

POST-CONFERENCE REPORT

GLOBAL EMERGING LEADERS FORUM 2026

GOA,
INDIA

ON DEMOCRACY

15 YOUNG ELECTED LEADERS
11 COUNTRIES
3 DAYS IN GOA, INDIA

27–30 JULY 2026 · INAUGURAL EDITION · CHATHAM HOUSE RULE



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LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER

When we built the Global Emerging Leaders Forum, we made ourselves one promise: this would not be a conference to learn from us. It would be an investment in the people in the room. Fifteen young leaders came to Goa already holding democratic power, members of parliament, city councillors, ministers of state, a village head. They did not need another panel telling them that youth representation matters. They needed each other, and they needed the practical scaffolding that almost no political system builds for its youngest members.

A year earlier, our research report *After They Win* put a number on that gap. Across twelve months and one hundred young elected officials, we found that political systems have become very good at recruiting a new generation and very bad at keeping it. Winning, as our delegates kept repeating to one another in Goa, is the easier part. What comes after, governing, being heard, staying in, is the part no one prepares you for. The Forum was our first attempt to prepare people for exactly that.

What I did not anticipate was how quickly this group would stop being an audience and start being a network. Over three days they argued about AI governance, drafted a communiqué, taught one another how their parliaments actually work, and, when a political crisis struck one of our own delegates mid-Forum, closed ranks around him and drafted a common statement on his behalf. That moment, more than any slide, is the reason this Forum exists.

This report is an account of what happened in Goa, and a marker of what we intend to build next. My thanks to every delegate who trusted us with their time, and to the partners who made the room possible.



Sudhanshu Kaushik

Founder & Executive Director
Centre for Youth Policy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The inaugural Global Emerging Leaders Forum on Democracy convened 27–30 July 2026 in Goa, India, gathering fifteen young people who already hold elected or appointed office across eleven countries. Convened by the Centre for Youth Policy (CYP) with Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung India and Fathom, the Forum ran closed-door and off the record under the Chatham House Rule, no lecterns, no keynotes-for-show, and a deliberate rule that no two delegates should arrive from the same silo.

The programme was organised around two convictions drawn directly from CYP's research: that youth representation is stalling worldwide, and that the decisive problem is retention rather than entry. An opening evidence briefing set out the global picture, that fewer than three per cent of parliamentarians are aged thirty or under, and that progress has flatlined for the first time in over a decade. Two workshops then translated that diagnosis into capability, focusing on the single force reshaping every delegate's political environment: artificial intelligence.

TWO WORKSHOP THEMES

Governing AI in a borderless world

A shared vocabulary for policymakers of mixed technical literacy, built around interoperability, the argument that jurisdictions do not need identical laws, only compatible ones and closing on the case for a common governance “floor, not ceiling.”

AI as a tool for public leadership

A hands-on session moving delegates from passive use to structured, prompt-driven application in real legislative and constituency work, “moving beyond chatbots.”

“Sixty-five per cent agreed it is easier to win office than to remain in politics long-term.”

AFTER THEY WIN, CYP, 100 YOUNG ELECTED OFFICIALS

WHAT THE FORUM PRODUCED

01

A participant-drafted communiqué

Shared commitments on youth trust, legitimacy and AI governance, written by the delegates rather than handed down from the front of the room.

02

A digital portfolio for every delegate

Professional site, official bio, portrait and communications assets, so that each delegate leaves more visible, more contactable and more citable than they arrived.

03

A living peer network, tested in real time

When a political crisis engulfed one delegate during the Forum, the group organised, drafted and issued a common statement in solidarity. That episode is the clearest validation of the thesis behind the entire event: the missing infrastructure for young politicians is, first and last, one another.

This report records the proceedings, the people and the themes of the Forum, and connects each back to the *After They Win* evidence base that gave rise to it. It closes with the outcomes CYP intends to carry forward: the young-official tracker and support desk, the growing regional networks, and a standing commitment to measure success by retention, not entry.

ABOUT THE CENTRE FOR YOUTH POLICY

The Centre for Youth Policy (CYP) is an independent, non-partisan research institution dedicated exclusively to the study and advancement of youth political engagement. Founded in 2023 and headquartered in Washington, D.C., its mission is direct about what that means: *researching the future of youth in democracy*. CYP holds youth political engagement to the same standards of scholarly rigour applied to any field of political science.

Alongside the research, CYP has built a convening arm, the annual Youth & Democracy Conference and now the Global Emerging Leaders Forum, on the argument that research is necessary but not sufficient. Young elected officials tend to be isolated from each other, from the literature, and from peers facing the same barriers elsewhere. The convening work exists to fix that: connecting a young mayor in Nepal working on participatory budgeting with a councillor in Portugal facing the same problem, or a first-term legislator in India with a peer in Chile. CYP also acts as a secretariat to five regional parliamentary groups around the world.

The underlying case is stark. The average age of a head of government globally is over sixty, and the median parliamentarian is typically more than twice the age of the population they represent.



Research is necessary but not sufficient, CYP's convening arm exists to close the distance between young officials.

RESEARCH PORTFOLIO

Global Youth Tracker

Live database, 220 countries

India Youth Tracker

With the Lok Sabha 2024 Tracker

Youth Policy Review Series

Peer-reviewed policy analysis

Election Watch

Rapid-response election coverage

After They Win

100 officials, 6 regions, 12 months

GLOBAL EMERGING LEADERS FORUM 2026

GOA, INDIA

ABOUT THE FORUM



The roundtable in session, Goa, closed-door, off the record, under the Chatham House Rule.

The Global Emerging Leaders Forum on Democracy is CYP's first convening platform built exclusively for young people already holding democratic power. The inaugural edition ran 27–30 July 2026 in Goa, India, hosting fifteen young leaders, with Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung India and Fathom as partners.

The premise was a forum that was not a conference to learn from us, but an investment in them. It ran closed-door and off the record, no lecterns, no speeches. The goal was that no two people should come from the same silo. Delegates came from Nepal, The Gambia, Germany and beyond, holding a wide range of positions.

The Forum was built directly off *After They Win*, CYP's twelve-month survey of one hundred young elected officials across six regions. It asked not how young people get into office, but what happens to them once they are there. Its headline finding: sixty-five per cent agreed it is easier to win office than to remain in politics long-term. The report's framing is blunt. Political systems have succeeded at recruiting a new generation and failed at keeping it.

NOT A MOTIVATION PROBLEM. A DESIGN PROBLEM.

What emerged from the survey was a cluster of structural issues and a single conclusion. The doors into politics have widened; nobody built the floor on the other side.

UNDERPREPARED

Most young officials arrive with no real staff, no research capacity and no communications infrastructure.

SIDELINED

Welcomed as symbols of generational change during the campaign, then excluded from the rooms where decisions get made.

DISCONNECTED

Rarely connected to peers facing the same problems elsewhere; left to build whatever infrastructure they can informally.

AND THEREFORE

Retention, not entry, is the measure that matters. The Forum was CYP's next step toward building the floor.

Programming ran for three days: pathways into political leadership and youth trust and legitimacy; workshops on public communication and digital presence; and a full track on “Digital, AI & Democracy.”

“The last decade asked how to get young people into office. The question for the next decade is what happens once they are in.”

AFTER THEY WIN, CONCLUSION

THE FORUM AT A GLANCE

15

YOUNG LEADERS

11

COUNTRIES

3

DAYS

3

SESSIONS & WORKSHOPS

Fifteen delegates convened across three days for one opening evidence briefing and two full workshops, complemented by leadership conversations, a cultural and team-building programme, filmed interviews, and a closing reflection dinner. Every delegate left with a bespoke digital portfolio and a place in a peer network that now spans South and Southeast Asia, East Asia, West Africa and Europe.

REGIONS REPRESENTED

South Asia, Southeast Asia, East Asia, West Africa and Europe

OFFICES HELD

MPs, city and municipal councillors, a minister of state, a deputy commissioner, and a village head (sarpanch)

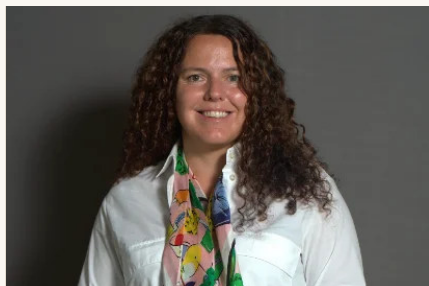
PARTICIPANT SNAPSHOT

Fifteen delegates from eleven countries, spanning national parliaments, city and municipal councils, a state ministry, a civil-service commissionerate and a village panchayat. The delegation was chosen so that no two members arrived from the same political silo, pairing a first-term MP with a village head, an opposition youth leader with a governing minister of state.

DELEGATE	COUNTRY	OFFICE HELD
Anushka Shrestha	Nepal	Member of Parliament; Miss Nepal
Wu Yi Syuan	Taiwan	New Taipei City Councillor; Democratic Progressive Party
Dr. Jedsada Lertthanasarn	Thailand	Former MP, Bangkok Constituency 2; Research Lead
Tsenguun Saruulsaikhan	Mongolia	Member of Parliament; National Energy Commission
Abdoulie Njai	The Gambia	MP; Head, West Africa Young Parliamentary Network
Nico Gunzelmann	Germany	Member of the Landtag of Baden-Württemberg
Samady Ou	Cambodia	Youth President, Cambodia National Rescue Party
Ariffin Sha	Singapore	Youth Wing, Singapore Democratic Party
Arqam Muneer	Sri Lanka	Leader, Social Justice Party, Mt. Lavinia Municipal Council
Modesta Petrauskaitė	Lithuania	Member of Parliament; Lithuanian Social Democratic Party
Biraj Biswas	India	Minister of State, Law & Justice and North Bengal Development, Govt. of West Bengal
Rajool Patil	India	Municipal Chair, Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai
Chandrajyoti Singh	India	Assistant Deputy Commissioner, Government of Punjab
Aditi Singh	India	Member of the Legislative Assembly, Uttar Pradesh
Niranjan Singh Patel	India	Sarpanch (village head), Gram Panchayat Rordha

DELEGATE PORTRAITS

Professional portraits produced as part of each delegate's digital portfolio. Portrait-name pairings to be verified against the studio shot list before publication.



Modesta Petrauskaitė

LITHUANIA



Wu Yi Syuan

TAIWAN



Dr. Jedsada Lertthanasarn

THAILAND



Tsenguun Saruulsaikhan

MONGOLIA



Abdoulie Njai

THE GAMBIA



Nico Gunzelmann

GERMANY



Ariffin Sha

SINGAPORE



Anushka Shreshta

NEPAL



Niranjn Singh Patel

INDIA

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The Forum ran across three working days, framed by an opening evidence briefing and closed by a reflection dinner. Its spine was three substantive sessions, one keynote briefing and two workshops, interwoven with community-building, filmed interviews and the collaborative drafting of a closing communiqué.

THE THREE SUBSTANTIVE SESSIONS

KEYNOTE

Youth Political Representation

An evidence briefing on the global representation gap, drawing on IPU 2025 data and CYP's *After They Win* survey. Led by Sudhanshu Kaushik.

WORKSHOP 1

Governing AI in a Borderless World: Interoperability and AI Governance

Facilitated by Ridhi Suri and Vidushi Sinha.

WORKSHOP 2

AI as a Tool for Public Leadership: Moving Beyond Chatbots

Facilitated by Ridhi Suri and Vidushi Sinha.

RUNNING ALONGSIDE THE SESSIONS

Digital portfolios

A professional site, official bio and communications assets for each delegate, so they can be contacted, cited and better known to the wider public.

Bonding and community-building

Structured exercises and an off-site cultural programme designed to turn a delegation into a network.

Closing dinner and reflection

A final off-the-record session to consolidate commitments and draft the communiqué.

OPENING KEYNOTE & WORKSHOP SUMMARIES

The Forum opened with an evidence session and proceeded to two workshops. Each set out to equip delegates to navigate an increasingly technological environment and the shifts in governance it is forcing.

A OPENING KEYNOTE: YOUTH POLITICAL REPRESENTATION



“Assessing the Facts: Young People in Elected Office”, the opening evidence briefing.

OBJECTIVE

To establish, from the data, why youth representation matters and to reframe the delegates’ shared problem from getting elected to staying elected.

THE GLOBAL PICTURE, IPU 2025

46%	of the world’s people are under 30, against about 2.6% of parliamentarians aged 30 or under.
17.5%	of MPs are aged 40 or under, a rise of 0.2 points since 2023, the first flatline in over a decade.
73%	of upper houses report no member under 30; over a third of all chambers have none at all.
1	parliament meets a 15% youth benchmark, Armenia at 15.3%, then Ecuador (12.7%) and Turkmenistan (12.5%).
1.1%	of MPs are women aged 30 or under, down from 1.3% in 2023. The only cohort moving backwards.
16	of 193 UN member states have a head of government under 35; the average is 55-plus.

CYP’S OWN EVIDENCE, AND THE FLOOR’S RESPONSE

Against the IPU’s global frame, the keynote set CYP’s lived-experience data: a twelve-month survey of one hundred young elected officials, on an 86-question instrument covering pay, staffing, safety and renomination. Its headline finding, that 65% agreed it is easier to win office than to remain in politics long-term, became the refrain of the entire Forum.

DISCUSSION THREADS FROM THE FLOOR

Funding gaps	A cited \$200 monthly-salary example, questions around \$80m crisis-reserve funds, and the corruption pressures that low pay invites.
Germany’s comparative advantage	Voting and candidacy from 18, and roughly €13,500 in staff funding available to young politicians.
Mentorship	Knowledge transfer from senior politicians treated as a retention lever rather than a courtesy.
Retirement-age proposals	Debated as a mechanism for creating youth turnover in long-static chambers.
Idealism versus compensation	Raised sharply by the delegate from Nepal, the quiet cost of asking young people to serve on conviction alone.

“Winning is the easy part. Staying is the hard part.”

AS THE SESSION CONCLUDED

GOVERNING AI IN A BORDERLESS WORLD



OBJECTIVE

To build a shared vocabulary on AI for a room of policymakers with mixed technical literacy and to show that governing AI across borders is a problem of compatibility, not uniformity.

HOW THE SESSION MOVED

01 How AI works

Data → patterns → decisions, grounding everything that followed.

02 The employment-screening case study

Run as a deliberate “gotcha”: the room initially trusted a bias-laden model because of its data volume, then discovered that 80% of technical-leadership hires over ten years had been men. The lesson: the AI learned the bias, not some neutral truth.

03 Interoperability ≠ identical laws

Compatible mechanisms enable cooperation, shared trust and rapid cross-border response. Two kinds were distinguished: governance interoperability (laws, institutions, oversight) and technological interoperability (systems, data formats, standards).

04 The 72-Hour Deepfake Crisis simulation

A five-group role-play, Election Commission, Government, AI Platform, Civil Society, International Agencies, responding to a viral AI-generated video of a candidate.

THE COMPARATIVE REGULATORY LANDSCAPE

EUROPEAN UNION

Rights-based and risk-tiered, extraterritorial in effect via the “Brussels effect.”

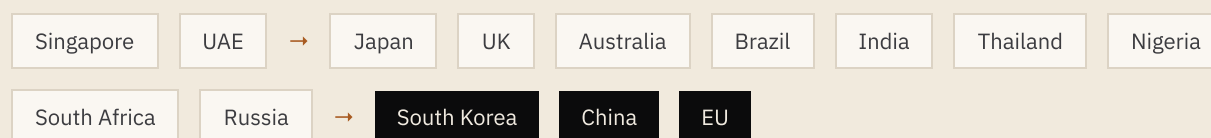
UNITED STATES

Sectoral and largely voluntary, with a state-by-state patchwork.

CHINA

State-directed, with a mandatory algorithm registry.

FLEXIBLE TO PRESCRIPTIVE



Despite enforcement differences, risk-based classification, human oversight and transparency obligations now appear across nearly every jurisdiction.

INDIA'S POSITIONING, IN THREE PARTS

A voice for the Global South

“AI for impact”, a use-case capital

AI as public infrastructure, via DPI

The workshop closed on the UN whitepaper argument for a shared governance *floor, not a ceiling*: common minimums, with room for stronger national safeguards.

INTERACTIVE ELEMENTS

A live Mentimeter poll on delegates’ AI concerns; a paired discussion on regulatory approach; a 15-minute self-assessment checklist mapped to six interoperability layers.

“If you could change one thing about how AI is governed in your jurisdiction tomorrow, what would it be?”

AI AS A TOOL FOR PUBLIC LEADERSHIP: MOVING BEYOND CHATBOTS

OBJECTIVE

To move delegates from passive AI use to structured, prompt-driven application in real policy work, treating AI as a tool to be used well, rather than a threat to be feared.

97%

of OECD countries already use AI in at least one government function.

84%

of repetitive UK public-service transactions could be automated, roughly 1,200 person-years a year.

Top 3

McKinsey ranks technological change among the leading disruptions facing public-sector leadership.

LEGISLATURES ALREADY USING AI

Inter-Parliamentary Union

Brazil, Ulysses Suite

Italy, GENAILEX-B

France, National Assembly

THE METHOD TAUGHT

The 2-step pattern. Feed in the real document, then ask structured questions, specifying audience, format and length, and requiring citations.

Effective prompting, in three parts. Context → specificity → iterative build.

HANDS-ON EXERCISES, AND THE RESPONSIBLE-AI FRAME

EXERCISE 1

Reading a bill

Delegates uploaded the mock *AI Ethics and Accountability Bill, 2024/2025* and ran group-specific prompts, clause-by-clause summaries, committee briefings, constituent explainers, global best-practice comparisons and implementation research. Each was paired with an explicit caution set: never upload personal data; treat predictive elements as speculative; have a policy officer review simplified explainers; verify against primary sources.

EXERCISE 2

The
constituency
inbox

Delegates clustered twelve anonymised constituent messages, water access, pensions, streetlights, health camps, bus routes, housing schemes, garbage collection, by theme, urgency and recommended action, then built prompts for recurring-issue ranking, first-draft responses, platform-specific social copy, sentiment analysis and early-signal detection.

SEVEN CORE RISKS TAUGHT

Hallucinations

Privacy

Confidentiality

Human oversight

Bias

Attribution & copyright

Human oversight, again

Human oversight was taught twice, deliberately. A Responsible-AI framework, Fairness, Transparency, Accountability, Security, was then unpacked case study by case study.

LIVE POLLING, DELEGATES' OWN WORDS

Misinformation ·
overdependence · hallucination ·
cost · “AI psychosis”

SOLIDARITY IN PRACTICE: WHEN CRISIS FOUND ONE OF OUR OWN

The most important thing that happened in Goa was not on the agenda. Midway through the Forum, a political crisis broke around one of our delegates back home. Within hours, the room stopped being a cohort of strangers and became something closer to a caucus and it drafted and issued a common statement on his behalf.

WHAT HAPPENED

During the second day of the Forum, Abdouli Njai of Gambia learned that the national broadcaster was broadcasting a report of an audit into campaign funds alongside his negotiations he was having with the government that were not meant to be disclosed to the wider public, especially not so early on in the process. The news reached the delegate mid-session, and it was immediately clear that this was exactly the kind of moment *After They Win* had warned about, a young official facing a fast-moving threat with little institutional protection and few peers positioned to help.

HOW THE GROUP RESPONDED

What followed was not organised by CYP staff; it was organised by the delegates. The instinct in the room was collective before it was procedural.

Gathered the facts

Pooling what each delegate could verify from their own networks across regions, so that any public response rested on confirmed information rather than rumour.

Drafted a statement

A short, jointly-signed text based on the experience of the other elected officials on how to approach this situation for the Hon'ble MP from The Gambia.

Sent it out across their networks

Released simultaneously through the delegates' own official channels, so that a single voice from one country became a chorus from eleven, carrying further and faster than the affected delegate could have reached alone.

WHY IT MATTERS AND HOW IT CONNECTS BACK TO *AFTER THEY WIN*

This episode is worth dwelling on because it is the clearest validation of the premise behind the Forum. *After They Win* found that young officials are rarely connected to peers facing the same problems elsewhere, and that when things go wrong they are left to improvise a response with no staff, no communications infrastructure and no legal backstop. The report's recommended remedy for precisely this scenario was what CYP calls “quiet crisis support”, statement drafting, media holding lines, rapid research and legal referrals, delivered through peer advisory circles so that no one navigates a first-term crisis alone.

In Goa, that service was not delivered by an institution. It was delivered spontaneously, by the peers themselves, within hours of the room forming. The Forum had set out to build the infrastructure the research identified as missing; instead, before the infrastructure could be formalised, the network simply behaved as if it already existed. A group of people who had been strangers seventy-two hours earlier closed ranks around one of their own and spoke, publicly and together, in his defence.

That is the outcome CYP most wanted and could least have scripted. It is the difference between a conference and a constituency.

It is also the strongest argument we have for why this network should be resourced to do deliberately, and at scale, what it did instinctively in Goa.



LEADERSHIP CONVERSATIONS & COMMUNITY

If the workshops supplied the content of the Forum, the hours around them supplied its purpose. The Chatham House Rule allowed delegates to speak candidly about the realities of holding office young, party pressure, renomination anxiety, online harassment, the loneliness of being the only person under thirty in the chamber. These conversations, held over meals, on the off-site programme and late into the evenings, were where the network actually formed.



COMMUNITY-BUILDING

A cultural and team-building programme took the delegation off-site, including a group excursion into the Goan countryside and its waterfalls, deliberately designed to move people out of their formal roles and into a peer relationship.



THE CLOSING COMMUNIQUÉ

A short, jointly-authored statement of shared commitments on youth trust, legitimacy and the responsible governance of AI. Unlike a keynote handed down from the front of the room, it was written by the delegates themselves, which is precisely the point: the Forum's outputs belong to its participants.

INVESTING BACK INTO POLITICAL CAREERS

Most convenings send delegates home with a certificate and a group photo. We wanted the Forum to send them home with working assets. Three days in Goa were also a production: a full studio shoot, filmed long-form interviews, and a bank of written and visual content built around each delegate, produced by CYP and handed over for them to keep and use.

15	15	15	4
STUDIO PORTRAIT SITTINGS	FILMED INTERVIEWS	DIGITAL PORTFOLIOS BUILT	SUPPORT TEAMS BEHIND THEM

THE SHOOT

A prepped studio set on site: lighting, backdrops, wardrobe guidance and a shot list per delegate. Formal portraits for official use, working shots for press, and candid frames for their own channels. Many delegates had never had a usable photograph of themselves in office.

THE FILMS

Each delegate sat for a long-form filmed interview on how they won, what they are trying to change, and what the job has cost them. Cut into a full piece plus short vertical edits sized for the platforms their constituents actually use.

THE PORTFOLIO

A professional site per delegate carrying an official bio, portrait, record in office and contact route. The practical effect is that a journalist, a funder or a fellow legislator can now find them, verify them and reach them in one step.

THE CONTENT BANK

Bios in long and short form, quote cards, headshot sets, and a communications template for launches and statements. A standing photography, digital, research and AI-literacy team sits behind the assets after Goa, so the material stays current instead of ageing on a hard drive.



The test we set ourselves was simple. Six months after Goa, would a delegate still be using something we made? The portfolio, the portrait and the films are all built to pass that test.

THE PERSONAL COST OF PUBLIC LIFE

One session was reserved for the part of the job that rarely reaches a conference agenda: what holding office young does to a person, their money, their family and their health. It ran under the Chatham House Rule, and the account below is aggregated and unattributed by design.

Money

Salaries that do not cover the cost of standing, let alone serving. Delegates described self-funding travel, staff and constituency work, taking second jobs, and watching peers leave politics for reasons that were purely financial. Several named the obvious risk: pay this low invites corruption.

Family and relationships

Partners and parents absorb the schedule, the scrutiny and the abuse without having chosen any of it. Delegates spoke about relationships that did not survive a first term, about family members targeted online, and about the difficulty of explaining a life that never fully switches off.

Safety and harassment

Online harassment was universal in the room and heaviest for the women present. Threats arrive with no security budget attached, no protocol to follow and, in several cases, no institution willing to treat them as serious.

Mental health

Burnout, sleep loss and the pressure of never being off duty. Almost no one had access to confidential support they trusted, and most assumed that asking for it would be read as weakness by their own party.

Isolation

Being the only person under thirty in the chamber, unable to speak candidly to colleagues who may also be rivals, and carrying the expectation of representing an entire generation alone.

Career risk

Renomination sits with a handful of party gatekeepers, and one term out of favour can end a career before it starts. Delegates described postponing study, income and family plans against odds nobody had explained to them.

WHAT DELEGATES ASKED FOR

- Confidential mental-health support
- A legal backstop when threats escalate
- Pay and expense transparency across chambers
- Peer circles that outlast the Forum

“We are asked to serve on conviction alone, and then judged for not lasting.”

COMPOSITE OF THE SESSION, UNATTRIBUTED BY AGREEMENT

KEY THEMES & INSIGHTS

Across three days and three sessions, five themes recurred, threading the representation data, the AI workshops and the human moments of the Forum into a single argument.

01 Representation is a retention problem, not an entry problem.

Young people win office more easily than they keep it. Funding, mentorship and structural barriers, not motivation, dominate the loss. The Forum's entire design followed from this inversion of the usual question.

02 Sovereignty without silos.

Interoperability, DPI and the “governance floor” all made the same case: countries do not need identical rules, only compatible ones. Cooperation is a matter of shared minimums and mutual trust, not surrendered sovereignty.

03 Trust is the real bottleneck.

Both workshops converged on a single diagnosis: technical capability is outpacing institutional trust and oversight capacity. The scarce resource is not technology; it is legitimacy.

04 AI bias mirrors institutional bias.

The employment-screening case study and the Dutch childcare-benefits scandal make the same point: absent deliberate intervention, AI systems encode historical inequity rather than correcting it. The model learns the bias, not a neutral truth.

05 From principle to practice.

Both sessions pushed delegates from abstract concepts toward concrete checklists, prompts and self-assessments. The point was never to admire the problem; it was to leave able to act on it.

PHOTO ESSAY

Three days in Goa, from arrival to the closing dinner.

ARRIVAL & THE ROOM



FIRST INTRODUCTIONS & NETWORKING



WORKSHOPS, DISCUSSIONS & THE PANEL



INTERVIEWS & BEHIND THE SCENES



Each delegate sat for a filmed interview, raw material for the digital portfolios built for them.

CULTURAL PROGRAMME & THE WATERFALL



Fifteen office-holders; one network.

OUTCOMES & LOOKING AHEAD

The Forum was conceived as the first practical answer to the question *After They Win* left open. Measured against it, Goa produced four things worth carrying forward.

WHAT DELEGATES LEFT WITH

A peer network

Young officials across regions, connected for the long term and already tested under pressure.

A digital presence

A professional portfolio, portrait and communications assets, making each delegate more visible, contactable and citable.

A growth team

Photography, digital, research and AI-literacy support behind them.

A place in the regional networks

WAYPA in West Africa, and the Caribbean, Balkan, Nordic and Pacific networks now forming.

WHAT CYP WILL BUILD

The Forum feeds directly into CYP's standing programme: the young-elected-official tracker and internship pipeline, the research support desk, expert office hours, and the five "stations" of support that *After They Win* recommends, from the digital constituency office to surviving re-selection. Goa made one priority especially clear: formalising the "quiet crisis support" function, so the network can do deliberately what it did instinctively for one.

THE WIDER FRAME

The Forum sits inside a larger narrative: India's push on digital public goods and AI governance through the DPGA, BRICS and G20 tracks, and the argument, rehearsed at length in Workshop 1, for a Global-South voice in setting the shared governance floor. The leaders convened in Goa are precisely the cohort who will inherit and implement whatever that floor becomes.

The Global Emerging Leaders Forum is CYP's first answer to what happens once young people are in office, and, on the evidence of Goa, a working one.

OUR PARTNERS

The Forum was built with partners who share the same conviction: that young people already in office are worth investing in directly. Their contribution ran from the knowledge programme to the production work that put assets in delegates' hands.



KNOWLEDGE PARTNER

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung India

Knowledge partner to the inaugural edition, shaping the democracy and governance programme and anchoring the Forum in its wider work on political participation.



PARTNER

Fathom

Partner on the research and content side of the Forum, supporting the material that delegates took home with them.



PARTNER

Algo & Agenda

Partner on the digital and AI track, contributing to the interoperability and public-leadership workshops and to the delegates' digital presence.



PARTNER

The Oslo Center

Partner on democratic practice and political-party support, bringing long experience of accompanying young leaders in office.

WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM

Exalt Strategies

EXALT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The inaugural Global Emerging Leaders Forum was made possible by the Centre for Youth Policy and its founder, Sudhanshu Kaushik, and by the partners and facilitators who built the room around the delegates.

PARTNERS

Konrad-Adenauer-
Stiftung India

Fathom

Algo & Agenda

The Oslo Center

KNOWLEDGE PARTNER

FACILITATORS

Ridhi Suri

Workshops 1 & 2

Vidushi Sinha

Workshops 1 & 2

AND THE DELEGATES

Above all, CYP thanks the fifteen delegates who gave three days, spoke candidly under the Chatham House Rule, and, when it counted, stood together. This report is a record of what they built.

THE FULL FORUM SCHEDULE

Goa, India, 27–30 July 2026. Three days that ran from a workshop room straight into the Western Ghats.

TUESDAY 28 JULY — WORKSHOPS & DIALOGUES

07:30–10:00	Breakfast
From 08:00	Photo interviews, shoots & content, throughout the day
10:00–11:00	01 · Assessing the Facts: Young People in Elected Office What holding office actually involves once you win — drawing on CYP's <i>After They Win</i> report.
11:30–13:30	02 · AI Interoperability: Governing Intelligence Across Borders Aligning standards and shared rules so AI systems work together safely, where sovereignty and cooperation collide.
13:30–14:30	Lunch
14:30–15:30	03 · Designing for Political Campaigns: Message, Movement & Machinery From narrative and voter targeting to ground operations — building a campaign that converts.
16:00–18:00	04 · AI Tools for Public Leadership: Beyond the Chatbot Drafting policy, reading constituent data, speeding up casework — with a candid look at the limits and risks.
19:00 / 20:00	Pre-dinner drinks, then dinner

WEDNESDAY 29 JULY — FIELD DAY, WESTERN GHATS

09:00	Meet & depart — SOUL Trek Meet at the property, 9:00 sharp. The SOUL Travelling Ambassadors join here, and the stories begin in the vehicle.
~10:00	Arrive Tambdi Surla — nature farm A 12th-century Kadamba temple carved from a single block of basalt; a trek through the foothills of the Western Ghats with a trained naturalist, ~25–30 minutes one way, crossing water streams to a natural cascade; a traditional Goan lunch at the eco-farm; a lesson in how feni, Goa's traditional spirit, is made.
~17:00 → 17:30	Conclude and depart, then break & downtime
19:00	Design & Content Showcase — the design work built across the conference, presented back to delegates
19:30 / 20:30	Dinner, then an optional evening trip into Panjim

THURSDAY 30 JULY — DEPARTURE

Morning	Breakfast & check-out. Safe travels.
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All times in IST