YOUTH ROUNDTABLE

BRIEFING

Proposed Activities

The Youth Roundtable will explore Amartya Sen's capability approach through the lens of projects currently on the ground in communities around the world. The best practices of youth-led projects will be used to identify cross cutting activities and governance frameworks that champion youth as assets to society. Additionally, we will explore the policies that promote a framework for sustainable development. A discussion paper will act as a guide for youth to present their work. The participatory roundtable is designed to enable a youth-led process to overturn the barriers that determine their *capability short falls* and to inspire a rich conversation between young people, research institutions, the private sector, government and UN officials.

Moderator
Ms. Janes Samuels, Edito and Author, Romving Unfreedoms : Citizens as Agents of Change in Urban Development

Young voices from around the World :
Youth leaders will speak about their projects and experiences on the ground from urban centers around the world. The young people will include UN Urban Youth Fund grant recipients.

1.	Tayiona Sanangurai	Young voices network	Zimbabwe
2.	Khalida Brohi	Fisherwomen and girls livelihoods	Pakistan
3.	B. K Dalit	Youth-led Urban Farming in Slums	Nepal
4.	Shimri Zamaret	Youth and the occupy movement	Palestine/Israel
5.	Rana Gabe	Youth aware of their National accountability	Egypt
6.	Stefan Manevski	Intercultural Peace, using internet radio	Macedonia

Panel of experts respondents :

1. Prof. Marco Musella : Dean of Political Sciences, University of Naples
2. Ms. Janes Samuels
3. Jean-Hugues Hermant, managing director, Projection network

Concept note : http://www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/WUF6-Roundtable7-Youth.pdf

PROJECTION NETWORK
Jean-Hugues Hermant

As a young professional I will raise questions or give inputs in the light of my short experience and professional background.

I have been the managing director of Projection network for 2 years now.
This non-profit organization is a network of young professionals from the North and the South, working for access to basic services in urban areas in developing countries.

"Young professional" means that our members are already professionally involved in the field.
We develop a cross disciplinary approach with our members who have different skills like engineering, communication, project management, research, etc. and work for all types of organizations: private and public sectors, the civil society, NGOs, international institutions, universities, research centers, etc.
Projection offers several activities to its members, as for instance, international workshops, production of intellectual contents, after works, etc. During those activities we can work on a topic and come up with a set of recommendations from young professionals. Then we have different ways to make good use of those recommendations
- Either do advocacy
- Or put them into practice by launching field projects
- Or else create tools for learning and awareness-raising.

I have no time to develop our specific approach and furthermore this is not the purpose of this round table. I have just introduced myself and my organization to give you a better idea of who I am and why I am here.

So as you have certainly understood I am neither a theorist neither a politician. I prefer to talk about field's issues. I must admit that before being invited to this roundtable, I didn't know much about Amartya Sen and his capability approach… So I went to the library and borrowed his book to prepare this session and it reminded me a little story :

During a meeting, an expert told the young professionals in front of her: "keep your ingenuousness". First I was a little shocked; I thought she told us we were naïve or stupid.
But I made a little research and I saw that according to the word's etymology, "ingenuous" means: "man born free" in the meaning of naturally able, skillfull.

Even if the young are impacted by their culture, their education, their environment. They first have the capabilities. They are not formatted by development established schemes. They can raise up questions that may seem silly, even scary (according to the example of voices from below in Zimbabwe) but ultimately prove their relevance. These are the questions that can pave the way for development because they can shake the current order.

The projects that have just been presented are the proof of the force of ingenuousness. I am very impressed by the work they have done and this is a lesson for us, the urban professionals.

As in many other fields, urban professional actors often forget they have some capabilities and mostly go further reassuring classical projects of development. They mostly disregard (by choice or because this is the way it is) they have the capability to be innovative, to go "off the beaten track". Youth are able to do so. They are able to think "out of the box".

Here was my little story.

So according to me there are 2 main challenges for both urbn professionals and urban youth, which allowed a good capability expansion:

- First, To share experience between generations: we should learn from the elder : our parents or experienced professionals for my part who can transfer their knowledge. This is a way to understand what have been done and why, as well as a way to have a better vision of what can be done now.
Sometimes, there are barriers dividing youth and elder almost represented by traditional institutions. How did you deal with that? How did you break down those barriers?

- Second, we talked about mistakes. This topic seems particularly interesting to me because there is kind of taboo about the subject of failure in the development community and especially for funders or public actors. It is difficult for them to admit and say: this project I put x billion on was a complete failure! But I believe that there is no failure, only mistakes. And we could build from these mistakes if we just have the ability to admit our mistakes!
According to your experiences, the people you deal with are first in a failure position. The situation they are facing put them to apathy and they just "let it be".
How did you switch this point of view from failure to mistake? How did switch from apathy to action?