

You(th) in capacity-building

The Role of Youth and Their Capacities in Enhancing Resilience for Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) Implementation and National Development Plans

Organised by the [PCCB](#) in collaboration with the PCCB Network at the [Middle East and North Africa \(MENA\) Climate Week](#), the final side event of the '[You\(th\) in capacity-building](#)' side event series at the Regional Climate Weeks, took the format of a regional panel discussion as a hybrid event in the Atlantis Hotel at The Palm which 35 people attended. The side-event provided a platform for regional dialogue to highlight the role of youth and their capacities in enhancing resilience for nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and national development plans. Members of the PCCB Network and panelists from the [Dubai Electricity and Water Authority](#), [Children and Youth constituency to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(YOUNGO\)](#), [Friedrich Ebert Stiftung](#), and [Arab Youth Climate Movement Qatar](#) shared their experiences, recommendations, and best practices with regards to the MENA region.

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The role of youth and their capacities in enhancing resilience for Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) implementation and national development plans

March 31, 2022
12:45-13:45 GST

Moderator
Alejandro Kilpatrick
Manager
Capacity-building, UNFCCC

Panellists

Neeshad Shafi
Co-founder & Executive Director
Arab Youth Climate Movement
Qatar, Qatar

Aysha Alremeithi
Deputy Manager, Innovation
Ecosystem
Dubai Electricity and Water
Authority, UAE

Presenter
Zainab Rachdi
Programs Manager
Mohammed VI Foundation for
Environmental Protection, Morocco

Sarah Alharthey
YOUNGO Member
YOUNGO, Saudi Arabia

Abdallah AlShamali
Program Manager
Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Jordan

PCCB Network
United Nations Climate Change
Partnership on Capacity Building

FRIEDRICH EBERT STIFTUNG
YOUNGO

Arab Youth Climate Movement Qatar
أرب يوث كلايمت موفمونت قطر

مؤسسة محمد السادس لحماية البيئة
FONDATION MOHAMMED VI
POUR LA PROTECTION DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT

Alejandro Kilpatrick, Manager of the Capacity-building subdivision of UNFCCC, kickstarted the panel discussion with the question - Are youth capacity-builders, capacity-recipients, or both? All the panellists viewed youth as a combination of both, with their role fluctuating both spatially and temporally. Aysha Alremeithi, Deputy Manager of Innovation Ecosystem at Dubai Electricity and Water Authority, in her response also pointed out that young people are both capacity-builders and recipients because of their versatility in comparison to other age groups, whereby young people can be drivers and advocates for change in business and the broader economy. At the same time, Aysha also emphasised that young people still have a steep learning curve to increase their capacities. Abdallah AlShamali Program Manager at Friedrich Ebert Stiftung also built on this by emphasizing that young people are increasingly showing leadership in capacity-building especially through peer-to-peer learning. Neeshad Shaf Co-founder and Executive Director of Arab Youth Climate Movement Qatar and Sarah Alharthey, member of YOUNGO agreed that youth are increasingly turning into capacity-builders rather than just recipients. Both panellists pointed out that young people are increasingly educating themselves and others on the climate crisis

Next, the conversation turned to the current state of youth engagement in the MENA region. Aysha commented that while there is still more to do, some governments in the region are paving the way for meaningful youth inclusion. She explained that in 2016 the UAE appointed the youngest government minister in the world as a minister for youth affairs. Additionally, in 2017 the UAE developed youth councils as a tool to ensure that the youth voices and needs are represented at all stages of the policy development process. However, whilst other panelists commended this approach, they pointed out that it was not necessarily the norm in the MENA region. Abdallah commented that youth participation in the MENA region is still much lower compared to other regions. He cited compounding issues such as youth unemployment that may inhibit more young people from getting involved in climate activism. Sarah and Neeshad agreed with this view commenting that there may be structural problems that lead to a lack of involvement and active engagement. They also suggested that while there is representation of Global North youth at international conferences it is not equaled by youth from the MENA region, which may be down to a lack of funding or support.

Following this, Zainab Rachdi, Programs Manager at Mohammed VI Foundation for Environmental Protection presented on the foundation's work on education and advocacy. This was showcased through the Hassan II Environmental Training Centre, African Green Universities and Youth Education Network as well as the African Climate Hub.

Finally, the panelists were asked about the role of youth in building resilience in the context of the NDCs and national development plans and how they can be further engaged. To this end, Neeshad commented that youth organisations have been doing important work in Qatar to fill knowledge gaps. For example, one organisation even carried out carbon footprinting for households. However, he commented that climate education in school syllabuses must go further in the region. Sarah also said that in further engaging youth there is currently huge untapped potential, where youth unemployment rates are high, but young people are also the ones with the skills needed for a green transition. Aysha also commented that young people can increase resilience if they are given the tools to do so. She stressed the importance of providing a framework that youth can work with, increasingly in more agile forms of governance. She identified localising youth's involvement in climate governance as a top priority for increasing resilience. Abdallah stressed the importance of communication, pointing out examples of how youth can be further engaged in the region, using popular vloggers. Sarah indicated that changing hearts and minds is important and can be achieved by allowing youth to have more of a seat at the table in governance.

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