

Youth Network on Beyond GDP Recommendations to the High-Level Expert Group

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The Youth Network on Beyond GDP

The Youth Network brings together over 1,000 young people from 90 countries to redefine how progress is measured beyond Gross Domestic Product. As part of the *Youth Moving Beyond GDP* initiative, a partnership between Beyond Lab, Rethinking Economics International, and UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), it aligns with SDG 17.19 and Action 53 of the Pact for the Future. Our mission is to place people and planet, as well as current and future generations, at the heart of economic systems by breaking the “intergenerational glass ceiling” in global policymaking. Through direct engagement with Member States and the UN Secretary-General’s High-Level Expert Group, the Network empowers young economic thinkers to influence policy design, foster intergenerational dialogue, and institutionalise equity in economic governance.

Strengthened by an open registration process disseminated to ensure broad and equitable participation, the Network bridges global grassroots action with high-level decision-making to ensure that measures of progress reflect well-being, inclusion, and long-term sustainability.

The Core Guiding Principles of Beyond GDP Indicators

The Youth Network proposes an integrated framework grounded in guiding principles that shape domain interpretation and indicator selection, ensuring relevance to youth priorities. We acknowledge that these are neither absolute nor fully comprehensive, yet these are the guiding principles and values that the Youth Network consider essential for moving Beyond GDP. Our framework is based on three main pillars that serve as interpretive lenses for selecting domains and indicators. All indicators should follow the principles of a *human-rights based rationale*, *uphold intergenerational justice*, and remain *globally relevant while being country-owned*.

1. **Human Rights-Based:** Indicators must uphold dignity, equality, and justice for all, reflecting universally agreed human rights standards.
2. **Intergenerational Justice:** Decisions today should safeguard the well-being of current and future generations, ensuring progress benefits those yet to come.
3. **Country-Owned yet Globally Relevant:** Solutions must respect local realities and capabilities while contributing to shared global goals, underpinned by common but differentiated responsibilities.

The Core Domains of a Youth-sponsored framework for Beyond GDP

Building on the aforementioned guiding principles, and in alignment with the HLEG’s framework of well-being, sustainability, and equity and inclusion, the Youth Network identified five domains that capture what truly matters for present young people and future generations. Thus, the following domains should be measured with respective indicators for Beyond GDP to resonate with the Youth Network.

1. **Participatory & Fair Governance:** Ensuring transparent, accountable governance that empowers youth and fosters intergenerational decision-making.

- a. Youth inclusion and meaningful participation in policy processes.
 - b. Fiscal justice and financial alignment to Beyond GDP: borrowing only for future-positive investments, progressive taxation, and intergenerational budgeting.
- 2. **Equity, Inclusion & Knowledge Justice:** Guaranteeing intersectional equity and inclusive knowledge systems for all generations.
 - a. Address age, gender, geography, and ability-based disparities.
 - b. Future-proof education and epistemic inclusion (including Indigenous knowledge and lived experience).
 - c. Digital inclusion and data dignity.
- 3. **Resilient Well-being:** Promoting social, economic, and environmental resilience across individual, community, and national levels.
 - a. **Individual:** Mental and physical health, happiness, and dignity (including end-of-life care).
 - b. **Community:** Social cohesion, trust networks, and cultural vitality.
 - c. **National:** Adaptive capacity, crisis preparedness, and care economy.
- 4. **Planetary Boundaries & Environmental Justice:** Respecting ecological limits and recognising nature as a rights-bearing entity to ensure sustainability.
 - a. Integrate circular economy and regenerative capacity metrics into national frameworks.
 - b. Value and preserve natural assets; progress must reflect renewal rather than depletion.
- 5. **Spillover Accountability:** Tracking and mitigating transboundary impacts/spillover effects to uphold global fairness and responsibility.
 - a. Monitor environmental, economic, and social externalities across borders.
 - b. Ensure accountability for actions affecting other countries and future generations.

The Process and Methodology of Recommendation Creation

Process: The recommendation development followed an inclusive, collaborative, and participatory approach designed to ensure legitimacy and broad representation. It began with an initial consultation call to establish priorities, followed by a first survey that gathered over 250 inputs from the Youth Network on proposed recommendations. These insights were iteratively refined through a second survey and a series of consultation calls, enabling continuous feedback loops and collective sense-making. This multi-stage process ensured that recommendations were not only co-created but also validated through diverse stakeholder engagement, reflecting both global relevance and local realities.

Methodology: To analyse and synthesise the inputs, we employed a qualitative, inductive approach inspired by grounded theory principles, ensuring that the framework emerged from lived experiences and collective priorities rather than prescriptive templates. Responses were coded and organised through thematic clustering, grouping similar ideas into higher-order categories that reflected dominant patterns across submissions. This clustering was complemented by triangulation with insights from consultation calls, reinforcing credibility and coherence. The iterative nature of the analysis allowed for constant comparison and refinement, ensuring that the final domains and recommendations were empirically grounded, analytically robust, and reflective of majority consensus.