



Growing Together

YOUTH and the Work of the United Nations



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PREFACE

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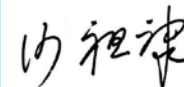
The United Nations has long recognized the importance of investing in youth. In 1995, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth to guide national and international action to create an environment in which young people can flourish and develop their potential to the fullest. Since then, opportunities for young people to benefit from development have expanded around the world. Nonetheless, youth continue to face many constraints and challenges that hinder their smooth transition to adulthood.

Although the United Nations Programme on Youth of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is the only part of the United Nations Secretariat with the explicit mandate to address youth issues, this brochure shows how the United Nations system, as a whole, supports youth development with a diverse range of programmes and activities. As the brochure demonstrates, the work of the various parts of the United Nations system relating to youth is complementary and covers all 15 priority areas of the World Programme of Action.

With activities ranging from data collection and analysis to direct country support to Governments, civil society and other stakeholders, the United Nations system is well-positioned to provide comprehensive, specialized assistance in support of global youth development. Particular attention is being given by many UN system offices to areas such as health, education and employment, and the special circumstances of girls and young women—areas which present persistent challenges to youth development in many parts of the world.

Now is the time to make strategic investments in youth. Investments which target the large numbers of young people today will not only improve the wellbeing of a large generation of young people, but will also produce long-lasting benefits for the social and economic development of countries and regions. Indeed, our ability to achieve several of the Millennium Development Goals is directly linked to our progress in improving young people's health, education and socio-economic opportunities.

This brochure is a welcome example of how the United Nations system and the young people it serves are growing together. By taking stock of UN system activities related to youth development, the brochure provides a chance to assess how effectively the United Nations system is responding to this important development challenge, and it helps to identify any gaps that may exist in our approach. It is intended as a source of information to assist all stakeholders and to ensure that the United Nations truly delivers as one in the area of youth development, in an effective and forward-looking fashion. Only by working together to advance the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth as a comprehensive strategy to promote youth development will we be able to make a lasting difference in the lives of the youth of today and tomorrow.



SHA Zukang
*(Under-Secretary-General for
Economic and Social Affairs)*

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADF-V Fifth African Development Forum
AIDS Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
AISI African Information Society Initiative
BCPR Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery
CAH Department of Child and Adolescent Health and Development
CIS Commonwealth of Independent States
CSD Commission on Sustainable Development
CSW Commission on the Status of Women
DAW Division for the Advancement of Women
DESA Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DSD Division for Sustainable Development
DSPD Division for Social Policy and Development
ECA Economic Commission for Africa
ECE Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

ESCAP Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESID Emerging Social Issues Division
FGM Female genital mutilation
GAID Global Alliance for ICT and Development
GGP Generations and Gender Programme
GGs Generations and Gender Survey
GPI Global Partnership Initiative on Urban Youth Development
HDRO Human Development Report Office
HIV Human immunodeficiency virus
IBRD International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICPD International Conference on Population and Development
ICT Information and Communication Technologies
IDA International Development Association
IFAD International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO International Labour Organization





J8

Junior 8 Summit

MDGs

Millennium Development Goals

MRU

Mano River Union

NAP

National action plans on youth employment

NGO

Non-governmental organization

PAHO

Pan American Health Organization

PATH

Poverty Alleviation through Tourism and Heritage

SRH

Sexual and reproductive health

UNAIDS

Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

UNDP

United Nations Development Programme

UNEP

United Nations Environment Programme

UNESCO

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNGASS

United Nations General Assembly Special Session

UN-HABITAT

United Nations Human Settlement Programme

UNICEF

United Nations Children's Fund

UNIDO

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

UNIFEM

United Nations Development Fund for Women

UNFPA

United Nations Population Fund

UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

UNDP

United Nations Population Division

UNPY

United Nations Programme on Youth

UNSD

United Nations Statistics Division

UNV

United Nations Volunteers

VIP

Violence and Injury Prevention

VOY

Voices of Youth

WFP

World Food Programme

WHO

World Health Organization

WPAY

World Programme of Action for Youth

YAP

Youth Advisory Panel

YEN

Youth Employment Network

YEP

Youth Employment Programme

HOW DID A UNITED NATIONS YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AGENDA EMERGE?

Although there are small variations in the group considered as youth in the agencies, funds, offices and programmes of the United Nations system, “youth” is often defined by the United Nations as those aged 15-24 years old. This age group makes up nearly one fifth of the world’s population. Youth are frequently referred to as representing the future, but their sheer numbers, complemented by their imagination, ideals and energy, make young people a major force in the world today.

The imagination, ideals and energies of young women and men are vital for the continuing development of the societies in which they live. The Member States of the United Nations first acknowledged this officially in 1965 when they endorsed the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples.

Two decades later, the United Nations General Assembly observed 1985 as International Youth

Year, with the theme “Participation, Development and Peace”. The Year drew international attention to the important role that young people play in the world, and in particular, to their potential contribution to development and to the goals of the United Nations Charter.

International debate and discussions reached a high point in 1995 when, on the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year, the United Nations adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond. The adoption of the Programme of Action, which provides a framework to guide public, private and international action on youth development, was evidence of the commitment of the international community to young people and of a resolve to address the challenges to youth development in a comprehensive and collaborative manner.

THE WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR YOUTH TO THE YEAR 2000 AND BEYOND: A GUIDE FOR ACTION ON YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) initially identified 10 priority areas to guide policy

and action in the area of youth development (see the table). Recognizing the major changes that were occurring in national and international development environments at the end of the twentieth century and to align the Programme of Action better to new challenges in the twenty-first century, the General Assembly added five additional priority areas in 2005. These five areas (Globalization, Information and Communication Technology, HIV/AIDS, Armed Conflict and Intergenerational issues) were elaborated in a supplement to the WPAY, which was adopted at the sixty-second session of the General Assembly in 2007.

For each priority area, the WPAY outlines the nature of the challenges young people face and presents proposals for action to improve the well-being of young people. The WPAY also outlines the means of implementation of the Programme of Action.

PRIORITY AREAS OF THE WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR YOUTH

- 1 Education
- 2 Employment
- 3 Hunger and poverty
- 4 Health
- 5 Environment
- 6 Drug abuse
- 7 Juvenile delinquency
- 8 Leisure-time activities
- 9 Girls and young women
- 10 Youth participation in society
and in decision-making
- 11 Globalization
- 12 Information and communications technology
- 13 HIV/AIDS
- 14 Armed conflict
- 15 Intergenerational issues

The 15 priority areas of the WPAY are clearly interrelated. They also cut across areas in which organizations of the United Nations system specialize and provide technical advisory and other services to Governments. They therefore form an appropriate foundation for a coordinated collaborative effort from the United Nations system. United Nations system offices have, by focusing on independent areas of expertise, addressed many of the issues, goals and objectives of the WPAY.

Despite the broad coverage of areas, lack of information on the specific activities and programmes that each part of the UN system engages in hampers youth development work. It is vital that this information becomes widely available, not only within the UN system, but also to others working in the area of youth development. This brochure responds to this need.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION PRESENTED IN THIS BROCHURE

The brochure summarizes responses of United Nations offices and agencies to questionnaires that

sought their specific inputs on their work. UN system offices whose work covers aspects of youth development were invited to contribute to the brochure. Responses received were reviewed and supplemented where necessary with information readily available in public sources, such as websites and publications. The summaries were then shared with UN system offices for their preview, corrections and amendments. The brochure is therefore the result of a collaborative effort across offices.



United Nations Programme on Youth (UNPY)

The United Nations Programme on Youth is the focal point within the United Nations Secretariat on issues related to youth. It is the only part of the Secretariat that is mandated exclusively to deal with youth issues. The Programme is part of the Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD) of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). The Programme on Youth is, in particular, responsible for monitoring progress and constraints in addressing the objectives of the World Programme of Action for Youth. The Programme is also charged with playing a lead role in inter-agency consultations on youth development. The compilation and production of this brochure by the UN Programme on Youth is intended to support and foster the inter-agency dialogue.

REPORTING ON YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The Programme on Youth conducts research and analysis on youth and provides information to Governments, youth, civil society and other parts of the United Nations system on issues and activities relating to youth development. It publishes the biannual *World Youth Report*, which presents analytical discussions on selected topics related to youth development. Taking a regional approach, the *2007 Report*, for example, examined the opportunities and challenges that youth face during their transition to adulthood. Through Reports of the Secretary-General and other documentation for the General Assembly and the Commission on Social Development, the Youth Programme also contributes to informing Governments and the international community

about key developments in the area of youth and, especially, on progress made in the 15 priority areas of the WPAY. The Programme services the Commission on Social Development and the Third Committee of the General Assembly, providing draft texts for consideration of these bodies and assisting with negotiations of resolutions on youth.

To promote information sharing on activities within and outside the UN system on youth issues, the Programme on Youth also produces *Youth Flash*, an electronic newsletter. *Youth Flash* includes an in-depth feature on a topical youth issue and provides an overview of youth-related activities organized by the entire UN system.

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY

International Youth Day is commemorated every year on 12 August. The Programme on Youth selects a theme for the day in consultation with youth organizations, the Department of Public Information and other UN system offices and agencies. It also organizes a commemoration of the Day at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The Programme encourages youth around the world to organize activities to raise awareness about the situation of youth in their country. Youth are encouraged to send in a description of their planned activities to youth@un.org. The most creative activities are featured on the Programme's website to provide a sense of how International Youth Day is being commemorated around the world and to encourage other youth to take action.



UN DPI Photo

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION WITH CIVIL SOCIETY AND YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS

A major part of the work of the UN Programme on Youth involves working with civil society, especially youth-led organizations that are working with young people, particularly at the grassroots level, to address various areas of the World Programme of Action for Youth. The Programme on Youth cooperates with and assists these youth-led organizations. It arranges consultative meetings, briefings and other discussions with them to guide their work, and it also gathers their inputs and feeds them into intergovernmental discussions. Young people, both as individual experts and as representatives of organizations, are also involved in Expert Group Meetings and other substantive discussions organized by the Programme on Youth.

TECHNICAL COOPERATION

The Programme collaborates closely with the Technical Cooperation Unit of the Division for Social Policy and Development. The Unit works directly with Governments and other stakeholders to translate international agreements—such as the World Programme of Action for Youth—into practical strategies and projects at the regional and national levels. The Technical Cooperation Unit draws on the expertise of the Programme on Youth and, in turn, feeds experiences gained from the field into the Programme's work in support of the intergovernmental policy development process. Cooperation is often initiated at the request of a Government or UN counterpart, and technical cooperation advisers work closely with other parts of the UN system. In 2007/2008, activities of the technical cooperation unit that relate to youth included providing support for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Young People in Iberoamerica; working to integrate youth concerns into poverty reduction strategies in

Africa; and enhancing capacity to deal effectively with issues related to illicit small arms and violence.

ENSURING YOUTH PARTICIPATION

An important dimension of the Programme on Youth's work relates to strengthening the participation of youth in decision-making processes at all levels in order to increase their contribution to national and international development. The Programme provides advisory services to other United Nations system offices and other stakeholders on how to ensure active youth engagement in their initiatives.

Through publications, advocacy and the provision of advisory services, the Programme on Youth facilitates the inclusion of youth representatives in Member States' official delegations to the General Assembly and other intergovernmental bodies. Youth delegates frequently deliver official statements on behalf of the youth in their countries, and some negotiate actively on the

text of resolutions. The Programme provides information, advisory and orientation services to youth delegates before and during their stay in New York to facilitate their effective participation at UN meetings.

Various activities of the Programme aim to support and encourage youth initiatives and their meaningful engagement in the development dialogue. The Programme supports and encourages youth to plan and carry out projects in support of youth development. A toolkit, *Making commitments matter*, for example, guides youth organizations on how to evaluate their Governments' efforts to implement the WPAY. The website of the Programme on Youth provides a wealth of information to support youth participation and it also provides an opportunity for youth to provide feedback to the Programme.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- World Youth Reports 2003, 2005 and 2007
- Guide to the Implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth
- *Making commitments matter: a toolkit for young people to evaluate national youth policy*
- A brief guide to youth delegates to the United Nations General Assembly
- Various Reports of the Secretary-General related to youth issues

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Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)

The Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs focuses on promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls of all ages. The Division supports the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, which seeks to promote and protect the full enjoyment of all human rights and the fundamental freedoms of all women throughout their life cycle. DAW also supports the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol. The Division strives to promote the mainstreaming of a gender perspective both within and outside the United Nations system.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

DAW examines issues that affect young women and girls in the context of the 12 critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action as well as emerging issues, many of which coincide with the priority areas of the World Programme of Action for Youth. Among the areas addressed are education, employment, poverty and hunger, health, care-giving, environment, sport, participation in decision-making, information and communication technology, HIV/AIDS, and armed conflict.

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

DAW conducts research and develops policy options to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. The Division has a publications programme, which includes resources for Governments, civil society and other stakeholders to enhance work on gender equality, women's human rights and the empowerment of women.

YOUTH AND THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

A major area of DAW's work is to provide substantive support to the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and other intergovernmental bodies working to advance the global policy agenda on gender equality. In this context, DAW covers issues related to the improvement of the situation of young women and girls. The annual sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women provide space for young women and girls to participate actively in informing global policymaking on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. At its fifty-first session in 2007, the Commission on the Status of Women addressed "The elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child" as its priority theme. Over 200 girls participated in the session and were involved in official interactive meetings of the Commission, such as the High-level Roundtable on the priority theme, and

other CSW-related events and activities. The 2007 Commission's agreed conclusions on the priority theme include recommendations for the development of programmes and projects aimed at young women and girls affected by poverty, armed conflict, HIV/AIDS, violence and discrimination.

In preparation for the annual sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women holds an online discussion of the priority theme to be considered by the Commission. The discussions are open to all and give girls and young women a platform from which to share their views on issues affecting them.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- Women 2000 and Beyond: Women, Gender Equality and Sport (2007)
- Women 2000 and Beyond: Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women through ICT (2005)
- Women 2000 and Beyond: Women and Water (2005)
- World Survey on the Role of Women in Development (1999, 2004)

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Division for Sustainable Development (DSD)

The Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs promotes sustainable development by providing technical cooperation and capacity-building at the international, regional and national levels. The Division is the substantive secretariat to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). Besides supporting the CSD, the Division is also the secretariat for the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, which includes provisions for youth involvement in its implementation. In addition, it is the secretariat for the Ten-year Framework for Changing Unustainable Consumption and Production Patterns—an area of increasing relevance for young people.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

The Division's focus on youth is based on chapter 25 of Agenda 21, which was adopted at the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Agenda 21 identified Children and Youth as one of the nine major groups of civil society whose participation in implementing the Agenda is a prerequisite for sustainable development. In particular, Chapter 25 states that the involvement of youth in environment and development decision-making and in the implementation of programmes related to the environment is critical to the long-term success of Agenda 21. The chapter notes also that it is imperative that youth from all parts of the world participate actively in all relevant levels of decision-making processes because these affect their lives today and have implications for their futures. In addition to their intellectual contribution and their ability to mobilize support, youth bring unique perspectives that need to be taken into account. The Major

Groups Programme within the Division for Sustainable Development works actively to ensure the involvement of youth in protecting the environment and promoting economic and social development.

COLLABORATION WITH YOUTH FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Major Groups Programme is responsible for engaging and liaising with youth and for enhancing their participation in the work of the CSD and its intersessional processes. It disseminates CSD-related information to youth networks and publishes on its website annual guidelines to support the participation of youth and other civil society groups in CSD. The Division also supports children and youth in their efforts to influence the integration of sustainable development into education at all levels.

YOUTH IN THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Since the creation of the Commission on Sustainable Development in 1992, youth have played an important role as partners in sustainable development and in informing the Commission's decision-making processes. Youth continue to infuse the CSD with new ideas and information, and present challenges that enrich the intergovernmental debate. Youth and other major groups participate in interactive dialogues, develop coordinated statements through thematic caucus groups, and lobby for particular initiatives that they feel should be supported. They also contribute significantly to the registered Partnerships for Sustainable Development in the context of the CSD.

The CSD continues to explore innovative formats for the participation of youth and other major groups of civil society. Substantive exchange between representatives of the major groups of civil

society and Government officials is now integrated throughout the various official sessions of the CSD, including thematic discussions, expert panels and interactive discussions with Ministers during the High-level Segment. Youth and other major groups contribute their expertise to technical discussions on thematic issue areas and offer solutions for ensuring sustainable development.

THE CSD YOUTH CAUCUS

As part of the preparatory work leading up to the CSD meetings, the Division for Sustainable Development collaborates closely with the CSD Youth Caucus to facilitate the engagement of youth during CSD meetings. The Youth Caucus is a group of representatives of youth-led NGOs who work together to influence decision-making at the CSD. Youth prepare official papers addressing the thematic areas on the CSD agenda and are invited to contribute to the many side events that take place during CSD sessions. Young people also participate

in the Partnerships Fair and the Learning Centre, which are both part of the CSD official programme. The Partnerships Fair provides a venue for registered Partnerships for Sustainable Development to showcase progress, launch new partnerships, network with existing and potential partners, create synergies between partnerships and learn from each other's experiences. The Learning Centre provides teaching and training at a practical level on topics of relevance to the specific themes being considered by the CSD, as well as on selective cross-cutting themes of sustainable development.

SUPPORT FOR YOUTH FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The Division for Sustainable Development receives extrabudgetary funds from donors to support the participation of youth from developing countries and countries with economies in transition at CSD. These limited funds are allocated to representatives identified

Division for Sustainable Development (DSD)

in close consultation with the young people who coordinate the CSD Youth Caucus. The Division also has access to limited financial resources to support youth-related work, including research and publications.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- Sustainable development needs you (brochure)

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The work programme of the Population Division (UNPD) of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is aimed at enabling the international community to understand better and address effectively current and foreseeable population issues as well as the population dimensions of development at the national and international levels. The Division produces and disseminates demographic estimates and projections at the national, regional and global levels, and analyses demographic data by age, sex and selected socio-economic characteristics, including youth, conventionally defined as the population aged 15 to 24.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

Globally, there are nearly 1.2 billion people aged 15 to 24. The number of young people has never been higher and is expected to remain near its current level until 2050. Demographically, young people are the focus of special attention because they have clearly differentiated demographic behaviours. In most societies, entry into marriage or cohabitation starts when people are young, and fertility is highest among women aged 20 to 24. Migration rates also tend to peak, for both men and women, over the age range of 15 to 24. In societies unaffected by endemic violence, mortality over the age range 15-24 tends to be the lowest over the life course, but young people, particularly men, are at greater risk of dying because of external causes (accidents, suicide and violence) than people at older ages. In high-fertility countries, an early start of childbearing exposes young women to higher risks of maternal death over their lifetime, though risks of maternal death are generally lower among women aged 18-24 years than among those in other age groups. Because the onset of sexual activity usually occurs when people are young, and when they lack the knowledge and

means to protect themselves, the risk of contracting a sexually transmitted disease is often higher among young people than among older adults.

The Population Division also studies the implications of demographic trends for development. In this regard, the role of young people in the labour force and their access to education and training is particularly relevant. Recent analysis of the age and sex structure of the urban and rural population for all regions of the world has confirmed that young adults, particularly men, tend to be more urbanized than the rest of the population, indicating that the young are more willing and able to take advantage of the opportunities that cities offer.

ESTIMATES AND PROJECTIONS BY AGE AND SEX

The United Nations Population Division produces and publishes the *World Population Prospects* every two years. This publication presents the official United Nations population estimates and projections for the world, major areas, regions and 228 countries or areas (see reference below). Population data classified by age group and sex permits the

analysis of trends in the young population for every country in the world. These data are widely used by international organizations, national Governments and researchers. They are also used for the calculation of indicators to measure progress in attaining internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

ADOLESCENT FERTILITY

The Population Division produces the estimates of adolescent birth rate, a target under Goal 5 focusing on the reduction of maternal mortality, as established by the Millennium Development Goals. Adolescent birth rates have been published in the wall chart entitled *World Fertility Patterns 2007*. A report on *Adolescent Reproductive Behaviour* is in preparation. The Division also collects and analyses information on the views of Governments concerning adolescent fertility and on the policies or programmes they have adopted to ensure that women do not become pregnant at too young an age.

MORTALITY

The Population Division prepares and publishes data on the levels and trends of mortality between

1950 and 2005 in the *World Mortality Report*, the latest of which is 2007 (a CD-ROM version is also available). The report includes estimates of life expectancy at birth and at age 15. A wall chart entitled *World Mortality 2007* presents estimates of the survival probability from birth to age 15 and from age 15 to age 60. It also contains information on maternal mortality and HIV prevalence.

MIGRATION

The Population Division compiles and analyses data on international migrant stocks and flows. The Division has developed a database containing data on the number of foreign-born persons or foreigners enumerated in the population censuses carried out since 1960 or obtained from population registers. The database includes information classified by age and sex, which is being used to estimate the number of international migrants in each country of the world, classified by age and sex. The estimates will permit a global assessment of the participation of youth in international migration. The development of the database has benefited from the financial support of UNICEF and the UNDP South-South Unit as well as from the collaboration of the World Bank.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision. Available in print or online, at <http://www.un.org/esa/population/unpop.htm>
- World Fertility Patterns 2007 (wall chart)
- World Mortality 2007 (wall chart)

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The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is mandated, among other functions, to compile and disseminate global statistical information, develop standards and norms for statistical activities and support countries' efforts to strengthen their national statistical systems. Through these activities, the Division promotes the development and availability of statistics and indicators needed to identify and address issues of relevance to youth at national, regional and global levels.

RATIONALE FOR COLLECTING, COLLATING AND DISSEMINATING STATISTICS ON YOUTH

Age is an inherent attribute of individuals and represents one of the most basic types of demographic information collected about individuals in censuses and surveys, as well as through administrative record systems (such as vital registration). Through its various activities, UNSD promotes the collection, compilation and dissemination of basic socio-economic and demographic data cross-classified by five-year age groups and by sex, thereby permitting the calculation of statistics and indicators relevant to the age-group 15-24 years. The Division also sets principles and methods for population and housing censuses, provides technical assistance, and collects, compiles and disseminates census data worldwide.

DATA COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION

UNSD directly collects, collates and disseminates national population data and vital statistics. The

data are collected, on a regular basis, through questionnaires sent to national statistical offices. Questionnaires collect data classified by age and sex on variables related to population estimates, population count, migration, economic characteristics of the population and household characteristics. Information on marital status, in particular, is classified by five-year age groups including 15-19 and 20-24 years. With respect to education characteristics, all data are available by age. For example, population 10 years of age and over by literacy; population 15 years and over by education attainment; population 5 to 24 years age by school attendance.

2010 WORLD CENSUS PROGRAMME ON POPULATION AND HOUSING

The United Nations Statistics Division plays a pivotal role in coordinating the World Census Programme on Population and Housing. UNSD encourages countries or areas to conduct censuses during the 2005-2014 decade, and to disseminate the results. In this way the Division is encouraging countries or areas to produce relevant information pertaining to youth.

The population census is among the main sources of demographic data, such as information on fertility, mortality and migration. This information is valuable for taking stock of the current size and age-sex composition of the population, including the relative size and composition of the youth population. It also helps to gauge future trends in population dynamics, including those likely to affect the future size and composition of the youth population. This information also provides the context within which all other social and/or economic data can be placed. In addition, censuses collect a variety of other relevant information on such areas as literacy, educational attainment, participation in the labour force, housing and household structure, which can be cross-tabulated by age and sex to provide information on the situation of youth in various areas of policy concern.

DEVELOPMENT AND DISSEMINATION OF APPROPRIATE METHODOLOGIES

The Division has continued to play an important role in publishing technical handbooks

and manuals on various census-related topics. With regard to the 2010 round of censuses, UNSD revised and updated the publication “Principles and recommendations for population and housing censuses”, which provides revised and updated concepts, definitions and classifications as well as a set of recommended tabulations which, in most cases, have age as a critical cross-classifying variable.

Some of the tabulations from which information specific to youth can be extracted include those on: native and foreign-born population; population by place of usual residence; population by country of birth; economically active population by main occupation; head or other reference member of household; population (by single years); population by marital status; female population 10 years of age and over by number of children ever born alive including children living or dead; household deaths by age; population 5 to 29 years (youth are a subset of this population) by school attendance; population 10 years of age and over by literacy; population

by activity status and educational attainment; currently active population by activity status, main industry and main occupation; main status in employment; population with and without disability by sex; population 5 years of age and over by disability status and current or usual activity status.

TRAINING WORKSHOPS

An integral part of the 2010 World Census Programme is the provision of technically sound advice that builds upon the existing strengths of national statistical offices while considering ways to strengthen overall national statistical capacity in conducting censuses and intercensal national surveys. For example in 2007/2008, the Division conducted a series of regional workshops on census management and cartography as well as on data capture and processing. This training programme continues, covering various aspects of census implementation, throughout the period of the 2010 round of censuses. Training workshops help in build-

ing national capacity in planning and managing census processes. They enable Governments to hone their ability to collect accurate data on all demographic groups, including youth.

MONITORING THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Most of the data collected through censuses and national sample surveys are used to produce the relevant MDG indicators that facilitate the study and monitoring of the situation of youth. For example, the *Millennium Development Goals Report*, which is coordinated by UNSD, provides indicators by age, such as number of people living with HIV, youth unemployment and literacy rates.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- Principles and recommendations for population and housing censuses
- Millennium Development Goals Report (yearly publication)
- 2005 Demographic Yearbook

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2005 | Diego Goldberg | Pixel Press | UNFPA

Global Alliance for ICT and Development (GAID)

The Global Alliance for ICT and Development (GAID) is part of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The Global Alliance promotes and advocates for the use of information and communication technologies as a tool for development.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

While the areas of education, entrepreneurship, health and governance are the four focus areas of GAID's work on ICT and development, youth and gender are seen as cross-cutting issues and therefore feature prominently in the work of the Global Alliance.

GLOBAL FORUM ON YOUTH AND ICT

GAID's work on youth has been catalysed through a Global Forum on Youth and ICT, which the Alliance organized in September 2007 on the theme "Youth as agents of change". The Forum was attended by more than 500 participants and engaged young people in debates and discussions with their peers, policymakers and technology leaders in exploring ways to empower the community and to participate more fully in society through the appropriate and responsible use of ICT. The Forum also provided a platform to showcase youth-led

initiatives and created a space to foster youth-adult cooperation to encourage an intergenerational transfer of skills and resources. Young people shared ideas and learned from peers who have successfully used ICT as a tool in promoting their own economic and social advancement as well as that of their communities. Some 30 partners, including the International Telecommunication Union, UNESCO, ILO, WHO, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, the UN Programme on Youth, Intel, Microsoft and civil society organizations contributed to the organization of the Forum.

ENGAGING YOUTH— THE GLOBAL YOUTH COALITION

As a follow-up to the Forum, GAID established a Global Youth Coalition to support the agenda of the United Nations on harnessing information and communication technologies for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The coalition is intended to serve as an information hub on Youth and ICTs by hosting a matrix of best practices and

ICT policies from the world's regions. The Global Youth Coalition enables youth around the world to exchange knowledge and experiences on ICT and youth issues and to spearhead youth-led initiatives and programmes. It also allows youth to communicate with other organizations and stakeholders working on the MDG agenda for youth and ICT.

The Youth Coalition supports the work of the Global Alliance by:

- Establishing an active online community engaged in policy discussions, online collaboration, research and advocacy.
- Conveying GAID's goals and objectives to youth around the world, especially in the developing world.
- Bringing youth perspectives and needs relevant to ICT for development to the attention of the Global Alliance.
- Informing the Alliance of significant regional developments and initiatives.

- Serving as a platform for dialogue among youth on information society issues.
- Encouraging the exchange of ideas and practices among youth.
- Organizing global and regional youth forums.
- Helping to create centres of excellence for youth in order to develop and implement more focused work programmes in the four focus areas (education, health, governance and entrepreneurship).
- Identifying and mobilizing the resources necessary to carry out the Coalition's work effectively.

The Coalition is composed of youth networks from around the world and is coordinated by a Committee of GAID E-leaders for Youth and ICT, an executive body composed of 10-12 youth representatives from each region and of successful youth leaders from various fields. The Committee provides project advice and acts as a repository of efforts and best practices.

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The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) promotes regional integration and focuses attention on Africa's special needs, particularly within the context of achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In this regard, ECA places emphasis on supporting efforts to eradicate poverty, placing African countries on the path of growth and sustainable development, reversing the marginalization of Africa in the globalization process, and accelerating the empowerment of women.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

The Commission's work on youth must be seen in the context of the size of the youth population in the region: young people aged between 15 and 24 years alone account for about 20 per cent of the population. Africa's youth often face considerable hurdles to participating in economic, social and political spheres of life. Inadequate access to education and training, poor health and vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, lack of decent jobs, frequent armed conflicts and few opportunities to contribute to decision-making processes are among the major obstacles to youth development in the region.

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

A major part of ECA's work on youth is conducting research and analysing trends and policies in WPAY priority areas, notably in the areas of education, employment, health and HIV/AIDS, girls and young women, and the participation of youth in society and decision-making. ECA also supports country efforts to gain knowledge in these areas.

ECA prepares reports and country-level analyses on pressing youth issues and began publishing a biennial *African Youth Report* in 2008. The first issue of the *African Youth Report* analyses trends in education, youth employment, HIV/AIDS and the health situation of young Africans, as well as their participation in political decision-making processes. The *Report* also reviews policies and strategies to address these issues.

PROMOTING DIALOGUE AND DECISION-MAKING ON YOUTH

In November 2006, ECA and the African Union, together with the United Nations system, the African Development Bank and the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, organized the Fifth African Development Forum (ADF-V) on "Youth and leadership in the 21st century". ADF-V brought together almost 300 youth representatives from all five subregions of the continent, various Heads of State and Ministers of Youth, experts from Ministries of Youth, NGOs and civil society, and regional and international organizations to arrive at

a Consensus Statement that highlighted key actions to be taken by Governments and partners to strengthen youth participation and empowerment. The Forum also launched the African Youth Charter, an initiative of the African Union Commission, to promote youth development in the region.

THE POST-ADF-V STEERING COMMITTEE

ECA serves as the Secretariat of the Post-ADF-V Steering Committee, which follows up on the implementation of the ADF-V recommendations. The Committee consists of the African Union and United Nations agencies working in the area of youth, including UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO, UNDP and the International Organization for Migration. In addition to supporting the popularization, ratification and implementation of the African Youth Charter, the Committee is also working with the African Union to implement activities for the Year of African Youth 2008. In particular, ECA is providing technical support to the development of documents and planning to help promote both the African Youth Charter and

the Year of African Youth through a website and knowledge management initiative.

YOUTH AND ICT

ECA places particular attention to information and communication technologies (ICT) and how they can contribute to youth development and to overcoming the challenges facing young people in Africa. Young people are often the leading innovators in the use and spread of information and communications technologies. ECA's activities in this area are guided by the African Information Society Initiative (AISI), a regional framework adopted by African countries in 1996 aimed at harnessing the potentials of ICT for socio-economic development.

ECA builds the capacities of youth groups for the implementation of AISI through meetings, forums, workshops and online information and knowledge sharing. A continental Africa Youth Network in the Information Society has also been launched to coordinate activities at subregional and national levels (www.ayinetwork.org).

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- African Youth Report 2008

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The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) strives to foster sustainable economic growth among its 56 Member States located in the European Union (EU), non-EU Western and Eastern Europe, South-East Europe, Central Asia and North America. All these countries dialogue and cooperate under the aegis of ECE on economic and sectoral issues. To this end, ECE provides a forum for analysis, policy advice and assistance to Governments. Through the development of conventions, norms and standards, ECE aims to harmonize action and facilitate exchanges between Member States. This process results in consumer guarantees of safety and quality, helps protect the environment, and facilitates trade and the greater integration of member countries at the regional level and also with the global economy. The key areas of expertise of the ECE are economic cooperation and integration, energy, environment, housing and land management, population, statistics, timber and forests, trade and transport.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

ECE recognizes that young people represent an asset upon which the future of any society depends. The ECE region is home to about 179 million youth, representing approximately 15 per cent of the total population. In many countries of the ECE region, young people are facing an erosion of their opportunities to gain education, employable skills, and a decent job and income. It is estimated that 18 million young people in the countries in transition and emerging market economies are neither at school nor in employment. Concerned with this situation, ECE launched a youth entrepreneurship programme in the early 2000s which led to two Regional Youth Forums in 2002 and 2003. Currently, ECE's key engagement on youth is in the area of road safety initiatives, in recognition of the fact that road accidents are the leading cause of death for youth. In addition, ECE focuses on improving knowledge for policymaking on issues that directly affect youth.

GENERATIONS AND GENDER PROGRAMME

ECE is coordinating the Generations and Gender Programme (GGP) of data collection and research. GGP is a system of national Generations and Gender Surveys (GGS) and contextual databases, which aims at improving the knowledge base for policymaking in UNECE countries. The surveys conducted in this programme cover the age range from 18 to 79 years. Many of the issues studied, however, are specifically relevant for young people, such as the processes of family formation and home-leaving and a broad range of their determinants, including education, the labour market, housing, intergenerational relationships and contraception. The GGP contextual database, which includes age-specific data on population processes and employment, is a comparative collection of around 200 variables on the national and regional level for each participating country. These data serve to complement the micro-level data collected in the GGS.

POLICY DISCUSSION

ECE organized the conference “How generations and gender shape demographic change” in May 2008. The event discussed the research findings from the Generations and Gender Programme and the policy actions of Governments in the related areas. One panel session of the conference was specifically devoted to the better integration of young people in society and addressed various facets of transition to adulthood. The keynote paper and the summary of this youth-related session are included in the conference proceedings, which are available at: www.unece.org/pau/ggp.

ROAD SAFETY

The First United Nations Global Road Safety Week in April 2007 was organized at the Palais des Nations in Geneva jointly by ECE, WHO and the four other United Nations regional commissions. Targeted at young people, including young drivers, the Week commenced with a World Youth Assembly, which was attended by over 400 young people from more than 100 countries. The Assembly culminated in the adoption of a Youth Declaration for Road Safety, which describes the views of young people on what they, their parents, teachers, Government leaders and others can do to improve road safety. At the close of the Assembly, the Declaration was presented to the President of the United Nations General Assembly.

The Youth Assembly also provided the opportunity to showcase the results of a youth essay competition launched by UNICEF on road safety. The momentum that was generated by the Assembly resulted, among other things, in an international network of young people who are motivated to address the issue in their countries and are communicating

electronically to share their ideas and experiences. A number of young delegates have also taken steps to implement the Declaration. For example, the Canadian delegates set up a national youth committee for future work on road safety. The Zambian delegate submitted the Declaration to all relevant ministries (health, community development and transport). In Algeria, the Declaration was printed in national newspapers, and in Belize, the Ministry of Education agreed to include road safety in primary and secondary school curricula.

The full Global Road Safety Week focused on young road users, including drivers. Young people are over-represented in road accidents, which are the leading cause of death for people aged between 10-24 years. The objectives of the Week were to give a voice to youth on the road safety issue, contribute to a shift in attitudes and behaviour towards road safety among young people, encourage and support a cadre of national leaders for road safety and launch the Youth Declaration for Road Safety. The slogan for the Week was “Road safety is no acci-

dent”. ECE recognized that creating a network of young ambassadors for road safety, which can represent and engage their peers, was one way of putting this slogan into action.

REGIONAL YOUTH FORUMS

The First Regional Forum on Youth was initiated and organized in Geneva in 2002 by ECE in collaboration with the ILO, UNICEF, UNAIDS, UN-DESA and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Forum, with the theme “Security, opportunity and prosperity”, included a focus on HIV/AIDS, trafficking/sexual exploitation, youth empowerment and prevention of violence. The discussions on these issues were based on the recognition that the situation regarding HIV/AIDS prevalence in European transition countries was alarming in terms of the growth rates of the epidemic. Evidence was presented on selected aspects to which special risk groups (such as young refugees, youth soldiers, and other young men and women) are exposed. A publication

was issued called *Youth in the UNECE Region: Realities, Challenges and Opportunities*, which represents a collection of the presentations made by participants at this Youth Forum.

As a follow-up activity in 2003, ECE organized the CIS Forum on Youth with the theme “Youth of the 21st century: realities and perspectives” in Kiev. The event was held at the invitation of the Government of Ukraine in cooperation with the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and with the support of UN-DESA, the ILO, UNAIDS and UNICEF. The Forum was designed to discuss the complex range of problems facing youth in the CIS countries during the difficult period of transition, as well as to identify the best possible approaches and solutions to these problems.

KEY PUBLICATIONS AND CD-ROMS

Publications

- Youth of the XXI Century: Realities and Perspectives (2004)
- Youth in the UNECE Region: Realities, Challenges and Opportunities (2003)
- The Musketeers Conquer the Net—A “Teen” Guide to Getting Online (2003) Available in English, French, Russian and Spanish

CD-ROMs

- Mission Seagull: A Change of Air! (2004) Available in English, French, Russian, German and Spanish
- Discover the UN Family and Have Fun!—From 4 to 94 years (2004) Available in English, French and Spanish
- Discover the UN and Have Fun!—From 6 to 96 years (2003) Available in English, French and Russian/Uzbek

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The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) serves as a knowledge centre in the region. It collaborates with its Member States and with a variety of local, national and international institutions in undertaking comprehensive analyses of development processes based on in-depth examinations of public policies. Many of the ECLAC divisions that carry out these analyses and research tasks also provide technical assistance, training and information services.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

Latin America is home to about 100 million youth who represent 18.5 per cent of the region's population. ECLAC recognizes that the prospects for these young people differ significantly depending on their socio-economic background and whether they come from rural or urban areas.

MONITORING AND RESEARCH

ECLAC is the focal agency for the production of information and documents regarding youth in Latin America and the Caribbean. It collects data on the situation of young people and on the opportunities available to them in several priority areas of the WPAY, such as education, employment, poverty, health, ICT and participation in society and decision-making (social cohesion). In the area of education, ECLAC collects data on enrolment and progression at different levels for 15-29 year-olds and compares differences by income, ethnicity, gender and geographical distribution. ECLAC also analyses employment data,

contrasting youth and adult levels of unemployment, precarious jobs, income levels and educational returns as well as gender gaps among employed youth. Trends in the levels of poverty and extreme poverty among youth and non-youth are monitored and differences between rural and urban areas as well as indigenous and non-indigenous populations are tracked. ECLAC also analyses the main health problems among the region's youth population, with a special emphasis on violence, accidents, homicide and drug abuse. In terms of information and communication technology, ECLAC collects data on access to ICT and internet connectivity by age and socio-economic background of youth. Regarding participation in society and decision-making, special attention is given to the extent to which young people have a sense of belonging, and their political participation and access to decision-making by youth.

TECHNICAL COOPERATION

ECLAC assists Governments to develop social protection policies for youth and advocates for the promotion of young people's rights. In addition,

ECLAC assists Governments with educational reforms and provides evidence-based policy analysis on a variety of youth-related issues, such as youth and crime and gender aspects.

PARTNERSHIPS

In collaboration with the Iberoamerican Youth Organization, an intergovernmental organization that coordinates all official Government youth institutions within the region, ECLAC has published the most detailed analysis of the situation of youth in Latin America in the last decade: *La Juventud en Iberoamérica: tendencias y urgencias*.

ECLAC also engages in initiatives related to youth with the UN system and other international organizations. For example, in collaboration with UNICEF, a regional conference on children and youth is planned in the Caribbean for 2008. Together with UNFPA, ECLAC's subregional headquarters for the Caribbean prepared a study on *Perspectives of Adolescents on Policies*

of Reproductive Health in Groups of Afro-Descendants Populations in the Caribbean.

ECLAC is also preparing documentation on youth for the Iberoamerican Summit and the Iberoamerican Conference of Ministers of Youth, including new findings and updated information on various aspects of young people's lives in the region.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- La Juventud en Iberoamérica: tendencias y urgencias (2004)
- Disability in the Caribbean—A Study of Four Countries: A Socio-demographic Analysis of the Disabled (2007)
- Series of bulletins entitled Desafíos (Challenges), published jointly by ECLAC and UNICEF, available at www.cepal.org/desafios/.
- Situación y desafíos de la juventud en Iberoamérica (2008)

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Economic and Social Commission for Asia and

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is the regional development arm of the United Nations for the Asia-Pacific region. ESCAP carries out work in three main thematic areas: poverty reduction, managing globalization and tackling emerging social issues. Within ESCAP, the Emerging Social Issues Division (ESID) works on youth issues. The Division adopts a three-pronged approach in its work on youth. It raises awareness on the situation of young people, assists Governments to develop comprehensive national youth policies and works directly with young people through concrete projects to address youth development issues.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

ESCAP's work on youth mainly focuses on the health-related challenges faced by youth in the region, in particular HIV/AIDS and substance use. ESCAP's focus on HIV/AIDS and substance use is based on the recognition that young people, especially those living under socially and economically disadvantaged conditions and those who are out of school, are often poorly equipped to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS, drug abuse and other risks. Furthermore, those who are infected with HIV and/or experiencing problematic substance use often do not have effective and youth-friendly treatment and rehabilitation facilities to turn to. ESCAP thus advocates for policy change in these areas and has developed a number of related projects.

PROJECTS

ESCAP has supported projects targeting disadvantaged youth at risk of HIV/AIDS and substance abuse in Cambodia, China, the Philippines and Sri Lanka.

Through community participation and training networks that promote life skills, these projects aim to promote positive health behaviour among youth. ESCAP also works in the Greater Mekong Subregion to reduce drug use among young people and to engender a supportive legislative environment which promotes the diversion of young drug users from custodial settings to effective treatment provision in community settings. Particular components of these projects include:

- Training peer educators and counsellors in youth-friendly approaches to prevention and treatment.
- Working with and offering counselling to young drug users and orphaned and separated youth to keep away from crime and delinquency.
- Working with youth centres and other organizations to encourage young people at risk of drug use and HIV/AIDS to engage in sports, drama, art, music and other positive leisure-time activities while avoiding risky behaviour.
- Undertaking training and counselling work to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS.

- Developing evidence on effective community-based life skills interventions as a reference for policy and programme development.

ENGAGING YOUTH

Youth are engaged in these projects in a variety of ways. They come to project workshops and meetings to participate in deliberations and express the concerns of the group they represent. Young people are also used as peer educators and counsellors as well as trainers of trainers with regard to HIV/AIDS and substance use prevention and treatment. Finally, the feedback of young people participating in projects is used in developing resource materials and policy recommendations.

POST-TSUNAMI PROJECT

ESCAP has a post-tsunami project in Aceh, Indonesia, which seeks to create a more supportive policy environment and build capacity to support orphans and separated youth in family and community settings by promoting the

training of local health workers in psychosocial care and increasing activities aimed at developing livelihood skills and generating income.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- HIV Prevention among Young People: Life Skills Training Kit (2005)
- HIV/AIDS Prevention, Care and Support: Stories from the Community (2003)
- Young People—Partners in HIV/AIDS Prevention (2003)
- Adolescent Substance Use: Risk and Protection (2003)
- A Tool Kit for Building Capacity for Community-based Treatment and Continuing Care of Young Drug Users in the Greater Mekong Subregion (2008)

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Economic and Social Commission for Western

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) promotes economic and social development through regional and subregional cooperation and integration. It formulates and promotes development assistance activities and projects commensurate with the needs and priorities of the region and acts as an executing agency for relevant operational projects.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

ESCWA monitors the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth in the Arab region. ESCWA's work on youth is based on the recognition that the future development of the region will hinge greatly on the ability of countries to take advantage of a demographic "window of opportunity" that can potentially promote higher rates of economic growth. This window is created by a sharp decline in fertility and infant mortality over the past two decades, which is leading to an increase in the proportion of the working age population (15 to 60 years) relative to the dependent population in the younger and older age groups over the next few decades. The ability of countries in the region to take advantage of this opportunity depends on whether young people entering the workforce are healthy, educated, and skilled and whether adequate investments are made to expand productive capacity and create jobs.

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

ESCWA undertakes situation analyses and baseline studies to assess and understand the setting, the problems, the goals and the perceptions of youth in the countries and subregions that comprise the Arab region. It conducts research to identify groups of vulnerable youth and analyses the situation of the region's young people in the areas of education, employment, poverty, health and their impact on decision-making. Special attention is paid to the situation of girls and young women.

ESCWA organizes expert group meetings to contribute to these analyses. These meetings serve to exchange lessons learned and good practices and help to generate a regional strategy to integrate youth in the development process.

Based on these situation analyses, ESCWA makes policy recommendations geared at improving the well-being of youth. In the area

of HIV/AIDS, in particular, ESCWA attempts to influence the extent of inequity and exclusion in the formulation of youth HIV policy. To promote social equity and security, ESCWA is developing models to integrate young people into national development plans and programmes.

SOCIAL POLICY BRIEFS

ESCWA publishes a series of Social Policy Briefs. The aim of the briefs is to raise awareness of the significance of age-structural transitions, and of the “youth bulge” in particular, for development in Arab countries and to bring information on this emerging issue into the policymaking process in Arab countries. In addition, the Social Policy Briefs are intended to promote the implementation of World Programme of Action of Youth.

ARAB YOUTH DIRECTORY

ESCWA has established the Arab Youth Directory, a website on and for Arab youth

NGOs. The website's aim is to stimulate communication and cooperation among youth NGOs in the region. The Arab Youth Directory can be accessed at www.escwa.un.org/ayd/.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

ESCWA's Population and Development Report—The Demographic Window: An Opportunity for Development in the Arab Countries

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www.escwa.org.lb/popin/

International Fund for Agricultural Development

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is dedicated to eradicating rural poverty and hunger in developing countries by empowering poor rural women and men in developing countries to achieve higher incomes and improved food security. Through low-interest loans and grants, IFAD develops and finances programmes and projects that enable poor rural people, including rural youth, to overcome poverty themselves, for example, by increasing their access to financial services, markets, technology, land and other resources.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

IFAD-supported programmes are based on the recognition that in many of the poorest developing countries young people represent a large proportion of the rural population. IFAD's commitment to enable poor rural people to overcome poverty is therefore highly dependent on finding ways for young women and men in rural areas to use their productive capacity and energy.

PROJECTS

IFAD supports projects in many countries to promote rural youth employment and address rural food security and poverty. These include skills training and vocational training for young women and men in deprived rural areas. In Uganda, for example, IFAD, through the Belgian Survival Fund, supported the Uganda Women's Effort to Save Orphans to provide skills training to AIDS orphans. In Rwanda,

Egypt and Syria, among others, IFAD supports projects to promote enterprise development among youth in mainly agro-processing and marketing activities in high-value agricultural export sectors. These projects include creating links to financial institutions as well as to agricultural exporters. Some projects also promote apprenticeship opportunities. The projects are implemented through community development organizations, which take the lead in identifying young participants. IFAD has also supported the establishment of rural banks in Benin that provided much-needed finance for enterprise development among youth.

In other countries, such as in Haiti and Nigeria, IFAD's projects and programmes contribute to poverty reduction through diversifying and increasing incomes and improving food security. Participants are poor rural people living below the poverty line, which includes households headed by youth.

Several IFAD-supported projects also support the demilitarization and reintegration of former rebels and child soldiers, for example, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Rwanda.

EMPHASIS ON YOUNG WOMEN

In many countries, lack of alternatives is the main reason given for very high levels of marriage and childbearing among rural adolescent girls and young women. Activities for young women, in particular income-generating activities and skills training, are therefore a major component of IFAD's gender programme.

IFAD-supported programmes and projects in countries in transition in Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States are addressing the trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation. Projects identify the needs of poor rural women and girls and reduce their vulnerability by enabling them to find fairly paid work or start small businesses of their own.

YOUTH AND IFAD'S FARMERS' FORUM

Rural youth organizations and farmers' organizations, which also include young people, participate in IFAD's Farmers' Forum. The Farmers' Forum is a bottom-up process of consultation and dialogue among small farmers and rural producers' organizations, IFAD and Governments, which focuses on rural development and poverty reduction.

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International Labour Organization (ILO)

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the tripartite UN agency that brings together Governments, employers and workers of its Member States in common action to promote decent work throughout the world. The ILO is devoted to advancing opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Its main aims are to promote rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection and strengthen dialogue in handling work-related issues.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

The ILO is actively engaged in promoting decent employment opportunities for youth. Youth represent 44 per cent of the total unemployed, although they only make up 25 per cent of the working-age population. Many young people cannot afford to be unemployed and must take any employment they can find. The result is an estimated 125 million young working poor. Youth employment therefore features prominently on the international development agenda and is a major focus of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Both developing and developed economies are confronted with the challenge of creating decent and sustainable jobs for the large cohort of young women and men entering the labour market every year.

DEFINING THE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AGENDA

Recognizing that a failure to integrate young people successfully into the labour market has broader consequences for the future prosperity and development of countries, the ILO's constituents (Governments, workers and employers' organizations) adopted a resolution on youth employment in June 2005, which spelled out an "ILO plan of action to promote pathways to decent work" which now guides most of the ILO's work in the domain of youth employment. Almost every branch of the organization deals in one way or another with issues directly related to youth. Besides employment, ILO focuses on youth as an integral part of the ILO's efforts to promote social protection, labour standards and social dialogue between representatives of employers, workers and Governments.

THE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME (YEP)

The ILO's Youth Employment Programme (YEP) is an intra-departmental “umbrella” programme that coordinates ILO action on youth employment. Its activities include advocacy and awareness-raising for youth employment issues (with the specific goal of promoting employability, employment creation and workers rights), broadening the knowledge base on youth employment, providing services for the ILO's constituents, drafting and implementing strategies to promote youth employment, and coordinating the technical assistance work carried out by the ILO field offices and headquarters.

EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES FOR EX-COMBATANTS

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes have increasingly had to deal with situations where the majority of ex-combatants are young people. These latter require specific actions and measures addressing their needs. The ILO has provided policy advice and training programmes tailored to this specific group. In Kosovo, for instance, the ILO implemented a pilot integrated employment and training programme to deal with the training and employment needs of youth in a post-conflict situation, including demobilized young combatants. The programme included cost-sharing arrangements with private enterprises hiring young people who were at risk of discrimination and social exclusion.

HIV/AIDS AND THE WORKPLACE

To the extent that youth are among the people bearing the direct or indirect consequences of AIDS, they are beneficiaries and participants of specific ILO initiatives and programmes aimed at HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support in the workplace. AIDS is a workplace issue not only because it affects labour and productivity, but also because the workplace has a vital role to play in the wider struggle to limit the spread and effects of the epidemic. HIV/AIDS threatens the livelihoods of many workers and those who depend on them—families, communities and enterprises, and it also weakens national economies. Discrimination and stigmatization against women and men with HIV threaten fundamental principles and rights at work, and undermine efforts for prevention and care.

ENGAGING YOUTH

The ILO aims at increasing young people's participation as essential stakeholders in social dialogue. It also has a variety of initiatives to strengthen young people's participation in the democratic life of societies, often through direct collaboration with its constituents. For example, the ILO encourages young people's direct participation in trade unions and employers organizations. Moreover, when developing National Action Plans on youth employment—or youth employment-related policies in general—the ILO explicitly advises countries to involve youth groups. Another example is within the HIV/AIDS and the workplace programmes in which organizations of young people are called to participate in meetings.

The ILO periodically organizes visiting tours of its headquarters for students from secondary school and universities. Students have the chance to get acquainted with the ILO's structure and organization and to meet personally and exchange ideas with ILO professionals. Several programmes to

foster interactions with academic institutions are also in place. An internship programme and the Associated Experts Programme offer young professionals the chance to work for the organization.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- Global Employment Trends for Youth (2006, 2008)
- Youth Unemployment and Employment Policy (2001)
- Youth: pathways to decent work. Background report of the International Labour Conference, 93rd Session (2005)
- Stimulating youth entrepreneurship: barriers and incentives to enterprise start-ups by young people (2006)
- Guide for the preparation of National Action Plans on Youth Employment (2008)

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Photo: Diego Goldberg / Pixel Press / UNFPA

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) is an innovative joint venture of the United Nations family. It brings together the efforts and resources of 10 UN system organizations to the global AIDS response covering HIV prevention, treatment, care and support for people living with HIV and their families.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

Young people are at the centre of the global HIV epidemic. It is estimated that 5.4 million youth are living with HIV, 58.5 per cent of them female. More than one third of the estimated 6,800 new infections each day are among youth. Despite the high numbers of young people living with HIV, youth-friendly services, such as access to HIV information to prevent future transmission of HIV among this group, and adequate health and social support services, are insufficient. There is still a need to mobilize policy makers, parents, media and faith-based organizations to influence public opinions and policies on HIV and young people.

ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNING

The UNAIDS Secretariat facilitates increased participation of young people in international AIDS conferences around the world. The UNAIDS

Secretariat, in partnership with the World AIDS Campaign, has a large programme on youth campaigning and outreach with financial support from UNFPA. UNAIDS also advocates for adequate access for adolescents to confidential sexual and reproductive health services, including information about sex, sexuality, prevention of unwanted pregnancy and prevention of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV.

STRATEGIC INFORMATION AND POLICIES

UNAIDS provides strategic information and policies to leaders, policymakers and planners worldwide to guide the AIDS response with actions that must be taken to stop the spread of HIV infections. It also provides Governments and other stakeholders with practical guidance to tailor their national HIV prevention response in different epidemic scenarios to the specific HIV prevention needs of young people (see key publications 1 and 2).

TRACKING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

UNAIDS tracks, monitors and evaluates the AIDS epidemic among young people. The UNAIDS Secretariat has prepared guidelines and supported countries to report on the progress made on the implementation of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS) through a set of indicators on young people. The UNGASS reports received by the UNAIDS Secretariat are used to prepare the *Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic*, which includes data disaggregated by sex and age and allows effective tracking of resources and the programmatic response on HIV and young people.

ESTABLISHING PARTNERSHIPS

The UNAIDS Secretariat works very closely with, and provides technical support to, the Alliance of Youth Chief Executive Officers. The Alliance is represented by the Chief Executive Officers of the World Alliance of YMCAs, World Young Women's Christian Association, World Organization

of the Scout Movement, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the International Award Association.

UNAIDS also mobilizes financial, human and technical resources to support an effective AIDS response among young people. It supports advocacy efforts by developing partnerships with civil society and mobilizing leadership among youth.

In addition, the UNAIDS Secretariat in collaboration with UNFPA has formed a partnership with "Designers Against AIDS" to educate young people on AIDS through a clothing line launched by the clothing retailer H&M. The clothing line, "Fashion Against AIDS", aims to alert young people to AIDS and to make them think about prevention and caring for themselves and their loved ones. All clothing tags and materials direct youth to the Designers Against AIDS website (www.designersagainstaids.com) where they can buy products, join the community and learn more about HIV prevention.

The UNAIDS Secretariat works in more than 85 countries worldwide and has seven regional support teams. At the regional and national level, the UNAIDS Secretariat organizes a range of activities and programmes on HIV and young people in collaboration with its co-sponsors and/or with national and international partners. In collaboration with UNFPA and other co-sponsors, the UNAIDS Secretariat is producing documentation on what works in joint programmes on HIV and young people in order to better coordinate harmonized programming among partners at country level on HIV and young people.

ENGAGING YOUTH

Young people are important stakeholders in all aspects of the work of the UNAIDS Secretariat. The senior management team of the UNAIDS Secretariat has made a commitment to include young people at all the major meetings, consultations and events on HIV in order to provide a platform for a meaningful dialogue between young people and adult leaders on HIV. In addition, the UNAIDS Programme

Coordinating Board is providing a platform for expression for networks of young people. Networks of young people are also members of the Global UNAIDS Interagency Task Team on young people and HIV.

UNAIDS aims to strengthen the coordination among youth networks, and provide them with the necessary skills and space to influence the global agenda on young people and HIV. In this context, the Secretariat has provided both technical and financial support to the Global Youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS and to the World Scientific Congress of the World Scouts Movement.

UNAIDS has initiated a Special Youth Programme, modelled on UNFPA's Special Youth Programme, in which two young people from developing countries are selected for a nine-month remunerated fellowship to work within the UNAIDS Secretariat in Geneva and also in the UNAIDS country offices in their home countries. The main objective of the programme is to build the leadership skills and capacity of young people to contribute to the AIDS response, especially at the country level.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- Intensifying HIV prevention: a UNAIDS policy position paper (2005)
- UNAIDS practical guidelines for intensifying HIV prevention: towards universal access (2007)
- Preventing HIV/AIDS in young people: evidence from developing countries on what works. A summary of the WHO Technical Report Series No. 938 (2006)
- HIV/AIDS and human rights—young people take action. A kit of ideas for youth organizations (UNESCO/UNAIDS, 2001)
- Global guidance briefs on HIV and young people (2008)

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United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) advocates for the protection of children's rights, helps meet their basic needs and expands their opportunities to reach their full potential. In its work, UNICEF is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history. While UNICEF's focus is on children, defined as those 0-18 years old, it pays special attention to adolescents (10-18 years).

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

When they are appreciated as sources of energy, imagination and passion, young people flourish and so do their communities. UNICEF recognizes that young people are speaking out and taking active leadership roles throughout society. These young leaders are making a difference in their communities, campaigning in their schools and are key activists for child rights. They are representing the concerns and views of their peers in forums from youth parliaments to international meetings, and engaging in inter-generational dialogues with adults in key decision-making positions. UNICEF works with and for adolescents to promote their rights to meaningful participation and positive development.

PROMOTING YOUNG PEOPLE'S ENGAGEMENT—THE JUNIOR 8 SUMMITS

To ensure the participation of young people in the highest levels of decision-making, UNICEF organ-

izes the Junior 8 (J8) Summits each year with the host Government of the G8 Summit. The Junior 8 is held parallel to the G8 Summit of world leaders. Over the course of several days, young people take part in workshops, round-table discussions and participatory exercises to help them discuss and agree on the priority issues and recommendations that are on the G8 agenda. At the end of their discussions, the J8 delegates write a joint communiqué outlining their conclusions and recommendations, which is presented to the G8 leaders in a face-to-face dialogue. The J8 seeks to synthesize and reflect the major national and regional agendas put forward by young people, in its attempt towards global advocacy as part of the G8 summit process. Over the past three years, the Junior 8 Summit has helped to put forward the views and recommendations of young people to the G8 leaders and to advocate for these recommendations to be taken into account in decision-making on global issues. The main topics that have been included in the J8 agenda in the past years have included education, HIV/AIDS, climate change, development in Africa, tolerance and

global health—which were the topics of discussion among the G8 leaders during their summits. Participants to the Junior 8 Summit include teams of young people representing the G8 countries as well as a delegation of young people from non-G8 countries representing the various regions of the world. Participants are encouraged to bring their experiences back to their youth organizations and communities. This collectively supports the creation of a stronger J8 community, joint advocacy for social transformation and active civic engagement. More information is available at www.j8summit.com.

VOICES OF YOUTH

One of UNICEF's best-known youth initiatives is the Voices of Youth (VOY) website. Since 1995, VOY has focused on exploring the educational and community-building potential of the Internet, and facilitating the active and substantive participation of young people in discussions on child rights and development-related issues. Through web boards, interactive quizzes, youth leadership profiles, live chats and more, Voices of Youth

provides thousands of young people from over 180 countries with an opportunity to self-inform, engage in lively debate, and partner with their peers and decision-makers to create a world fit for children. Voices of Youth is available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish at www.unicef.org/voy.

FOCUS ON HIV/AIDS

UNICEF is very active in the area of children and adolescents and HIV/AIDS. In close collaboration with partners, UNICEF provides support to scale up efforts to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV, to promote paediatric HIV diagnosis and treatment, the protection, care and support for children affected by AIDS, and the prevention of HIV transmission in adolescents in over 100 countries.

COVERAGE OF OTHER AREAS OF THE WPAY

UNICEF's activities span most areas of the WPAY. Examples include:

- *Education:* UNICEF focuses on providing education in emergency situations, second chance primary education, non-formal education, life-skills education and girls' education. UNICEF is the lead agency of the United Nations Girls Education Initiative.
- *Environment:* UNICEF is concerned about the impact of climate change on the health and economic opportunities for young people. Through UNICEF programmes, young people have access to treatment for respiratory illnesses and water-borne diseases and receive support for livelihoods and skills-development for meaningful employment. The Child Friendly Cities Initiative in partnership with UN-HABITAT aims to create safe spaces and opportunities for participation for children and adolescents in the world's most rapidly urbanizing environments.
- *Substance use:* UNICEF promotes the prevention of substance abuse and works with adolescents who engage in injecting drug use, particularly in situations with high HIV/AIDS infection rates.

- *Justice for children and adolescents:* UNICEF promotes respect for the rights of children in conflict with the law and the effective application of international protective measures for young people involved with the justice system.
- *Girls and young women:* To promote the rights of girls and young women, UNICEF focuses on girls' empowerment through education, life-skills education and participation. UNICEF also has initiatives to combat harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation and child marriage.
- *Armed conflict:* UNICEF assists youth in armed conflict through the demobilization and reintegration of child soldiers, by promoting non-formal education, life skills and vocational training, and by making the voices of young people affected by conflict heard.

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United Nations Development Fund for Women

The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programmes and strategies to foster women's empowerment and gender equality. Placing the advancement of the human rights of women at the centre of all of its efforts, UNIFEM focuses its activities on four strategic areas: reducing feminized poverty; ending violence against women; reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS among women and girls; and achieving gender equality in democratic governance in times of peace as well as war. UNIFEM's work is guided by the priorities set in the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Millennium Development Goals.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

UNIFEM's target population spans the range from young women (adolescents) to older women. UNIFEM recognizes, however, that due to the double discrimination they suffer based on their gender and age, young women face particular challenges in the areas of poverty, education, employment, migration, health, and participation in decision-making. It is therefore vital that public policies and legislation targeting young people take into account a gender perspective, and, likewise, that public policies and legislation targeting women take into account a youth perspective.

PROJECTS

One example of UNIFEM's activities focusing specifically on younger women is the project "Young women as citizens: strengthening young women's leadership and networking in Argentina,

Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay". The project, with a duration from 2007 to 2010, aims at consolidating the political agenda of young women in these countries and at expanding their opportunities to influence decision-making processes. By building the knowledge base and the capacity of young women activists, organizations, and networks to advocate effectively for their human rights and citizenship in different arenas, UNIFEM hopes the project will help to achieve its ultimate goal of promoting gender equality in democratic governance.

Various strategies are being adopted to achieve the goals of the project:

- *Production and dissemination of information and knowledge:* Since there is a need for a greater insight into the realities, perceptions, needs and demands of young women, quantitative and qualitative research is conducted in all programme countries.
- *Strengthening young women's empowerment*

and leadership: Young women participating in the project take part in workshops which question traditional power relations, power structures and political processes. The workshops also provide young women with advocacy tools and strategies. Participants learn to identify challenges and opportunities to influence existing power relations, structures and processes.

- *Small grants to young women-led projects:* To strengthen young women's organizations and networks, a Small Grants Fund supports local innovative initiatives on women's rights and citizenship. Young women who participate in the capacity-development workshops are encouraged to present proposals to the Fund to enable them to put their newly gained skills into practice.

UNIFEM also participates in an inter-agency project in Haiti that aims to build national capacity in the areas of prevention and care for women and girls who have suffered sexual violence. The project facilitates women's and girls' access to medical, psycho-social and legal assistance and educates

communities about the causes and consequences of sexual violence through a communications campaign.

A grant from UNIFEM's Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women has helped finance educational materials and brochures for adolescents in the Commonwealth of Independent States which explain how trafficking of women can happen and ways to prevent it.

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Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR)

The Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) is the practice leader for crisis prevention and recovery within the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). A repository for tools, methods and experience, BCPR supports country offices and advises UNDP Senior Management on issues related to conflict prevention and recovery, natural disaster risk reduction and recovery and cross-cutting issues, such as early recovery and gender equality. BCPR works closely with UNDP country offices and, through them, with their national counterparts, by providing technical assistance, best practices and financial resources in support of their prevention and recovery activities. BCPR works to ensure that UNDP long-term development policies and programmes incorporate opportunities for disaster reduction and conflict prevention. BCPR is also responsible for ensuring that UNDP's commitment to gender equality is reflected throughout its crisis prevention and recovery work.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

In the context of its conflict prevention and recovery work, UNDP is working extensively for, and with, youth at the country level. Examples of UNDP's youth-related work include the promotion of youth employment and youth volunteerism, programmes aimed at increasing young people's participation and voice, support to the development of youth policies, and the promotion of social cohesion, cross-cultural communication and a culture of non-violence among youth.

The Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) has recognized the need for knowledge codification and cross-country learning on this issue, and has embarked on a sustained global effort to develop a better understanding of the youth-violence linkage and its programmatic implications.

ACTIVITIES

The BCPR initiative—Youth Programming in Conflict Prevention and Recovery—which was launched in 2005 has the following objectives:

- To gain a better understanding of UNDP experience in working with youth in the context of conflict prevention and recovery.
- To identify key areas and/or roles for which UNDP has a particular value added vis-à-vis other actors.
- To capture lessons learned from UNDP experience in working with youth.
- To develop programming guidance for UNDP and partners.

In order to achieve these objectives, a number of activities have been undertaken over the past three years, namely:

- Publication of the report *Youth and Violent Conflict: Society and Development in Crisis?* (2006). The report reviews existing analytical and policy frameworks, and provides a preliminary mapping of relevant strategies and programming efforts put in place by UNDP and partners, and identifies gaps and areas in need of further reflection.
- Development of case studies, each reviewing a specific UNDP programme on youth in Cyprus, El Salvador, Kosovo and Liberia.
- E-discussion on Youth programming in crisis prevention and recovery” (30 April–15 May 2007). The e-discussion brought together a selected number of UNDP practitioners with extensive experience on the topic, as well as a limited number of non-UNDP experts, and explored the rationale, value added and challenges of UNDP in youth programming.
- Desk Review of over 20 UNDP youth-related programmes.

Building on these experiences, as well as additional resources and inputs, BCPR is now moving towards the development of a “How to” Guide on Youth and Violence, which is expected to be completed in 2008.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- Youth and Violent Conflict: Society and Development in Crisis? (2006), available at www.undp.org/cpr/whats_new/UNDP_Youth_PN.pdf

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The Human Development Report Office (HDRO), based at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), annually produces the *Human Development Report* in which it addresses a topic of global relevance. Topics covered in the past include climate change, water, international cooperation, cultural liberty, the Millennium Development Goals and democracy.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

Recognizing that the *Human Development Report* is addressed to policymakers and that its messages may need to be tailored to its young readers, HDRO produces a youth version of the global *Human Development Report* in cooperation with civil society organizations. These youth versions are short, colourful summaries of the main report. Past brochures have been widely distributed and were successfully received by youth organizations and UN agencies as important advocacy and learning tools.

ENGAGING YOUTH

The entire process of creating the youth version of the *Human Development Report* is managed by young people. They are in charge of writing, designing and editing the brochure.

To find young people to contribute to the brochure, a letter is sent to youth organizations and youth networks around the world, explaining the key messages of the main *Human Development Report* and asking young people to participate in the youth brochure's task force. Youth who have signed up can contribute stories, paintings, poems, videos and reports related to the *Report's* theme. The best contributors are invited to work with UNDP officials and civil society partners on editing the final brochure.

To sign up for the task force to work on future editions, send an e-mail to publications@peacechild.org.



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KEY PUBLICATIONS

Past editions of the youth brochure can be found at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/publications/title,1280,en.html> (2007 edition) <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/publications/title,1058,en.html> (2006 edition)

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United Nations Educational, Scientific and

With the ultimate goal of building peace, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) promotes international cooperation among its Member States in the fields of education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture and communication.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

Youth has always been a major focus in UNESCO's programmes. UNESCO was the first agency of the UN system to define and develop specific programmes for young people. Youth-specific activities are developed by the UNESCO Section for Youth, Sport and Physical Education (in the Sector of Social and Human Sciences), with an emphasis on youth participation and intercultural dialogue. The UNESCO Youth Section stimulates youth participation and lends youth organizations, movements and associations technical support to implement youth-led initiatives. In addition, through youth focal points in each specialized sector of the organization (education, culture, communication and information, natural sciences), UNESCO's work also focuses on access to and quality of education and explores youth cultures and identities, as well as young people's interaction with the environment, science and culture in general. For the next medium-term strategy 2008-2013, UNESCO is reinforcing its commitment to youth

by taking targeted actions for young people in all spheres of its work.

UNESCO YOUTH SECTION: ACTING WITH AND FOR YOUTH

FOSTERING YOUTH PARTICIPATION: UNESCO YOUTH FORUMS

The UNESCO Youth Section stimulates youth participation based on the conviction that no one is better suited to identify the issues of importance to youth within UNESCO's fields of work than young people themselves. UNESCO not only encourages youth participation in its programmatic work, but also promotes participation through its biennial Youth Forum. The UNESCO Youth Forums, held since 1999, have been institutionalized as an integral part of all sessions of the UNESCO General Conference, UNESCO's highest decision-making body, and have become an important mechanism for channeling young people's voices into the organization's work. The Forum fosters intercultural dialogue and

encourages participants and youth organizations to develop networks and partnerships. Following the recommendations of the 2005 UNESCO Youth Forum, the Youth Section also organized or co-organized a series of UNESCO regional youth forums in the Pacific, Euro-Mediterranean region, Asia, Americas and Africa.

The Youth Forums provide a unique space for interaction that is of immense value to young people with vision and initiative. Bringing together young delegates from all over the world to exchange views, share experiences, reflect together and, above all, detect common preoccupations and problems, the Forums allow youth to form networks and partnerships on issues that are of particular relevance to them.

PROMOTING YOUTH POLICIES

In order to support Member States in the development and implementation of integrated national youth policies and programmes, the UNESCO Youth

Section has developed a set of guidelines covering policy formulation, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. The organization has also produced good practice examples of youth-adult partnerships as well as a series of training and capacity-building modules highlighting the requirements of and challenges involved in “mainstreaming” the rights and needs of young people. For example, the Section has implemented an “Adolescent girls breaking the poverty cycle” project, which seeks to empower marginalized girls in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan through a broad-based capacity-building programme and the formulation of policy guidelines to ensure equal development opportunities for girls and young women living in poverty. Young people participate in this project’s implementation as monitors and evaluators.

Furthermore, following up on UNESCO regional Youth Forums, the Section increasingly works at the regional level on youth participation in the development of regional youth agendas and policies.

DEVELOPING NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS WITH YOUTH NGOS

The UNESCO Youth Section works closely with a variety of international, regional and local youth and student organizations to identify, test and implement youth-initiated ideas and innovative approaches. Through regional listservs and a directory of youth-led and/or youth-servicing organizations entitled “Who is who”, the Youth Section stimulates networking across borders, continents and cultures and encourages youth to get involved and make their voices heard.

PREVENTING YOUTH VIOLENCE IN CENTRAL AMERICA

The UNESCO Youth Section also has an intersectoral programme on youth violence (Maras) prevention in Central America. Four major projects are underway in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Honduras in cooperation with national authorities, while a fifth will be launched in Ecuador.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and

RAISING AWARENESS ON HIV/AIDS

UNESCO is one of the co-sponsors of UNAIDS and is the lead organization for HIV prevention among young people in education institutions. UNESCO's work in this area includes developing educational information and advocacy tools in cooperation with young people; advocating for appropriate learning opportunities for youth; supporting youth participation in HIV and AIDS policy and programming; and creating partnerships with youth organizations to involve and empower young people to make informed choices, take action and develop responsible attitudes and behaviour.

YOUTH-RELATED PROJECTS IN UNESCO'S SECTORS

While the main UNESCO youth programme is run by the Youth Section within the social and human sciences sector, a series of youth-related projects have been developed by youth focal points in UNESCO's various specialized sectors.

EDUCATION

Today's challenge in education is to prepare unprecedented numbers of young people and adults for further learning and sustainable livelihoods. UNESCO promotes quality education at the post-primary levels by assisting policymakers, curriculum developers, trainers and teachers to reform national education systems. For learners who are outside the formal school system and disadvantaged youth, UNESCO advocates flexible secondary-level learning opportunities. To translate innovative ideas into concrete action, UNESCO organizes seminars and workshops for policymakers and conducts research into emerging trends and challenges for education at the national, regional and international levels. UNESCO also has a large number of projects in countries around the world to promote access to quality secondary education for all. These projects range from integrating disadvantaged groups and girls into school, promoting ICT-based secondary education and stimulating an entrepreneurial spirit in secondary schooling. The Associated Schools Project network provides a platform to identify

innovative educational approaches and materials to develop young people's capacities.

NATURAL SCIENCES

UNESCO's natural sciences sector promotes national and regional science and technology policies and capacity-building in the sciences, engineering and renewable energy. It also implements programmes designed to respond to the international goals and challenges of climate change, gender equality, the eradication of poverty and sustainable development, in particular in small island developing States. In this sense, UNESCO is supporting the Youth Visioning for Island Living process. In this programme young people living in small islands work to implement their visions, proposals and plans for helping their islands develop. Youth Visioning seeks to build capacity among island youth, to give youth a voice in sustainable development matters, and to make positive changes at the local and national levels.

CULTURE

UNESCO's overall goal in the area of culture is to promote cultural diversity and dialogue among peoples. The organization notably contributes to mutual cultural understanding through the Young Digital Creators project. This UNESCO initiative was launched in 2003 to encourage communities to build their own creative learning environments through the use of digital tools and online applications. The Youth PATH (Poverty Alleviation through Tourism and Heritage) project actively involves youth from the Caribbean in both the preservation of the natural and cultural heritage and the economic development of their islands. The project focuses on building or strengthening the capacities, knowledge and skills of young people to conserve and manage natural and cultural heritage properties while creating employment avenues for them.

COMMUNICATION

The three principal strategic objectives of the communication and information sector's programmes

are promoting the free flow of ideas and universal access to information, promoting the expression of pluralism and cultural diversity in the media and world information networks, and promoting access for all to ICTs. In this perspective, UNESCO's Infoyouth International Information and Data Exchange Network on Youth was initiated in order to meet two main challenges: the necessity to counteract the splintering of various and scattered information sources and networks on youth, and the urgent need to implement appropriate and coherent youth policies from local to global levels. Among the main objectives of the Infoyouth Network are spreading worldwide data, experiences and analyses on which national and international youth policies are based through the use of new communication and information technologies; improving awareness and understanding of the problems and expectations of young people in different types of societies; and backing innovative projects aimed at stimulating the active participation of young people in the political, economic and cultural life of society.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- UNESCO's commitment to youth—the Youth Forum (2004)
- Assessing youth empowerment through peer-group monitoring and evaluation (2007)
- Empowering youth through national policies—UNESCO's contribution (2004)
- All different, all unique: young people and the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2004)
- Youth, HIV/AIDS and human rights—young people take action. A kit of ideas for youth organizations (UNESCO/UNAIDS, 2001)

UNESCO's social and human sciences sector magazine, *SHSViews*, No. 17, with a special file entitled "Young people—making tomorrow's world" as well as Issue 164 of the *International Social Science Journal* on "Youth in transition" can be downloaded at www.unesco.org/shs.

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The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) acts as a catalyst, advocate, educator and facilitator to promote the wise use and sustainable development of the global environment. To accomplish this, UNEP works with a wide range of partners, including United Nations entities, international organizations, national Governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and civil society.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

Deteriorating environmental conditions have a profound effect on young people's health as well as on their socio-economic situation. It is therefore important to have the concerns of young people on environmental issues heard, and also to engage them in actions that help to mitigate environmental challenges. UNEP engages young people in environmental activities in order to foster a generation of environmentally conscious citizens, capable of positive action. UNEP recognizes the critical role young people can and must play in addressing environmental issues.

PROMOTING YOUNG PEOPLE'S ENGAGEMENT: THE TUNZA STRATEGY

UNEP has adopted a programme for children and youth named "Tunza", which in the Kiswahili language of Eastern Africa means to treat with care and affection. The Tunza Programme is a six-year

strategy aimed at promoting the participation of children and youth in environmental activities. It consolidates all UNEP's activities for young people into a unified global programme implemented through the Children and Youth Unit of UNEP's Division of Communications and Public Information.

The Tunza strategy focuses on four thematic areas: awareness creation and information exchange, capacity-building, and youth participation in decision-making. All Tunza activities have an emphasis on the involvement and participation of girls and young women and concerted efforts are made to mainstream gender issues and concerns into the Tunza programme.

UNEP also engages young people through the Nature and Sport Camps, which combine sport with environmental awareness activities and campaigns. The camps provide an effective vehicle for mobilizing young people into environmental action.

CAPACITY-BUILDING

Since 1985, UNEP has been organizing international conferences to help build young people's capacity to address environmental issues. The UNEP TUNZA International Youth Conference is a biennial event for about 150 youth between 15 and 24 years from around the world. The aim of the Conference is to share experiences and develop joint strategies for environmental networking and community-based activities. The Conference is also used to promote environmental awareness and good practices by young people, to develop regional plans of action and to get commitments from the participants on environmental actions and projects they will pursue. Conference participants also elect members of the Tunza Youth Advisory Council—a group of 12 youth leaders who advise UNEP and represent youth in international environmental forums such as the UNEP Governing Council.

UNEP also has an internship programme aimed at capacity-building for young people on environmental issues. Young people from around the world can

apply for internships, which are normally limited to 6 months. Each year about 30 interns from about 20 countries participate in this programme. An online application form can be found at www.unon.org.

YOUTH IN DECISION-MAKING

UNEP recognizes the need to get young people more actively involved in decision-making regarding the environment. The Tunza Global Youth Retreat, which takes place in Nairobi every two years, brings together the Tunza Youth Advisory Council members and other youth leaders to review UNEP Governing Council documents and to develop a youth statement to the Governing Council. During the retreat, the young people are given the opportunity to exchange ideas and build their capacity to address environmental issues globally and in their communities. The retreat also gives them the opportunity to review UNEP's activities for young people and make suggestions on how to better involve young people in environmental issues.

PARTNERSHIPS

UNEP has signed agreements with various organizations dealing with children and youth. The agreements govern how both organizations will work together to foster environmental actions by young people. An example is a Memorandum of Understanding with the World Organization of the Scout Movement, which enables UNEP to utilize the vast Scout network that reaches about 30 million people worldwide to convey environmental messages to young people around the world.

In addition, the UNEP Environmental Education and Training Unit collaborates with universities to enhance environmental education.

AWARENESS CREATION AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE

UNEP utilizes the *Tunza* magazine, a quarterly publication, to disseminate environmental information to young people. The magazine highlights issues of concern to young people and is

produced by young people. Previous topics included biodiversity, the Millennium Development Goals, forests, energy, technology and the environment and North-South cooperation. The magazine is published in English, French, Spanish and through special arrangements in Japanese, Chinese, Korean and Mongolian. It is available in hard copy and via the website www.unep.org/Publications/Tunza.asp.

Information about youth and the environment is disseminated to young people via a listserv database of approximately 10,000 children and youth organizations. The listserv continues to grow with new addresses received from conferences and meetings.

In order to ensure wide dissemination of information and to bring UNEP services closer to young people, UNEP has established Tunza Focal Points in its six UNEP regional offices (Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe, North America, and West Asia) and in its divisions.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

A Tunza Folder containing fact sheets on the various activities for children and youth is available for use as a reference tool for youth organizations, partners and donors.

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The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) aims to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities, with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all. To this end, UN-HABITAT works to expand the global understanding of urban development, shelter and poverty. It advocates for sustainable urbanization and urban poverty reduction, provides technical cooperation and innovative financing for urbanization and specific shelter needs of the urban poor and creates strategic partnerships to leverage resources and coordinate international programme activities that work toward similar ends.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

UN-HABITAT regards young people as a major force for a better world and as active partners in meeting the challenges posed by the world's human settlements crisis. Young people constitute a large proportion of the urban population in rapidly urbanizing developing countries. Often, they have no jobs and no voice. Any effective intervention to improve the living conditions of the urban poor and slum-dwellers must deal with the challenges facing youth.

The work of UN-HABITAT with respect to youth is guided by the Habitat Agenda, which was adopted by 171 countries at the 1996 City Summit in Istanbul, Turkey. The Agenda recommends a participatory approach to promote employment, training, and crime prevention and stresses the role of young people in the alleviation of poverty and inequality.

UN-HABITAT has many programmes that engage with young people. These include the Safer Cities Programme, which aims at building capacities of local authorities and youth to address urban insecurity adequately and thereby contribute to the establishment of a culture of prevention; the Sustainable Cities Programme that focuses on building capacities in urban environmental planning and management using broad-based stakeholder participatory approaches; and the Water and Sanitation Branch programme, which promotes water conservation in schools and local communities in many developing countries.

GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE

The Global Partnership Initiative on Urban Youth Development (GPI), launched at the Second World Urban Forum in 2004, is the lead youth programme within UN-HABITAT. The GPI seeks to integrate the Millennium Development Goals with development programmes at the city level focusing on and working with urban youth, local governments, civil society, other relevant United Nations agencies,

multilateral institutions and private foundations to provide meaningful solutions to urban youth challenges. Utilizing an integrated approach to urban youth development, the initiative aims to contribute towards the improvement of livelihoods for marginalized youth in cities, especially those who live in slums. The GPI will also strengthen the capacities of local authorities and other institutions to engage youth effectively in policy formulation and the implementation of programmes.

YOUTH RESOURCE CENTRES

One of the key programmes of the Global Partnership Initiative has been the creation of resource centres for youth. UN-HABITAT and local governments have set up computerized One-Stop Youth Information Resource Centres in several African cities to prepare young people for employment through training in entrepreneurship, computer technologies and apprenticeships. The centres also provide health-related training and prevention programmes and activities, as well as information on local governance. Lastly, the

centres are hubs for youth to engage in cultural and physical activities such as music and sports, allowing them to interact positively with their community and their peers.

Similarly, the agency has set up special “We are the future” centres in towns and cities recovering from conflict and disaster. These centres concentrate on youth-led services for orphans and vulnerable children. The focus of this rehabilitation work is on health, nutrition, arts, sports and computer technology with the final aim of peacebuilding and entrepreneurship creation.

OPPORTUNITIES FUND FOR URBAN YOUTH-LED DEVELOPMENT

UN-HABITAT has established an Opportunities Fund for Urban Youth-led Development to strengthen the capacity of youth-led initiatives in improving young people’s livelihoods. The Fund helps test new approaches to good governance, adequate shelter and secure tenure, and promotes

the sharing of best practices. It also promotes vocational training and credit mechanisms to encourage entrepreneurship and employment for young women and men, in collaboration with the private sector, civil society and other UN bodies. UN-HABITAT is establishing a Youth Advisory Council to oversee the Youth Fund.

ENGAGING YOUTH—WORLD URBAN YOUTH FORUMS

UN-HABITAT is committed to increasing the number of youth actively involved in policy and decision-making mechanisms. Since 2006, UN-HABITAT has organized the World Urban Youth Forums leading up to the World Urban Forums. The Youth Forums are a response to a request from youth participants at the Second World Urban Forum in Barcelona in 2004 and provide youth with the opportunity to exchange views on sustainable urbanization and to share opinions in order to make meaningful contributions at the main forum.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme

Besides the World Urban Forum, youth can also participate in UN-HABITAT's work through the Governing Council and through UN-HABITAT's online discussion forums, accessible through UN-HABITAT's youth website.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- UN-HABITAT & Youth (brochure)
- Habitat Debate, Vol. 9, No. 2: "Young people in an urbanizing world"
- Youth entrepreneurship and employment (2008)
- State of the World's Cities 2006/2007
- Global Report on Human Settlements 2007: Enhancing Urban Safety and Security

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2005 | Diego Armando | Wel Press | UNFPA

United Nations Industrial Development

The mission of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is to reduce poverty in countries with developing and transition economies through sustainable industrial growth.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

Although youth-related activities are not at the core of UNIDO's mandate, the organization recognizes that promoting decent employment opportunities for youth is an important component of achieving industrial development.

UNIDO has worked towards implementing a variety of programmes and projects specifically aimed at empowering and assisting youth in need. UNIDO is active in entrepreneurship development and education, provides young men and women with technical skills and vocational training and promotes women's entrepreneurship programmes in a number of countries.

A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIP FOR PRODUCTIVE AND DECENT WORK IN THE MANO RIVER UNION AND CÔTE D'IVOIRE

High youth unemployment and underemployment is not only a social and economic problem, it can

have political ramifications as well. The members of the Mano River Union (MRU)—Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone—and Côte d'Ivoire are particularly acute examples of the dangers of high youth unemployment. In these countries, youth unemployment and subregional security have become intimately linked.

All four countries are confronted with large youth populations, which have been protagonists as well as victims of political instability and conflict. Many young people who were not directly involved as combatants have lost their employment or have had to interrupt their education. Unemployed youth can be ready recruits for anyone looking to profit from instability. In addition, the young people in these countries face pressures to migrate, at considerable risk to themselves and with potentially adverse consequences for both the home and the host country.

To overcome these threats and generate prospects for a better future for youth in the region, UNIDO launched a Youth Employment Initiative, the

“Multi-stakeholder Programme on Productive and Decent Work for Youth in the MRU countries and Côte d’Ivoire”. In this initiative, UNIDO is joining forces with the ILO, UNDP and the Youth Employment Network to support youth-led employment initiatives and to complement existing national efforts on youth employment. The multi-stakeholder programme can be seen as a sign of the commitment of United Nations agencies to “deliver as one” in the area of youth employment.

The programme directly addresses the needs of youth by linking them to employment opportunities in the dynamic private sector and training youth in various skills that are required by sectors such as mining, forestry, agriculture, agro-industries and construction. The programme will assist and train youth in identifying, designing and implementing projects in self-employment and collective activities and will improve access to finance for youth-led projects. The programme will also set up a sub-regional information system on supply and demand in labour markets and provide a forum for outreach

and an ICT network for youth, while at the same time monitoring experiences and lessons learned.

Youth have participated in all meetings that led to the formulation of the multi-stakeholder programme. During a joint exploratory mission by UNIDO, the ILO, UNDP, the Youth Employment Network and the United Nations Office for West Africa to the Mano River Union countries and Côte d’Ivoire, particular emphasis was placed on meeting with youth and listening to their views, needs and ideas. Youth representatives were also part of the Technical Working Group, which helped to develop and operationalize the programme, as well as in the Steering Committee, which establishes programme policies and oversees implementation.

In addition, UNIDO is establishing a subregional youth forum designed to facilitate contacts and experience sharing between youth groups in West Africa. An Internet communication platform linking up the relevant stakeholders of the programme is also being developed.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- West Africa’s Youth Employment Challenge—The Case of Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d’Ivoire
- Best Practices, Policy Environment, Tools, and Methodologies for Youth Employment in West Africa
- Productive and decent work for youth in the Mano River Union: Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d’Ivoire—4.5 million need employment: an agenda for a multi-stakeholder programme. Issues Paper

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United Nations Millennium Campaign

The United Nations Millennium Campaign informs, inspires and encourages people's involvement and action for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It supports citizens' efforts to hold their Governments to account for the promises they made at the Millennium Summit in 2000. At that Summit, 189 Government leaders from the highest political level agreed to a set of eight time-bound goals that, when achieved, will have a significant impact on ending poverty in all its dimensions. Working at both the national and international levels, the ambition of the Campaign is to inspire a global movement to achieve the Goals and eradicate extreme poverty by 2015. The Millennium Campaign's premise is simple: we are the first generation that can put an end to extreme poverty around the world, and we refuse to miss this opportunity!

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

The Millennium Campaign recognizes that youth are significantly affected by poor socio-economic conditions. Estimates suggest that over 462 million youth live on less than \$2 per day, 133 million are illiterate and every day thousands of young people are infected with HIV/AIDS. Yet, young people are unable to gain the political leverage to make any significant contribution to the advancement of society. Although they constitute almost 20 per cent of the world's population and have a particularly intense resolve to affect change, young people are often left voiceless in the political process.

The Millennium Campaign seeks to address this situation by focusing on youth as a primary constituency to partner with and mobilize as part of the Campaign. It encourages youth to play a role in holding their Governments accountable and to create awareness on poverty.

GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS

The Campaign has established a number of key strategic partnerships at the global level to increase young people's awareness on the MDGs, and to bolster the formation of national level linkages between youth groups and the national Millennium Campaigns. Key partners included the World Organization of the Scout Movement, TakingITGlobal, the Global Youth Action Network, the International Young Catholic Students and the World Alliance of YMCAs. Each partner develops unique material for their constituents and undertakes specific MDG activities on both a global and national level.

NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS

At a national level, youth have now been included as a key constituency in each national Millennium Campaign. Several national Youth Consultations were held in 2006 including in Canada, Bangladesh and India. The Canada Youth Millennium Campaign, for example, began its programme in September 2006, linking the major Canadian NGOs—including Make Poverty History Canada, Rights and

Democracy, and Amnesty International—together to develop a youth-centred programme on the MDGs. In Bangladesh, over 55 youth organizations across the country came together in July 2007 for the first national youth consultation on the Millennium Development Goals. Representatives from various youth organizations discussed how to promote the Goals and ensure that Government officials listen to the voices of young people in the country. The meeting concluded with the establishment of a new youth network called “Youth for the Millennium Development Goals”, which will work to unite the many youth groups in Bangladesh around the MDGs. In India, over 250 young people from 16 States assembled in Nagpur for a National Youth Consultation on the Millennium Goals. The event marked the first time young people from across the country came together to discuss the role of youth achieving the MDGs.

USING SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES TO MOBILIZE YOUTH

To mobilize young people online, the Millennium Campaign set up portals on popular social

networking sites including Facebook, MySpace and MSN Spaces. For the “Stand Up Against Poverty” Campaign on the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, a unique Facebook application was developed which allowed users to place a Stand Up banner on their profile page. Users could also add daily MDG pictures, and post comments to a global wall. A custom design was created for *MySpace.com* which featured the Campaign’s End Poverty Blog. The Campaign established a partnership with MSN Spaces during the Stand Up event, which promoted the Campaign’s profile on the homepage of *MSN Spaces.com*. As a result of these developments, over 7,000 members have joined the Millennium Campaign’s social networking sites. The Campaign’s youth website www.endpoverty2015.org/youth was developed to provide information on the Millennium Development Goals to young people in elementary and high school. The portal remains the most trafficked website of the Millennium Campaign with over 300,000 unique visitors per month.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

An MDG Action Guide for young people is available at <http://mdg.takingitglobal.org>.

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The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) assists Member States in their struggle against illicit drugs, crime and terrorism. The three pillars of the UNODC work programme are (a) field-based technical cooperation projects to enhance the capacity of Member States to counteract illicit drugs, crime and terrorism; (b) research and analytical work to increase knowledge and understanding of drugs and crime issues and expand the evidence-base for policy and operational decisions; and (c) normative work to assist States in the ratification and implementation of international treaties, the development of domestic legislation on drugs, crime and terrorism, and the provision of secretariat and substantive services to the treaty-based and governing bodies.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

UNODC recognizes that young people use illicit drugs much more than adults. In a country with a medium level of drug abuse, 1-5 per cent of the general population will have used illicit drugs in the past year, while 10-20 per cent of its young people will have used drugs in their lifetime. The use of illicit drugs has a range of serious negative physical and psychological effects, such as physical and psychological dependence, mental illnesses (such as depression or paranoia), HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C. These in turn can exact a high toll on families and communities. The use of psychoactive substances, whether legal or illegal, by young people is particularly problematic as it affects their healthy development. The younger people start using substances, the higher the probability of developing substance dependence later in life.

For the past decade, UNODC has had a programme focusing on the prevention of substance abuse and has worked on the treatment and rehabilitation of drug dependence, including the prevention of HIV/

AIDS and other social and health consequences. UNODC also assists Governments in reforming juvenile justice systems and in preventing crimes by young people in urban areas.

CONNECTING YOUTH IN ACTION: THE GLOBAL YOUTH NETWORK

UNODC (then UNDCP) started involving young people in the development of prevention activities in 1997 by mobilizing a number of innovative youth programmes around the world. The Youth Vision Jeunesse Drug Abuse Prevention Forum, held in 1998 in Canada, provided an opportunity for several youth programmes to share their ideas about how to prevent drug abuse. These ideas and proposals were brought to the attention of Government leaders during the Special Session of the General Assembly on the World Drug Problem in 1998. One of the needs articulated was the creation of a worldwide network that would enable youth to remain in contact and to continue to learn from each other. The network should provide access to up-to-date

materials and information on effective methods of drug abuse prevention among youth. This was the genesis of the Global Youth Network, which now connects some 500 member organizations in more than 100 countries.

The prevention of drug use is not only about providing young people with information about the negative consequences of drugs, but also about helping young people to obtain the opportunities, skills and information to avoid risky behaviours and make healthy choices. The Global Youth Network therefore seeks to increase the participation of youth in drug abuse prevention by:

- *Providing technical and financial support.* The Network has, for example, provided training in needs assessment and programme planning for youth substance abuse prevention to non-governmental organizations working with youth in six regions. Each organization was represented at the trainings by a young person and a youth worker. Following the training, small grants were provided to the

trainees with the most innovative proposals on how to involve youth in drug abuse prevention.

- *Involving youth in the identification of good practices.* The Network has identified and published good practices on a range of drug abuse prevention topics through a participatory process. This process typically involves the review of the scientific literature by both practitioners and youth to distil good practices on the basis of both research and practical experience. The results are disseminated through the website of the Network, a mailing list, a Newsletter and, in some cases, through training.

- *Supporting the creation of regional networks* to sustain and adapt its work at the regional level. In 2008, six Networks were operational: Eastern Europe, Eastern Africa, South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific, Mexico and Central America and South America.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- A Participatory Handbook for Youth Drug Prevention Programmes, and related publications on planning prevention of youth drug abuse
- Publications on preventing youth drug use through various activities (performance, sports, internet-based, peer-to-peer)
- School-based education for drug abuse prevention
- Publications on preventing drug use among particularly vulnerable groups (e.g. ethnic minorities, injecting drug users)
- Monitoring and Evaluating Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Programmes

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United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

Active in 150 countries, areas and territories around the world, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) promotes the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity. UNFPA supports countries in collecting and analysing population data that can help Governments understand population trends. The Fund also helps Governments to use these data to formulate policies and programmes to reduce poverty and to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, every young person is free of HIV/AIDS, and every girl and woman is treated with dignity and respect.

UNFPA's work is guided by the Programme of Action adopted at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo. At the conference, 179 countries agreed that meeting needs for education and health, including reproductive health, is a prerequisite for sustainable development over the longer term and agreed on a set of targets for charting progress. Reaching ICPD's goals is not only essential for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, but also for improving the prospects for youth.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

UNFPA's focus on youth is based on the recognition that young people, particularly those living in poverty, have been virtually ignored in policies and programmes. Yet, of the 1.2 billion young people in the world today, about half survive on less than \$2 a day, while more than 100 million adolescents do not attend school. Fifteen million adolescent girls become mothers every year. Almost 40 per cent of the 6,800 new HIV infections each day are among young people, the majority of whom are young girls in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

UNFPA regards investments in young people's human capital development, that is in their health, education and employment, as one of the most cost-effective development expenditures in terms of the social returns they generate. The current "youth bulge" in the population structure of many countries offers a one-time window of economic opportunity. For a large group of countries where

fertility has declined sharply in the last two decades, the proportion of the working age population will increase relative to younger and older dependent populations over the next few decades. With appropriate investments, policies and governance, countries can take advantage of this low dependency ratio, or "demographic bonus", to launch economic, social, cultural and structural transformations.

At the policy level, UNFPA frames adolescent and youth issues within the larger development context of poverty reduction. At the programme level, it advocates for an essential package of social protection interventions for youth that includes education, sexual and reproductive health services, support for establishing livelihoods and recognition of young people's rights to participation. At both levels, the Fund encourages intergenerational alliances that pair the energy, perspectives and motivation of young people with the experience and know-how of adult coaches and facilitators.

UNFPA'S FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION ON ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH

UNFPA's Framework for Action on Adolescents and Youth articulates the organization's multisectoral strategy to promote the comprehensive development of young people worldwide. The Framework for Action identifies the four key areas of interventions of the Fund in regard to young people: creating a supportive policy environment; expanding access to gender-sensitive, life skills-based sexual and reproductive health (SRH) education in schools and community settings; promoting a core package of sexual and reproductive health services; and encouraging young people's leadership and participation.

SUPPORTIVE POLICY ENVIRONMENT

UNFPA actively engages in policy dialogues on poverty reduction strategies and national MDG-based development plans advocating, based on analyses of population structure and poverty

dynamics and the "demographic bonus" argument, for increased investments in education, health (including sexual and reproductive health) and employment. UNFPA also supports capacity-building of young people, their networks and organizations to advocate for young people's rights and needs in policy dialogue and decision-making processes. For example, UNFPA, in collaboration with the World Bank and UNDESA, has developed an online course on Young People and Poverty Reduction Strategies, which prepares young people in developing countries to participate in the development and monitoring of their country's Poverty Reduction Strategy.

GENDER-SENSITIVE, LIFE SKILLS-BASED SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH EDUCATION

The Fund proactively pursues policy discussions, dialogue and advocacy on improving the quality of education systems, postponing age at marriage, and retaining girls in schools. UNFPA promotes

the delivery of educational interventions through a gender equality promotion and skills approach that will equip girls and boys with the abilities to turn knowledge into practice. It focuses policy on inclusion of SRH education in school curricula and informal education programmes within the context of sector-wide approaches, poverty reduction strategies and education reforms.

CORE PACKAGE OF SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES

UNFPA works with ministries, NGOs and other partners to allow for efficient and youth-friendly delivery of a holistic health-care package that includes universal access to accurate sexual and reproductive health information, a range of safe and affordable contraceptive methods, sensitive counselling, quality obstetric and antenatal care for all pregnant women and girls, and the prevention and management of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV.

UNFPA is the lead United Nations agency in the provision of HIV/AIDS information and education, condom programming, HIV prevention for out-of school young people and prevention efforts targeting vulnerable groups. UNFPA strives to build on and expand rights-based policies and programmes that promote young people's healthy development and provides them with age-appropriate knowledge and tools to make informed choices and exercise their reproductive rights. It proactively pursues policy discussions, dialogue and advocacy on improving young people's access to sexual and reproductive services within the context of sector-wide approaches, poverty reduction strategies and health sector reforms.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

The Fund pays special attention to working with young people through youth-adult partnerships. It works towards identifying institutional mechanisms for incorporating young people's input into all stages of policy and programming processes.

UNFPA invests in capacity-building and leadership skills of youth to make them advocates for their own rights and the rights of those among them who are most vulnerable and marginalized. UNFPA also promotes and supports the meaningful participation of young people in international meetings and conferences. Many of the youth networks UNFPA supports have been effective advocates for youth issues in international and regional forums.

UNFPA encourages the participation of youth in its projects and programmes by promoting peer educators as agents for transmitting safe sexuality messages, linking peers with services and partnering with young people's networks and coalitions. The Fund taps into the dynamism of youth movements and their communication networks for advocacy and action on issues, such as HIV/AIDS and age at marriage.

UNFPA IN CRISIS SITUATIONS

In humanitarian situations, UNFPA works to protect the reproductive health of those affected, with

an emphasis on the special needs of women and young people. It also supports various data collection activities necessary for efficient relief efforts. UNFPA also provides assistance to stricken communities, including their youth, as they move beyond the acute crisis and enter the reconstruction phase.

GLOBAL YOUTH ADVISORY PANEL

UNFPA has a strong track record of partnering with youth networks and organizations at the country, regional and global levels. In 2004, UNFPA established its Global Youth Advisory Panel (YAP) as a mechanism of open dialogue and exchange between the Fund and young people. Panel members, aged 15 to 24, represent national, regional and international youth networks and organizations, and meet annually to make recommendations on the strategic opportunities and actions to address adolescent and youth issues within all areas of the Fund's mandate. Members also share ideas and communicate

among themselves and with UNFPA throughout the year via an online forum. Numerous Youth Advisory Panels have also been established at the country level over the past few years to provide inputs in country-level programming for UNFPA and increasingly to the UN country team as a whole.

UNFPA'S SPECIAL YOUTH PROGRAMME

UNFPA has initiated the Special Youth Programme, which recruits outstanding young people aged 20 to 24 from developing countries to join UNFPA for a 9-month paid fellowship that is divided between UNFPA's New York headquarters and their home country. Through this programme, UNFPA engages young people in policy development and programming and builds their capacity and leadership skills in addressing population, sexual and reproductive health, and gender issues.

STATE OF THE WORLD POPULATION—YOUTH SUPPLEMENT

Since 2006, UNFPA has been publishing a *Youth Supplement* as a parallel report to its annual flagship publication *State of World Population*. The *Supplement* explores the theme of the main report through the experiences and perceptions of young people. Previous themes have included migration and urbanization:

- Growing Up Urban: State of World Population 2007 Youth Supplement
- Moving Young: State of World Population 2006 Youth Supplement

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- Framework for Action on Adolescents and Youth: Opening Doors with Young People: 4 Keys
- Putting Young People Into National Poverty Reduction Strategies: A Guide to Statistics on Young People in Poverty
- Giving Girls Today and Tomorrow: Breaking the Cycle of Adolescent Pregnancy
- Will You Listen? Young Voices from Conflict Zones
- Case for Investing in Young People—As Part of a National Poverty Reduction Strategy

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United Nations Volunteers (UNV)

In 1971, the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme was created by the General Assembly as a development partner to serve the entire UN system. UNV is entrusted with raising awareness of the role and contribution of volunteerism to development, providing technical assistance to develop volunteerism, and mobilizing volunteers nationally and internationally. It supports the efforts of the UN system, Governments and civil society in all developing regions to meet national development objectives within the context of the MDGs.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

Through General Assembly resolution 31/131, UNV has a special mandate to work with youth. UNV believes that young people must be approached as assets for development. Youth volunteerism programmes encourage policymakers, communities and youth themselves to see young people as valuable, underutilized resources for local and national development and the achievement of the MDGs.

PROMOTION OF YOUTH VOLUNTEERISM

UNV is closely involved in the formulation and implementation of youth-related projects and programmes that promote the participation of young people in the development of their societies. UNV provides direct technical assistance to countries in establishing volunteer infrastructure, including youth volunteering schemes. It also assists Governments to develop supportive policies

and legislation as well as volunteer associations and networks and to measure the economic contributions of volunteerism.

In addition, UNV places between 7,000 to 8,000 qualified and experienced professional women and men, drawn from over 160 countries, as UNV volunteers each year. They serve both internationally and nationally in 144 countries—often in areas of direct concern to the challenges facing young people.

PROJECTS

UNV is engaged in work related to all of the priority areas of the WPAY through specialized UNV volunteer assignments and through community volunteerism partnerships and projects, many of which involve youth themselves in voluntary action. Some of the diverse examples of how youth are engaged as volunteers to address both national and youth development objectives are:

SUPPORTING YOUTH LIVELIHOODS— SIERRA LEONE

Through a joint UNDP, UNV and Ministry of Youth and Sport programme entitled “Youth engagement and job creation through agriculture”, some 15,000 young men and women between 15 and 35 years are involved in improving food security in Sierra Leone. In addition to supporting young people in farming activities, this community-based programme also provides training and resources that help the young people sustain their businesses and livelihoods. Young people are thus improving their skills and gaining access to resources, which in turn demonstrates that there are viable livelihood alternatives outside the cities. In addition, the programme organizes and supports various voluntary group projects and establishes networks between engaged youth groups for sharing good practices.

RAISING AWARENESS OF FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION—EGYPT

In Egypt, UNV is supporting a national campaign led by the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood and UNDP to stop the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM). Working with youth organizations, the UNV volunteers, including victims of FGM, raise awareness on the issue and provoke debate. Starting at high school level, they work to generate understanding of what FGM means and what impact it has on women, both physically and emotionally. At universities and youth centres, the UNV volunteers have informal talks on FGM with their peers in a non-threatening environment. To reach out to larger groups, youth conferences are organized to encourage student participation in discussions on medical and religious issues.

ADDRESSING POLITICAL PARTICIPATION— KYRGYZSTAN

In Kyrgyzstan, UNV has helped establish volunteer networks to tackle voter apathy among young

people. Youth volunteers work throughout the country before elections to raise awareness of the upcoming vote, political structures and voter rights and responsibilities. They spend several days in each community fostering discussions between youth and political candidates. These one-on-one interactions enable youth and politicians to understand each other's views and concerns better.

TECHNOLOGY LEARNING CENTRE— UGANDA

A team of six online volunteers, including youth with backgrounds ranging from IT consultancy to media management, supported the Youth for Technology Foundation in establishing the Sironko Digital Village, a community technology and learning centre in Uganda, by creating a webpage, mobilizing funding and providing strategic advice. For their work, the Youth for Technology Foundation Team won the Online Volunteer of the Year 2007 Award.

ONLINE VOLUNTEERING

Anybody interested in learning how to become an online volunteer can do so at www.onlinevolunteering.org. UNV's online volunteering service provides development organizations access to a global pool of knowledge and resources to enhance their capacities, while offering individuals worldwide additional opportunities to volunteer for development and contribute to achieving the MDGs. The online volunteering service has enabled over 900 non-profit development organizations (civil society organizations, Government institutions, academic institutions and United Nations organizations) to benefit from the support of more than 9,500 individuals from 172 countries.

MORE INFORMATION

Further examples of youth volunteerism and UNV project partnerships can be found on the UNV website (www.unv.org) and the World Volunteer Website (www.worldvolunteerweb.org). Interested young people and others should check with the UNV/UNDP Country Office in their country for relevant projects and volunteer opportunities.

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The World Bank is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. It is made up of two development institutions owned by 185 member countries, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA). Each institution plays a different but supportive role in the Bank's mission of global poverty reduction and the improvement of living standards. The IBRD focuses on middle-income and creditworthy poor countries, while IDA focuses on the poorest countries in the world. Together, these institutions provide low-interest loans, interest-free credit and grants to developing countries for overall development, including specific assistance to sectors such as education, health, infrastructure and communications, among others.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

The Children and Youth Unit within the World Bank's Human Development Network is charged with managing the Bank's youth agenda and with maintaining a cross-sectoral perspective, to ensure harmonization of investments across sectors and across the life-cycle. The Unit focuses on coordination, rather than direct execution, and relies on strategic partnerships within and outside the Bank. The World Bank has expanded its work on youth in response to increasing demands from country clients, donors and civil society and in recognition that the current global youth bulge provides an unprecedented opportunity to take advantage of the largest pool of children and youth in recorded history. The World Bank recognizes that youth can be a positive force for change, but that unemployed and disenfranchised youth are susceptible to disruptive activities. It believes that growth and poverty reduction are enhanced by strategic investments in human capital, in particular in young children. Investments in youth

and early adulthood are far more productive if they build on a strong foundation, rather than attempt to compensate for earlier weaknesses.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE WORLD BANK'S WORK WITH AND FOR YOUTH

The World Bank's work on youth is guided by the logical framework for youth investment across sectors outlined in the *World Development Report 2007*. This framework focuses on the opportunities facing youth as they grow, their capabilities to choose wisely and the importance of second chances to recover from harm received or poor decisions made earlier in youth. The Bank's Children and Youth Framework for Action helps systematically to identify key vulnerabilities and strategic opportunities for scaling up investment in children and youth. It emphasizes a life-cycle approach and emphasizes that risks are not homogeneously distributed along the life-cycle and are typically higher in earlier stages of life, with important long-term and sometimes

irreversible consequences on later stages of life. The World Bank's work on youth is consistent with and coordinated with the Bank's priorities of poverty reduction and the development of sub-Saharan Africa, fragile States, middle-income and Arab countries, the Education for All Fast-track Initiative, good governance and anti-corruption.

KEY ACTIVITIES IN THE AREA OF YOUTH

- *Increased lending.* In fiscal year 2005, the World Bank lent nearly \$1 billion for youth.
- *Investments in all sectors and regions.* Non-education lending has grown to roughly 35 per cent of the total during the years 2000-2005, up from 5 per cent in 1995-2000. Latin America and the Caribbean has historically received the bulk of youth-oriented investments. In recent years, Africa and South Asia have seen the fastest growth in lending.
- *Increased analytical and advisory activities.* The World Bank has increased its non-lending activities

in response to rapidly growing demand, especially for youth employment, youth at risk, vulnerable children and children and youth in fragile States.

- *Strengthening the evidence base.* The evidence base for what works in youth development is weak. Many countries continue to spend scarce resources on programmes that have no proven impact. For example, only 2 per cent of evaluated youth HIV interventions show a positive, objectively measured impact. The Bank is therefore compiling and disseminating knowledge of what works, providing technical assistance and developing practical tools for the operations and for clients.

ACTIVITIES IN 2008 AND 2009

In fiscal years 2008 and 2009, the Children and Youth Unit is focusing on the following areas:

- *Facilitating the economic empowerment of young women.* In collaboration with bilateral and private-sector donors, the Children and Youth Unit is developing a programme to enhance the skills and labour force success of young women around the world.
- *Understanding preference formation and risky decision-making.* In collaboration with the World Bank's research department and others, the World Bank is launching a work programme to understand decision-making, in particular what determines an individual's sense of the future and why people make choices that put their future at risk.
- *Enhancing voice, reducing violence and crime.* In collaboration with the Bank's Post-conflict Unit, partners in other United Nations agencies and civil

society, the Children and Youth Unit is launching a programme to develop interventions to engage young people in post-conflict reconstruction, participation and conflict resolution.

- *Assisting in the school-to-work transition.* The Children and Youth Unit is continuing its work with the Bank's regions and with the Social Protection Department to design and facilitate evaluations of school-to-work assistance programmes around the world.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- World Development Report 2007: Development and the Next Generation
- Supporting Youth at Risk—A Policy Toolkit for Middle-Income Countries (2008)
- Youth advisory groups—new allies in the World Bank's work, Working Paper Series No. 6 (2008)

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World Food Programme (WFP)

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) is the world's largest humanitarian organization and the United Nations frontline agency in the fight against world hunger. Over the years, WFP has reached hundreds of millions of people in about 80 countries, using food assistance to meet emergency needs and support economic and social development. On average, WFP feeds over 70 million people per year.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

WFP seeks to educate youth on the significance of global hunger throughout the world, and also hopes to demonstrate the impact that adolescents can make toward alleviating this worldwide issue. The World Food Programme believes in the potential of today's youth as successful future decision makers, and hopes that by raising awareness about hunger, the young adults who WFP reaches can become well-informed leaders. Furthermore, WFP understands that by supporting youth in vulnerable communities through safety-net programmes, it is ensuring that those children and young people affected by world hunger can maximize their potential for future success.

PROMOTING YOUNG PEOPLE'S ENGAGEMENT

Knowing that today's youth are significantly proficient in media and technology, WFP is continually incorporating programmes through which youth can learn about global hunger using entertainment and media outlets.

- *Food Force*—Launched in 2005, Food Force was the world's first humanitarian video game. It explores the problem of global hunger and the logistics of humanitarian aid work. The game is available in 12 languages as a free Internet download from www.food-force.com, with over six million players worldwide. The website also has a teachers' section, where educators can find lesson plans and a wealth of information about WFP and hunger.
- *Free Rice*—This engaging, hunger-fighting vocabulary game expands adolescents' language skills while donating free rice to the hungry. For every vocabulary challenge answered correctly, sponsors donate 20 grains of rice to WFP. The rice donated has already translated into WFP food rations for thousands of hungry, poor people, including pregnant women in Cambodia, schoolchildren in Uganda and Bhutanese refugees in Nepal. It can be played online at www.freerice.com.
- *The Team: Emergency in Ristanga*—Released at the Children's Book Fair in Bologna, Italy, in April 2008, this children's novel depicts the exciting story of three humanitarian aid workers who become heroes through their work with WFP. The reader

follows Carlos, Rachel and Joe (characters from the Food Force video game) through their mission in the flood-struck Ristanga, an imaginary country reflecting the traits of innumerable WFP operations.

SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMMES

When hunger strikes a community, children suffer most. Hunger drains them of their will and ability to learn. WFP school meals encourage hungry children to attend school and help them concentrate on their studies. The promise of at least one nutritious meal each day attracts children to school, boosts enrolment, promotes regular attendance and enhances student performance. In the poorest pockets of the world, WFP has seen that guaranteeing one school meal a day can nearly double primary school enrolment in one year. WFP has also used school feeding programmes to encourage girls to continue secondary schooling and some of WFP's "food for education" initiatives include vocational training for young adults.

WFP works with Governments and partners to provide school feeding programmes in rural, food-

insecure areas. In these targeted areas, the agency secures food supplies and transport, as well as ensuring delivery and distribution. Where appropriate, take-home rations are also provided as part of school feeding programmes. These are especially useful for encouraging girls—future mothers and food-providers for families—to attend school.

REACHING YOUNG COMMUNITIES

WFP believes that young adults have great potential to promote change throughout the world. Therefore, the World Food Programme supports groups such as Universities Fighting World Hunger on college campuses, as well as virtual groups on social networks like Facebook that promote WFP's cause. WFP hopes to energize and motivate these groups to act as a leading member at events such as the annual University Hunger Summit. A student-created initiative, the University Hunger Summit seeks to mobilize universities in support of global goals to end world hunger. WFP knows that through its engagement in these young communities, young adults will understand that their participation in global issues is vital.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- World Hunger Series (2007)—Hunger and Health
- World Hunger Series (2006)—Hunger and Learning

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World Health Organization (WHO)

WHO is the directing and coordinating authority for health within the United Nations system. It is responsible for providing leadership on global health matters, shaping the health research agenda, setting norms and standards, articulating evidence-based policy options, providing technical support to countries and monitoring and assessing health trends.

RATIONALE FOR YOUTH-RELATED WORK

Although many adolescents are healthy, a significant proportion of them face a range of problems which have implications for their health now and in the future. In line with the Millennium Development Goals 5 and 6, the WHO focuses on health challenges related to HIV and maternal mortality. The organization also addresses other health issues that affect adolescents such as mental health, substance use, nutrition, injuries and violence and endemic diseases.

WHO's Department of Child and Adolescent Health and Development (CAH) envisions a world in which children and adolescents enjoy the highest attainable standard of health and development, a world that meets their needs, as well as respects their rights, enabling them to live to their full potential. Within the Department, there is a specialized team working exclusively on adolescent health and development, covering the health needs of the population aged 10 to 24 years. While CAH advocates for a comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach to

adolescent health and development, it focuses its technical assistance on the contribution of the health sector.

WHO's technical support is organized around the four key roles of the health sector, which are expressed in the "4S" framework: Supportive, evidence-based policies; Services and commodities; Strategic information; and Supporting other sectors.

SUPPORTIVE, EVIDENCE-BASED POLICIES

CAH raises awareness, promotes research and synthesizes information to develop standards and guidelines. It facilitates the adaptation and implementation of these guidelines at national and local levels to sustain the health of adolescents. CAH also develops and disseminates the evidence base for interventions that promote and protect the health of young people, and advocates for the development and delivery of effective programming. It has done reviews on adolescent-friendly health services, HIV interventions and parenting interventions.

SERVICES AND COMMODITIES

CAH also provides technical assistance to support a systematic approach to scaling up the provision and use of quality health services to adolescents. This includes developing consensus among key stakeholders and developing national standards for youth-friendly health services. CAH supports efforts to achieve these standards by training health workers to deal with adolescents effectively and sensitively, making health facilities welcoming to adolescents, and generating adolescent demand for health services and community acceptance for their provision. CAH produces training materials for health workers, job aids and tools for assessing the quality and coverage of services.

STRATEGIC INFORMATION

WHO provides guidance to countries on the information that needs to be collected to guide health policies and programmes. It has produced guidance documents on indicators for HIV programmes and for monitoring the MDG goals. The organization imple-

ments a Global Student Health Survey (www.who.int/chp/gshs/en/) and is involved in regional surveys such as the Health Behaviours among School-aged Children Survey in Europe (www.hbsc.org).

STRENGTHENING OTHER SECTORS

An important role of the health sector is to call on other sectors to implement effective interventions for adolescent health. WHO helps the education sector to develop health promoting schools and supports many regional networks, such as the European Network of Health Promoting Schools. WHO also supports initiatives to strengthen the health of adolescents by working with parents and sport coaches.

HIV

CAH produces technical materials to strengthen national HIV programmes to deal with youth. It has published evidence of effective interventions to prevent HIV among young people. CAH has also developed national-level indicators for HIV and young people to support the collection of strategic information which

guides programme management and implementation. In addition, capacity-building materials for health workers to prevent and care for HIV among young people have been developed.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

CAH produces technical materials to deal with sexual and reproductive health. An orientation programme to train health-care providers dealing with the key sexual and reproductive health issues has been adapted for use in more than 30 countries around the world. CAH provides support to incorporate adolescent health in curricula of nursing and medical teaching institutes and in distance education courses.

SUBSTANCE USE

Substance use is dealt with in CAH's training materials for health workers, in particular in relation to HIV and injecting drug use. WHO has a keen interest in reducing tobacco use which, together with alcohol use, are two of the largest public health challenges in the world. The organization organizes the Global Youth

Tobacco Survey (www.who.int/tobacco/surveillance/gyts/en/index.html), which has been implemented in 129 countries.

VIOLENCE PREVENTION

WHO has a Violence and Injury Prevention Unit which addresses various issues like road safety, child and adolescent maltreatment and other injury prevention at the global level. In some regions, violence is a major issue affecting young people's health and is therefore a focus of WHO's activities in these regions. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), WHO's regional office in the Americas, for example, has implemented a violence prevention project in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Peru. The project's aim is to foster the participation of youth in programmes promoting youth development and violence prevention through advocacy, development of public policy, knowledge management and dissemination, and the promotion of innovative and participative experiences. In addition, capacity-building on

Violence and Injury Prevention (VIP)—using the VIP-TEACH youth module—is being carried out in the Americas and generic attention to violence prevention is being generated by the global WHO VIP programme.

ENGAGING YOUTH

Youth participation is a principle promoted in all WHO supported activities. CAH works to ensure adolescent participation in its research and development work, as well as in its country-level work. For example, CAH promotes adolescent participation in workshops on adolescent health for health-care providers. In the Americas region, national adolescent health programmes have been supported to institutionalize youth participation and WHO-PAHO has developed a guide on youth participation which is available at www.paho.org/english/ad/fch/ca/ADOLHome.htm.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- Adolescent Friendly Health Services—An Agenda for Change (2002)
- Broadening the Horizon—Balancing Protection and Risk for Adolescents (2001)
- Helping Parents Improve Adolescents' Health in Developing Countries (2007)
- Preventing HIV/AIDS in Young People—A Systematic Review of the Evidence from Developing Countries (2006)
- Orientation Programme on Adolescent Health for Health-care Providers (2006)

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The Youth Employment Network (YEN) supports employment-generating activities, programmes and policies for youth. It was established in 2001 as a partnership between the United Nations, the ILO and the World Bank to give effect to the global commitment in the Millennium Declaration of “developing and implementing strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work”.

The YEN secretariat, based at the ILO in Geneva, promotes coherent approaches, which integrate supply- and demand-side strategies, in stimulating youth employment. The YEN combines a political strategy with the technical experience and implementation capacity of its partner organizations to address the ongoing challenges of unemployment and underemployment of young people. The YEN therefore plays an important role in facilitating communication and information sharing, linking important initiatives and stakeholders. It also fills a key international coordinating role in operationalizing peer partnerships among participating countries.

MAJOR ACTIVITIES

The YEN's activities and contributions include:

- *Ensuring political buy-in and national backing for the National Action Plan process.* United Nations General Assembly resolutions request countries to develop National Action Plans on youth employment (NAPs). The YEN supports the formulation of NAPs in its lead countries—those countries that have committed at the highest political level to creating decent and productive work for young people and to preparing a national review and action plan on youth employment. The YEN works in close partnership with its core partners to motivate Governments to operationalize their commitments. Much of this work can be seen as helping to create the basic conditions required for a multi-stakeholder approach.
- *Promoting policy coherence and the engagement of the core partners.* The YEN works to bring together its three core agencies, both at headquarters level and in the field, thereby demonstrating

the combined strength of an inter-agency effort and providing strategic guidance to the YEN lead countries in the development of NAPs.

- *Adopting a network approach.* The complexity of the youth employment challenge underscores the need for the engagement of a broad range of actors. The YEN with its wide network and national mandate provides outreach and network support by generating buy-in from other stakeholders as necessary, allowing for a more holistic and sustainable approach to NAP development. This includes engagement across ministries and with the private sector, municipal authorities, parliamentarians and civil society groups at the international and national levels and youth.
- *Promoting youth participation.* Building on General Assembly resolutions which encourage youth participation in the NAPs, the YEN has built a strong relationship with youth through its Youth Consultative Group on the global level and with national youth groups in the lead countries. The YEN has a track record in capacity-building activities to support

the engagement of youth in the development of employment policy.

- *Developing relationships with supportive countries.* The YEN secretariat has the ability to leverage a range of resources—political, technical and financial—to support the development of NAPs, complementing resources mobilized by core partner agencies.
- *Facilitating knowledge sharing, production and dissemination of tools and resources.* The YEN secretariat facilitates the sharing of knowledge on NAP development through its lead country network and beyond. In addition, it develops tools and resources to assist countries in the formulation of their NAPs and promotes the tools of its core partners.
- *Supporting monitoring, evaluation and ongoing improvement of NAPs.* The YEN is developing indicators on youth employment and benchmarks to measure progress. It facilitates peer partnerships to improve NAPs.
- *Providing a platform and access to the international arena.* It can assist the partners in bringing

policy messages into forums such as the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission for Social Development and the World Bank's Annual Meetings, and open doors for participation in YEN partner activities.

THE YOUTH CONSULTATIVE GROUP

The YEN promotes young people as assets—as catalysts for development—rather than as passive beneficiaries for whom employment must be found. In 2004, a YEN Youth Consultative Group was launched, comprising representatives of large international and regional youth organizations to provide advice and guidance to the YEN's work. The Youth Consultative Group also assists the YEN secretariat to identify youth organizations on the national level for country-level activities such as youth consultations or different youth capacity-building activities.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

- Youth Employment Promotion: A Review of ILO Work and the Lessons Learned (2005)
- Improving Prospects for Young Women and Men in the World of Work (2004)
- Joining Forces with Young People: A Practical Guide to Collaboration for Youth Employment (2007)
- Best practices in private sector collaboration for youth employment (2008)
- Is youth employment a priority in West Africa? An analysis of national policies and budgets from a youth perspective (2008)

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