



PRESS RELEASE: UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 00:01 BST MONDAY 19 APRIL

WHO-BACKED GLOBAL YOUTH MOBILIZATION FUNDS YOUNG PEOPLE'S IDEAS TO COMBAT IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

- Initiative led by the world's six largest youth organizations and supported by the World Health Organization and United Nations Foundation will fund the work of young people in communities impacted by the global COVID-19 pandemic
- Impact of the global pandemic on young people to be addressed at Global Youth Summit
- Young people will decide where the money goes and how it is spent
- Global Youth Mobilization backed by UNICEF, USAID, UNFPA, European Commission, Salesforce, FIFA and Heads of State and Governments from around the world

From today, young people around the world will be able to apply for funding to support innovative Local Solutions to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, as part of a new initiative called the [Global Youth Mobilization](#). Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, climate change activist Greta Thunberg and youth representatives from the Global Youth Mobilization will join a press conference on Monday 19 April 2021 at 1700 CEST.

Led by the Big 6 Youth Organizations and backed by the WHO and United Nations Foundation, the Global Youth Mobilization is an initiative of young people and voluntary organizations taking action to improve their lives now and in a post-COVID-19 world.

Hundreds of millions of young people have had to put their lives on hold because of the COVID-19 pandemic. 90 per cent of young people have reported increased mental anxiety during the pandemic; more than one billion students in almost every country have been impacted by school closures; 80 per cent of young women are worried about their future; and one in six young people worldwide have lost their jobs during the pandemic.¹

The Global Youth Mobilization Local Solutions funding will by-pass traditional funding and support streams to invest in young people and community grassroots organizations anywhere in the world. A world first at this scale and level of ambition, young people and community organizations are able to apply for funding via one centralised platform, available in multiple languages. These local solutions will be judged and decided on by young people, for young people.

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, said: "WHO is committed to ensuring the voice, energy and solutions offered by youth are at the centre of the world's recovery from COVID-19. Our collaboration with the Big 6 and the United Nations Foundation will fuel wide-ranging actions led by young people to address the challenges their own communities face, and will also provide global platforms for their wisdom and ideas to be heard and acted on."

From education disruption and job losses, to a decline in mental health and rising gender-based violence, the Global Youth Mobilization will support young people to overcome the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic. An initial \$2 million of funding will be available in four tiers,

¹ All sources are included in this paper: [Young People Championing Post-Pandemic Futures: Policy Recommendations from the Big 6 Youth Organizations](#)

from \$500 through to \$5,000 and an ‘accelerator’ program will scale and replicate the most promising solutions, with further funding lined up over the coming months.

A Global Youth Summit, to be held virtually on 23- 25 April, marks the starting point for young people to get involved in the mobilization. Over the three days, thousands of young people, leaders, policy makers and changemakers will come together in one space to discuss the issues facing young people across the world.

The mobilization is being supported by Governments, UN agencies and Royal Families including, the Queen of Malaysia, the President of Kenya, President of Ghana, the Vice President of Nigeria, the Government of Fiji, the Prime Minister of Belgium, the Government of Singapore as well as the European Commission, USAID, UNICEF and UN Population Fund. More details, and further Government support, will be announced at the Global Youth Summit.

The Global Youth Mobilization and its supporters are calling on governments, businesses, and policy makers to back the initiative and commit to prioritising young people in their policies and investing in their futures.

Funded by the [COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund](#), other supporting global partners include high-profile brands and advocates, including: Salesforce, FIFA, the Special Olympics, UNHCR, Cambridge International, Peace First, Generation Unlimited and Influential.

Dr Tedros will open the Global Youth Summit alongside Youth Representatives of the Global Youth Mobilization Board. It will feature youth activists from hundreds of countries, three plenary sessions with high-profile speakers, and over 60 interactive breakout sessions involving a range of partners. The Summit will be available to anyone, via broadcast and in five core languages: English, French, Spanish, Arabic and Russian.

Daisy Moran, Youth Board Representative, Global Youth Mobilization Board, said: “This is a pivotal moment for our generation. The Global Youth Mobilization provides an opportunity for young people to take an active role in the immediate and long-term recovery from the impact of COVID-19. Our experiences, creativity and passions will inform policies and decisions affecting all our lives and I urge people to apply for the funding available. Together, as campaigners, members of youth focused organisations, global health actors, and volunteers from around the world, we are calling for action now.”

For more information, please visit: www.globalyouthmobilization.org

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NOTES TO EDITORS

The WHO press conference will take place at 1700 CEST on Monday 19 April.

You can join the press conference by:

Zoom:

<https://who-e.zoom.us/j/97576439142>

Password: VPCyouth21

Phone:

Webinar ID: 975 7643 9142

Numeric passcode for phone: 4662611775

International numbers available: <https://who-e.zoom.us/u/aczVepLgsX>

For media inquiries and interview requests, please contact:

- WHO Media team - mediainquiries@who.int
- Global Youth Mobilization - GYMGD@mhpc.com
- United Nations Foundation - press@unfoundation.org

About the Global Youth Mobilization

The Global Youth Mobilization is led by the Big 6 Youth Organizations, an alliance of leading international youth-serving organizations:

World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM), Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), World Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS), The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and a leading programme for youth development, The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award (The Award).

Together, the Big 6 actively involve and engage more than 250 million young people, contributing to the empowerment of more than one billion young people during the last century.

The Global Youth Mobilization is led by a diverse Board made up of youth representatives drawn from across the Big 6, alongside CEOs of the Big 6 and representatives from the World Health Organization and United Nations Foundation.

Social Handles

- Twitter: [@GYMobilization](https://twitter.com/GYMobilization)
- Instagram: [@gymobilization](https://www.instagram.com/gymobilization)

Media interview opportunities

The following are available for interview from the 19 April through to the Global Youth Summit from 23 – 25 April.

Global Youth Mobilization Board members

- **Daisy Moran, Global Youth Mobilization Youth Board member**
Daisy is a youth activist based in Illinois, USA. An active member of the YMCA movement, she is currently Director of Youth Achievement & Community Engagement at Two Rivers YMCA. You can read her full biography [here](#).
- **Tharindra Arumapperuma, Global Youth Mobilization Youth Board member**
Tharindra is a youth activist based in Sri Lanka. An emerging leader for The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award since 2017. She has achieved all three levels of the Award Programme and volunteers as a trainer for the Award in Sri Lanka and globally. You can read her full biography [here](#).
- **Ahmad Alhendawi, Chair of the Global Youth Mobilization Board**
Ahmad Alhendawi is the 10th Secretary General of the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM), becoming the youngest to helm one of the world's leading educational youth movements. Prior to his appointment in WOSM, Mr. Alhendawi served as the first-ever United Nations Secretary General's Envoy on Youth and the youngest senior official in the history of the UN. You can read his full biography [here](#).

Stories from the pandemic

- **Elahi Rawshan – 24, Bangladesh – International Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC)**

Elahi is an IFRC volunteer who has been supporting communities across Bangladesh throughout the pandemic. Initially in hospitals in the immediate response to the crisis and since supporting young people with online skills development. Read about Elahi [here](#).

- **Estrella Gutierrez – 24, Mexico - World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts**

Estrella is a Girl Guide from Mexico who worked a student doctor volunteer throughout the pandemic. Read her incredible story [here](#).

- **Gregory Kipchirchir - 22, Kenya – The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award**

Gregory is a Gold Award participant who during the pandemic become heavily involved in farming and local community tree planting projects as a way to support those around him. Read his story [here](#)

Further resources and information

- Website: <https://globalyouthmobilization.org/>
- Local Solutions platform: <https://globalyouthmobilization.force.com/s/>
- For further campaign messaging and a breakdown by theme (from education disruption to mental health and more), please find the full campaign toolkit [here](#)
- All campaign assets, including logos and artwork, are available [here](#)
- [Young People Championing Post-Pandemic Futures: Policy Recommendations from the Big 6 Youth Organizations](#)