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YOUTH MAPPING STUDY

DFID'S Approach to Young People

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This study was commissioned by the Youth Working Group of the DFID/Civil Society Network on Children and Youth to assess the current approaches to youth in DFID's development cooperation in policy and country assistance practice.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction:

This study was commissioned by the Youth Working Group of the Civil Society / DFID Network on Children and Youth. Its purpose was to assess the current approaches to youth in DFID's development cooperation in both policy and country assistance practice. The study was conducted by a single consultant over a period of 30 working days, by a review of a substantial sample of DFID documents and interviews with a selection of DFID staff members (field and HQ) and partner organisations. Terms of Reference are at Annex A.

Young people between the ages of 15 and 24 are among the most marginalised and vulnerable of the world's poor. The extent to which they are affected by HIV / AIDS, unemployment and missed educational opportunities can result in them leading unhealthy, unfulfilled adult lives – if they live that long. On the other hand, youth represent a largely untapped resource for the contribution they can make – both to their own countries' development and to the acheivement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) globally. They are both tomorrow's leaders, parents, professionals and workers and today's asset. Properly supported and given the right opportunities, girls and boys, young women and young men can play a significant part in lifting themselves, their families and communities out of poverty. Too often, however, youth are considered only or mainly as a problem to be contained; a threat to peace and security. While many of the rank and file of armed groups are youth and they are disproportionately represented in urban criminal gangs and prisons, youth are also the victims of violent conflict and of gang warfare.

DFID is not alone in seeking to understand better the relationship between youth, poverty development and growth; nor is this the first time that DFID has sought to engage with youth in some way. Globally, there is a growing realisation that the involvement of youth is key to achieving growth and development and that targeting interventions to this age group represents an investment in peace, security and development. To date, however, there has been little articulation and even less consensus about how development actors can engage with youth and what this would mean for development programming and policies. The need for information and guidance is shared, therefore, by DFID and its partners.

For these purposes, this study creates the following categories, which are not mutually exclusive:

Youth as partners in development: Ensuring the participation of youth in programming, funding and decision-making;

Youth as beneficiaries: Programmes and funding that deliberately benefit youth or where youth are inevitably a significant proportion of the beneficiaries;

Youth as assets: The 'asset-based approach' means that programmes and funding addresses youth as a resource to be valued;

Youth as threat: Policy, programmes or funding that addresses youth as a problem to be contained, appeased or controlled.

The study also considers the extent to which youth benefit by DFID's general assistance given to governments, multi-lateral organisations or civil society.

Why youth is important to DFID's work

Youth have Rights. Up to the age of 18, girls and boys are entitled to the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international or regional law. For instance, a 16 year old girl who is also a wife and mother and a child who has been a commander in an armed group during a violent conflict[1] are as entitled to a basic education as their younger siblings. Over 18 years, youth are entitled to the same protection of their rights as older adults.

Development is a Youth Issue. Young people are particularly affected by development issues. For instance, in 2005 more than 50% of HIV positive people were 15-24 and HIV / AIDS is the leading cause of death amongst sub-Saharan African youth. 133 million 15-24 year olds are illiterate and in several African countries, literacy amongst girls and young women of 15-25 is at or under 50%[2]. Where there is competition for scare livelihoods, youth are more likely to be unemployed or under-employed. Young men are more likely to be killed in violence outside the home in peace-time than any other group while their teenage sisters are particularly vulnerable to being trafficked for sexual exploitation. Displacement, whether induced by violent conflict, climate change or 'development induced[3]', disrupts the lives, education, security and opportunities of youth.

Youth is a development issue: DFID recognises the benefits of having a rigorous, thorough knowledge of the country context. To this end it is now mandatory for country offices to prepare analyses based on social exclusion, gender and governance. An analysis of youth development indices, as the

[1] The term 'violent conflict' is commonly used across DFID and so is used here, rather than the more legally meaningful term 'armed conflict'.
[2] All statistics from the World Development Report 2007
[3] Ref: www.forcedmigration.org

Commonwealth Youth Programme document[4] explains, not only tells us about the experience of young people; it also describes the situation of a country as a whole.

Key Findings

1. DFID does not yet have a strategy to address the above issues.
2. The Department is doing much work both that benefits youth. Some of this work is inevitably targeted at the youth age-range and some because general development assistance is likely to benefit youth.As the Department deals with the demographic reality of the 'youth bulge' in many developing countries, this work is likely to increase in quantity and depth.
3. To date, however, there is little specific documentation of this work. Reasons for this include a lack of age-disaggregation either in the tracking mechanisms or evaluation processes. Where age is used as disaggregating factor, DFID finds this information relevant and useful in directing policy, programming or practice.
4. There are some notable examples of where DFID is doing work or is providing funding support to work that involves youth as partners in development. Where it has done so, DFID staff members and partners consider that the value added has been signficant; programmes are more effective and sustainable. This is still relatively ad-hoc, however, although it is mandatory for DFID Country Offices to consult with civil society and this may include youth.These positive examples need to be scaled up and / or replicated across DFID's geographical presence and throughout DFID's policies. Youth participation is a relatively new concept for many organisations, including most bilateral donors. Moreover, partner governments to whom budget support or other financial assistance is given may not be committed to involving youth in making decisions about resource allocation or other governance issues, even where youth comprise a signficant proportion of the electorate.
5. In order to overcome obstacles to effective youth participation, DFID and its partners need to (a) embrace the need to engage youth, (b) identify any obstacles to so doing and (c) work with youth to find ways to overcome them. The latter could involve mentoring by adults or designing youth-friendly consultation processes or recruiting young consultants to carry out the consultation work.
6. The current climate is positive for work that benefits youth or regards youth as an asset. There is a growing global awareness of the relationship between having skilled and confident youth and economic

[4] Ref Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment 2007-2015, Commonwealth Youth Programme, 2007

growth and development. At the same time, donor governments, multi-laterals and to some extent partner governments are acknowledging the need for greater transparency, accountability and responsiveness to their citizens, including youth. In the UK, Ministerial direction and emphasis on education and on economic growth is creating fertile ground for work that emphasises the assets-based approach to youth.

7. DFID is well-placed to consider the gender dimensions of youth as it has done substantial work recently to ensure the integration of gender considerations across the organisation. Outside of the areas of health and education, however, there has been little explicit attention (again because of lack of disaggregation across age) to the situation of girls and young women and vigilance is needed to ensure that 'youth' does not start to mean only boys and young men.

Examples of encouraging policy and practice across DFID include:

1. *HIV / AIDS*: A new strategy is being developed that has addresses young people, recognises that they comprise a proportion of other groups (e.g. prisoners or women) and is geared towards greater outreach to excluded and marginalised groups and supporting innovative work.
2. *Education*: £8.5 billion will be dedicated to education over the next 10 years. Due to the primary education MDG target, DFID has focussed largely on this area. It is increasingly aware of the need for secondary, tertiary or vocational skills training in order address the needs of primary school completers and to create the conditions for economic growth.
3. *Governance*: The mandatory Country Governance Analysis, while not explicit about youth, if done rigorously, leads the investigator to ask for disaggregation by age, both in terms of capacities for supporting development and in terms of who is particularly affected by development issues.
4. *Climate Change*: This is a new and growing field for DFID and the team are considering how to engage with youth.
5. *Development Awareness*: DFID has for some time engaged UK youth in increasing the awareness of the UK public about development. It is now considering ways to involve youth outside the usual sectors of society.
6. *Migration*: The 2006 Migration policy paper makes the connections between gender, age and migration status, pulling out important considerations for programming.

Examples of encouraging practice at Country or Regional Office level include:

1. DFID Nepal is increasingly addressing both the issues of youth and the need to avoid replicating existing, exclusionary social structures in so doing. DFID Nepal is striving to strike a balance between youth as a threat to peace and security and the asset that they represent.
2. DFID Sierra Leone has instituted a justice sector programme which, from its inception, emphasised juvenile justice. This was to strike a balance between recognition of the role that youth played in the conflict and to ensure that their rights are promoted and protected in the reconstruction phase.
3. DFID offices in the Caribbean and Rwanda are supporting national governments to increase their capacity to collect and analyse data and statistics to. This will enable the governments and donors alike to detect trends, identify areas of resilience, allow for a greater focus on youth and to programme accordingly.
4. In Honduras, DFID supports the establishment of integrated sexual health clinics that provide non-judgemental services to young people and vulnerable groups.
5. DFID provides support to the Kenyan Prison Service to strengthen service provision for those with HIV and TB.
6. DFID supports legal education and rights awareness of sex workers in Togo and young people in Niger
7. DFID Nigeria supports the peer education programmes in Nigeria, focusing on young street prostitutes and drug users.
8. DFID provides support to the Transitions to Adulthood Programme – a research programme on the social and economic factors contributing to poor health of adolescent girls.
9. DFID supports radio programming in Afghanistan run by and for young people
10. DFID Indonesia has supported youth efforts to make the national media more accountable and more independent

Key Recommendations

DFID needs a strategy for addressing the demographic reality of youth and to ensure that its programme of development assistance works to the benefit of youth, with youth and to support youth as an asset.

While there are positive developments as described above, and there is a growing acknowledgement across DFID of the imperative to address youth issues, there is both room for supporting this development and areas where DFID should ensure it does not lose the substantial gains it has made. The following recommendations aim to be synergistic or at least complementary.

1. *Research:* DFID has announced a substantial increase in its research budget and commitment, creating positive opportunities for organisations concerned with youth - and those wishing to ensure that DFID is concerned with youth – to influence the shape and direction of that research. The submission by the Children and Youth Network in response to the consultation process for the new research strategy outlines a comprehensive set of research initiatives that would substantially inform the work of DFID in terms of its understanding of the relationship between children, youth and the development issues with which DFID is concerned and would increase the understanding and contribution of DFID to the global debate on this issues. It would also enable DFID to create a coherent, Department-wide strategy for addressing youth. The submission is annexed to the body of this report
2. *Senior-level message:* DFID at Ministerial and senior management levels should send out a message to Country Offices and Headquarters alike that youth are an important sector and that they should include them in all analyses and ensure that they include them in any consultation process. This should lead, in turn, to greater levels of work with youth as partners and as beneficiaries
3. *Partnerships:* The NGO community and multi-lateral organisations have much to offer DFID in this regard, both at international and national levels. While at the international level, DFID is seeking to strengthen its relationship with its civil society partners. Reductions in staffing and an increasing aid budget, however, may militate against a deeper engagement with its partner NGOs. The larger and more resourced NGOs have a responsibility to bring their learning and experience to the attention of DFID officials and Ministers. To this end, it is suggested that the Youth Working Group of the Children and Youth Network develop an advocacy strategy.
4. *Evidence:* The Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE) supported by DFID forms the basis of a programme of action for work regarding youth. Of particular interest to DFID should be the development of Youth Development Indicators as a positive, innovative method of using different indices to measure development generally as well as specifically for youth. It is suggested that DFID take a much closer look at the PAYE and work on Youth Indicators

5. *Monitoring and Evaluation*: DFID relies heavily on its evaluation capacity. The relationship between good programming and evaluation is now well known and accepted across DFID. It is key, therefore, that age disaggregation forms a central part of evaluation methodology for programmes and funding arrangements in order to provide DFID staff

members with the incentive to address youth and guidance on how to do so.

6. *Emerging and other catalytic issues*

a) Employment and growth: There is emerging interest at Ministerial and Prime Ministerial level for addressing issues of youth employment as a matter of urgency and much ground work done by the Policy and Research Division, including on MDG 1 and its targets. A new target for MDG 1 "achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people" was created in 2007.

b) Education and skills: Secondary, tertiary and skills-based education is central to the realisation of young women's and men's rights and to employment and growth. Education - for all ages - is also one of the most cost-effective development strategies[5].

c) Climate change: DFID is already investing signficantly in climate change as it affects development. Youth are particularly interested in this issue as they can see how it will affect them for all their lives, restrict their aspirations and reduce the chances of sustainble development in their countries. At the same time, youth in the UK are particularly concerned with environmental issues and are ready to take action, including in partnership with their contemporaries in developing countries. This ties in with development awareness and there are substantial opportunities for DFID to support these initiatives in tandem.

d) Governance: DFID's emphasis on governance has created opportunities at the country level for involving youth in all three dimensions of good governance, including but not restricted to youth participation. The responsiveness and accountability of a government can be measured by how youth view it and whether it is able and willing to respond to issues identified as important by young people. The messages coming from country offices that have performed the Country Governance Analysis are revealing in this regard and provide an opportunity for the rest of DFID to learn about the relationship between youth and development, poverty and the acheivement of the MDGs.

e) Development awareness: DFID is responding to the increased awareness and thirst for information amongst UK youth to understand more about their role as global citizens. Positive developments that can be built upon include the deliberate extension of these initiatives to children and youth from less advantaged backgrounds and entry into

[5] Prime Minister speech 31 July 2007

the informal sectors. It is suggested that DFID and relevant partners also explore the opportunities for development awareness programmes in the developing world. This would increase the level of participation of youth, make DFID and its INGO partners as well as national goverments more accountable to youth, their families and communities and bring in the expertise and experience of youth.

f) Radicalisation: Caution is needed to ensure that the emphasis on 'radicalisation' does not threaten to shift the discourse on youth towards regarding them as a problem to be contained or appeased or to divert assistance away from attention to girls and young women, in particular. DFID and partners will need to hold firm to the fact that youth are rights-holders, are often the victims of the same disaffection that leads them into crime and that good development practice, including the involvement of youth, diverts them to positive aspirations

g) Violent conflict

To date, reference to youth in DFID's work on violent conflict has been almost exclusively in terms of youth as a problem or a threat to security, although – by implication - much of the work that DFID supports addresses youth; be this in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration, security sector reform more broadly or funding support to work pursuant to UNSC Resolutions 1612[6] or 1325[7]. There is an opportunity, however, for DFID to make its work on violent conflict more explicitly youth-focused and, in turn, to ensure that this addresses youth as peace-builders, rather than only as spoilers.

Conclusion

This is an exciting time for DFID to be addressing youth. There is a growing global awareness of the imperative – both demographic and rights-based – to do so and there is support from civil society. The demographics mean that the chances to do so are time-limited, however, and DFID will need to develop a strategy in the near future to grasp this opportunity. It will need to draw on the resources of its civil society and inter-governmental partners, particularly from the DFID / Civil Society Children and Youth Network.

[6] Monitoring and reporting of violations of children's rights in armed conflict
[7] Women, Peace and Security

MAIN REPORT

INTRODUCTION

This study was commissioned by the Youth Working Group of the DFID / Civil Society Children and Youth Network to provide the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and its partners with an assessment of the current approaches to young people aged 15-24 in DFID's development cooperation in both policy and country assistance practice. It follows on from a similar mapping study to assess the extent to which DFID has a 'child rights climate' and whether its work would benefit from doing so. This document seeks to explain and analyse what work is being done across the Department that promotes the participation of youth[8], benefits youth, treats youth as an asset - or a threat - and integrates the concerns of youth into wider policy and practice.

The paper seeks to form a base-line from which future progress can be ascertained. A second stage of this work may be to draw out more specific evidence and lessons from a few 'case studies', either geographical (based on the work of selected Country / Regional offices) or issue-based.

The paper is predicated on the belief that there is an imperative to address youth and their concerns in strategies for development assistance. For both DFID and the civil society organisations in the Youth Working Group, however, there is still a need to understand and articulate the relationship between youth and development as well as the most effective way to address these issues. This includes the need for civil society organisations to understand better how to work most effectively with major donors. As such, this study, along with other intiatives such as the formation and launch of the DFID / Civil Society Children and Youth Network and a secondment to DFID from Plan to work on children and youth represents the beginning of a joint 'learning journey' for DFID and its civil society partners.

In order to start to meet the above ambitions, this paper addresses the issue of "why youth are important to DFID'S work" that lies behind the questions "what is DFID doing?" and "how is it doing it?" regarding the the relationship between youth, poverty and development.

[8] Youth is the preferred term to 'young people' throughout this document although the term "young people" is used occasionally. The terms are inter-changeable.

METHOD[9]

This study was carried out by one consultant over 30 working days, with the assistance and support of the secondee from Plan as coordinator. An Advisory Group was also formed with representatives of the Youth Working Group. While the study was conducted entirely in the UK, interviews were held with 21 DFID staff members including representatives of five DFID country offices. Many of the headquarters-based staff also have direct and recent experience of working in DFID Country Offices or with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) at the country level.

Discussions were also held with partners in other government departments as well as civil society[10]. Apart from interviews, the study was based on DFID documentation[11] and that of some of its partners. Thanks are due to all those who participated, be it by giving time to talk, supplying documentation or directing the consultant to other staff members. All interviews were conducted on the basis that information and opinions were not to be attributed unless necessary.

Interim findings were presented to the Advisory Group in August and to the Youth Working Group in September 2007 and final findings were presented to meetings of DFID personnel and civil society organisations in October.

BACKGROUND

The Department for International Development leads the UK's "fight against world poverty" and locates itself firmly as a partner to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It strives to do so in a way that promotes and protects the human rights of poor people. DFID strives to find ways to do this effectively and efficiently while remaining accountable to the UK population. As well as the multi-lateral systems, DFID invests heavily in national capacities, particularly governance structures and aims to be responsive to the varied contexts in which it operates. Her Majesty's Government (HMG), partner governments, international civil society and youth at home are concerned about the likelihood that the MDGs will not be met. The call to action delivered by the Prime Minister in July 2007[12] provides an imperative to find new ways of changing this course. The MDGs and their targets along with various other documents[13] and calls to action stress the relationship between children and young people and poverty and development.

[9] Terms of Reference at Annex A
[10] List of people consulted is at Annexe E
[11] Bibliography at Annexe D
[12] Speech to United Nations 31st July 2007
[13] See for example General Assembly Resolutions 60/2, 57/165, Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups (2007)

This study is not the first time that DFID has focussed on children and young people at the global level. In 2002, to coincide with the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children, DFID commissioned an analysis of child rights and development programming[14] and produced a briefing paper "Breaking the Cycle of Child Poverty". In 2004 and 2005, it both commissioned a study on the relationship between age and DFID's development assistance[15] and published the document "Learning to Listen: DFID Action Plan on Children and Young People's Participation 2004 – 2005". The former found that DFID's work was not responsive to the needs, rights and capacities of children and youth. At that time, DFID was not able to identify many instances of work which either explicitly promoted the rights of children or addressed youth as an asset. Children and youth were, largely, invisible in DFID's programming, policies and practice. It recommended further research into whether and, if so, how, adopting more of a child rights and youth-focussed approach could assist DFID in its aims. "Learning to Listen" stated that DFID would continue to develop its partnerships with relevant organisations, conduct an audit of work supporting children's participation, form an internal steering group to promote children and young people's participation and investigate further training opportunities for staff.

The last three recommendations lay dormant until March 2007 when DFID and partner non-governmental organisations (NGOs) formed the DFID / Civil Society Children and Youth Network consisting of NGOs, UNICEF (UK) and the Commonwealth Youth Programme along with DFID staff members. This network formed into separate children (0-18[16])) and youth (15-24[17]) working groups which commissioned these two studies. In addition, to assist with taking forward the Learning to Listen Plan of Action, Plan has provided a secondee to DFID's Equity and Rights team.

Other donors

DFID is often at the vanguard of development initiatives and aid modalities. In this instance, it need not take that role, as others have already done so. Particularly, the Governments of Norway[18] and Denmark[19] have structured their strategies for development cooperation around the imperative to address children and young people as rights-holders as well as to address the demographic reality. The World Bank's 2007 World Development Report focused entirely on youth as an indication that addressing youth is crucial to the acheivement of the MDGs.

[14] Children's Rights, Inequality and Poverty; Sarah White, University of Bath
[15] Social Development Direct; Age-Related Mapping Study 2005
[16] The Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as a person under 18 years old
[17] General Assembly Resolution 50/81 (1995)
[18] Three Billion Reasons
[19] Children And Young People In Danish Development Cooperation

Definition of Youth

Throughout this document and in keeping with the Terms of Reference and Vision Statement of the Youth Working Group[20], "youth" is taken to mean girls, boys, young women and young men from their 15th to 25th birthdays. While this represents the consensus held by the General Assembly in 1995 and reaffirmed in 2005, it is important to recognise that definitions or assumptions about the age range of 'youth' vary between countries[21], between genders in those countries (where girls may be mothers at 14 but men are assumed to be youth until 30) and according to the roles and responsibilities that young women and men are ascribed. The transition from adolescence to adulthood; from dependence to independence can also become both truncated and lengthened in developing countries, particularly but not exclusively those recovering from violent conflict. For instance, where there is a lack of jobs or it is not possible to finish primary school on time, the transition from youth to adult may be delayed. On the other hand, for exactly the same reasons, girls may have their own children at an increasingly young age, so that girls' experience of adolescence collides with their – adult – responsibilities as a mother. Also for these reasons, boys and girls may have no option but to take on other adult responsibilities such as becoming migrant workers to support their families[22].

It is possible that this lack of uniformity about the age-range for "youth" has a negative impact on development programming about youth. In a context where a man is still "young" into his 30s or even later, it can be difficult to determine where initiatives focused on young people stop and general development starts. Similarly, where girls of 18 years have been married for some years and have their own children, it is easy to subsume them into adult reproductive health service programming and forget that they are youth with all that entails.

The 2007 World Bank report "Development and the Next Generation" indicates that a more appropriate age-range may start at 12 years as this is the age where children start assuming adult responsibilities and becoming 'producers' in the developing world.

Gender

Gender has a fundamental impact on the lives of youth. Even the term "youth" is often assumed to mean boys and young men and, as will be discussed in more depth later, growing attention to 'radicalisation', extremism or criminality focuses almost exclusively on young men as a threat to national or

[20] Annex B
[21] For example, Sierra Leone law defines youth as up to 35 years old to take account of a missing generation
[22] UNICEF Sri Lanka Child protection strategy documents

international security. Girls and young women, on the other hand, particularly where they take on responsibilities at a young age, may be marginalised because of their gender roles, as well as whatever other dimensions affect their lives such as ethnicity, disability or caste. Early pregnancies and sexual violence against girls and young women can result in continuing ill-health, marginalisation (for instance where young women with fistula or rape victims are ostracised[23]) and other obstacles to participation in public life.

Boys and young men also have pressures deriving from their gender roles, including expectations from their peers to conform to notions of masculinity and from their families to be 'real men' or head of household at an early age. The latter is particularly so in conflict-affected countries where adult men may have been killed or are away from home as part of an armed force or group[24]. Moreover, as families disintegrate through the poverty-induced migration of either parent or because of HIV / AIDS, boys and young men may lack positive male role models while girls may lack maternal guidance and support. Research[25] has demonstrated the need to address gender roles of men and boys in order to combat violence against women, girls and boys.

In conflict-affected contexts, gender roles tend to become polarised both while the conflict is going on and in early recovery and reconstruction phases[26].

WHY YOUTH ARE IMPORTANT TO DFID'S WORK

The majority of the world's population is under 25. In most countries of the developing world, the 'youth bulge' is either being felt now or is iminent. Young women, young men, girls and boys represent the greatest opportunity for the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Not only are they tomorrow's decision-makers, teachers, judges and politicians, their position in society means that they can make a direct contribution – today - to the development of their countries and to international peace and security. Whether as workers, students, entrepeneurs or activists and often as parents themselves, youth are poised both to take the necessary action and to inform today's decision-makers about how to achieve development. They cannot do this, however, unless two broad requirements are met:

Firstly, the participation of youth must be facililtated, not blocked by obstacles - real or perceived. The voices of youth have to be heard.

[23] UNFPA
[24] The distinction here is derived from Article 4 of the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict to the Convention on the Rights of the Child
[25] Save the Children Sweden and UNIFEM "Working with men and boys to promote gender equality and to end violence against boys and girls"
[26] Oxfam:
http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/routledg/cgde/1998/00000006/00000003/art00009

Secondly, youth must be empowered. Deprivation, ignorance and poverty create a vicious circle in which youth are kept out of the job market, away from positions of power and become disaffected. In turn this can lead to them lapsing into apathy, adopting unhealthy life-choices or becoming vulnerable to recruitment by war-lords and extremists. Their own lives and their countries' chances of development are then compromised.

Youth have rights

As well as the demographic imperative, it is important to address the fact that young women and men, girls and boys have rights. The Convention on the Rights of the Child states that girls and boys between the ages of 15 and 18 share the same rights of children as the younger population, including health, education and family life. It is important to remember that a 16 year old girl who is also a wife and mother is still entitled to the Convention rights to protection, or that a child who has been a commander in an armed group during a violent conflict[27] is as entitled to a basic education as his or her younger siblings. In addition, older youth are entitled to the same protection of their rights as older adults including the right to work, to form a family and to participate in public life. At all ages, they have the right to be free from discrimination, and to justice and to livelihoods. Moreover, as UNICEF and others are discovering[28], the experience of a child while they are younger, whether their rights have been violated or fulfilled, has an impact long after they reach 18. For instance, girls who have babies too young are more likely to develop complications with subsequent pregnancies as well as other negative consequences[29]. The UN Study on Violence Against Children[30] also describes how

> "Violence may result in greater susceptibility to lifelong social, emotional and cognitive impairments and to health-risk behaviours, such as substance abuse and early initiation of sexual behaviour. Related mental health and social problems include anxiety and depressive disorders, hallucinations, impaired work performance, memory disturbances, as well as aggressive behaviour. Early exposure to violence is associated with later lung, heart and liver disease, sexually transmitted diseases and foetal death during pregnancy, as well as later intimate partner violence and suicide attempts."

Development is a Youth Issue. The MDGs and their targets recognise that young people are particularly affected by development issues. For instance, in 2005 more than 50% of HIV positive people were 15-24 and HIV / AIDS is the leading cause of death amongst sub-Saharan African youth. 133 million 15-24

[27] The term 'violent conflict' is commonly used across DFID and so is used here, rather than the more legally meaningful term 'armed conflict'.
[28] OECD DAC Handbook on Security System Reform: Supporting Security and Justice
[29] UNFPA
[30] http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/study.htm

year olds are illiterate and in, several African countries, literacy amongst girls and young women of 15-25 is at or under 50%. Where economic growth is stagnant and there is competition for scare livelihoods, youth are more likely to be unemployed or under-employed; young men are more likely to be killed in violence outside the home in peace-time than any other group while their teenage sisters are particularly vulnerable to being trafficked for sexual exploitation. Displacement, whether induced by violent conflict, climate change or 'development induced', disrupts the lives, education, security and opportunities of youth.

Youth is a Development Issue

DFID values having a rigorous, thorough knowledge of the country context. To this end it is now mandatory for country offices to prepare analyses based on social exclusion, gender and governance. An analysis of youth development indices, as the Commonwealth Youth Programme document[31] explains, not only tells us about the experience of young people; it also describes the situation of a country as a whole. For instance, where children drop out of secondary school because they are not learning, this acts as an indicator of wilingness or capacity of the national Ministry of Education, or where a government prioritises military spending over tertiary education, this will indicate how many of that country's youth are likely go to university as opposed to joining the army[32].

Taking youth initiatives to scale

Where youth initiatives have proved their value, there is both a challenge and an opportunity to scale these up or to replicate them and to avoid the 'evaporation' of these acheivements. Information about these initatives is often difficult to find; there is no international repository of information about youth or any organisation that is tasked to be a guardian for the rights of youth. There are numerous examples of good practice in working with youth, others that attempt to address youth as a potential threat to security and some that address youth as a resource for development. Nevertheless, these are rarely replicated or 'taken to scale'. For instance, while the electoral process in Rwanda in 2003 ensured that youth were represented in the national parliament, this has not been widely replicated in other contexts, even where there are signficant youth populations such as in Sierra Leone. Work with youth or that addresses them as a resource (or even a threat) still tends to be at the 'project' level, although some youth-led groups (such as the African Youth Initiative on Climate Change[33] or the Asian Young Leaders

[31] Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment 2007-2015, Commonwealth Youth Programme, 2007
[32] UNICEF Sri Lanka Child Protection Section 2007
[33] http://www.ayicc.org

Conference)[34] are using their networks to organise at the regional or sub-regional level, sometimes despite resistance. Examples from the past can provide lessons for the present and future, such as the Nicaragua “Each one teach one” programme in the 1980s where almost universal literacy was achieved by children and young people teaching their parents to read. Where youth themselves have instigated programmes that can have an impact, they need support, access to information and for development agencies to work with them to find ways to replicate and scale up.

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES TO YOUTH

Today’s development agencies operate in an environment of complex realities. On the one hand, violent conflicts[35] within and between states are getting fewer. Some momentous gains have been made in other development terms, including the near eradication of measles and polio. On the other hand, criminality, trans-national organised violence and the spread of HIV / AIDS threaten to undermine development gains; youth are a significant factor in all these both as victims and perpetrators. Youth may be viewed as a resource for their families, communities and countries or as a threat to security, peace and development. The challenge, therefore, is to maintain the focus on achieiving the MDGs and the concomitant realistion of human rights, to avoid being side-tracked by immediate, domestic threats, and to move from regarding youth as a problem to be contained to an asset to be actively engaged for development.

In short, the asset-based approach addresses youth as people with something concrete to offer both now and in the longer-term. It treats youth as a cohort to be supported and valued. The ‘deficit-based approach’ is concerned largely or wholly that, if we fail to address youth and their concerns, they will become tomorrow’s armed groups, criminals and terrorists. The risks associated with this approach are several:

Firstly, it can lead to unsustainable programming based on appeasment alone; keeping disaffected youth content and occupied in the short or medium term can lead to decisions that have longer-term negative impacts on the youth themselves and on development more generally. A stark example is giving cash to young men leaving armed groups as an incentive to give up their weapons and to give them a ‘leg up’ in re-joining society. As we have seen in Sierra Leone and Liberia[36], this is effective only in encouraging young men to present themselves for disarmament and demobilisation, does nothing to aid reintegration and can exacerbate gender inequalities as well as longer-term insecurity.

[34] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tx2D8LNAieU
[35] Within the international humanitarian law meaning of armed conflicts
[36] UNICEF Lessons Learned Documents

Secondly, this approach does not address the realities that it is young people who are amongst the primary victims of criminality, armed conflict or terrorism. Whether this is the high incidence of homicides amongst young men in the Caribbean, the use of young women and men in armed groups or the prevalence of suicide attacks carried out by youth, it is key to recognise that these youth are themselves victims – even where they may also be perpetrators[37].

Thirdly, programming in this way can threaten other development priorities. As will be seen later in discussing 'radicalisation', there is a danger that other development campaigns such as girls' education can be marginalised for the sake of keeping the youth occupied, off the streets and away from those who would manipulate them for their own ends.

Fourthly, this approach is contrary to any form of rights-based approach. It contains no express linkage to youth's human rights nor does it involve them as partners or even participants. Certainly, it veers away from the principles of non-discrimination as it is those youth who are considered most dangerous that receive attention. While these may overlap in some ways with the most marginalised and most vulnerable, it risks ignoring other youth who are not considered so dangerous, particularly girls and young women, youth with disability or working youth.

The *assets-based* approach, on the other hand, is more sustainable, effective and closer to a human rights-based approach. It is based on the premise that youth are an actual or potential asset to their communities and to development more generally. For instance, rather than preaching abstinence to youth as a means of preventing the spread of HIV and AIDS, the assets-based approach empowers young women and men to talk to their peers and to run programmes where youth can receive age-appropriate information about their options. This does not have to be peer-to-peer, of course. Research has shown that when mothers have a good relationship with their daughters, the latter are less likely to have sex early, have fewer sexual partners and are therefore less likely to contract sexually transmitted diseases or cervical cancer[38].

The assets-based approach addresses youth as partners in development. In so doing, it emphasises the participation of youth and acknowledges that youth have the information, the networks and the interest to make their societies work better. For instance, involving youth in planning for disaster risk means both that planners have access to a layer of information that may not otherwise be available and enables information about disaster risk reduction to be promulgated quickly and efficiently across the community.

[37] Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups
[38] Journal of Adolescent Health

This approach recognises that, with support and empowerment, young people can contribute to the economic growth of their countries. As a billion young people start to enter the labour market, the short, medium and long-term potential of their earnings, revenue from tax and their productivity is unprecedented. A generation of professionals or other skilled workers can be lost if these young people are not engaged in appropriate education or skills training. It has been seen in Cambodia that it takes three or four generations to replace doctors, judges, scientists and teachers. Simultaneously, engaging these young women and men in decent work for decent pay, reduces the likelihood that their countries will remain dependent on international development assistance.

In terms of basic services, the assets-based approach appreciates that educating girls and young women leads to more planned and reduced family sizes, reduced infant and maternal mortality, increased vaccinations of babies and a greater chance that these young women will be economically active members of society.

Youth can be leaders and positive agents for change. For instance, in terms of preventing armed conflict, reducing its impact on development and contributing to peacebuilding and conflict transformation, young women and men can help to build bridges across political, ethnic, ideological or other divides. Youth across these divides tend to share the same concerns and to have the same aspirations and vision for their futures, however they may be manifest. They all want peace, security, economic well-being and to be healthy. In both Rwanda[39] and Sierra Leone[40], young men who were associated with the armed conflict in some way have organised themselves to run motorcycle taxi services, demonstrating their commitment to serving their communities and refusing to be politically manipulated while maintaining their peer group network. In Sierra Leone, particularly, these groups have relied on support from international organisations to help with internal governance issues while the latter have gained a deeper understanding on the dynamics of youth and post-conflict recovery and reconstruction.

Moreover, placed between childhood and adulthood, youth feel a responsibility for their communities and for their own families. For example, conflict-affected youth in the Central African Republic were found[41] to be more concerned than their parents that their younger siblings should be educated. These youth realised that they had missed out and were prepared to work hard to make sure this did not happen to their little brothers and sisters. In the global North, much of the campaigns to ‘Make Poverty History’, to reduce

[39] Kibora: Peace Building Through Cooperatives and Self-Help Organisations at Community Level in West Africa (2006)
[40] Search for Common Ground report on Bo Bike Riders’ Association http://www.sfcg.org
[41] Save the Children assessment mission – March 2007

climate change and against negative effects of globalisation have been led by youth.

Youth as partners for development

As well as being integral to the asset-based approach, involving youth as full and effective partners for development is consistent with the rights-based approach.

Both DFID's Human Rights Target Strategy Paper[42] and the UN Statement on a Common Understanding of a Rights-Based Approach to Development Cooperation[43] stress participation as a central tenet of the human rights based approach. DFID's Action Plan "Learning to Listen" also stresses that the effective involvement of young people is at the core of good development practice. While some aspects of young people's participation may be more obvious – for instance in the design of a peer-to-peer education programme for adolescents regarding HIV / AIDS, the human rights based approach indicates that all sectors of society should participate in decisions that affect their lives. Examples where the involvment of youth as partners makes a positive difference to humanitarian or development outcomes include the following:

Involving young people in the design and layout of camps for displaced persons means that, in conflict situations, steps can be taken to reduce the likelihood of recruitment or the these militarisation of camps, as well as ensuring that girls and women are less likely to be subjected to sexual violence. Asking girls and young women about their needs can ensure that, for instance, they do not miss out on school while menstruating for lack of culturally-appropriate sanitary protection in the humanitarian packages.

DFID and its partners have found that youth have information that is useful to planners. In terms of disaster risk reduction[44] where young people's networks and connections with each other can ensure that the whole community is taken into account. In planning for the reintegration of children and young people who have been with armed groups, those who have recently left are able to tell programmers how to reach those still associated and what would be the most effective way of helping them to leave[45]. The same applies to prostitution amongst young women and girls[46].

At a more formal level, youth parliaments and youth councils have been shown to create a virtuous circle where youth gain experience in dealing with

[42] Realising Human Rights for Poor People
[43] http://portal.unesco.org/shs/en/ev.php-URL_ID=7733&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
[44] Plan UK DRR project, funded by DFID's Common Humanitarian Fund
[45] Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups
[46] DFID Nigeria

decision-makers, learn about democratic processes and start to shape the latter to make them more responsive to youth concerns. At the same time, politicians and others involved in governance become accustomed to talking with youth and valuing them as resources for development. For instance, the Commonwealth Youth Ministers' Meetings have demonstrated that, when supported and resourced, young people can make a a rigorous, disciplined contribution to debate and to the creation of tools for development and have introduced senior politicians to the concept of listening to youth.

Youth as beneficiaries

It is a requirement of rights-based programming that it specifically promotes, protects or realises a human right or cluster of rights, such as education, health, housing or non-discrimination. In terms of youth, addressing youth as beneficiaries will relate to those areas where youth are the immediate and obvious targets for development assistance programming or where, by definition, they are likely to be a primary group of beneficiaries. Examples here can include secondary and tertiary education, adolescent sexual and reproductive health programmes or the reintegration of children who have been associated with armed groups. In societies which are experiencing the 'youth bulge', it is likely that development interventions that, for instance, create jobs or improve the environment for entrepeneurship, will benefit youth. Care must be taken, however, to ensure both that these initiatives do indeed benefit youth and do not replicate discriminatory or exclusionary social structures in terms of the youth that stand to benefit. Youth with disability, for instance, who are often deeply marginalised across society, need to be specifically targeted to ensure that they share the benefits of these programmes.

Where development assistance is properly directed to benefit youth, it can also work as a lever to combat discrimination on the basis of gender, caste or disability. As has been seen in the UK, where schools or colleges have included children and youth with special educational needs, the whole institution benefits and all those who attend learn are encouraged to adopt a tolerant and valuing approach to their contemporaries.

In terms of meeting the MDGs, there are numerous examples where programmes that are specifically targeted at young people result in improved development outcomes. For instance, improving employment opportunities for young women in Bangladesh resulted in delayed marriage, later first pregnancies and therefore, reduced infant and maternal mortality rates[47]. Exporting sectors employ disproportionatly high levels of young women and men. This could be because they are perceived as more open to new

[47] Institute for Health Management – Pachod and International Center for Research on Women (2003)

production methods than older people or because (at first) they are cheaper to employ. Positive government interventions to support the exporting sector can provide incentives to young people to acquire more skills. The World Development Reports 2007 states that:

> *Among 48 developing countries, increases in apparel and shoe exports as a share of GDP were found to be positively associated with subsequent upturns in both male and female secondary school enrollment. For the average country, a doubling of apparel and footwear exports as a share of GDP raised female secondary school attendance by 20-25 percent*[48]

General development assistance

Work that does not purport to have youth as a primary focus, may yet have an impact on young people, either in particular or as part of society. Examples here can include increasing the capacity of national governments to conduct data collection and analysis or the provision of food as humanitarian assistance. As well as having an impact on youth, the effectiveness of these programmes may also depend on the participation of youth, whether they are relevant to youth or whether they take account of young women and men's particular strengths and capacities.

For transition countries planning their first or early democratic elections after armed conflict or a monolithic state structure, the participation of young women and men will be central to sustainable development, peace and security. Their involvement in the democratic process will be dependent on general factors such as corruption amongst electoral candidates and confidence in the transparency of the electoral system as a whole. Young people are reluctant to vote if they consider it a waste of time. Youth participation in the political process it will also depend on the relevance of election materials to youth and on the efforts made to involve them as election monitors and, of course, as candidates themselves. Early participation in electoral processes has been shown to have long-term effects both positively and negatively. Youth who do not participate at their earliest opportunity are less likely to do so in later life and vice versa[49].

YOUTH AND HOW DFID WORKS

DFID as a donor

DFID provided £4,413m as bilateral assistance (57%) and to multi-lateral organisations (38%) in 2005 / 6. It is, therefore, in this capacity that most NGOs, inter-governmental organisations and partner governments will have

[48] Gruben and McLeod (2006)
[4949] WDR 2007

their primary relationship with DFID and it is from its position as one of the world's biggest donors that it derives much of its influence on the international stage.

The UK is committed to meeting the UN target[50] whereby overseas development assistance comprises 0.7% of its gross national income by 2013[51], while DFID continues to restrict its administrative costs (currently at 5%). The aim here is to streamline the delivery of development assistance so that the maximum possible amount of funds goes to the recipients, not to paying salaries of UK citizens[52]. It is also an attempt by DFID – along with other government departments – to avoid an over-staffed and inefficient civil service. In order to be able to 'do more with less', the trend within DFID is to provide increasingly significant funds to multi-lateral organisations, including the various entities of the United Nations (UN)[53] and the European Union while continuing to support the Development Banks[54] The UK, often represented by DFID officials, is also a prominent member of the governance structures of some multi-laterals such as UNICEF. While the bulk of funding at country level now constitutes direct budget support and other financial assistance to the national governments[55], DFID country offices and headquarters also support international and national civil society and research / think-tank institutions.

It is in the realm of national civil society that DFID's move towards achieving greater spend with a smaller staff may have be particularly challenging, for two reasons. Firstly, national NGOs are unlikely to be able to absorb the quantities of money that DFID gives and so can be ineligible for any support. This is particularly true of youth organisations which are less likely to have a large staff or extensive, country-wide programmes.

Youth and Direct Budget Support

In order for direct budget support to benefit civil society organisations, the partner government has to have the commitment and the capacity to direct funds to these organisations. In many countries, youth are not seen by their governments as viable or important partners. Moreover, while youth issues

[50] 1970 General Assembly Resolution
[51] www.dfid.gov.uk
[52] DFID aims to reduce its full-time equivalent civil service staff to around 1,600 by March 2008 (Annual Report 2007)
[53] This increased by £98m to £299m in 2005/6, including around £50m contribution to the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)
[54] World Bank and Regional Development Banks
[55]http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/sid2006/section2.asp#The_DFID_Aid_Programme_in_2005/06_

appear across every line ministry, they are often relegated to the 'youth' Ministry which are frequently the 'cinderellas'; weak and under-resourced[56].

Some research has identified another risk regarding giving aid through direct budget support, in that it may actually serve to reduce the negotiating power of donors with partner governments. Budget support negotiations tend to take place with the Ministries of Planning or Finance, who may have little contact with other Ministries, particularly where these are weaker or have less status. Unless specific care is taken to involve the Ministry relating to youth, they and their concerns can be left out of the earliest stages of negotiations, making it much more difficult to 'insert' youth later[57].

International organisations

DFID has a range of relationships with various international and regional organisations. The partnerships with multi-laterals such as UN departments, funds and agencies or the Development Banks tend to be reflected in institutional partnership documents, those with larger international NGOs by Programme Partnership Agreements (PPAs) and others by various framework agreements. There are other relationships, particularly with smaller international NGOs or national organisations that are reflected only in the funding documentation or in Memoranda of Understanding or similar. Reasons for this complexity include the following:

a) UN agencies, funds and departments have their own governance structures, in which DFID may play a part. Some, such as the OHCHR does not have an Executive Committee or Board, but some of its work is guided by the Human Rights Council of which the UK is a member;
b) Some partnerships are joint with other donors, including the partnership with UNICEF and those with the African and Asian Development Banks. This may mean that DFID is influenced by those other donors, or vice versa. The extent to which this is positive can be dependent on the direction of those other donors;
c) Some partnerships, such as that with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) or the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), have grown organically over the years;
d) Although DFID leads the UK government fight against world poverty, it is sometimes other government departments that lead on partnerships with other organisations working with, for or on youth. Examples here include the Youth Employment Network supported by the International Labour Organisation where it is the Department of Work and Pensions which carries the lead and is most active in engaging both with the partnership and on this issue. Similarly, although DFID is a substantial

[5656] These ministries are often merged with those for women, children, families and / or sport.
[57] www.siyanda.org/docs/Aid_Instruments_Exclusion_Gender.do

contributor to the Commonwealth Youth Programme, the Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council has more to do with the FCO and DCSF than with DFID.

The 'light touch' approach

DFID first started a programme of engaging intensively with the departments, funds and agencies of the UN in the context of the UN reform agenda. It was apparent that some of these entities were weak, unco-ordinated and lacked strong management. DFID used its position as an influential and significant donor to help these parts of the UN to identify where change was most needed and supported them to make these changes. This also involved supporting some members of staff within those organisations who wanted to make change – whether radical or incremental – that may not have had support from the top of their house. This process was labour and time-intensive for both DFID and the partner and sometimes led to resentment that DFID was micro-managing. This also had political implications. As the changes began to take effect and DFID listened to partners' concerns, it started to pull away from this approach and has now adopted a more 'light touch' approach. This now means that, largely, funds are not earmarked for specific projects but are given for core activities. At the same time, the institutional partnership documents mentioned above do outline the priority objectives for strengthening the partner organisation. Whether these reflect the priority of the agency / organisation, DFID or a true negotiation between the two is variable. The objectives are, by and large, not indicative of the priority areas of work for the partner, but of those areas where DFID and the partner think there is room for improvement.

Youth in partnership documents

Apart from those organisations that focus on children, there is little reference to youth in any of the categories outlined above. This could be because it is not a priority of the partner organisation, because it is not a priority of DFID or because both DFID and the partner are content that the funded partner is doing all it should on youth and so this is not a focus for support. It is apparent, on closer examination that some of the organisations supported by DFID do work on or for youth (fewer work with youth) even where this is not reflected in the documentation. The risk associated with not documenting this work in the partnership agreement is that the partner is not held accountable by DFID for this work and if the partner decides to drop it, it can be dropped.

Moreover, it is possible that, when work with, for or on youth is missing from the documentation, a message is transmitted to those partners, other partners and other donors that work with, for or on youth is not a priority for DFID. It is only by making a priority clearly and explicitly apparent that it becomes one.

Child protection policies

It is a requirement of the Development Awareness Fund that child protection mechanisms should be in place where staff are likely to have direct contact with children. This is not a general funding requirement, however. , there is no standard requirement for all partner organisations. It is suggested that DFID consider making adequate child protection mechanisms a prerequisite of funding, in the same way as it requires that funded partner organisations have adequate financial systems in place to ensure accountability both to their beneficiaries and to the UK population.

The sexual or other abuse of children and young people is a violation of their rights. It also invites scandal and detracts attention from the good work that organisations are doing, while providing ammunition to those who would decry the involvement of development agencies in the lives of poor people. The UN, regional peacekeeping organisations[58] and NGOs have all had unfortunate experiences of their staff facing allegations of egregious violations against girls, young women or boys and have found it costly as well as shameful.

In order to make this requirement of funded partners, DFID may find that it needs, itself, to institute a mechanism to protect children and youth from abuse by its own staff members or contractors. This would be both to ensure reciprocity of standards and to set a good example. While it may be true that most DFID staff do not have formal and frequent contact with young women or young men, there are, unfortunately, opportunities for abuse. Additionally, while it is to be hoped that no-one working for or with DFID would use their position in this way, it is well documented that there is no way of detecting – in advance - a person who is likely to abuse a young person. Where, however, organisations put mechanisms in place and adhere to them, the likelihood of such abuse happening and continuing undetected and unreported is greatly reduced[59].

Assistance can be given in this regard by groups such as the Keeping Children Safe Coalition or UNICEF who have led on the development of these policies.

Foreign and domestic policy

DFID is also a major Whitehall department. While development assistance is, of course, bound by the 2002 International Development Act, development is part of HMG's foreign policy. Examples here include the relationships between HMG and the Governments of Zimbabwe or Sri Lanka, which in turn has an impact on HMG's political leverage at fora such as the Security Council or

[58] ECOMOG, African Union

[59] Liberia Save the Children study 2006, UNHCR / Save the Children study 2002, UNDPKO materials on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Human Rights Council. Development assistance also has a close relationship with domestic policies. For instance, in terms of migration, there is a domestic pressure to keep people experiencing conflict or persecution away from British shores, which can be manifested as an imperative to enable them to stay at home or close to home by providing more and better assistance in their regions of origin. In turn, the UK struggles with the need to recruit skilled migrant labour without being responsible for any 'brain drain' in countries that need their skilled workforce more. DFID also has a task to maintain positive public perceptions of development assistance, particularly in times of economic uncertainty.

Working across Whitehall

44. DFID makes efforts to cooperate with other government departments on an issue-basis or through formalised structures such as the Conflict Prevention Pools or the Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit. Other government departments are also called upon to collaborate with DFID or at least on development issues, including the Department for Enterprise, Business and Regulatory Reform on youth employment issues, the Department for Children Schools and Families on the Commonwealth Youth Programme (particularly as it relates to HMG's Every Child Matters agenda) and the Home Office on issues of international refugee law and policy.

45. In its capacity as a department of HMG, DFID – with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office - has a significant influencing role at the international level. This may be in terms of, for instance, providing funding support for particular mandates or in providing technical, negotiating expertise at international gatherings for instance on reproductive health and rights at the UNGASS on Children in 2002. The UK is putting forward a resolution on Policies and Programmes for Youth at the 62nd UN General Assembly.

46. DFID knowledge and expertise may also be called upon to inform UK negotiations at the Security Council or Human Rights Council, for example. DFID is also considered a leader on the development of effective aid modalities; it has completely untied all development assistance and is leading on the harmonisation agenda, as well as the development of common pools and a more 'light touch' approach to multi-laterals and international NGOs.

WHAT GUIDES DFID?

Ministerial direction

The Prime Minister has demonstrated a whole-hearted commitment to achieving the MDGs by launching the following programmes of action:

- A programme of action on education to end illiteracy and to ensure opportunity for all.

- A programme of action on trade and economic development to end poverty and ensure prosperity for all.
- A programme of action to challenge degradation and to protect the environment, to promote safety and security for all.
- And a programme of action to eradicate disease to ensure decent health for all.

The above list, with obvious connections to youth, creates opportunities for DFID as well as other government departments, civil society and the multi-laterals to harness the asset of youth. At the same time, it is clear that these programmes are dependent on a concerted effort to involve youth and build their capacities. When the Prime Minister talks about the need to inspire the young, to produce a new generation of trained teachers and to ensure adequate levels of health professionals, he is referring to the education, training and employment of youth. In referring to fostering entrepeneurship and creating the correct environment for private enterprise to flourish, it is clear that this includes youth.

DFID is governed by a Secretary of State with three Under-Secretaries of State. Ministerial emphasis and interest plays a prominent part in determining DFID direction. For instance, DFID's interest in and response to internal displacement increased manifold once the (then) Secretary of State was made personally aware of this phenomenon. Currently, the Ministerial team is showing an interest in issues of economic growth, employment and skills and the role of the private sector in development (amongst others).

International and national law

While the MDGs are located within the Millennium Declaration, which makes a clear connection between human rights and the achievement of the MDGs, it is the latter that motivates DFID staff and this that they regard as the *raison d'etre* of the organisation. This study and other mapping studies[60] have revealed that DFID staff members do not, systematically and routinely, locate their work in international law. For instance, the imperative to use international cooperation to further the achievement of the Convention on the Rights of the Child[61] is little known across DFID and country-based staff does not tend to use international norms and standards in their dealings with partner governments. This is changing, however, as there is increasing awareness across DFID about the relevance and usefulness of international law. Four examples demonstrate this: (a) the reference in the Country Governance Analysis to the outputs of the UN Human Rights Treaty Monitoring Bodies (b) a short series of training carried out for DFID headquarters staff on international human rights, (c) a study about to be commissioned by DFID on

[60] Human Rights Reviews 2004, 2007 (yet to be finalised)
[61] See General Comment 5 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child at http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(symbol)/CRC.GC.2003.5.En?OpenDocument

the effectiveness of aid modalities, including their relevance to human rights and (d) a frequent reference in DFID documents and at country level to UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

As stated above, DFID is also bound by national law. Most relevant are the 2002 International Development Act and the 1998 Human Rights Act, followed by the 2001 International Criminal Court Act.

Other influences

DFID is also responsive to other governments - be they donor or 'beneficiary'. For instance, there is an increasing call by African education ministers to address the problem of adolescents entering (and leaving) secondary school with sub-standard attainment levels and not ready for livelihoods. Similarly, participants at the high-level "Asia 2015" conference[62] raised the need for a skilled, educated work-force, clearly laying down a marker for post-primary education and skills training for youth.

While DFID's relationship with multi-lateral bodies such as UNICEF, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the World Bank is largely donor / recipient, these bodies also play a role in influencing thinking across DFID. This is particularly likely as the 'light touch' approach that DFID has recently adopted with its multi-lateral partners is embedded. DFID can take advantage of the research and field experience of these organisations and can use these partnerships to form strategic alliances with other donor governments. The usefulness of these relationships, however, is dependent on the strength of the multi-lateral organisation as well as the avenues of communication. It is beholden on organisations that purport to promote the rights of youth to ensure that it is able to articulate this message to DFID and to lead by example.

DFID's relationships with civil society organisations, including academic institutions, 'think tanks', NGOs and faith-based groups also provide opportunities for influencing DFID's direction. The Overseas Development Institute, for instance, holds many joint events with DFID and DFID staff members are likely to be aware of the latest research emanating from that organisation.

In addition, of course, research that is commissioned by DFID – either alone or in collaboration with partners - can also influence thinking across the organisation.

[62] March 2006. See documents at http://www.asia2015conference.org/index.htm

YOUTH ACROSS DFID – A SNAPSHOT

General Comments on DFID documentation

DFID produces a large amount of documentation. A substantial proportion of this was reviewed for this study, including country and regional-level documentation, briefing papers, policy documents, the Annual Reviews of 2005 and 2006, evaluation reports and a random sample of Developments magazine.

The documentation reveals that DFID is clearly doing a great deal of work that benefits young people. This may be in terms of prioritising 'young people's issues' (e.g. education), work that coincidentally benefits young people (e.g. demobilisation and reintegration of people associated with armed groups) or work that is focused on young people as a sector (e.g.radicalisation).

While youth is not explicitly prominent across the higher-level policy documents, there is much contained in policies (from the White Papers downwards) that provides opportunities for DFID to include young people more explicitly in its programming and that can lead DFID to take advantage of the respective advantages and potential that young people can bring. For instance, the 2006 White Paper talks about inclusiveness and responsiveness of governments and other governance structures which should 'open the door' for young people and their mentors to engage themselves with these structures.

The primary challenge in finding evidence of work with, for or on youth is that DFID has not yet articulated a policy, strategy or direction on youth or age-related development assistance more generally. Hence, it does not systematically disaggregate by age or apply an age 'lens'; whether in terms of children, youth or older people. Youth is not recognised as a discrete sector of society as are women, for example. Apart from a few notable examples, therefore, there is little in the documentation that singles out young people as a target for development assistance, a group that warrants particular attention for participation or one that has something particular to offer. Nor do analyses of development assistance make reference to any relationship that may exist with youth or youth issues.

The lack of reference to youth in DFID documentation means that DFID and its partners are deprived of the opportunity to understand and learn more about the relationship between youth and development and to contribute to mutual learning in the global arena. In particular, it does not help DFID and its partners to learn whether the work that is being done with, for or on youth is making a difference in terms of the MDGs and whether and in what way it contributes towards realising or promoting the human rights of youth. It also militates against scaling up or replication of positive work, both because the

record is lost and because it appears not to have been a DFID priority or even an interest. Similarly, important lessons may be lost instead of learned from the work that DFID is doing, both for DFID itself and for its partners. This can act to the detriment of programming in the future and, importantly, in the present. Again, a potential 'virtuous circle' - where good programming based on rigorous analysis informs even better programming - may be replaced by a 'vicious circle' where positive aspects of programming are lost because of a lack of analysis, in turn 'dumbed down' by a lack of documentation about the issues facing youth.

Apart from the above, there are other reasons why a systematic addressing of age / youth may be absent from DFID documentation, some of which are inter-linked:

a) A time-lag applies to policy and other written documents vis a vis current and developing thinking;
b) Country Assistance Plans are 'generational', in that they are written to last for a number of years. Those that are currently being written are incorporating the mandatory Country Governance Analysis (CGA), whereas others will have already done both the CGA and already incorporated the Gender and Social Exclusion Analysis (CSEA) also now mandatory. Even where the logic of these analyses point, for example, to youth being a particular concern in relation to HIV / AIDS or the justice sector, youth are not routinely identified as a group in this way. For example, while the Regional Assistance Plan for the Caribbean identifies the social exclusion of poor urban youth as a concern relating to HIV / AIDS and crime, it does not refer to a commitment to involving youth in its work with partner governments or institutional capacity-building;
c) DFID works on new or emerging issues, such as climate change, extremism ("radicalisation") or women, peace and security. Much of the work that accompanies these issues is discussion-based (internally and with partners) rather than documented, particularly at its early stages;
d) Linked to the above, much takes place within DFID that is not documented. As stated above, a Ministerial interest may result in a shift of emphasis. At the same time, shifts in thinking, influencing and relationships with some multi-lateral organisations may not be documented. Particularly where work may be considered sensitive or may have wider implications than DFID's own development assistance, documentation may reflect a diluted version of the true picture. For instance, where a partner government is particularly weak in some areas, this may be expressed in 'capacity-building' rather than declamatory terms, or where issues are 'hot' in the international arena,

DFID may choose not to publicise all the stages of its policy development;

e) The ‘DFID line’ may be reflected in other documents (e.g. by the European Commission) rather than in DFID documents themselves;
f) Analysis of the implications of age is dependent on disaggregation of data. For instance, although the target group may be comprised largely of young people, this analysis is missing from the documentation. For instance, the reports of the Taking Action programme (on HIV / AIDS) acknowledges that prisoners and street prostitutes are amongst the ‘vulnerable groups’ of concern, yet does not address the (probable) fact that most of these people will be young. Again, this is a vicious circle where the lack of age-disaggregation leads to a lack of analysis, missed programming opportunities and therefore a lack of reporting on the impact on different groups and the capacities that these different groups may bring;
g) Linked to the above, the invisibility of youth in DFID’s documentation may reveal that DFID staff members do not yet have an understanding of the imperatives to address youth, the benefits of paying attention to youth or, indeed, an age-related analysis of development issues. The relevance of age to development is an emerging issue and DFID is at the beginning of this journey.
h) There is no requirement in the evaluation methodology to consider youth. This means that external and internal evaluations are not called upon to apply a ‘youth lens’ to the assessment of DFID’s effectiveness. The experience of requiring evaluations to take gender into account shows that, where staff members know that the work will be analysed against gender indicators, the earlier stages of programme cycle management pay more attention to gender.

Youth as partners for development

Young people obviously form a component of the groups with which DFID consults at both policy and country level, including those falling into the ‘socially excluded’ groups (e.g. scheduled castes or women). While the formal consultation processes are open to all, including young people, DFID is not yet, systematically, specifically seeking the views of young people either as a sector of society or as a component of other groups.

At policy level, youth do not appear in DFID policy documentation as a group or sector of society with a valid and valuable contribution to make. For instance, although youth are referred to in the conflict prevention, disaster risk reduction and security policies as people who are affected by crises or as a source of conflict-related risk, the imperative to involve them and the benefits of doing so are missing. This may be partly to do with a lack of international standards on the involvement of youth compared to, say, women pursuant to

UNSC Resolution 1325 or children pursuant to Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, although, of course, the latter applies to youth between 15 and 18 and there are other international instruments that relate to the basic human right to participate in decision-making. It is more likely, then, that DFID has not yet thought about the need and the benefits of involving youth or has not yet imported this into policy-level documents.

Civil society participation

DFID documentation does reveal an increased commitment to involving civil society in the development of policy. Consultation periods tend to be of sufficient length and the documents are accessible on-line. Also, the Country and Regional Assistance Plans, as they reach the re-drafting stage of their cycles, are put out to consultation via the internet. At country level, however, the documentation does not indicate a consistent approach to the involvement of national civil society at all stages of the project or programme cycle, although there are many positive examples. These include a recent evaluation of DFID assistance to the Anti-Corruption Commission in Sierra Leone where the views of civil society were considered key and that some Country Assistance Plans mandatorily include a period of consultation where DFID staff actively seek the views of civil society. Whether or not this will include youth groups (or youth in other groups), will depend on the local context as well as the commitment and awareness of the DFID Country Office.

Participation and evaluation requirements

While participation is important throughout the project or programme cycle, perhaps the most important and catalytic part of this cycle is in monitoring and evaluation. Two linked comments here: Firstly, as youth are not expected to be involved in the evaluation of DFID programming or funding, there is less incentive (particularly when staff members are under pressure) to involve them at the earlier stages of the programme. Secondly, if staff members do not expect to be evaluated in terms of whether and to what extent they involved youth in programme design and implementation, it is easy for this dimension to drop off the agenda.

Obstacles to youth participation

These should not be underestimated. Youth groups – particularly those without adult support – are less likely to be in the same circuit as DFID staff members, compared to, say, religious leaders or established adult civil society organisations. They are less likely to know about the relevant meetings, to speak English or to know the etiquette or procedures for liaising with donors. At a prosaic level, simply getting in the DFID building can be difficult for a poor young woman who has to negotiate her way past the security guards.

Participation and governance

DFID describes participation as a central component of the human rights-based approach and the new emphasis on governance includes the imperative for governments / decision-makers to be accessible and responsive to the population. Encouragingly, this is not only expressed in terms of the electorate, which would exclude those under 18 in most countries. The challenge is to ensure that governance structures and institutions are accountable, accessible and responsive to the whole population, including the marginalised. Particular challenges with regard to youth are manifold and include the following:

Decision-makers can have less respect for the views of youth than of their own peers, particularly where there are the added layers of lack of education, marginalisation, poverty, class or caste and gender. Youth tend to have less experience in dealing with decision-makers, can be easily intimidated by the structures and processes of governance and may be used to dealing with authority – or, rather, being dealt with by authority – in a disciplining or restricting context. Youth from poor, rural communities may speak a different dialect from the decision-makers or at least know that their accent 'lets them down'. For effective participation of youth, decision-makers and youth themselves need education, experience and training. National Youth Councils have a role in terms of helping young leaders to exercise their citizenship rights and to advocate for the rights of youth. While some Youth Councils are set up by statute (e.g. Uganda and Malawi), their effectiveness varies, depending on their structure, independence from national government and representativeness.

Despite the above, there is no international organisation tasked with bringing decision-makers and youth together at the national level, as with, say, UNIFEM or UNDP for women vis a vis electoral candidacy training.

It is to be hoped that, as increasing numbers of DFID Country Offices identify youth as a societal sector of concern and other imperatives to recognise the value of youth participation are embraced, DFID discussions with national governance structures and planning for more accountable, responsive and accessible governance will include the introduction of specific measures to ensure youth are able to participate effectively. It will be important for these to be documented.

Youth as beneficiaries

In pursuance of the MDGs, DFID's policies and programmes will frequently have an impact upon young people, although, as above, this is rarely explicit. Where the programming is obviously aimed at young people, such as primary education for adolescents who have missed out on the early years or

programmes for married girls, the documents are clear about the benefits to the young people and their families and communities. In other instances, however, where young people are – by definition- the bulk of the target group, they may be invisible (e.g. targeting street prostitutes for HIV / AIDS work).

In other instances, where there is no disaggregation or analysis by age, the information is missing about whether young people comprise a signficant proportion of the target group. For instance, the DFID programme in Nicaragua[63] supports income generation activities for rural poor people. It is apparent that many of the beneficiaries of this work are women, and it is possible if not probable that young women are a signficant proportion of this group. Available documentation does not show this, however. The Lesotho Justice Sector Support Programme[64] is another example where it is likely that youth are involved and stand to benefit from this programme yet the documentation is silent on this topic. In Moldova[65], DFID knows that remittances from migrant workers form a substantial part of the economy, yet does not appear to have analysed the demographic of these workers. The value of doing such analysis here is demonstrated by those instances where the programming documentation is explicit about its relationship to youth, as in Sierra Leone's justice sector work, where juvenile justice has been identified as a priority area and the document is clear about why this is important.

Youth as resources, an asset or a threat

As an organisation, DFID has yet to be systematically explicit about its approach to youth as an asset or resource. It has more of an explicit commitment to working on youth where youth are addressed as a threat to security or peace. For instance, on Poverty Reduction Strategies, while there is an emphasis on education and health sectors, and these sectors are recognised as being partiuclarly relevant to youth, the analysis of *why* it is important to address these issues and the opportunities that a healthy, educated youth population bring for economic development and growth of countries has yet to be fully developed. In terms of economic growth, particularly in the job market and in ensuring a skilled workforce, there is an increasing awareness of the demographic necessity to ensure that there are jobs for the millions of youth about to enter the job market.

Disaggregation (or the lack of it) creates an obstacle here to obtaining a true picture of DFID's work on youth. For instance, although youth in Afghanistan are central to that country's recovery from decades of conflict and oppression, there is little information to indicate that they are being valued in terms of

[6363] DFID Annual Report 2007
[64] Ibid
[65] Ibid

reducing the economic dependency of those communities on poppy production. The Quick Impact Projects programme in Helmand province help farmers to create alternatives to poppy production yet, unfortunately, there is no documentation about the demographic of these farmers or their families.

On violent conflict and youth involved in organised violence, on the other hand, DFID has recognised the need to focus work on the threat that disaffected young people may constitute, although the documented work in this area is patchy. Documentation from the Sierra Leone country office pays a great deal of attention to this. It is also apparent that DFID Rwanda has supported the national government's efforts to harness young people's skills and capacities, from both an assets-based approach and the recognition that youth comprised a signficant proportion of both the perpetrators of the genocide and the victims.

Where work on youth is documented, it would be useful to know more about the individual activities, how the decision was reached to do this work and how it happened. For instance, documents about the work on forestry in Indonesia do make reference to young people being instrumental in creating a freer mass media. It would be helpful, particularly in searching for ways to scale up and to replicate if it also explained how young people could be and were mobilised to play their part in this way in creating a democratic society.

By definition, work that addresses youth either as a resource or a threat overlaps considerably with work 'with' youth; it is important that young women and young men are involved in all stages of work that addresses them as an asset or, indeed, a problem. For instance, while an emphasis on the sensitive areas of harmful cultural practices self-evidently has an impact on young people in particular, there is variable (documentary) evidence that young people themselves are being actively engaged to combat the practices of, for instance, early marriage or female genital cutting. In China[66], young women are involved in vocational training to provide sustainable alternatives to trafficking for sexual exploitation and in Afghanistan[67] young journalists are active in the production of a radio programme for Afghan teenagers. In Bangladesh, however, it is not recorded whether and to what extent young women are being involved in making the police stations more approachable to women and girls and in Iraq it is not recorded whether young people are involved in the peace-building initiatives.

There is good news, however, in that some of DFID's more recent documents do demonstrate an encouraging trend towards an age and gender-disaggregated analysis of the demographic of a phenomenon, such as the

[66] DFID-funded ILO project
[67] Straight Talk media programme for Afghan youth, funded by the Global Conflict Prevention Pool

March 2007 policy on migration[68] This document picks up the intersection between age and gender, particularly relating to young women and addressing the implications for the economic health of various countries and their populations. At other times, an emphasis on gender has opened the window to other analyses including regarding youth. Any rigorous gender analysis should lead to an analysis of *which* girls, boys, women and men are having particular experiences. For instance, a gender analysis of humanitarian assistance in Ethiopia revealed that boys and young men were not able to avail themselves of food assistance because they did not know how to cook; a finding which resulted in changes in the assistance programme[69]. The DFID Bangladesh Country Assistance Plan and other documents, based on DFID's gender and social exclusion analysis, emphasise the situation of women *and girls*. While these documents could benefit from a deeper analysis of the differential experience of girls and young women from their older sisters, it is obvious from the demographics of that country that a large proportion of the target population will be in the youth cohort.

Youth as a threat

Radicalisation

The emphasis on radicalisation, while understandable in today's context, could threaten to overwhelm DFID's gains, particularly with regard either to girls' education or to youth participation. It is easy, as seen with Sierra Leone vis a vis young men as potential drivers of conflict, to forget that youth includes young women and girls and to lose sight of the 'asset-based' or rights-based approach to working with, for and on youth. Many young men in fragile states (or states with emerging conflicting groups) are disaffected, may find themselves without a place in society and so turn to extremism or organised crime. It is tempting to identify their problems as being to do with dislocation from their families and communities, the breakdown of family or community structures or to do with gender differences. The risk associated with this analysis is that it can provide some sort of justification for not educating girls. For instance, where girls are educated in order to attract a 'better' husband in order to boost family income and status in the longer-term, their male contemporaries may find themselves left behind, disaffected from their own families and with little to do and little meaning to their lives. A rights-based approach regards all young women and men as having the same rights, including education, livelihoods, identity and so on and does not accept that the rights of one group should be sacrificed for another's. Rather, instead of denying girls the right to education, alternatives such as 'second chance'

[68] Moving out of poverty,making migration work for poor people
[69] www.ochaonline.un.org

programmes can be offered to adolescent boys who may have missed out on secondary education.

It is also important to remember that young men, too, experience insecurity and that they both benefit from programmes that are designed to improve the security of their communities and have a right to security. Young men's experience of insecurity may indeed be the 'tipping' factor that makes them vulnerable to recruitment by war-lords or extremists.

POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS - Headquarters

There was widespread interest and engagement in this study by DFID staff members. While this seems to reflect an increasing awareness of the demographic imperative to address youth, particularly in areas such as economic growth, it also seems to be a result of the growing emphasis on education, including secondary and tertiary but also addressing older children and youth who still need primary education. DFID has long had a commitment to MDG 2 relating to primary education as well as to MDG 3 which relates to gender disparities in primary and secondary education. Although an indicator of MDG 2 relates to the literacy levels of youth, this dimension attracts less attention than the measurement of enrolment and completion rates in primary-level schooling. There is, however, an increasing awareness of the fact that many poor children are leaving primary school without having learned very much, due to poor capacity, uninformed teaching methods or poor attendance as a result of poverty. Many more are still out of school – particularly girls and particularly in conflict-affected fragile states. The older of these children have entered or will shortly enter the labour market and will be either ill-equipped to engage in positive livelihood choices or will constitute a lost opportunity for economic growth through their earnings. It will also reduce the professional cohort needed to ensure sustainable development. DFID has started to re-think education and skills, and has published a briefing paper on vocational training, education and skills[70]. It is also starting to include attention to youth in its thinking on economic growth. While this is largely in terms of youth as a resource, rather than as rights-holders, there is also a clear recognition of the imperative to address 'decent work' rather than 'any work' as – implicitly – a rights issue.

Other areas where there are opportunities for working with, for or on youth include climate change. This is a growing area of interest across DFID and substantial resources are being devoted to deeper exploration of the links between poverty and climate change, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. DFID is also supporting the IDS at Sussex University regarding the relationship between children and climate change. There is also an opportunity here to

[70] April 2007: Briefing Paper on Technical and Vocational Skills Development

work *with* youth, particularly in identifying and supporting those youth groups which are already working on climate change both in the developing world and at home.

Secondary and tertiary education is beginning to come onto DFID's agenda, largely thanks to its relationship with the NGO community concerned with education as well as some pressure from politicians in partner governments who identify unskilled youth as a burgeoning concern in their countries. The growing emphasis on economic growth as well as governance means that DFID will have to be cognisant of the need to pay attention to secondary and tertiary education, as well as skills training.

The mandatory Country Governance Analysis (CGA) to be performed by all DFID country offices, while not containing specific references to youth as a cohort or a sector, is sufficiently rigorous to both allow for and encourage age-related analysis. Indeed, there is already an indication in early reporting by Country Offices that they are starting to identify youth as one of the main sectors of society to which they will need to pay attention, both from an 'assets-based' approach and one that identifies youth as a potential 'driver of fragility'. Based on the DFID analysis of good governance as outlined in the 2006 White Paper, the CGA contains references to transparency, capacity and accountability. The challenge here is to encourage country offices to recognise youth as a group to whom national governance institutions should be accountable, to increase the capacity of these institutions to respond to the issues faced by youth and to ensure that youth have access to the decision-making process. An encouraging development here is evidenced in Rwanda and the Caribbean, where DFID is supporting national or regional structures to upgrade their data collection and analysis capacity. This will enable governments to disaggregate their data according to age, gender and other categories where appropriate[71]

Similarly the mandatory gender analysis should (and in some instances does[72]) lead inevitably to an interrogation of the impact of development strategies on age. If, for instance, it is found that a reason for child malnutrition is due to mothers' illiteracy or lack of nutritional awareness, a gender analysis will throw up that many of these mothers are themselves children or very young women. As seen below regarding the Caribbean, an understanding of the gender dimensions of social exclusion in urban areas demonstrates the need to work with youth.

[71] There will be sensitivities about this. For instance, Rwanda is unlikely to acknowledge difference based on being a Tutsi or a Hutu. In other countries where data-collection is a concern, care must be taken that it does not replicate exclusionary differences such as caste. The draft guidance to the Gender and Social Exclusion Analysis addresses this point.
[72] Ref: Draft Gender and Social Exclusion Analysis Guidelines

DFID has funding partnerships with many organisations, including UK-based NGOs. Many of these organisations carry out positive work with, for or on youth, with which DFID will rightly align itself, such as in answering Parliamentary Questions about spend on youth. The extent to which the information, lessons and innovative thinking and practice that emerges from these organisations' work is fed into the DFID processes is variable. Positive examples include the network membership organisation Campaign for Global Education (GCE) which works closely with education colleagues in DFID to share the expertise and research results of member organisations as well as acting as a 'reality check' for DFID policies and direction. The Children and Youth Network is another example where DFID has welcomed the participation of civil society to enable it to benefit from the work of its NGO partners.

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is an example of where this process is not as yet happening but where there is a major opportunity for a new model of working in partnership. DFID funds six NGOs to carry out different dimensions of work on DRR. Plan UK is funded outside the PPA to carry out a major project on the involvement of children and youth in DRR. It is already demonstrating the benefits of including youth at the centre of DRR and the dangers of not doing so. DFID has recognised that, due to lack of its staff time, there has been little capacity for bringing the information to DFID and for DFID, in turn, to ensure that these valuable lessons are transmitted either to its country offices or to the international DRR arena in which DFID is a significant influence. It is taking action to remedy this by reprioritising in order to be able to devote more time to the funded partners. Additionally, the NGOs themselves are sharing their knowledge and it is to be hoped that they will find a way to feed this information in to DFID and other donor governments.

Development awareness and education

DFID devotes substantial resources[73] on development awareness through the Development Awareness Fund (DAF)[74], particularly amongst children and youth, because it recognises that working with youth is key to improving the understanding of development amongst the UK population[75]. Work funded by the DAF tends to be school or college-based and aimed at helping young people to better understand – and to be able to contribute to – development, development assistance and the complexities of these. In doing so, the DAF (and its subsiduary fund, "Enabling Effective Support") addresses youth as people with something to contribute both now and later in their lives.

[73] £1.5million for new projects in 2008 / 09 FY
[74] http://www.dfid.gov.uk/funding/dafguidelines0809.asp
[75] Learning to Listen Action Plan 2004 - 2005

There are many positive developments in the approach taken by DFID to development awareness. Of late, there is recognition that children and youth who are themselves disadvantaged or marginalised within the UK also have the right to know about development and that they have plenty to contribute. DFID and its partner organisations working in this area have recognised that they have some distance to travel in this regard and that development awareness programmes have tended to favour children and youth from middle-class backgrounds. One dimension to this, more particularly for youth than for smaller children, is that the projects are carried out almost exclusively in school. For 16-18 year old youth, this means that it targets those who stay on for 'A' levels or equivalent. To meet this concern, DFID and partner NGOs are working towards bringing development awareness into more informal settings (including youth work) as well as schools.

Development awareness for children and youth who live in developing countries has not yet been a focus either for DFID or its partner NGOs. If DFID and its partners are serious about participation of youth in developing countries, it will be necessary to provide support to the youth, their teachers and leaders to ensure that they can hold donors, governments and other development agencies accountable from a position of knowledge.

The idea of development awareness for children and youth in developing countries is still new and it will be a challenge for DFID to identify the best ways to support youth and youth organisations concerned with learning about development at the country-level. There is an opportunity and responsibility here for DFID, NGOs and academic institutions to increase their attention to youth in the developing world as actors in development, rather than replicating the dichotomy of 'aware North' and 'recipient South'. The challenge will also be to avoid replicating those structures within developing country societies that contribute to the social exclusion of some youth; again, taking development awareness further than the formal education sector so that, for instance, working youth can also benefit, is imperative in this regard. Much can be learned here from the work of the Commonwealth Youth Programme and from youth groups themselves.

The Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE)

DFID can be proud of the financial support it has given to the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP), from which the above has been developed for 2007 - 2015. The synchronicity with DFID's own concerns is clear: the PAYE relates to many of the countries in which DFID has a particular interest, whether as fragile states or countries where DFID provides a signficant level of support. It is also concerned with the same issues as DFID, including education, HIV / AIDS, governance, employment and economic growth and climate change while also pushing the boundaries to, for instance professionalise the youth

work sector and to monitor and evaluate progress in youth development. The PAYE explicitly adopts an assets-based approach and is located firmly on a rights-based premise of youth empowerment and participation and has mobilised youth across all continents. DFID is starting to liaise more closely with the Commonwealth Youth Programme, creating an opportunity to bring the expertise of the CYP into DFID's work, helping it to enter the relevant networks or deepen its relationships with relevant bodies and to act as a mutual 'critical friend'.

General Assembly Resolution 60/2 tasked the UN Secretariat to work with partners to establish a broad set of indicators related to the priority areas identified in the World Programme of Action and five new areas of concern to youth: viz. globalization, HIV/AIDS, ICT, conflict and intergenerational issues. Governments and other actors may choose to use these indicators to monitor the situation of young people. . As a result, the Commonwealth Youth Programme has, over the last 12 years or so, worked with partners to develop a set of "Youth Development Indicators". Determined largely by youth themselves, these indicators are designed to be complementary both to the Human Development Index and the MDG targets. By focusing on a specific age range, they aim both to highlight the experience of youth vis a vis development so that the global achievements can be measured against a real cohort of society (ie. to ask the question "have youth been served or failed by development efforts?") and to provide a broader set of information regarding development generally. The indicators have obtained signficant purchase in various countries and regions, including the Caribbean which acts as a repository for the Organisation of American States (OAS), Brazil and Malaysia which have already developed sets of indicators.

The indicators are qualitative as well as quantitative; they overcome many of the problems associated with obtaining reliable statistics in difficult circumstances by interrogating factors leading to 'resilence'. Again, this rights-based, assets-based approach regards youth not as a problem to be contained but as a group from whom development actors may learn.

Employment and Economic Growth

In his speech in July 2007 the Prime Minister said:

"In the 1990s the talk was structural adjustment; in 2007 it is sustainable development. But perhaps for too long we have talked the language of development without defining its starting point in wealth creation - the dignity of individuals empowered to trade and be economically self sufficient."

This sends out a clear message across DFID that it should be increasingly concerned with the need to create a positive economic and legal environment

for development to occur and provides an emphasis on the relationship between economic growth and sustainable development.

Even before the new Ministerial team was established, DFID was starting to revitalise its interest in skills training, including vocational skills. The July 2006 Briefing Paper "The Importance of secondary, higher and vocational education to development" clearly and strongly makes the connection between education and skills and economic growth – and, in turn, the acheivement of the MDGs. More latterly, work within the Growth and Investment Group in DFID's Policy and Research Division is creating the environment for more substantive dialogue about the connections between youth and economic growth. While there is some reluctance to address youth as 'yet another group', the opportunity is there to ensure that work on economic growth both takes on board the imperative to address youth and does not lose the gains made by DFID and others in this field.

DFID may also benefit here from work with the Department on Work and Pensions which is leading on the Youth Employment Network initiative.

HIV / AIDS is a growing threat against the lives and livelihoods of young women and men, who comprise the majority of people with the disease. While DFID has focussed on this area for some years, it has recently developed a new, energetic strategy. While there is still some basic, key information missing about HIV / AIDS prevalence, youth behaviour regarding unsafe sexual and drugs practices and what can help prevent the spread of the epidemic and reduce the associated mortality, DFID is now pulling together the work that is has done to address these issues into a coherent whole.

POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS – Country Offices

There are many positive examples of work being done for and on youth (less of work being done with youth) at the country and regional level. The challenge here is to pick up these positive developments and find ways of scaling them up and of replicating them across regions where appropriate or, at least, ensuring that the lessons learned from these examples of good practice are transmitted between offices. A few examples follow:

DFID Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone is emerging peacefully from many years of violent conflict, in which youth were amongst the main victims and perpetrators. Sierra Leone describes itself as having lost a generation due to the conflict[76]. The profound

[76] Ref: Children and Youth in Sierra Leone's peace-building process: McIntyre and Thusi 2003

impact of the conflict on youth is seen in the high prevalence of sexual violence post-conflict and the levels of prostitution amongst girls who had no or little alternative livelihood opportunities. It is likely that the latter was also a result of the largest peace-keeping force the world has ever seen being present in Sierra Leone[77]. At the same time, the limitations of the demobilisation process for young combatants have contributed towards reduced livelihood opportunities and growing urbanisation particularly amongst youth[78]. DFID, through partners including the Government of Sierra Leone and the British Council, has worked hard to ensure that its programming works with youth, for youth and on youth. Examples include that it has made concerted efforts to involve youth in civil society consultation, including outside the capital. Some of this is automatic; leaders of some civil society organisations are young. Even where this is so, DFID is to be congratulated on not 'shutting the door' to these organisations because they have young and inexperienced leadership. In other instances, DFID has gone out of its way to ensure youth representation in its consultation processes. Work for youth has included funding Sexual Assault Referral Centres (no longer), and support to the Family Support Units within police stations that deal with sexual and other violence against women and children. Work on youth is characterised by the justice sector reform programming, where juvenile justice has been prominent from the outset. Again, young people were amongst those consulted and they stand to benefit directly from the programme. Importantly, the programme also acknowledges that a sub-standard (or non-existent) juvenile justice system contributes to the instability of the country.

There are gender considerations here, however. The emphasis on DFID programming with, for or on youth tends to be geared towards boys and young men as they are seen as potential drivers of fragility. Certainly, groups of under-occupied young men hanging around urban streets are more immediately alarming than a cohort of girl mothers attending the ante-natal clinics. The documentation and analysis of DFID programming in Sierra Leone indicates that, while girls and young women are not a threat, and while gender-based discrimination against girls and women remains endemic throughout the country, the priority will be to ensure that male youth are diverted into productive activities. This is despite the fact that girls and young women are having children at very young ages, reducing their own chance of education and appropriate livelihoods, in turn carrying the danger that their children will be less likely to be vaccinated, educated or healthy.

[77] Ref: Studies carried out by Save the Children and UNHCR in West Africa 2002 and 2006
[78] Ref: UNICEF Lessons Learned Report

DFID Caribbean

Restricted staff capacity in DFID Caribbean has meant that it has to be very strategic in its support to governance structures and institutions across the region. The documentation and programme analysis does recognise that youth are both an asset and a concern; crime levels (national and transnational), early pregnancy, a skewed sense of 'respect' and lack of positive role models, particularly for young men, has led DFID and its partners to emphasise working on these issues. Transnational crime has been identified as having a signficantly negative impact on youth in the region – either because they become directly involved (as organised criminals, 'mules' or as victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation) or because of the spill over effect into the countries themselves (e.g. the diversion of illegal drugs destined for the US or Europe). Gender dimensions feature prominently in DFID's analysis of the issues facing youth, particularly in terms of sexual violence against girls and young women and notions of masculinity amongst their brothers.

DFID Nepal

In Nepal, there is a happy convergence of the rights-based, social exclusion approach in which youth from socially excluded groups are included in the overall analysis and an emphasis on youth as a concern due to the violent conflict. As the latter subsides and DFID partners engage in the reintegration process of former young combatants, there are increasing opportunities to analyse why the rebel groups were so easily able to mobilise young women and men and the need to address their concerns. DFID Nepal has also been innovative in recruiting young people as research consultants and in so doing has gained a much more intimate knowledge of youth's concerns and experiences and challenged its own perceptions, as well as providing encouragement to young women and men that they can speak out and be recognised by a major donor government.

DFID Rwanda

In Rwanda, the national government is already aware of the imperative to include and involve youth in all dimensions. It has not been as concerned with children's rights[79] as they were neither actively involved in the genocide nor are part of the electorate. DFID's programme of general budget support to this government, therefore, is likely to support initiatives that involve youth. At the same time, youth involvement in initiatives such as the building and maintenance of genocide memorial sites and the emphasis on peace

[79] Human Rights Assessment. DFID Rwanda 2004 (unpublished)

education in secondary as well as primary schools is likely to contribute to a more aware next generation of decision-makers[80]

Livelihoods

There is an increasing need in many countries to create the environment in which young women and men can support themselves and their families (including their own children). Generally, DFID offices recognise this and tend to favour initiatives to create the economic and legal environment in which entrepreneurship may flourish. In doing so, they tend to eschew micro-credit for young entrepreneurs, regarding them as based on an erroneous assumption that young people are automatically good entrepeneurs – or want to be. This is not to say that micro-credit is negative per se. It has lifted many thousands of families out of poverty and has empowered millions through organisations such as Grameen, SEEDS and Shakti in South Asia. In many circumstances, it can be the only means of financial support for young people who may otherwise fall into destitution. Indeed, there are many young people across the globe who would benefit greatly from the opportunity to set up their own business. With some notable exceptions, however, those that have been successful have tended to be youth with other resources such as parental support or tertiary education. In other instances, the success has come about because groups of young people have banded together and pooled their resources and knowledge[81]. It is important to remember that, even (or especially) where young people are eager to 'just do it' and set up their own businesses, they usually lack the experience, financial safety net and connections to guarantee success.

HIV / AIDS

DFID has a range of positive initiatives in the area of HIV / AIDS across its country offices. These include:

- Support for comprehensive HIV prevention activities for young people. In Honduras, DFID supports the establishment of integrated sexual health clinics that provide non-judgemental services to young people and vulnerable groups.
- Support (through UNICEF) for National Plans for children affected by AIDS in 13 countries: Kenya, Ghana, Ethiopia, Malawi, Nigeria, Lesotho, South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Tanzania, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- Support to CARE Zambia (£10 million over 4 years) to deliver community level social protection programmes that benefit children affected by AIDS; including home based care, volunteering counselling services, and anti-stigma and discrimination activities.

[80] Ref children's involvement in protests regarding Darfur, 2006 (Aegis Society)
[81] See reference to bike riders' taxi services above

- Support for harm reduction and drug substitution therapy in Eastern Europe and Asia. Approaches include pilot projects, technical assistance for national implementation, social marketing, and outreach and peer education.
- Funding for an Asia-Pacific regional consultation on male sexual health and HIV, to increase leadership and ensure adequate and appropriate HIV prevention, treatment, care and support for men who have sex with men.
- Support for an outreach programme in Bangladesh that empowers sex workers and their children to demand their rights for basic services, raise awareness of the discrimination and abuse they face and build accountability for performance.
- Support to the Kenyan Prison Service (working with UNODC) to strengthen service provision for those with HIV and TB. A policy seminar on Prisons and Prevention of HIV is planned to be held in Kenya's largest prison (Kodiaga Prison in Nyanza) later this year.
- Support for legal education and rights awareness of people living with HIV and AIDS (Malawi), HIV-positive women and children affected by AIDS (Uganda), sex workers (Togo) and young people (Niger)
- Support to the peer education programmes in Nigeria, focusing on young street prostitutes and drug users.
- Support to Transitions to Adulthood Programme – a research programme on the social and economic factors contributing to poor health of adolescent girls.

These initiatives can be linked to renewed efforts to promote the availability of anti-retroviral treatment while using DFID's influence with reluctant governments to encourage them to acknowledge and deal with the problem.

While not all of these programmes are explicitly youth-centred, it is obvious from the target group that youth will feature substantially. The challenges for DFID are to (a) ensure that the youth demographic is not subsumed into the other identities the beneficiaries may hold (e.g. prisoner) and (b) to find ways to scale up these initiatives.

THE WAY FORWARD – Using the Opportunities:

There are many positive developments as described above, and there is a growing acknowledgement across DFID of the imperative to address youth issues. There is a need, however, for more explicit policy support for these developments, and to ensure that DfID does not lose either the substantial gains it has made or the opportunities it is opening up to increase the effectiveness of development interventions. The following recommendations for taking advantage of the opportunites will be found to be at least complementary and often synergistic in the real sense of the word.

Research

DFID has announced a substantial increase in its research budget and commitment, creating positive opportunities for organisations concerned with youth - and those concerned with ensuring that DFID is concerned with youth – to influence the shape and direction of that research. The submission by the Children and Youth Network in response to the consultation process for the new research strategy outlines a comprehensive set of research iniatives that would up-grade the work of DFID in terms of its understanding of the relationship between children, youth and development and would increase the understanding and contribution of DFID to the global debate on this issues. The submission is attached at Annex C.

As DFID becomes more aware at Ministerial and senior management levels of the imperative to treat youth as an asset, they could support this by sending out a message to Country Offices and Headquarters alike that youth are an important sector and that they should include them in all analyses and ensure that they include them in any consultation process. This should lead, in turn, to deeper and more informed work with youth, to benefit youth and that uses youth as a resource.

Partnerships

The NGO community has much to offer in this regard, both at international and national levels. At the international level, DFID is opening the doors between itself and its civil society partners; it is constrained, however by the reduced staff body and by the expansion in quantity of spend, to the possible detriment of being able to engage deeply with its partner NGOs. Smaller NGOs, particularly, are adept at innovative or targetted work in hard-to-reach places and there is a danger that reduced DFID staff capacity will lead to this work being overlooked. At the same time, there is a responsibility on the larger and more resourced NGOs to bring their learning and experience to the attention of DFID officials and Ministers. To this end, it is suggested that the Youth Working Group of the Children and Youth Network develop an advocacy strategy for engaging with DFID, other donor development agencies and multi-laterals so that their messages can be persuasive, appropriate and coordinated. In particular, there is a need for concrete evidence – be this qualitative or quantitative – and for the results of this evidence to be brought to DFID through appropriate channels. NGOs conduct a great deal of research and have access to field-based development experience which they could be using more effectively to this end.

DFID relies on its relationships with multi-laterals as well as NGOs to provide expertise and to promote innovative thinking and activities. Where partners are not able or willing to do so, there is room for DFID to use its influence to

prompt better performance so that it, as well as other donors, governments, NGOs and others may benefit. This is particularly challenging where DFID has a complex relationship with the governance of organisations such as the UN specialised agencies. It is encouraging that the joint institutional partnership with UNICEF has an objective that UNICEF should improve its human rights-based approach. Doing so will clearly enable DFID and other donors to learn from UNICEF's experience and expertise.

The work done by the Commonwealth Youth Programme, particulary the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE) described previously is as yet little known across DFID, despite DFID being one of the major funders. The PAYE forms the basis of a programme of action for work with, for and on youth. Of particular interest to DFID should be the development of Youth Development Indicators as a positive, innovative method of using different indices to measure development generally. It is suggested that the Commonwealth Youth Programme, the Youth Working Group and DFID host a seminar or launch event for the PAYE to explain the benefits of this sort of programme to DFID staff.

Learning

DFID has a much improved learning and management approach internally and although it has not yet developed a comprehensive learning organisation strategy there are moves to improve the methods and extent to which staff members learn from each other as well from their partners and from outside their own sphere. Across the organisation, DFID has benefited from a short series of human rights training for headquarters and field-based staff; such initiatives need to be sustained and refined to ensure they are always relevant and address emerging areas of concern, including the rights of children and youth. Regarding youth, there is appetite across DFID for more information about the benefits of working with, for and on youth and how to do this. This could either be the subject of a formal training course with the support of NGO partners and academics, or could be done as a series of mentoring exercises and guided on-job learning such as secondments to NGOs or IGOs or shorter visits to partner programmes in-country. Rather than providing DFID staff with more documentation that they have little time to read, existing opportunities such as Advisory Group or departmental retreats or 'town hall' meetings can be used to bring in issues of youth.

Monitoring and Evaluation

As an organisation striving for transparency, DFID relies heavily on its evaluation capacity. The relationship between good programming and evaluation is now well known and accepted across DFID and it has made great strides over recent years in integrating qualitative and quantitative

gender indicators. It is key, therefore, that age disaggregation forms a central part of evaluation methodology for programmes and funding arrangements. The Youth Development Indicators described above can form a useful starting point. As well as providing DFID staff members with the incentive to address youth; it also provides guidance on how to address youth – how to include youth in consultation and participation efforts, how to ensure that the work is reaching youth and that there is an appropriate balance so that the rights of youth are promoted, protected and realised. Moreover, practice in making youth a consideration – if not a central focus – will help DFID staff members to appreciate the asset that youth represent for the acheivement of the MDGs.

Emerging and other catalytic issues

DFID is engaging with issues as they arise or as they gain prominence on the international agenda. Others have been apparent for some time and represent an entry point to dealing with youth as an asset for achieving the MDGs.

a) *Employment and growth*

The 'youth bulge' creates both an opportunity and an imperative for addressing issues of youth employment as a matter of urgency. There is appetite for this at Ministerial and Prime Ministerial level and much ground work done by the Policy and Research Division. Moreover, the work being done at global level on MDG 1 and its targets should create an opportunity for ensuring that youth are comprehensively addressed.

b) *Education and skills*

Secondary, tertiary and skills-based education is central to the realisation of young women's and men's rights and to employment and growth. As is widely acknowledged, education is one of the most cost-effective development strategies that can be adopted. Moreover, an under-skilled or unskilled cohort of youth is not only a waste of their lives, but a waste of their potential contribution to the development of their own countries.

c) *Climate change*

DFID is investing signficantly in climate change as it affects development. Youth are particularly interested in this issue as they can see how it will affect them for all their lives, restrict their aspirations and reduce the chances of sustainble development in their countries. At the same time, youth in the UK are particularly concerned with environmental issues and are ready to take action, including in partnership with their contemporaries in developing countries. There are substantial opportunities for DFID to support these initiatives in tandem with those on development awareness.

d) *Governance*

DFID's emphasis on governance has created opportunities at the country level for involving youth in all three dimensions of good governance, not restricted to youth participation. The responsiveness and accountability of a government can be measured by how youth view it and whether it is able and willing to respond to issues identified as important by young people. The messages coming from country offices that have performed the Country Governance Analysis are revealing in this regard and provide an opportunity for the rest of DFID to learn about the relationship between youth and development, poverty and the acheivement of the MDGs.

e) *Health*

DFID is a major contributor to the new £multi-billion International Health Partnership, an initiative focusing on the health MDGs that brings together major donors, multi-lateral organisations and private foundations. The primary direction of its support will be to national capacities, particularly national health systems. This boost to the health sector and the emphasis on coordination of effort creates an opportunity for DFID to ensure that youth concerns are addressed in budget support to health ministries, as well as ensuring that youth ministries are engaged with health issues. This positive development further creates an opportunity and an imperative for youth and health civil society organisations to ensure that DFID and its funding partners are aware of the benefits of involving youth and the strength of youth as partners in the health dimensions of development.

f) Development awareness

DFID is responding to the increased awareness and thirst for information amongst UK youth to understand more about their role as global citizens. Positive developments that can be built upon include the deliberate extension of these initiatives to children and youth from less advantaged backgrounds and greater recognition of the informal sectors, including in youth work. It is suggested that DFID and relevant partners also explore the opportunities for development awareness programmes in the developing world. This would increase the level of participation of youth, make DFID and its INGO partners as well as national goverments more accountable to youth, their families and communities and bring in the expertise and experience of youth.

g) Violent conflict

To date, reference to youth in DFID's work on violent conflict has been almost exclusively in terms of youth as a problem or a threat to security, although, by implication,, much work that DFID supports addresses youth, such as in the areas of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration, security sector reform

more broadly (in that many members of new police services are young) or funding support to work pursuant to UNSC Resolutions 1612[82] or 1325[83]. There is an opportunity here for DFID to make its work on violent conflict more explicitly youth-focused and, in turn, to ensure that it addresses youth as peace-builders, rather than only as spoilers.

CONCLUSIONS

This is an exciting time for DFID to be developing its focus and strategy on youth. The renewed energy and resulting initiatives, along with Ministerial emphases on economic growth, education and skills and the ground-breaking work on HIV / AIDS, along with the new research strategy and the International Health Partnership, create unprecedented opportunities for developing a real, coherent strategy for work with youth, to benefit youth and, above all, to grasp the signficant contribution that youth can make to the acheivement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Currently, DFID is doing a great deal of work on youth and to benefit youth. It is doing less *with* youth, demonstrating a need for capacity-building in this area. There are opportunities, nevertheless, to engage with youth directly and with those organisations working with youth and on their issues.

DFID personnel at headquarters and country-level are increasingly interested in the demographic of youth. They are also positively engaged with the analytical frameworks provided by the Country Governance Analysis and the Gender and Social Exclusion Analylsis, both of which point to youth as a cohort to be addressed and a sector of rights-holders. As DFID grasps the reality of the 'youth bulge' and the essential contribution that youth can bring, it is to be hoped that it will maintain a focus on youth as an asset and resist any tendency to regard them only as a problem; particularly in the context of the 'radicalisation' agenda. It is hoped that this study, along with the preceding 'Child Rights' study will provide DFID and its civil society partners with a base-line analysis of DFID's work as well as the rationale for finding ways to effectively address youth in the acheivement of the MDGs.

DFID need not embark on this journey alone. As well as making connections with other donors, it can rely on its multi-lateral partners and UK civil society. The DFID / Civil Society Network is able to bring field experience, research and insights as well as its role as 'critical friend' to DFID's work.

[82] Monitoring and reporting of violations of children's rights in armed conflict
[83] Women, Peace and Security

ANNEX A

Terms of Reference

A mapping study of work that addresses youth[84] in the development cooperation of the UK Department for International Development

1. Background

The 2007 World Development report, *Development and the Next Generation* focuses on youth at a time when there are more young people in the developing world than ever before. The WDR and the increasing interest from other groups have raised the profile of young people, and the wide range of issues and challenges they face. Nearly half of the world's population is aged under 24 and 90% of these live in developing countries. Although the present youth cohort of 1.1 billion is the largest ever to enter adulthood, they have little or no voice in development and remain largely neglected in development plans. In itself, this presents an unprecedented opportunity to accelerate growth and reduce poverty. Achieving the MDGs will certainly require much more effective strategies to work with youth and there are specific outcome indicators targeted towards youth related to MDGs 2, 3, 6 and 8.[85],[86]

In DFID's 'Learning to Listen' Action Plan[87] , the right of children and young people to participate in decisions affecting their lives was reiterated, and examples of the positive results such participation brings in DFID-supported work in many countries were highlighted. The (then) Exclusion, Rights and Justice team commissioned a review of DFID activities relating to children, young people and older people in June 2005 to inform DFID's social exclusion policy. Although the report[88] found that DFID is engaged in a number of programmes to help/support children and young people, it also noted that young people were 'largely invisible' in DFID's work, apart from some work on conflict, Sexual & Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDs, and called for greater clarity in defining and distinguishing youth and issues relevant to them (as distinct from those for children) in order to identify appropriate interventions and methodologies for effective youth work.

The 2005 DFID policy paper on social exclusion recognizes that youth who feel a lack of identity, see few opportunities for the future and feel excluded from participating in decision-making may turn to violence and other crime. The essential and positive role youth can play in effective governance is being explored through a

[84] Youth is defined by the United Nations as the age range 15 – 25. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as a person under 18 years old.

[85] Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education (8) Literacy rates among 15–24, Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women(9) Ratio of girls to boys in sec. & tertiary ed, (10) Ratio of literate females to males 15–24

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases (18) HIV Prevalence among pregnant women (15–24)

(19) % of pop. 15–24 with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development (45) Unemployment rate among 15–24

[86] A new indicator for MDG 8 on 'Decent Work' is currently being finalized and will focus on women and youth.

[87] 'Learning to Listen', DFID, 2004

[88] 'DFID activities related to children, young people and older people', 2005

number of Programme Partnership Agreements (PPAs) with civil society organisations (CSOs), and the profound effect of *not* doing so increasingly recognised. For instance, social exclusion of youth in Sierra Leone is now generally agreed to have been a causal factor in the prolonged civil war. DFID's 2007/08 Social Exclusion workplan identifies the need to engage effectively with young people issues, with a particular focus on employment, internally within DFID and with external partners. Despite their demographic majority, intrinsic importance and immense potential, there is currently a disconnect between the existing wealth of research on youth from a range of disciplines and DfID practice. There is a need for new dialogue to link the two and for new research to address current policy concerns and develop evidence-based interventions.

DFID has responded in 2007 to the recommendations of the above reviews by establishing a Child and Youth Network. In collaboration with this Network, DFID has (a) jointly commissioned (with NGOs and UNICEF UK) a study on child rights approaches within DFID and (b) accepted a secondment from PLAN UK to work within the Equity and Rights team on children and youth. It therefore seems timely to review DFID's programme of development cooperation – to assess how far it already supports effective work around youth and to see how much more could be done in this regard. Member agencies of the working group on youth within the Children and Youth Network propose to implement a mapping study, (with full support and cooperation of DFID), on work that addresses youth in DFID's development cooperation.

2. The overall purpose of the exercise is to:

i) Assess the current approaches to youth in DFID's development cooperation in both policy and country assistance practice; this will include mapping of the extent to which DFID works <u>with</u> youth in their country development assistance, an analysis of programming that is <u>directed at youth</u>, and to 'flag' examples of programmes that have purposively engaged youth or which have been <u>youth-led;</u>

ii) Identify areas in which DFID's development cooperation can better focus on youth;

iii) Formulate 'next steps' recommendations for the DFID/CSO Youth working group on the basis of the findings.

In order to do this, the study will:

- provide a brief rationale for more focus and coherence on youth in international development cooperation and how this would specifically add value to DFID's work;
- use the 'Vision and Objectives[89] of the DFID/Civil Society Youth working group' as a framework and reference point;
- identify understanding and experience within DFID around youth as a critical group – in particular around youth participation, issues related to youth and governance, youth employment, sexual and reproductive health (including HIV/AIDs) and conflict;

[89] Draft of July 2007 – appended

- identify potential for cross-departmental collaboration within DFID;
- identify any potential linkages with other UK-based youth-led initiatives within HMG (cross-Whitehall collaboration);
- identify DFID research work that provides evidence of promising or successful approaches and strategies for engaging youth;
- identify to what extent DFID is learning from and/or contributing to wider debates within the international community around youth (e.g. through work of DFID's UNCD, the Youth Employment Network, World Program of Action on Youth etc.);
- in all of the above, particularly highlight gender considerations;

3. This study will be led by an Advisory Group comprised of members of the DFID/CSO youth working group and will address a number of the recommendations made in the 2005 mapping of 'DFID Activities Relating to Children, Young People and Older People.''

4. Scope of Work

The consultant (a child/youth specialist) will work with the participating agencies and DFID over a period of approximately 10 weeks to undertake the study. This will include an initial briefing (by phone and email) with the coordinator and the advisory group, a 'work in progress' discussion with this advisory group half way through the project and a debriefing session with the participating agencies and DFID prior to finalising the report. The consultant will:

- Provide a brief rationale for more focus and coherence on youth in international development cooperation;

- Review DFID's 2006 White Paper, Institutional Strategy Papers, a selection of Country Assistance Strategies and other key policy and practice documents. This would cover an analysis of the emphasis given to youth in DFID's written commitments.

- Assess if these written commitments are adequately reflected in DFID-funded programmes and research, and by a sample of DFID country offices.

- Assess standard DFID processes and tools with respect to the extent to which they recognise and promote the rights and well-being and development of all youth. (This will include analysing how and where the rights (with a focus on participation) of youth are promoted through assessment tools, planning decisions, funding decisions, monitoring and evaluation etc.

- Undertake interviews with key informants in DFID to determine perceptions around work with youth, and of how a youth lens can and should be informing DFID's development cooperation work and identify key gatekeepers for youth focus within the Department.

- Review DFID's capacity to work effectively with youth. (This will include an analysis of training on these issues for DFID staff and positions focussing on youth)

- Produce draft reports and a final full report of the study, findings and recommendations as specified under ‘project milestones’ in section 6.

5. Methodology

This study will be a desk review of relevant documentation together with a series of interviews with key informants. The consultant in consultation with the study coordinator (Helen Gallagher from DFID) will develop the interview questions. DFID will help provide the required documentation. Documentation to be reviewed will be collected by the consultant.

6. Implementation Modalities

A small advisory group made up of representatives from DFID and the CSO members of the DFID / CSO youth sub-group will work with the consultant and the study coordinator to support the implementation of the study and dissemination of results.

ANNEX B

DFID / CIVIL SOCIETY YOUTH WORKING GROUP

VISION, OBJECTIVES

and

Terms of Reference

Vision

We commit to working towards a secure and sustainable world free of poverty, disease and injustice in which youth[90] are empowered as equal partners in promoting development, democracy, peace and social justice.

We believe that youth have the right to participate in development decisions that affect them, their families, communities and nations - and to make change.

We see youth as a catalyst for transforming our societies and an essential asset for all efforts to address the urgent development issues facing us globally. We also recognise that youth face particular challenges and have distinct needs.

As partners, we commit to working with youth to build their capacities and agency, to champion an asset-based approach[91] to youth development and to advocate for adequate resource allocation to meet the urgent needs of young people.

Situational Analysis[92]: In the Least-Developed Countries(LDCs) targeted by DfID's major development interventions, three-quarters of the population is under 25 years old. A majority of the world's most disadvantaged citizens are thus children and young people. Further:

- 88 million youth are currently unemployed. In most countries, the youth unemployment rate is more than double the general unemployment rate. In the next decade, over a billion young women and men will enter the labour force – but the most optimistic estimates suggest that only 300 million jobs will await them;
- 10 million youth are currently living with HIV worldwide. More than half the 5 million new infections each year are inflicted upon young people. In high prevalence regions, an entire generation is being wiped out and the economic and social base of many developing countries is being destroyed.
- 130 million 15-24 year olds are illiterate – a majority of them young women;
- millions of youth live in parts of the world that are vulnerable to climate change and environmental degradation;

[90] For the purpose of this Working Group, youth are defined as the UN defines them: citizens aged 15-24;
[91] In simple terms, "seeing youth as a resource, not a problem" - the slogan of the Youth Caucus at the Johannesburg World Conference for Sustainable Development, 2002;
[92] Source: UN Youth Report 2005

- many youth experience war, political, gender and structural violence as well as being drawn into violent conflicts as part of paramilitary forces;
- inter-generational relations are under pressure: young people's democratic rights are frequently sacrificed in favour of social needs defined by their elders;

Youth are thus amongst the most marginalised, most vulnerable and disenfranchised sector of the population and, also, amongst the least prioritised when it comes to resource allocation. They are not being adequately listened to, or engaged in, decision-making. In our analysis, there is no clear relationship between development planning and demography in policy or practice. Despite their demographic majority, intrinsic importance and immense potential, there is currently a serious dis-connect between the *existing* wealth of research on youth from a range of disciplines and DfID practice. There is a need for new dialogue to link the two and for new research to address current policy concerns and develop evidence-based interventions.

We are a group of youth and development NGOs and academic institutions which have come together at DfID's invitation to form a Working Group for the Youth Sector to work with DfID and other development agents to champion youth. Given this global demographic reality and young people's profound need, it is our opinion that youth must be engaged as a driving force behind all development programmes to ensure their success, sustainability and full effectiveness.

AIMS and OBJECTIVES:

1. **AIM:** We seek to partner with a broad cross-section of NGO's, academic institutions and youth networks, both in the UK and abroad, in a forum for discussion, research and lesson-learning which will drive forward new thinking, understanding and good practice to support DfID and other development agencies to develop better strategies and projects with, and for, youth in the world's least-developed countries.

Objectives

1.1. Ensure broad-based representation in the Youth Working Group by UK-based NGOs and academic institutions interested in youth and development, and to seek the widest possible consensus within the group;
1.2. Create opportunities for collaboration between DfID and UK NGOs to develop good practice in youth policy development and implementation;
1.3. To ensure that the voices of the youth majority in the world's least-developed countries are heard by development agencies, that their talents and energies are used in programme delivery, that their human rights are observed and their needs are met.
1.4. To develop synergies with the Children's Working Group – seeking opportunities to link the work of the two groups in joint programming where possible and useful.

2. **AIM:** We seek an increased recognition of, and funding for, the needs of youth in development intervention strategies and policies.

Objectives

2.1. To explore the potential of youth-led development by creating opportunities for youth to assist in the design and delivery of healthcare services, peer-to-peer education programmes, youth employment strategies and other programmes that affect their well-being;
2.2. To plan and implement a series of pilot projects in LDCs that engage and involve youth which allow DfID, this Working Group and other interested agencies to work together on precisely targeted interventions with very specific goals in partnership with host country governments and local youth NGOs.
2.3. To undertake a programme of Policy and Action Research, and also to disaggregate data by age, to build up a body of knowledge about the needs and status of youth to enable DfID to have at its disposal comprehensive evidence on which to build future guidance and policy in relation to youth, including a Youth Development Index.

2.4. To ensure that, in future, DfID's policies and plans at country level are youth sensitive, and encourage the World Bank, International Agencies and client governments to ensure that their multi-year development strategies include pro-active policies and budget allocations for youth.

3. **AIM:** We seek to create a culture within DfID and UK development agencies where youth are considered as full and equal partners, and where the challenges faced by youth are understood and taken into account through meaningful youth participation in governance and project delivery both at Headquarters and Country Office level.

Objectives

3.1. Map existing DfID and Civil Society's activities and interventions for, and with, youth and define, then seek to improve, their structures and staffing to enable them better to address youth/development issues.

3.2. Offer training to ensure that key policy-makers in DfID and UK development agencies recognise youth as full partners in their work and develop the mechanisms to facilitate meaningful participation of youth in their governance and project delivery.

3.3. Enable key-stakeholders to recognise the challenges faced by youth and understand the distinct needs of youth as a sector for support. Our long-term objective is, in this way, to develop appropriate strategies, policies, programmes and resource allocations that will form a comprehensive policy on youth and development, solidly based on results and experience.

Terms of Reference:

The DfID / CSO Youth Working Group
Terms of Reference
July 2007

1. Background

The creation of this Working Group was an outcome of a DFID/NGO meeting in March 2007. The purpose of that meeting was to consult with UK-based NGOs working on children and youth issues on their interest in establishing a network to increase collaboration between DFID and UK NGOs on children and youth strategies. At the first meeting, it was decided to divide the Network into two sub-groups – a Children's Working Group focused on children's issues and the Youth Working Group to focus on youth issues. The original Network set up by DfID will function as a plenary platform to bring together both sub-groups in a Dialogue with DfID staff.

2. Composition

The Youth Working Group will bring together organisations working on youth and development issues globally. The members will primarily be officers and CEOs of such organisations, but, in the spirit of the aims and objectives of the Working Group, youth will be recruited and engaged to participate as often as is possible and interesting for them.

3. Meetings

The Youth Working Group will meet 2-3 times a year, in advance of the Joint Children and Youth Network Plenary meeting which will take place twice a year and will be convened by DFID.

4. Purpose

In addition to the Aims, Objectives and Targets outlined in the Group's Defining Document, *(attached)* the overall purpose of the Youth Working Group may be summarised as follows:

- to enable organisations working on youth and development issues to speak to DfID and other development agencies with a single voice;
- to provide a forum for discussion and lesson learning which will drive forward new thinking, understanding and good practice on Youth policies and programmes.
- to provide an opportunity for broad-based participation by the wider group of NGOs working on youth issues to collaborate with DfID, and each other, on policy development and implementation;
- to collaborate on joint research programmes into existing development programmes for, and with, youth,
- to initiate pilot projects and promote the results and good practice to the wider development community
- to promote meaningful participation of youth in the discussions, policy-making and policy implementation procedures;
- to promote a rights-based approach to development for youth; - *and* -
- to avoid duplication of work undertaken by other networks and fora.

5. Composition

All development NGOs that share this purpose and have experience of, or interest in, working with youth will be invited to participate in our meetings. The Youth Working Group will, as it sees fit, create sub-groups and committees to work on particular issues and objectives agreed by the group. DfID representatives will be invited to all its meetings, and be included in the circulation of the minutes of those meetings. Representatives of the Children's Working Group will also be invited to all meetings of the Youth Working Group – and synergies between the two working groups exploited where possible.

6. Definitions

For the purpose of this Network initiative, Children and Youth are defined according to the UN definitions. Namely:

- children = individuals aged 0-18 years;
- youth = individuals aged 15-24 years;

7. Roles and Responsibilities

- Members of the network will offer premises for the meetings of the the Youth Working Group on a rotating basis.

- Peace Child International will convene the Youth Working Group meetings and act as Secretariat to the meetings;
- Members of the network will elect an appropriate chair for each meeting at the start of each meeting.

8. Indicators of success

- Progress of the Youth Working Group will be assessed against the aims, objectives and targets outlined in the Group's Defining Document;
- Progress of the Youth Working Group will be reviewed annually.

ANNEX C

DFID/CSO Children & Youth Network: children and youth working groups' response to DFID's public consultation document on research strategy 2008-2013

21st September 2007

Members of the Network:

Department for International Development, Equity and Rights Team

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Children Working Group	**Youth Working Group**
Amnesty International Anti-Slavery International Child Rights Alliance of England ChildHope UK Children in Armed Conflict, University of Essex Consortium for Street Children EveryChild PLAN Railway Children Save the Children UK Voluntary Services Overseas WarChild World Vision Y-Care International	Youth Business International Overseas Development Institute Peace Child International Student Partnership Worldwide British Youth Council Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council Commonwealth Youth Programme Voluntary Services Overseas Plan International Street Child Africa OXFAM BOND Y-Care International Build Africa International Youth Foundation Youth Employment Network U-8 Scouts ActionAid CAFOD

Introduction to the DFID/CSO Children and Youth Network

In March 2007, with encouragement from several civil society groups, DFID's Equity & Rights Division set up a Children and Youth Network to explore a perceived policy vacuum in these areas. With the needs of children and youth being so different, the group agreed at its first meeting to divide into two working groups, one to focus on children's issues, the other to focus on youth. Both follow the UN definitions of "children", as citizens aged 0-18, and "youth", as citizens aged 15-25. The Children's Working Group is focused on exploring the implications of a rights-based approach to programming and policy-making in their area. The Youth Working Group is focused on exploring youth as a resource – an asset to development policy implementation.

The network is composed of over 50 international CSOs, including UNICEF UK, Save the Children, Plan, and World Vision, DFID and the FCO. Both working groups set up sub-committees to review the research agenda – the absence of data and authoritative evidence being a major obstacle to detailed policy development for each sector. At a meeting on September 3rd 2007, representatives of each group agreed to work together to present a joint submission to DFID's Central Research Division (CRD) consultation. The paper below represents the outcome of that collaboration and was co-ordinated by ChildHope UK, Plan, Save the Children UK, the Overseas Development Institute and Peace Child International.

Question 1

How can DFID build on its work on sustainable agriculture and develop its work on economic opportunities and growth?

Debates on how to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) — as well as the goals of country-specific Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) — largely assume that policies designed to improve aggregate household wealth will automatically enhance the well-being of all household members. However, empirical evidence calls into question the concept of a unitary household and suggests that both within and across countries there is considerable diversity in the gender and inter-generational distribution of income, assets and labour that mediate the effects of poverty reduction policies. In particular, changes in productive/paid workforce participation — especially that of women — often have unforeseen effects on the quantity and quality of care for more vulnerable household members, unless complementary policies are put in place (e.g. Woldehanna et al., 2007).

We recommend that the priorities for research on economic opportunities are:

- Investigating the efficacy of poverty alleviation and employment programmes specifically for marginalised/socially excluded young people, including young women, young men in depressed areas, indigenous youth, rural youth and young people at risk (also important for maintaining social cohesion).
- Research into appropriate models and the potential replication and transfer to different development/cultural contexts of successful youth micro-financing schemes, apprenticeship programmes, youth gaining access to land, pro-youth employment policies and incentives, entrepreneurship training, youth co-operatives and youth access to ICTs. Additionally, research into the limitations of micro-credit schemes with reference to young people – i.e. why do they not work so well? Is the problem that young people do not have the minimum level of collateral that even micro-credit institutions require, so that grants and loans tend to serve young people better (Sykes, YEN, Commonwealth Enterprise Conference, November 2007)?
- Marshalling political and economic arguments for the increased public investment in children and youth: 'for the poor in particular, capital market failures have led to

continued sub-optimal investment in human capital, such as schooling and health care, and resulting in continuing the vicious cycle of poverty' (Children & Youth: A Framework for Action, 2005, World Bank).

- Investigating the impact on children and youth of macro-economic planning and international trade regimes.
- How to create sustainable livelihoods and build recreation provision in rural areas and enable young people to have a more realistic understanding of life in today's cities, all in the interests of mitigating unsustainable urbanisation.
- Addressing 'key education gaps – children and young people are not learning as much as they should – even those who reach lower secondary levels can hardly read or write and are unprepared to cope with the practicalities of daily life… and do not know basic facts that could save their lives, such as the causes of HIV/AIDS' (World Development Report 2007, World Bank); investigating how to broaden access to secondary and higher education, especially the contribution of cost-effective means such as distance learning; investigating the contribution that informal education and life-long learning can make; reviewing educational curricula to ensure they are fit for purpose for youth and employment.
- Investigating the ability of the education, private and voluntary sectors to increase access to education, vocational training and soft skills to meet the needs of the current and future employment market in developing countries. Can public-private partnership improve the quality of public secondary education in sub-Saharan Africa (and elsewhere)? And what is the role of civil society in its delivery or monitoring? (NOTE also our comment under Question 5: 'emerging global trends').
- Evaluating different strategies for eradicating child labour, and other exploitative practices, creating incentives for getting children back into school, and alternative livelihood strategies for those relying on child labour.
- Assessing the relevance of Complementary Currencies, priming local economic activity and growth, to resource-poor countries. New applications of Community Currencies, particularly pioneered by organisations in Wales, have had positive implications for socio-economic regeneration. These community currencies provide a complementary means of exchange for social activity and/or for spare economic capacity to increase the engagement of young people in their communities. Economic applications include increasing productivity in agricultural and urban communities and supporting youth into employment.
- Linked to the new DFID Youth Volunteering scheme: what are the opportunities for cross-country skills-sharing among youth in developing countries and those in developed countries?

Question 2

How can DFID improve research on "killer diseases" and healthcare and develop its work on building the capabilities of individuals and families for a better life?

In terms of research on health and youth, it is critical to flag AIDS as a killer disease. The Johns Hopkins Center for AIDS Research has conducted several studies showing that, not only are youth aged 15-25 most likely to fall victims to this killer disease, they are also the best advocates and educators to raise awareness and promote protective measures amongst their peers. *DFID should explore and evaluate this 'asset-based' approach to engaging young people as instruments in the delivery of their HIV and AIDS strategies.*

HIV and AIDS overwhelmingly affect older children and young adults. We would encourage DFID to support research, as a life-saving issue, into the most effective and appropriate communication strategies with children and youth to combat HIV and AIDS and encourage healthy lifestyles, including peer education and new communication strategies and

information campaigns (including the use of text messaging), which connect well with youth cultures (Commonwealth Youth Forum 5, Malta 2005 recommendation).

Research is also needed on:

- The role of/partnership with employers/company CSR to tackle knowledge deficits/behaviour change strategies among (young) employees (eg building on the employee peer education experience of Standard Chartered Bank, Rio Tinto etc) in respect of HIV.
- Is peer to peer education an effective strategy in addressing substance abuse among youth? (this also links to the 'alternative economy' – drugs).
- How to create innovative partnerships between governments, intergovernmental organisations, NGOs and the private sector to increase the availability of social support systems which can help address: healthy lifestyles, counselling, youth suicide, teenage pregnancy, youth crime, substance abuse, HIV prevalence and condom use etc.
- The child protection and economic challenges involved in developing alternatives to institutional care (such as community-based fostering) for AIDS orphans require research urgently.
- The financing of healthcare services for children and youth.

Although there is some existing research on these issues, gaps in both understanding and dissemination remain. Better communication/links with academics doing work on this would enable policy-makers, including DFID, to draw upon this work[93]. Linking up with the WHO's new EVIPNET knowledge translation initiative, including its rigorous monitoring and evaluation framework, would be valuable.

DFID should initiate research into appropriate support for children and youth affected by HIV and AIDS and promote better links with academics working on this area, to ensure that this informs their policies.

Question 3

How can DFID improve research into good governance, including social and policy design areas?

Good governance is a key issue affecting the success of DFID's programmes. Without effective governance, people – especially children and youth - do not trust their governments, even when they attempt to put in place necessary and beneficial programmes. DFID-funded initiatives channelled through governments in countries in which the relations between the people and the government have effectively broken down are likely to fail.[94]

We believe that at least six key areas need to be considered with regard to children, youth and governance: 1) promotion of genuine representation, 2) internal threats to governance, 3)

[93] See for example on Africa: Melissa Parker, Isaac Niehaus, Cecil Helman.

[94] To give one example, the government of Cameroon tried to implement a vaccination campaign in the North West Province in the nineteen eighties but met with massive resistance as the vaccination teams were suspected of operating a covert government-sponsored human sterilisation programme. These events are memorialised in songs sung by mothers at the birth of children to this day. Likewise, in the same region of Cameroon, government and international relief teams sent to the site of the Lake Nyos disaster, in which a volcano released poisonous gasses that killed hundreds of people, were suspected of having caused the disaster and of arriving to measure its effectiveness.

decentralisation and service delivery, 4) post-conflict and fragile states, 5) a youth development index, and 6) child rights.

Promoting genuine representation

With respect to children and youth, it is key that governments make them feel genuinely represented at local and national levels, and that they can participate in government or NGO and donor-sponsored projects and initiatives.

Children's right to participate in politics is rarely recognised. Children, especially those living in poverty or who experience discrimination, seldom have the voice to speak out on issues that affect them. The impact of their exclusion from governance is largely invisible but highly significant and long lasting. Public accountability on decisions affecting poor boys and girls is lacking, and plans, programmes and services addressing children's needs are all too often inappropriately designed and implemented. If decisions are to be based upon the real needs and interests of poor and socially excluded children, those children need to be involved in the decision-making processes. Furthermore, creating meaningful opportunities for poor children to intervene in governance processes at an earlier point enables them to learn the skills and responsibilities of active citizenship that can be carried forward into their adult lives - with long term implications for the strengthening of governance.

DFID is recommended to support research into best standards for when and how it is appropriate to involve children in governance.

Youth have greater opportunities but with serious limitations and often not without risking discrimination and reprisals. Many authoritarian states in Africa, for example, have passed laws illegalising activities identified as 'tribal' or 'ethnic' in nature. Most often, these are used as an excuse to break up local opposition party political meetings. Meanwhile, the 'youth wings' put in place by the parties in power are often hand picked from within the families of party members and represent little more than window dressing for the purposes of international relations. Young people in sub-Saharan Africa often feel highly excluded from their governments and marginalised and ignored by policy-makers. Nelson Mandela, aware of this problem, has lobbied for the voting age to be reduced to sixteen years. *DFID – either by supporting initiatives that work directly with youths or helping to build genuine political will in state governments – needs to find ways of working with young people that will redress their present marginalisation within society.*

The social contract does not appear to work well partly due to children's and youth's relative lack of experience of wider political engagement and inadequate structures. There are far more organisations 'for' children or youth rather than of either group. *Research is therefore needed to support public debate about changing power relations in society – essentially, how to change and build new institutions and community-based organisations that give greater value and inclusion to children and youth.* What would new institutions need to look like in order to be more inclusive to children and youth and how should they link to child- or youth-led organisations (e.g., youth councils, child rights communities, children's parliaments etc)? What kind of capacity development with those structures is needed? How can children and youth be supported in finding their own new ways to organise, consult and communicate? What links are appropriate with national governance institutions?

In many countries a new political culture is needed in the face of disillusionment with politics and the state and, for example, sub-Saharan Africa youth's long-standing mistrust of government and elders, which are perceived to be corrupt, ineffectual and bankrupt. Research is needed into the question of the 'health' of inter-generational relations and in particular (but not exclusively) their impact on civil wars (cf conflicts in Sierra Leone and

Northern Uganda). Research on power relations between the generations in specific cultural contexts – especially patriarchy, hegemonic masculinity, collapsing masculinities (Dolan 2006) and sub-altern males, 'traditional leaders' and the role of the state – need to be investigated from a child and youth perspective (remembering that 'childhood' and 'youth' have different definitions in different cultures).

DFID is advised to support research into how to promote the effective inclusion of children and youth within society and how to address the marginalisation of both.

Internal threats to governance

New research should also consider internal threats to good governance as much as 'international threats'. This could include research to evaluate how to develop the capacity of national governments to tackle the gross abuses of children's rights in relation to issues such as child trafficking, forced begging and the problem of disenfranchised youth in general (focusing especially on marginalised groups such as street children, child migrants, child refugees, sexually exploited children) which may undermine future societal stability. It could also usefully encompass work that promotes the notion of inclusive governance (e.g., research with child-headed households in Jinja recently highlighted the role education plays in providing a sense of belonging and "membership to the future" Graham, 2007).

DFID should initiate and support research into ways in which to develop the capacity of national governments to tackle gross abuses of the rights of children and youth.

Decentralisation, joined up services and catering for diversity

Another critical area that requires urgent attention is the relationship between youth and decentralisation. International frameworks promoting the human, civic, social and economic rights of young people are signed with national governments but it is sub-national governments that are increasingly responsible for the implementation of related policies and legislation. Although there is a growing body of research on links between gender and decentralisation (e.g. by Goetz), little work exists on decentralisation and policies, programmes and service provision for youth and children (Jones et al., 2007; Pereznieto and Jones, 2007).

Lockheed's work on education suggests that there are four necessary preconditions for effective decentralization of services for children and youth: a national consensus on goals, a supporting legal framework, well-defined financial flow mechanisms and the provision of training to cope with new responsibilities at the sub-national level. As responsibilities and funding are devolved to local bodies, national governments still have two important roles to play: i) ensuring equitable financing across sub-national regions, and ii) maintaining quality control of standards.

There is also a growing consensus that the poverty experienced by youth is multi-dimensional and in order to tackle it effectively an integrated, inter-sectoral approach is needed. As the World Bank (2005) emphasizes:

> *any children and youth strategy – be it national, regional, or global – needs to be multi-sectoral and multidimensional. […] Interventions should […] address children and youth well-being simultaneously in several sectors, as well as through integrated packages of services and activities specifically tailored to their needs.*

In practice, however, despite appropriate policy frameworks being in place at the national level, the delivery of such services is too often fragmented and under-resourced. This is in large part due to the tendency for governmental agencies for children and youth to be among the most marginalized (as Harper points out), and thus unable to secure sufficient funding for

child-related services and programmes in the context of multiple competing demands for scarce sub-national government resources.

An additional challenge that is exacerbated by children and youth's exclusion from policy processes and the poor coordination of child and youth-related services is ensuring that diverse children and youth's differential needs (based on age, gender, ethnicity, physical and cognitive abilities) are taken into account and inform policy decisions (e.g. Lyytikainen et al.).

This suggests that further research is needed into participatory service delivery mechanisms which need to be designed so that policies and programs adequately address children and youth's diversities.

Fragile/post-conflict states

As the Public Consultation Document suggests, *DFID ought to look at ways of promoting more research into post-conflict and fragile states.* There is currently some excellent research on the topic (e.g. for Sierra Leone and Liberia: Abdullah 2005; Ellis; Richards 1996; Utas 2005) some of it focusing on the role played by children and adolescents in war and post-war reconstruction in particular (since these wars are primarily conducted by and affect children and young people, and also depend largely upon them for the successful resolution and the rehabilitation of the combatants and their victims).[95]

DFID therefore needs to find ways of making systematic use of what research already exists in their theatres of activity, and of consulting the authors of existing research as they formulate their programmes.

More research is needed into the 'new wars' (Duffield, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2006) and fragile/weak states – the new wars are networked across borders and linked into the global 'shadow' economies and criminal networks e.g., the arms trade, trade in natural resources, drugs and money laundering. There is evidence that these criminal networks and 'conflict entrepreneurs' are expanding, are involving significant numbers of youth as 'foot soldiers', and that the cynical maintenance of conflict situations is in their best interests so that they can operate freely and increase wealth and power. There is increasing resistance to the globalised liberal world order as a consequence of underdevelopment – and young people sometimes have no alternative but to participate in 'illegal' activities for their very survival.

Youth Development Index

Youth (and children) by nature cut across sectors, while most policies that influence them are set within sectors, so the challenge of coordination looms large (World Bank 2007).

Research is needed to help formulate and implement national policies and action plans on youth empowerment and to mainstream a youth perspective in all relevant policy areas.

Following the World Development Report 2007, calling for more detailed evidence on the impact of government youth strategies, and the passing of UN GA Resolution A/60/L.2, calling for better monitoring – we encourage DFID to work with its partners in the Commonwealth Youth Programme (who developed the YDI concept) to elaborate the criteria for a Youth Development Index. This would measure the impact of different strategies on the youth

[95] Better use could also be made on recent material generated about 'respect and understanding'. The Commonwealth Commission on Respect and Understanding, chaired by Professor Amatya Sen, will report to Heads of Government at the up-coming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (November 2007).

sector, and their impact on society as a whole. It could be similar to the Gender Development Index and help define the needs of youth and opportunities for expanding the asset-based approach to their involvement in the development arena.

Child rights

The UNCRC[96] is the mostly widely signed but, arguably, most poorly implemented international treaty. The failure to reverse child poverty and protect children's rights is clear. Commitments towards child participation have been particularly neglected; children have no role in representative democracy and are scarcely consulted as or by agents of change. More effective action depends in part on better research about advancing and protecting children's rights.

Although research and communication on child rights and child-led research is acknowledged as having a vital role to play in eradicating child poverty, improving children's status, and protecting children's rights, it remains under-funded internationally. A study commissioned by DFID points out that although rights and social justice receives some support from other donors, they tend to be smaller bilateral donors or private foundations. Of research funds made available by DFID in 2005, social inclusion, economic development and governance (including work on rights) only received £6.7 million (or 5.8% of the total). In the same report, Jones and Young identified various areas of omission in research funding, including 'poverty reduction and service delivery for children, youth, elderly' and point out that this, and the other neglected areas, fall within this relatively small research priority (Jones and Young, 2007: 7-8, 9, 64).

NGOs' experience of child rights programming and practice on child rights-based approaches have established the clear potential of rights-based approaches in eradicating poverty (White 2002, Maguire 2007, Social Development Direct 2005, Crawford 2005, Kelsey 2004, Theis 2004).[97] *However, there is a need for more research (action and academic) to create a more solid and rigorous evidence base around child rights approaches and programming.*

In a mapping study DFID commissioned in 2005, it was recommended that DFID should : *"use 2005 as an opportunity to underline the strategic importance to poverty reduction of tackling child poverty, articulate how the CRC, children's rights and children's participation are central to the achievement of the MDGs, and to use examples of work on education, health, sexual and reproductive health, and HIV/AIDS to demonstrate the added value of a children's rights approach across sectors, and to reinvigorate DFID work around the CRC."*[98]

Two years later however, as noted in a recent mapping of the child rights climate within DFID, the department continues to undervalue the importance of child rights and child participation to the achievement of the MDGs, and has failed to adopt child rights as a valuable cross-cutting approach. There is a serious gap in both the uptake of existing knowledge and the generation of new knowledge (including child-led research) on the most appropriate strategies for designing and implementing child-rights based approaches and for successful implementation of the CRC.

DFID has supported research into child poverty, but mostly with a well-being orientation (e.g. CHIP, Young Lives). Child rights theory and practice deserve far more attention than they are

[96] United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
[97] Also see http://www.equalinrights.org/content/resources_HRBA.html and http://www.odi.org.uk/rights/publications.html
[98] Social Development Direct, ibid, p5.

currently receiving. The most urgent gaps in globally-accessible knowledge about child rights and child rights programming are:

- The development of child rights indicators to monitor implementation of the UNCRC (UNICEF [especially through the Multi-Indicator Cluster Surveys MICS] and Save the Children UK have done some work on universal frameworks which allow for the design of country-specific indicators, but far more is needed on this). There is also a need to link human rights and child rights work more effectively in line with the emerging governance and accountability agenda;
- Better understanding of the relationship between universal rights (as codified in the CRC) and local diversity/contexts and between rights-in-theory (law) and rights-in-practice in different countries;
- Greater attention to the range of rights enshrined in the UNCRC: To date there has been uneven coverage of different sets of rights (in part due to the particular emphases of the MDGs) but given a growing recognition that childhood poverty necessitates a holistic or integrated policy approach inter-linkages between rights should be more systematically addressed;
- Greater understanding of the political, institutional (e.g. weakly resourced agencies with little or no representation at the sub-national levels) and ideological obstacles to the implementation of the CRC; and better documentation and analysis of successful strategies to overcome these;
- Developing minimum standards for child-rights programming and child protection;
- Rigorous evaluation that can inform guidance on good practice for different components of child rights-based approaches (e.g. child protection; children; participation and governance; service delivery; inclusion; best interests, and so on) and applying them nationally rather than just locally;
- Linking child rights work more purposively into other adult-focused research around governance and accountability – how can voice and agency of children be more effectively amplified to ensure that their rights are met?
- Linking child rights work more purposively into other adult-focused research around multi-year national development plans – how can children's voices and agency as well as research evidence addressing children's well-being be better integrated into the formulation and implementation of such over-arching policy documents?
- Research into when it is appropriate to use child researchers and the development of guidelines on this area.

DFID is advised to support research on these gap areas and undertake research to better inform the tools it uses, e.g., how a child rights situational analysis could be of benefit to DFID's programmes, how this tool could be modified in a way that is useful to DFID, and the place of child budget analyses in DFID's work.

Question 4

How can DFID improve research into the impact of climate change on poverty and environmental change more broadly?

Agenda 21 clearly states that "the involvement of today's youth in environment and development decision-making and in the implementation of programmes is critical to the long-term success of Agenda 21" (Chapter 25.1). Climatic change is arguably the most critical concern facing the global community today. Considering that today's youth form more or less 30% of the global community, it is clear that the principle laid out in Agenda 21 assumes an even more crucial dimension. Though generally sidelined in present-day decision-making,

young people are effectively the link between present and future generations. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) expressed its determination "to protect the climate system for present and future generations".

There have been some serious charges that the politics of climate change is guided by chronic "short-termism". While the politics of climate change embraces a wide variety of sectoral interests, there seems to be a conspicuous absence of adequate representation of the interests of future generations (the "not-yet-born"). Calls for the institutionalisation of our responsibilities towards future generations have so far failed to reach fruition on the global plane. In recent years, however, there have been a few examples at national level. The principles of intergenerational justice, equity and Solidarity are often advocated as theoretical foundations for addressing issues of sustainability in the social, economic and environmental spheres. Climate change raises crucial question of distributive justice in terms of how benefits and burdens should be shared within and between generations. Whereas the UNFCCC establishes the principle of equity in burden-sharing between developed and developing countries, it falls short of considering the relationship between present and future generations in this regard. Taken collectively, the above considerations lead on to a number of questions deserve attention, within a conceptual framework that examines the potential role of young people in addressing the issue of climate change by making use of the principles of intergenerational justice. As Mitchell et al point out in the 'Children in a Changing Climate Programme', traditional ways of researching this issues are unlikely to be effective or fast enough. Intense engagement with children and youth as part of research and encouraging disparate initiatives to collaborate will be necessary for effective research.[99]

DFID is, therefore, encouraged to give support to research that focuses on the following questions:

- To what extent can a theory of inter-generational justice help in strengthening the call for greater youth involvement in sustainable development in general and in the issue of climate change in particular?
- How present is a well-articulated discourse of intergenerational justice in educational, leadership and other initiatives and projects?
- Is a more long-term, future-oriented way of thinking being effectively promoted and disseminated in youth initiatives, particularly those of significant national and international relevance?
- How can children and young people become agents and advocates of intergenerational justice in their participatory role in consultative decision-making bodies and initiatives and in raising awareness about the issues (e.g. peer-to-peer mechanisms, street theatre, informal groups)?
- More generally, how can one effectively argue in favour of implementing the principle of youth involvement in addressing the causes and effects of climate change?
- How should we respond to the people challenges? Rising sea-levels and the particular problems of small islands states, how to withstand increased migration flows of youth and impact on population, economy and environmental sustainability – including, ultimately, for some states, contingency planning for the wholesale movement and re-settlement of entire populations and their re-settlements into different cultural contexts (eg Caribbean, Indian Ocean and Pacific islands) (UK and Australia will have some 'moral' obligations here in view of the colonial past and Commonwealth links).
- How can we promote children and youth active involvement in: (a) disaster preparedness, relief and management, (b) knowledge transfer between the generations, and especially the promotion and value of indigenous knowledge?

[99] For more details consult T. Mitchell, Institute of Development Studies.

- Is it right to assume that global liberal capitalism is going to continue more or less as the 'given' context for development at the start of the third millennium, given climate change?
- How can classroom teaching about climate change, renewable energy, the business opportunities created by new environmental realities, positive lifestyles and career decisions by young people, all be more effective?

Question 5

In addition to climate change, what are the emerging global trends that DFID research needs to address?

An emerging global trend that requires considerably more attention by DFID is the youth employment crisis. The 2007 World Development Report mentioned this, and several agencies are focusing closely upon it, especially after the publication of the UNOWA report on "Youth Unemployment and Regional Insecurity" in 2006[100]. The challenge is that there are over a billion young people coming on to the job market in the next decade and the most optimistic forecasts suggest that there are less than 300 million jobs awaiting them. Youth unemployment rates are already double – sometimes triple – the general rate. The costs of not addressing this challenge have been identified by many – increased prostitution, disaffection, crime, mendicancy, instability and – ultimately – violence, rebellion and civil war. Mercenary groups remain, in some less developed countries, the largest employers of young people.

DFID, the MoD and the FCO have already identified this area as critical to the stability of many regions – but research is needed into what interventions are most effective: youth-led business start-ups, youth-led public works and social enterprises, supported by international volunteers (North-South and South-South volunteer exchanges) have all been tried. But a serious, longitudinal study of a nationwide programme of such initiatives should be undertaken to test its impact in terms of economic growth, sustainability, social cohesion, stability and democracy. With the largest youth cohort the world is ever likely to see now moving inexorably towards a constrained and sometimes shrinking job market, there is no more critical global trend to be addressed at this point in history. Policy-makers, not just in the UK but worldwide, are floundering.

The guidance of DFID's research department is needed to point the best policy directions in terms of the youth employment crisis.

Other emerging global trends include:

- ◊ New Privatisation Models. As the neo-liberal perspective of development remains pervasive globally, several nations are looking to various models of privatisation with the aim of cutting government spending on education and increasing accountability and efficiency in the sector. Looking at education, America is doing this with Charter Schools, and Britain with Academies. Many developing countries, especially in Africa, are also beginning to experiment with some of these new privatisation models. Research questions include: Can public-private partnership improve the quality of public services in Sub-Saharan Africa?
- ◊ Different Visions of Development and the potential for conflict? Conversely, there is evidence of the rise from the ashes of the 'developmental state' and a challenge to the globalised liberal world order and 'western models' and assumptions that these models are universally valid or positive. Developments in South America suggest that

[100] UN Office for West Africa, Youth Unemployment and Regional Insecurity in West Africa, www.un.org/unowa/unowa/studies/yunemp-v2-en.pdf

ideology (as well as identity/nationalism politics) may be returning. Duffield (2002) therefore calls for a 'radicalisation of the politics of development' ie a commitment to *real* social transformation and a liberal peace. What is certain is that we are seeing different visions of development with a more religious or cultural content that are specific to particular groups or nations and we need to learn how to respond. These visions have particular resonance for some youth.

- ◊ What next post the MDGs**?** The MDGs, though important, represent a very narrow focus and view of development – what of a more human-centred development? What would this mean for development agencies such as DFID? It has been argued that development agencies have become more treated as more important actors in development than the people being 'developed'. And in the context of multiple development agencies and increasing complexity, how do we empower local actors, especially children and youth?
- ◊ The Limitations of Cost-Benefit Analysis**.** This model, used to evaluate the efficacy of many development programmes, needs to be looked at and alternatives found because it does not work very well in respect of social costs and public goods/commons, especially in respect of humanitarianism and the environment.

Question 6

How can DFID improve the way research responds to user demand?

Child-led research

DFID can 'respond to user demand' more effectively not only by consulting stakeholders in the immediate future, but by supporting more user-led research. While this has already been a feature of much DFID-supported research, a significant omission has been a lack of support for *child*-led research. ActionAid's 1998 Study, Listening to Smaller Voices[101], demonstrated the value of drawing children into Participatory Rural Appraisal, both as gatherers and analysers of data.

Whether it be in practice, action research or in academic research, various innovative methodologies for enabling children to lead research have been piloted but deserve far greater application. Examples include: 'child-to-child' research and learning; training children as researchers/research assistants; children as research advisors; and 'participatory ethnographic evaluation research' with children.

DFID is recommended to support:

a. Evaluation and refinement of methodologies for child-led research, and research where children are central participants, in different contexts;

b. Child-led generation and uptake of knowledge;[102]

c. Training, capacity-building and follow-up support for children researchers and for child-to-child learning;[103]

d. Identification of southern research groups, institutes etc. that could be supported as centres of excellence for this work.

[101] Listening to Smaller Voices – Victoria Johnson, Joanna Hill and Edda Evan-Smith, ActionAid.
[102] See http://childrens-research-centre.open.ac.uk/research.cfm for examples.
[103] For example, http://www.child-to-child.org/about/approach.html

Models to promote more high quality research on youth

DFID should identify southern research groups and institutes which could be supported as centres of excellence for this work. It could fund existing but cash-strapped research centres focusing on youth and childhood, which would greatly enhance their ability to conduct, promote and disseminate new research.

DFID should also be open to promoting pure research, the results of which are not of obvious immediate use to it for policy design and implementation.

Long-term qualitative field research is designed inherently to provide a full and rounded social profile of a community, interest group, minority group, or other social formation that is open-ended and the final results – or even the major focus – of which are not predetermined but locally determined by the subjects of the study. Because such open-ended studies are not restricted to tried and tested academic categories, these are precisely the kinds of studies that are the most likely to bear dividends in the long term; questioning taken-for-granted categories and generating new lines of inquiry that are truly informed by the data – i.e. by the people on the ground. For example, the work of Nicolas Argenti (2002, 2007), Jean-Francois Bayart (1985, 1989) and others on youth in Africa exposes the fact that 'youth' as a category is both recent on the continent (of colonial introduction) and also that it takes a radically different form from the category of youth in the west, being so inclusive as to embrace people into their forties and sometimes well beyond. This research shows that youth is not a marker of biological age on the continent, but rather of social standing in relation to others, highlighting relative age as a measure of social inclusion or exclusion. In Deborah Durham's (2004) apt framing of the concept, youth is 'indexical' in Africa, marking relations *between* people rather than inherent or essential aspects of an individual, and being 'young' is equivalent to being marginalised and excluded – regardless of age. Two points emerge from this example:

1. Research that had set out to study 'youth' as defined by the UN within a predetermined and universal age-range would have failed to develop this insight.

2. DFID-funded projects that were aimed at 'youth' or 'young people' as defined according to biological age would exclude a large number of people defining themselves as 'youth' and be likely to meet with restricted success.

Policy research

We fully endorse DFID's emphasis to promote research on current policy. We believe that there needs to be a complementary approach to support for longer-term ethnographic research with support for rigorous policy research. Given that an important part of the Central Research Department's mandate is to support high quality policy formulation, then investment in higher quality policy research and knowledge translation and brokering initiatives is critical. We welcome the Young Lives initiative and would like to see DFID bring the findings from this research more effectively into its own policy work. It is also essential that the learning from the Young Lives project is shared with both Regional Divisions and DFID Country Offices.

When children are asked about the most serious problems in their lives, it is often violence that ranks high as one of the threats to their well-being (UN Study of Violence against Children 2006). Research is needed on developing and supporting the most appropriate strategies for implementing the recommendations of the UN study on violence against children.

One important area to focus on would be demographic trends (3.11 point 2). Chief among these demographic trends must be the emergence of young people as the demographic majority across the countries of the South (World Bank 2006). As an unprecedented wave of young people come of age, so too do the challenges facing them: sexual and reproductive health, preventable 'killer' diseases, inappropriate education and underemployment, political marginalisation, the lure of Pentecostal Christianity, radicalisation and criminality, insurrection and warfare. All of these become all the more urgent and pressing issues as young people come to constitute the majority demographic tranche in society. Those who say that youth represent 'the future of the nation' – including not only African leaders (see Cruise O'Brien 1996, Seekings 1993) but also policy-making bodies (e.g. World Bank 2006) fail to appreciate fully that young people in the South do not perceive themselves as 'future adults' (even the title of the World Bank report refers to young people as 'the *next* generation') but rather as citizens seeking to attain their political and human rights and to fulfil their potential *in the present*. Many young people are the heads of families, the members of (most often of opposition) political parties, and active members of their local communities. Moreover, it is a demographic fact not lost upon young people in countries where the average life expectancy hovers around forty years that a great many youth will not ever become adults or elders. For these people, youth is not lived as a preparation for some later stage of life considered somehow more fully-fledged, valid or legitimate and deserving of policy focus, but as the predicament of their contemporary existence. This is not to say that children and youth should be seen as a problem – on the contrary, all the evidence suggests that the coming generation of young people represents an unprecedented development opportunity if embraced as such (Argenti 2002).

DFID should therefore initiate and support research on the opportunities provided by the emergence of children and youth as the demographic majority across the South.

Question 7

How can DFID best support cutting-edge science that benefits poor people?

Science and IT is delivering exceptional innovations in banking and financial services. Much trumpeted by the companies themselves, and various micro-credit lenders, mobile-phone banking and the electronic delivery of financial services via village shops, post offices, gas stations and sometimes even churches and faith groups, is an area that requires considerably more research and impact assessment. Clearly, it would be excellent to be able to extend financial services to rural areas of less developed countries without the necessity of building physical banks – but what are the downsides of electronic financial services?

DFID's support in gathering data on this issue is needed.

Question 8:

How can DFID be more systematic in helping developing countries to increase their research capacity?

It is important to pay as much attention to research content as research processes. *In this regard, we would recommend that DFID consider/pilot the opportunities for regional universities (in the countries that DFID is partnering) to engage in collaborative research with grassroots NGOs into issues that affect the most marginalised communities* (e.g. alcohol abuse in communities; substance abuse amongst street children; child sex abuse/incest – all

of which are important but often overlooked issues at the grassroots and do not currently feature significantly in research [and policy] on children and youth). In order to carry out such research effectively, there is a need to focus in particular in promoting the development of qualitative research skills – often universities focus overly on quantitative research.

In addition to promoting centres of excellence/universities which encompass methods training/research skills/courses on research training, we would also suggest considering developing 'local' research capacity through practical research projects which employ local people. This will also develop research-skills base and promote research generally, especially through on-going practical training using ethnographic research methods in the field. Supporting work by Northern researchers to team up with research assistants from developing country contexts is one good capacity strengthening mechanism.

CODESRIA, Senegal, represents one of the best independent research institutes on the continent. Staffed by academics from across Africa, it fosters multi-disciplinary social science research across the five regions. It publishes a wide portfolio of internationally renowned journals and monographs, including the peer-reviewed journals *Africa Development* and the *African Sociological Review*. Its annual session for 2006 focused on the marginalisation of children and young people on the continent. DFID would stand to gain a great deal by fostering links between CODESRIA staff and UK universities and NGO's, for example by funding joint workshops and exchanges of researchers between CODESRIA and UK partners.

Through partnerships with independent institutes such as CODESRIA, DFID could also help to fund African doctoral students through UK universities, thus increasing the pool of local academics and experts that it could refer to in Africa in the future.

Question 9:

Communicating research: How can we make sure people in developing countries can access and use research?

Communicating with children and youth

It has been widely argued, especially by ODI and the Global Development Network, that research-policy-practice should not be separate activities, but that take-up by stakeholders should be planned and their buy-in sought from the start. However, children as stakeholders in communication and use of knowledge are rarely considered in child poverty eradication programmes; and children's roles are almost never considered if children are not seen as direct 'beneficiaries'.

Whether communicating about progress achieved in implementing the CRC, or exploring strategies for improving transport for communities, for example, children are potential users and disseminators of the knowledge. As well as being consulted about challenges and strategies facing them, they need access to information and knowledge generated by research via appropriate formats (including the use of new multi-media), places and channels. Examples are legion, but UK-based Peace Child International's approach to generating child-created editions of UN documents, like it's Children's Edition of Agenda 21 (*Rescue Mission : Planet Earth* – 500,000 copies in print in 23 languages) or the UN CRC (*Stand Up Speak Out*) – demonstrate the effectiveness of engaging children to communicate complex global policies to their peers. UNDP has recently engaged PCI to develop both a child-created summary of their Human Development Report, and a 'Youtube' style website to host child-created videos explaining their key messages of their forthcoming 2007 HDR on Climate Change.

DFID should ensure that for all research that is about, for or with children and youth, it supports child-friendly dissemination strategies, such as producing child-friendly versions. All of DFID's research about or with children and youth must be approached in a way that respects a child's right to privacy and protection, to participate or not participate as they wish and must comply to best practice around informed consent.

Knowledge translation and knowledge brokering

Investing in knowledge translation and knowledge brokering initiatives is of critical importance in order to improve the dissemination of existing research in developing countries – many grassroots organisations would benefit from this. Whilst our grassroots partners are well placed to identify issues which need investigation, they are also unaware of much existing work which, in the appropriate formats, could be of considerable use to them – the suggestions here are also relevant to question 6 which deals with the way in which DFID can better respond to the needs of end-users of research. Good examples of such knowledge translation mechanism include ELDIS, DFID's own R4D portal, ODI's Evidence-based Policy in Development Network (www.ebpdn.org – which is part of a DFID-funded PPA Civil Society Partnership Programme), the WHO supported EVIPNET knowledge translation initiative on the health sector etc.

In addition, the recent mapping studies on children and youth related issues in DFID highlight the need for DFID to improve their own feedback loops so that they create channels through which they can directly learn, and thus benefit from, the research they fund.

Suggestions:

- Promoting the publication of research in journals, working papers, policy briefs, lessons learned digests (and other publications) which are available in developing countries and electronically
- Promoting the use of excellent online networks such as CRIN and The Better Care Network
- Developing more systematic dissemination of relevant research in user-friendly ways – perhaps something which could be achieved through a more comprehensive and better co-ordinated research 'pooling' and dissemination – could DFID spearhead this and act as a 'central bank' for research? Again linking with think-tanks such as the ODI and the DFID-funded EBPDN network (see above) could be helpful.
- Better systemic and regular communication/networks with academics to seek out existing research as well as collaborate on research gaps.

Question 10.

How should DFID position its research in the future?

Even though the global population is ageing, nearly half of all people today are under the age of 25.[104] The proportion is even higher in Sub-Saharan Africa. Children and young people are of critical importance to the political and economic well-being of their countries and regions now and in the future, it is clear that there is considerable scope and urgency for DFID to increase its research focus and research uptake efforts on children and youth issues.

There is some recent, cutting edge research on children and youth and the challenges facing them today. This research questions dominant assumptions and models regarding children and youth, and highlights them as one of the key economic and political issues of our day. This research is not to be seen as an endpoint, but as a beginning. As a generation 1.3 billion strong – the largest the world has ever seen – comes of age, it points to the urgent need for further research. As one of the world's leaders in development and development research in

[104] http://www.unfpa.org/pds/facts.htm

terms of quality and quantity of funding (see Jones and Young, 2007), DFID should now be taking the lead on this key issue.

It has transpired from the mapping exercise recently conducted by Sarah Maguire that the methods used by DFID's country-offices for gathering data are variable, perhaps even haphazard. As far as we can see, there is no system or procedure in place to see to it that DFID country officers conduct a systematic review of the extant literature. *We would strongly advise DFID to develop methods by which to consult country experts in each of the countries in which they work on children and youth issues (whether they are based in the country in question, in the UK, or elsewhere).* We believe that such an approach in each of the DFID country offices would reveal, amongst other things, the pressing need for a focus on youth at the local, national and regional levels. Moreover, a review of the pan-regional and global commonalities from country research findings conducted centrally by DFID would help to identify policy priorities – including that regarding children and youth today.

Question 11

How far should we take a more regional approach to some research questions?

We believe that it is critical for DFID to invest in multiple research methodologies and to promote trans-disciplinary dialogues and comparative approaches across regions. There is a pressing need to invest in more innovative methodological approaches, combining qualitative (both ethnographic and participatory data) with quantitative data (see e.g. Jones and Sumner, 2007). Existing national household survey data needs to pay greater attention to collecting age and gender-disaggregated data – often we are hampered from making robust analyses of the problems facing youth due to a lack of quantitative data. This has important spillover effects as many policy makers are more familiar and compelled by statistical evidence. However, at the same time we believe it is critical to triangulate quantitative findings with qualitative data which allows us to better understand important underlying socio-cultural dynamics. Long-term, small-scale ethnographic studies do not simply provide unnecessary arcane detail about obscure ethnic groups: they generate concrete data on themes that often have national and regional reverberations and lead to new ways of understanding problems across a whole cultural region. The case regarding youth and politics in Africa is one such example: research first conducted by a political scientist in Cameroon (Bayart 1985) was quickly extended as an analytical model to the whole of West Africa (Bayart 1989; Mbembe 1985). A review of qualitative studies of the African continent reveals the centrality of youth to any valid social political or economic analysis of and planning for the region. This means that quantitative studies must be conducted in a manner that is capable of taking age (both biological age and local, culturally specific age categories) into consideration.

Question 12

How should DFID work with other funders of international development research?

At the moment, it is similarly difficult for individual UK social science researchers to obtain funding to conduct high quality qualitative research abroad. One reason has to do with the funding priorities of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) – the main government body responsible for funding social science research in the UK. At present, the

ESRC is unequivocal in its guidelines as well as in the feedback provided to research applicants that research that is not of direct, tangible benefit to the UK economy is not a priority. The effect of this is that the ESRC is not adequately supporting research conducted outside the UK, and that researchers carrying out research that would be of benefit to DFID are less likely to be funded than those carrying out research within the UK. This is not the case in the small ESRC/DFID fund; we strongly support the extension and scaling-up of this joint initiative.

A second reason for the difficulties facing UK-based researchers is that qualitative research (for which the UK academic sector is renowned internationally) – otherwise known as ethnographic fieldwork – typically involves long-term research investments of a minimum of 18 months of research in situ. The ESRC, however, currently impose the same time restraints on doctoral research for both qualitative and quantitative research, with the result that the quality of qualitative research being produced now is dropping.

In a report on the state of the discipline of social anthropology in the UK commissioned by the Association of Social Anthropologists (UK) and the Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI) this year, the authors (a team of leading US social anthropologists) singled out ESRC funding policy as a major problem facing anthropologists in UK institutions today, noting that the ESRC receive proportionately fewer applications from anthropologists than other disciplines, and that of those it receives, proportionately fewer are funded than for other disciplines. To make matters worse, anthropology is not listed as one of the disciplines that falls under the remit of the ESRC, being viewed as a grey area that falls between the social sciences and the humanities, with the result that applicants are currently tossed back and forth between the two funding councils, the ESRC and the AHRC. In truth, cutting edge qualitative research in anthropology often does not fit the stated priority areas of funding of either Council.

There is a need to improve links (both in terms of channelling funding and creating feedback loops in order to learn from research) with research councils. In particular, there is considerable scope with the ESRC to fund and learn from research on international development themes, including those relating to children and youth. The ESRC is currently dominated by projects relating specifically to the UK. Furthermore, ESRC CASE Studentships which are an excellent way for DFID and NGOs to be partnered with (and directly benefit from) sound, rigorous academic research. These collaborative awards are largely taken up by public and private sector organisations.[105] By contrast, the NGOs do not feature significantly as CASE partners despite the fact that they are an excellent (and economic) way of getting good research done by trained researchers who can dedicate their time to this.[106] The ESRC

[105] For example, of the ESRC CASE Studentships awarded in 2007 none deal specifically with children and youth issues in developing countries or are linked specifically with NGOs working in this field (www.esrc.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/opportunities/postgraduate/pgtrainingpolicy/index1.aspx?ComponentId=5405)

[106] For example, Ruth Payne is currently doing an ESRC CASE funded PhD in collaboration with the UK based NGO Street Child Africa. In partnership with SCA's funded grassroots partners in Zambia, as well as other NGO research partners and core community groups which were established in the field by the researcher, Ruth is investigating the issue of child-headed households (CHHs). The constant dialogue with SCA as well as the range of stakeholders (from grassroots up to policy-makers & donors) has led to some excellent action research and a continual process of mutual learning and feedback. For example, core community groups, which began as focus group discussions are now acting as advisors to the project as well as developing their own agendas and informal programmes in their communities etc. All stakeholders also contribute to a quarterly newsletter which an excellent conduit for a constant sharing/feedback process. A dedicated feedback programme involving all stakeholders has also been planned with them through workshops and consultation.

could usefully invest more in supporting the dissemination and communication of these findings, to UK as well as partner country audiences.

Suggestions:

- DFID should earmark/prioritise a certain amount of ESRC CASE funding for International Development Organisations/NGO sector.
- DFID should enter into CASE partnerships themselves with partnering universities (CASE Studentships are set up through a partnership between an organisation and an academic institution and then projects are advertised for students).
- DFID should advertise/promote/encourage the uptake on CASE Studentships by NGOs and think tanks (especially those on the Children and Youth Network).
- DFID and ESRC should extend and scale-up their joint funding scheme.
- DFID should lobby for better feedback loops within the ESRC itself (and, consequently, the dissemination of research beyond the ESRC) – including not simply improved guidelines for how such funded research is conducted but supporting this and giving time for it.

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ANNEX D

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Human Rights Watch: http://www.hrw.org

ANNEX E

People consulted

DFID

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Isabel Cardinal (DFID Rwanda)
Richard Carter (DFID Caribbean)
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Other Government Departments

Victoria Challacombe (FCO)
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Other Organisations

British Council: Gordon Blakely
Commonwealth Secretariat (Commonwealth Youth Programme): Rajkumar Bidla, Andrew Jones, Cristal de Saldanha
Development Education Association: James Edleston
Save the Children UK : Keeli Sorensen
UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre: Eva Jespersen
War Child: Lisa Bournelis, Leila Billing
World Vision International – Philippa Lei, Stuart Kean
Y Care - Wumi Onadipe
Youth Employment Network – Justin Sykes