UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD), twenty-second session
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Panel discussion on: The role of science, technology and innovation in building resilient communities, including through the contribution of citizen science

Statement submitted by

UN Major Group for Children and Youth

Wednesday, 15 May 2019

CSTD Intervention
Citizen Science Panel
15.05.2019

Thank you all for your time and attention. A special thank you to UNCTAD and CSTD for inviting the UN Major Group for Children and Youth to join the discussion and to collaborate on the video presented here today.

We hope it has given you an insight into young people's perspectives on the topic of citizen science, and different ways in which they are contributing to making communities more resilient. These come from **13 different youth-led citizen science projects** we have collected from around the globe.

We would like to highlight a few points:

First…

1) Science, technology, and innovation are imperative for achieving resilience in communities but alone are not enough. The active participation of all stakeholders, especially citizens, is critical for better linking science, policy, and society.

Second…

2) Citizen science projects can help achieve resilience only when provided with a basic level of infrastructure and technologies, which themselves require considerable resources such as education, network access, and funding. Furthermore, the benefits from the data and knowledge contributions from such projects require a place in both scientific and local communities.

We would like to provide some context for the discussion by asking:

With today's increasing use of and access to technologies, can new ways of citizen engagement help bring sustainable development to communities?

We believe so and would argue that we have yet to achieve our full potential. This is due to a need to actively support citizen science projects, bringing them to the center of policy-discussions for resilient community building. Even more, structural barriers that perpetuate digital and gender divides will need to be overcome through improved capacities for collecting, assessing, and using data. These advances, in parallel with access to proven and effective technologies, will give communities a more prominent voice as active contributors to risk prevention, mitigation, response, and recovery.

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Progress could be made through the participation of citizens at each step of STI projects, from conception to realization. In doing so, inclusion is of top priority: inclusion both of all stake- and rights-holders in society to be meaningfully part of the discussion as well as knowledge from all sources - formal, informal, indigenous, and traditional.

Far too often, decisions and benefits of new technologies today are only realized by a select group of stakeholders. This isolation risks steering countries and societies away from an optimal path towards the 2030 Agenda. One way to overcome this may be by promoting an intergenerational lens to technological development and decision making. We, therefore, urge everyone here to engage a broader base of stakeholders in your countries, communities, and institutions.

We are encouraged that the CSTD and Technology Facilitation Mechanism are taking on these important discussions and we look forward to continuing this dialogue into the future.

Thank you.