



## **Informal Interactive Hearing of the General Assembly with Non-Governmental Organisations, Civil Society Organisations and the Private Sector**

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Thematic Session 1: Building a Better Tomorrow: Local Actions, National Strategies and Global Structures

### **Statement by Emmanuel Edudzie, Youth Empowerment Synergy**

Thank you Mr. President for the opportunity!

During the first decade of implementing the MDGs, development partners including UN agencies, the bilaterals, national governments and civil society organisations have regarded youth as targets for development programming. However, as the world enters the 'last lap' of the 2015 deadline, it is imperative to pay more attention to the role of youth as actors in the struggle to achieve the MDGs.

To be achieved, the MDGs must reflect local realities, engage people and be locally owned. This is in recognition of the fact that, unless the MDGs are understood and adapted to local, sub-national realities combined with capacity development for strategic planning, implementation and monitoring, it will be impossible to make any meaningful progress towards success in 2015.

This localization agenda will help in combating poverty and social exclusion, enable full participation and open space for social mobilization, and develop a greater capacity for citizen's monitoring of progress. The focus on the local level combined with appropriate linkages to national poverty reduction strategies will bridge disparities, socio-economic, gender and ethnic inequalities and thus fosters more rapid, equitable and sustainable development.

In this context, young people form a significant cohort at the local level, **both as targets of and actors in the localisation process**. Any serious policy for social, political and economic development must therefore recognize the importance of young people, especially in promoting social progress, reducing political tension and maximizing economic performance.

The pace, depth and scope of localisation of the MDGs therefore depend on how well youth resources are nurtured, deployed and utilised in the process. The challenge for all stakeholders is to provide sufficient opportunities for young people to join in this localisation process, especially as it relates to monitoring and reporting at the grassroots.

Thank you!