# 2024 HLPF ~ Science, technology and innovation: Triggering transformation and sustaining science-driven solutions

July 8th 2024
Major Group for Children and Youth Intervention

Thank you very much for the floor.

My name is Oumaima Makhlouk, and I am addressing this forum today on behalf of the Major Group for Children and Youth *Science Policy Interface Platform.*

**Key Solutions Identified from the STI Forum**
During a showcasing event hosted by the co-chairs amidst the STI Forum, we discovered inspiring youth-led innovations: from inflatable flood barriers to portable solar-powered air pollution detectors. These solutions **illuminate** STI's capacity to **drive global progress**.

**Policies and Partnerships Needed**
Yet, to bridge STI divides responsibly, we urgently need policies that **incentivize** local technology development and adoption through partnerships that focus on **empowering** youth, **not as just** workforce members but also as **leaders**. For instance, youth innovators in the SIDS have created apps to boost agricultural productivity. In line with these efforts, the Global Digital Compact emphasizes principles of transparent data practices, like open-access climate data portals, or platforms for expert advocacy and innovation, such as the UN Datathon, hosted by UNDESA and MGCY to empower young researchers to tackle SDG challenges.

**What Was Missing**
Unfortunately, The STI Forum missed critical discussions on mental health, gender intersectionality in discussions around impact of **digitalization and emerging technology disruptions**. In addition, youth engagement in AI governance was not a visible priority, and corporate responsibility in being accountable for the impact of technological developments on climate **was not enough.** We emphasise that youth is not a monolithic group, and to effectively engage with them, **we propose establishing a dedicated "Youth in STI Day" during the STI Forum and request for a designated youth seat in the 10-member group** We need to recognize that the youth and children of today, and the ageing populations to come, are **impacted by technology** in ways **no other generation** has experienced.

**Promising Collaboration Strategies**
While many governments acknowledge the importance of STI, structural barriers **remain**. <mark>**As an initial step, we advocate for our inclusion as partners in the informal technical group STI4SDGs "Partnership in Action" initiative and also be engaged in the "Group of Friends on Science for Action" initiative.**</mark> Fostering collaboration between scientific, industrial and financial stakeholders as well as policymakers in a way that is inclusive of youth and children **begins with the inclusion** of the MGCY Science Policy Interface (SPI) into the various UN processes at **all levels of multilateralism.** Neither the Global Digital Compact nor the Chapter three of Pact of the Future refer to **any specific follow up process** to engage with civil society organizations or major group stakeholder mechanisms.

<mark>To conclude, I would like to invite this assembly to think and share how we can significantly change the **paradigm** of youth inclusion in STI policy forums.</mark> Leveraging the potential of the Major Group for Children and Youth and our extensive regional networks, we are uniquely positioned to accelerate sustainable, science-driven solutions to create an inclusive platform for dialogue and ensure all voices are heard. **We just need to be included. The time for action is now.**