1. Background

A vast majority or approximately 90 per cent of young people living in developing countries are experiencing difficulties in having access to education, health services and securing gainful employment. Youth employability, which is closely linked to access to education, health, and information and communication technology, is critical for youth development and empowerment. The Asia-Pacific region contains 60 per cent of the world’s youth population, or 717 million young persons aged 15 to 24 years. Within the region itself, young people account for 19 per cent of the population. Many youth across the region have benefitted from its social and economic development. Youth unemployment remains the lowest among all regions of the world, at 11 per cent. Between 2000 and 2011, secondary and tertiary education enrolment rates increased from 51 to 64 and 14 to 26 per cent respectively.

Though net enrolment in secondary education has been steadily increasing challenges persist. Transition to the labour market remains a major challenge as youth unemployment is more than double the rate of the total working age population. Asian youth can be a great force for economic and political change, namely an indicator of a coming demographic dividend, if countries make strategic investments in health, education and governance at all levels, including in cities.

Young people in Asia are demanding effective and full participation in policy making processes, including in the governance, decision making and development of their communities and societies. The global focus on the implementation of the 2030 Development Agenda and its sustainable development goals, provides young people and other stakeholders with an opportunity to be more meaningfully involved at all levels, particularly as pertaining to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of youth related policies aimed at bolstering the 2030 Agenda.
Evidence-based policy development process requires, among other things, internationally agreed instruments, including indicators. The need for youth development indicators has been repeatedly highlighted by governments, as well as young people and youth-led organizations, over many years. Indicators are an essential tool for meaningful assessment of the situation of youth, and of monitoring the progress made towards implementing the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development (SDGs).

In response to repeated calls from Member States for a meaningful assessment of the situation of youth and for monitoring of the progress made towards implementing the World Programme of Action for Youth, the United Nations Secretary-General, in the 51st session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD), proposed a set of indicators related to the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY).1

Similarly, several recent reports focus on data and indicators related to youth development as well as the Sustainable Development Goals targets and indicators with disaggregated data on youth, there is similarly a need to tailor a youth-specific approach to adapt the SDGs and their indicators to the national conditions and realities.

Hence, key stakeholders UNDESA, the Commonwealth Secretariat, ESCAP, ILO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN Habitat UNV and UN Women have joined forces to organize workshops on evidence-based policies on youth development in Asia and on promoting the sustainability of the Youth Policy Toolbox.

In addition, the involvement of regional partners will be replicated in this workshop with the involvement of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN); the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC); the Asian Youth Council (AYC); United Nations Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (UN APTC ICT); United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, and ESCAP Subregional Offices.

2. Objective

The aim of the workshops is to strengthen the capacity of participants to formulate, monitor and review policies on youth using various methodologies and indicators. The participants will discuss how national and global youth policies, plans of action and programmes can be supported by existing youth indicators for monitoring socioeconomic development of young people. The workshop will also allow participants to apply participatory processes with youth organizations.

3. Target Group

The training workshops will target policymakers engaged with youth policy making, monitoring and evaluation, including Government officials, dealing with youth development issues, as well as civil society organizations, youth leaders and youth-led organizations. Each

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1 E/CN.5/2013/8
delegation is expected to be comprised of (1) senior government official responsible for youth policy making, monitoring and evaluation, (2) a representative of the official national youth machinery and (3) a representative of a youth-led organisation (civil society), to ensure an inclusive and balanced selection of participants representing a wide range of youth in the country.

The participants will be drawn from the following countries: Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand Timor-Leste and Viet Nam. Representatives from the United Nations system and regional youth organizations will also be invited. A total of around 60 participants are expected.

4. **Strategy**

The workshops will be conducted in the format of training, as well as interactive dialogues focused on the sharing of good practices for evidence-based policies on youth. The workshops will strengthen the ongoing work of developing technical capabilities of national Governments in Asia to formulate, monitor and review evidence-based policies on youth by using the indicators developed at international level and other tools. Capacity to apply participatory processes with youth organizations will also be enhanced. The training will also facilitate a dialogue between government and civil society entities, promoting exchange of experience in the governments’ programmes and youth organizations in measuring socioeconomic development of young people and youth participation. It will also strengthen dialogue between National Youth Councils of the region and encourage knowledge sharing of good practices of youth engagement, which is the topic of the latest World Youth Report.

5. **Expected accomplishment(s)**

In achieving the above objective the workshops will contribute to the following accomplishments:

- Increased levels of knowledge and awareness at governmental and non-governmental institutions about issues related to evidence-based policies on youth;
- Increased capabilities of participants to formulate, monitor, and evaluate policies on youth using internationally agreed indicators.
- Discuss modalities to ensure sustainability of the Youth Policy Toolbox through partnerships at the national, subregional and regional levels.

6. **Date, venue, and language**

The workshops will take place in Bangkok, Thailand (ESCAP Headquarters), from 29 May to 1 June 2017.

The working language of the workshops will be English; documentation will be provided in English.