

## Summary Note

### Results of the Young People for Global Solidarity Consultation

---

#### Background:

In line with the efforts of the National Council for Development and International Solidarity (CNDSI) Working Group entitled "Participation of young people in the drafting and implementation of France's international solidarity and development policy", the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs has launched a digital consultation entitled **Young People for Global Solidarity** to gather the opinion of young people – from France and countries eligible for official development assistance – between 15 and 35 years old, their ideas, expectations and proposals. This consultation has boosted reflection and provided avenues for discussion on the need expressed during this work to include young people in the drafting of cooperation programmes and public policies. It has also provided additional information to the working group's findings.

#### Attendance:

2,296 participants from 89 countries (including 47% from France) with an average age of 25 voiced their opinions in the consultation, which produced 500 verbatim reports. 55% of participants were female, 43% male, 1% non-binary and 2% unspecified. With an average age of 25, participants were mainly from cities (53%) and described themselves as having higher education degrees (73%). 43% held a master's degree and 30% a bachelor's degree. People from medium-sized cities and rural areas were also included in the Young People for Global Solidarity consultation. Their number grew over the course of the consultation.

#### Main takeaways:

1. Young people spoke of their concern about the world situation, with their attention focused on many issues including climate change, inequalities, humanitarian emergencies, growing extremism and growing gender-related discrimination. They also spoke of feeling illegitimate to act, despite the huge expectations vis-à-vis international solidarity stakeholders. Lastly, although young people applaud cultural and intellectual opening up and the meetings kickstarted their engagement and participation, the consultations also revealed that some deplored individualism and young people's unwillingness to act.
2. The consultation underlines the important role of political and institutional ecosystems, which are seen as obstacles to engagement. Young people deplore the fact that they are not very involved in consultation and decision-making and have expressed that their engagement is not promoted. This was one of the main reasons they gave for not trusting politics (cited in more than one third of responses regarding obstacles to engagement): young people do not trust the political ecosystem and at times fear the political and symbolic repercussions that their engagement could have. Some participating also criticized the "Western" conception of international solidarity and the lack of impact of the actions, and also deplored the phenomena of voluntourism.

3. The solidarity realm is still considered to be largely inaccessible and difficult to decipher. Young people have expressed that they need to be better directed and supported to start engagement and participation but also to be better informed and to receive targeted, consistent information presented by young people. Moreover, young people expressed the need to have a strong social network and a stable financial situation.
4. Young people have reported structural difficulties. Many people reported a lack of time, knowledge and key skills. They raised the need to be better informed, but many have stated that their financial precariousness limits their possibilities to become engaged. Women have highlighted these obstacles more than men (31% versus 22%).

### Expectations expressed by young people during the consultation:

- **Improve information and communication:** Communicate about the stakeholders to work with, the various ways to be engaged, and promote communication embodied by young people, posting the concrete impact of assignments and disseminated in all the areas that could reach young people from every background.
- **Show and promote the impact of international solidarity:** Prove that international solidarity actions address major global and local challenges in an effective and pertinent way so as to fulfil young people's aspirations to have an impact while giving them a reason to be engaged.
- **Ensure that the actions conducted in the field are in line with actual needs:** In addition to communication, monitor in concrete terms any abuses linked to solidarity actions without real impacts and make sure to involve local communities in the international solidarity programmes and closely collaborate with them.
- **Enhance the image of engagement and participation, especially in the professional world:** To address the feeling of not being promoted, recognize in concrete terms the acquisition of tangible professional skills, which are useful for young people's future professional lives, regardless of the job environment.
- **Recognize the right of young people from every background to participate and promote this participation:** At a time when political defiance is growing, encourage and provide choices to young people, from every background, in international, national and local decision-making bodies, politically and within organizations working in the international solidarity sector.
- **Establish a link between education, engagement and participation:** At a time when engagement is not easy and requires us to leave our comfort zone, structure educational options in the most important area, particularly at the level of school programmes, to raise wider awareness and encourage everyone to be engaged.
- **Free up time to be engaged and participate:** As young people indicated that a lack of time was a major obstacle to their engagement, freeing up time, particularly during the school or work day, to be able to be engaged was a main idea that was voiced.

- **Ensure the accessibility of international solidarity:** To democratize engagement and provide opportunities to all young people, ensure the accessibility of all of the different aspects of the sector for young people and fight any glass ceilings, especially linked to educational degrees or places of residence (example, overseas regions and communities).
- **Create an environment that is conducive to young people's engagement and participation, especially that of girls and young women:** Financially support young people, within a legal and political framework and through specific and adapted support, especially those who are victims of the various types of discrimination and/or who are in precarious socio-economic situations.