Youth Director of Nuestro Tiempo and Censura Cero, Kumi Naidoo, Executive Director of Amnesty International and Ilaina Rabbat, co-founder and Executive Director of the Amani Institute. During the panel Ms. Morgan stepped down and handed her seat to Ms. Divine Usabase and Ms. Fouzy Mathey who are Youth Advocates in SOS Children's Villages International. This power shift resulted in a very engaged session which encouraged Ms. Usabase and Ms. Mathey to announce their initiative Yes4Humanity. See more below, more information about this initiative can also be found on [their website](#) or you can [get in touch](#).

1.10 CLOSING ADDRESS

The closing address was delivered by Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen, the Chief Executive Officer of Plan International. The closing address was inspiring and motivated the participants to change their organisations' attitudes towards engaging a #NewGeneration. Ms. Albrechtsen committed to do her best in transforming Plan International into an intergenerational organisation and making sure youth are involved in the organisations governance.

2 OUTCOMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The civil society sector is facing challenges which hinders them from engaging youth and throughout the conference these challenges were addressed. The following are outcomes and recommendations for organisations to improve how they engage #NewGeneration.

2.1 OUTCOMES

- (i) Yes4Humanity movement. A group of CSOs and young activists agreed to launch Yes4Humanity initiative, a movement led by young people, to mobilise all people. It collaborates with CSOs like Greenpeace, Amnesty International, Plan International, SOS Children's Village International and others. All participants will be able to engage with causes important to them, sharing personal, powerful, positive stories with the global #NOWGeneration. Please find more details [here](#).



2.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Global Perspectives participants encourages CSOs and youth movements to:

- (i) Develop peer-to-peer learning opportunities between young/youth movements and established CSOs, aiming to build relationships that will encourage disruption, innovation and impact.
- (ii) Develop and implement youth strategies, especially within international CSOs. Young people have played an integral role in campaigning for different social issues which makes them powerful agents of change.
- (iii) Include youth voices in the decision-making process. Young people under 25 are 42% of the world population¹ and they are not a homogenous entity. Youth differ depending on their context, age, gender, socio economic background and many other factors, excluding them from the decision-making process will result in lack of security, respect and recognition of their rights. The International Civil Society Centre will lead by example and commits to involving young people in the preparation process of and be widely represented also at next year's Global Perspectives conference.
- (iv) CSOs and youth movements need to be accountable. Young people are often the target for human rights violations and lack of accountability from CSOs affect young people in their communities where they are viewed as marginalised groups.
- (v) Commit to the collective. Throughout the conference, recurring themes around stepping away from organisational hierarchies and brands ('egos and logos') as one of the key enablers of youth-driven social organisation and change arose from a number of sessions.

3 RECOGNITIONS

The International Civil Society Centre appreciates the contribution of all participants, contributors, sponsors and co-host for all their support, engagement and commitment.

3.1 Co-Host UNICEF – Generation Unlimited



¹ Office of the special advisor on Africa, UN, youth empowerment
<http://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/peace/youth.shtml>



3.2 Sponsors



EgonZehnder

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