

## Let Us Learn beneficiaries represent their region at youth summit

Story courtesy of UNICEF Madagascar

Brenda and Fandresena are two ambitious 7th graders and beneficiaries of the Let Us Learn program in Madagascar. They are serving as the elected board members of the Children's Club "Heure Creuse," which operates during off-peak class hours. Brenda is the chair of the club and Fandresena is the co-chair. The club brings together around 150 students from the school and they meet every week.

"Activities of the club include but are not limited to child rights' awareness raising. During big celebrations organized at the school yard, we do role plays to sensitize parents on the rights of their children. Members are also very engaged in the protection of the environment," said Mr. Rakotosalama, the teacher in charge of the animation of the club.

"Fandresena and Brenda are very active and when we were asked to appoint school representatives to attend the National Youth Summit, the choice was obvious," he explained.



Fandresena and Brenda were among the 88 youth delegates who were selected through a very competitive process to represent their region's voices at the summit, which was funded by UNICEF. During five days, youth leaders from the 22 regions of Madagascar gathered in Antananarivo to discuss "The Madagascar We Want" for 2018 and beyond. Participants were selected based on their experience engaging with youth on issues related to education, good governance and job creation.

Activities organized during the five days were designed to equip youth delegates with skills to meaningfully engage in discussions and develop a set of recommendations that would constitute the advocacy messages for all post-summit follow-up activities.

"I particularly liked the resource mobilization session because as the leader of our club, it is my responsibility to build a network of support for our activities," said Fandresena.

The summit was memorable for Fandresena, who had the opportunity to meet and discuss with the minister of education who was among the panelists.



Photos courtesy of UNICEF USA

Brenda appreciated the Talk Across Generations, a round table with senior policy makers in the country, including a former prime minister, parliamentarians, senior civil society activists and members of the government. It was an opportunity for all of the National Youth Summit delegates to share their perspectives and hear advices from the elders.

True to their commitment, Brenda and Fandresena spoke of the summit outcomes with all the school students during the Monday flag raising.

"Among all the things we shared, students were particularly interested in the electoral process, and I realized that even if we can't vote yet we have the duty to stay informed and we can also encourage our parents to verify if they are on the list," said Fandresena.