ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA (ESCWA)

ASSESSMENT AND MAPPING OF UNITED NATIONS RESEARCH ON YOUTH[1]
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ASSESSMENT AND MAPPING OF UNITED NATIONS
RESEARCH ON YOUTH

Background

In recognition of the importance of youth to development and in the spirit of "Delivering as one UN", the organizations of the United Nations (UN) System have decided to work together to take stock of what research these organizations have been undertaking on youth, as well as to map out future directions for youth research.

The United Nations has long recognized the importance of addressing the principles, ideals and potentials of young women and men in order to achieve society's goals and targets. In 1995, the United Nations adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY). This programme of action provides a general policy framework in which priority areas have been identified to ensure that all young women and men are given opportunity to reach their full potential, both as individuals and as active participants in the process of development. The WPAY covers fifteen priority areas: education, employment, poverty and hunger, the environment, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, leisure-time activities, health, girls and young women, HIV/AIDS, information and communications technology, inter-generational issues, armed conflict, the mixed impact of globalization, and the full and effective participation of youth in society and in decision-making.

In their meeting of 22 July 2010, the deputies of the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs (ECESA) agreed to the creation of a working group to develop specific proposals for joint research on youth issues. In response to this decision, the ECESA Social Development Cluster, in its meeting of 2 September 2010, decided to establish the Working Group on Coordinated Youth Research (WG-CYR), to be co-chaired by ESCWA and ECLAC.

The WG-CYR aims to improve the United Nations' co-ordinated work on youth research. It will achieve this through implementing the following two activities, among others:

1. Initiate a stock-taking of agency capacity in youth-focussed analytical research, programmes and activities; and

2. Develop a long-term research strategy with proposed topics and timelines.

This report addresses these two objectives in two parts: Part I surveys existing research activities carried out by UN organizations; and Part II identifies the basic elements of a future UN coordinated research strategy.

PART I. SURVEY OF EXISTING UN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

1.   Introduction: Survey Methodology

The methodology adopted in this report is based on survey analysis. A questionnaire has been designed by the consultant in close collaboration with ESCWA. The questionnaire aimed at assessing how youth issues are tackled in different organizations of the United Nations system by collecting information on youth research programmes carried out by those organizations. The main objectives of this exercise were to identify the research capacity of the UN agencies in the area of youth and pinpoint research gaps. The final goal is to develop the elements of a long-term research strategy for youth issues that includes priority areas, time horizon for future research and coordination mechanisms.

The survey was sent by electronic mail to 17 UN agencies' focal points, which was preceded by a formal letter from ESCWA to those agencies explaining the purpose of the project and seeking their help to

collaborate with the consultant. The 17 agencies comprised the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP); Economic Commission for Europe (ECE); Economic Commission for Africa (ECA); Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); International Labour Organization (ILO); World Health Organization (WHO); United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA); United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP); United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN-Women); United Nations Volunteers (UNV); World Bank; United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-HABITAT); United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA); and UN Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA). Out of those 18 agencies, 9 agencies completed the questionnaire, namely WHO, ESCAP, ECE, UNV, DESA, UN-HABITAT, the World Bank, ECLAC and ESCWA. A summary of the answers provided in the questionnaire is provided in Annex 1 at the end of Part I.

2.   Analysis

2.1   *Structural and organizational aspects*

It is important to identify how youth related issues fit within the mandate of the surveyed UN organizations and on what basis they undertake youth-related research. The aim is to figure out to what extent youth related issues and youth research constitute an integral element of the institutional set-up of those UN organizations. This will help to understand the importance of youth-related issues in such organizations, and to what extent they can undertake research in this area.

The survey found that most of the organizations have been dealing with youth-related issues for a long time, and that the adoption of WPAY and the creation of the UN Inter Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD)[2] have boosted their interest in this issue. In 7 of the 9 organizations (ESCWA, UN-HABITAT, World Bank, DESA, WHO, UNV, ESCAP), youth falls within the mandate of their organizations, yet other circumstances have increased their interest as it is the case of ESCWA where youth bulge has increased the attention and efforts of ESCWA in terms of dealing with youth-related issues. Similarly, DESA's interest was intensified with the establishment of IANYD, and WHO's interest with the creation of the adolescent health program in 1989. Only 2 organizations do not consider youth related issues as being one of their main objectives.

Four organizations work on youth issues following a decision by their senior management; and three other agencies undertake youth-related research and projects based on an invitation from another UN sister organization. The majority of the organizations use research as an input for other programs and projects. Seven organizations undertake both youth research and youth-related projects or programmes. In addition, some of the organizations undertake other complementary youth-related activities, as it is the case with ECLAC (developing indicators and acting as observatory) and UN-HABITAT and ESCAP (undertaking training and advocacy).

Gaps: Youth research is not fully streamlined or anchored in the work of several UN organizations or in their institutional set-up;

There is not always a clear mandate for youth research, making it ad hoc and often project-related and vulnerable to changes in organizational direction

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[2]   The Network is composed of over 25 different UN entities and serves as a platform to provide updates on youth related work and to initiate dialogue on prospects for collaboration. In 2009, the Network did a mapping of all UN System activities related to youth development including research, which was published in the form of a brochure "*Growing Together: Youth and the Work of the United Nations*" as well as made available online at http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/growing_together.pdf.

2.2 Methodological aspects and research objective

There is a need to understand whether the type of youth-related research carried out by UN organizations follow the same definitions and assumptions. This is important for the comparability and generalization of results. Moreover, it is important to understand what kind of methodologies are adopted to pinpoint if there is any deficiency in utilizing specific methodologies and also to ensure that different research issues have been subject to differentiated analytical methodologies that capture multi-dimensional aspects. Finally, identifying the main objective of the research, as defined by the UN organizations, helps to understand if the methodologies fit the objectives and if the different objectives identified in the questionnaire are really covered by the organizations.

Based on the survey results, it can be safely assumed that only 4 of the organizations apply the UN definition of youth (15-24 years old), whereas others apply different definitions. For example, ECLAC applies the Iberoamerican definition (15-29 age bracket); UN-HABITAT uses the 15-32 age bracket; and the World Bank and UNV both apply the country definition, and in non-country specific work, it was 15-25 age bracket. However in one of important World Bank report (2006 World Development Report), it used the 12-24 age bracket. WHO uses the adolescents' definition (10-19 age bracket), as well as young people (10-24) age bracket. ECE does not have any specific definition. Among the reasons for such heterogeneity are country needs, the organization's mandate, and data constraints.
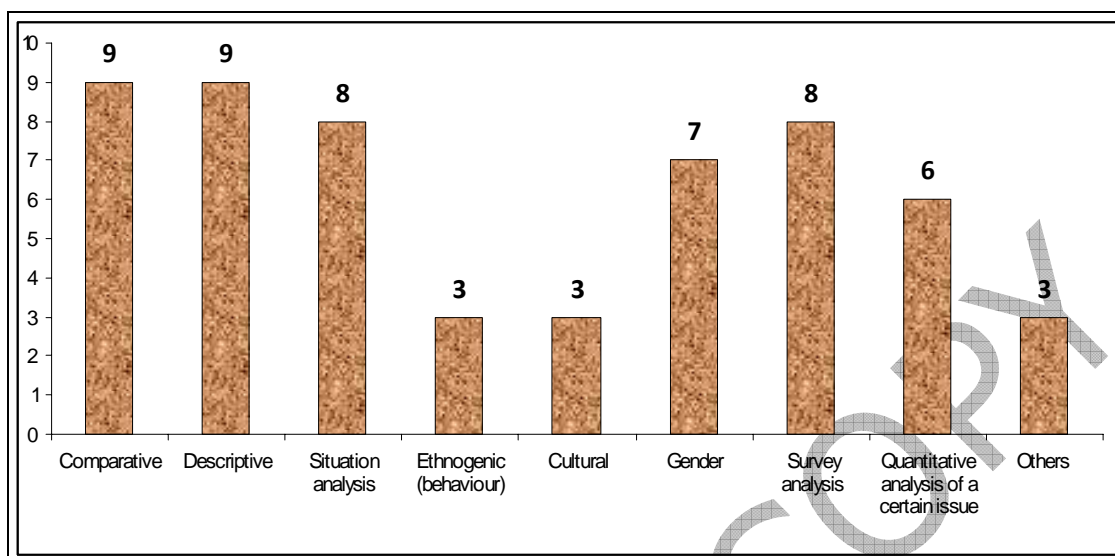
The methodologies adopted are driven to a large extent by the nature of topics and research. However, situation analysis, comparative or survey analysis and descriptive methodology have been the most common type used. Quantitative analysis and gender analysis are also used but to a lesser extent. Figure 1 shows the frequency of methodologies applied in an aggregated manner, whereas Table 1 shows the breakdown of methodologies applied by the different organization, according to the covered areas of research. Some organizations (for example, ECLAC) act as an observatory for the status of youth and their conditions in the geographical areas they cover and provide some related indicators. DESA has its flagship bi-annual report on youth "The World Youth Report", and UNV has its Youth Volunteer Infrastructure Project.

The organizations, in general, have a main objective which is policy analysis and recommendations (6 organizations), while other objectives like public awareness and insightful analysis are also considered (4 organizations), as well as input into other projects (3 organizations). In some organizations, research is an intermediate product used mainly as an input for other programs. Some agencies have objectives associated with youth capacity building and enhancing the role of their organizations in providing services to youth as skills upgrading (UN-HABITAT); developing youth leadership (ESCAP); integrating them into the labour market and enhancing their productivity (World Bank); or creating evidence on health risk behaviour of adolescents (WHO).

Gaps: There is a clear problem with youth definition (even after taking into account the specific reasons of some organizations for deviating from the UN definition), which can create different results and hence have different policy implications.

There is also a problem with the type of methodologies used: the survey showed that certain methodological tools that are not widely used despite their importance as a tool for investigating youth-related issues. In particular, methodologies which provide evidence based information (e.g. ethnogenic and cultural) on youth issues seem to be less of a focus than desk-based studies using existing material.

Figure 1. Frequency of Methodologies Applied in Research

Bar chart values: Comparative 9, Descriptive 9, Situation analysis 8, Ethnogenic (behaviour) 3, Cultural 3, Gender 7, Survey analysis 8, Quantitative analysis of a certain issue 6, Others 3.

Source: Survey results.

TABLE 1. METHODOLOGIES APPLIED BY UN ORGANIZATIONS ON DIFFERENT YOUTH ISSUES

Research area	Comparative	Descriptive	Situation analysis	Ethnogenic (behaviour)	Cultural	Gender	Survey analysis	Quantitative analysis
Education & Training	ECE ECLAC ESCWA UN-Habitat UNV World Bank	ECE ECLAC UN-Habitat World Bank	ECLAC ESCWA UN-Habitat	ECE	ECLAC	ECE ECLAC UN-Habitat World Bank	ECE ECLAC UN-Habitat World Bank	ECE ECLAC UN-Habitat World Bank
Poverty & Hunger	ECE ECLAC ESCWA UNESCAP UN-Habitat World Bank	ECE ECLAC UNESCAP UN-Habitat World Bank	ECLAC ESCWA UNESCAP UN-Habitat	ECE	ECLAC	ECE ECLAC UNESCAP UN-Habitat World Bank	ECE ECLAC UN-Habitat World Bank	ECLAC World Bank
Drug abuse	UNESCAP UN-Habitat	UNESCAP UN-Habitat	UNESCAP UN-Habitat			UNESCAP UN-Habitat	UNESCAP UN-Habitat	UN-Habitat
Leisure-time activities	UN-Habitat	UN-Habitat				UN-Habitat	UN-Habitat WHO	UN-Habitat
HIV/AIDS	UNESCAP World Bank WHO	UNESCAP World Bank WHO	UNESCAP World Bank WHO	WHO	WHO	UNESCAP World Bank WHO	UNESCAP World Bank WHO	World Bank WHO
Information and communications technology	ECLAC UN-Habitat	ECLAC UN-Habitat	ECLAC UN-Habitat			UN-Habitat	ECLAC UN-Habitat	ECLAC UN-Habitat
Inter-generational issues	ECE UN-Habitat	ECE UN-Habitat World Bank		ECE		ECE UN-Habitat	ECE UN-Habitat World Bank	UN-Habitat World Bank

TABLE 1 (*continued*)

Research area	Comparative	Descriptive	Situation analysis	Ethnogenic (behaviour)	Cultural	Gender	Survey analysis	Quantitative analysis
Full & effective participation of youth in society and decision-making	ESCWA UN-Habitat UNV World Bank	ECLAC ESCWA UN-Habitat UNV World Bank	ECLAC ESCWA UN-Habitat UNV World Bank		ESCWA	UN-Habitat World Bank	ECLAC UNESCAP UN-Habitat UNV World Bank	ECLAC UN-Habitat
Employment	ECE DESA ECLAC ESCWA UNESCAP UN-Habitat World Bank	ECE DESA ECLAC UNESCAP UN-Habitat UNV World Bank	DESA ECLAC ESCWA UNESCAP UN-Habitat	ECE		ECE DESA ECLAC UNESCAP UN-Habitat World Bank	ECE ECLAC UN-Habitat World Bank	ECE DESA ECLAC UN-Habitat World Bank
Environment	UN-Habitat	UN-Habitat UNV	UN-Habitat			UN-Habitat	UN-Habitat	UN-Habitat
Juvenile delinquency	UN-Habitat World Bank	UN-Habitat World Bank	UN-Habitat World Bank	World Bank		UN-Habitat World Bank	UN-Habitat World Bank	UN-Habitat World Bank
Health	ECE UNESCAP UN-Habitat World Bank WHO	ECE UNESCAP UN-Habitat World Bank WHO	ECLAC UNESCAP UN-Habitat World Bank WHO	ECE WHO	WHO	ECE ECLAC UNESCAP UN-Habitat World Bank WHO	ECE ECLAC UN-Habitat World Bank WHO	ECLAC UN-Habitat World Bank WHO
Girls and young women	ECE ECLAC UN-Habitat World Bank	ECE ECLAC UN-Habitat World Bank	ECLAC UN-Habitat World Bank	World Bank ECE		ECE ECLAC UN-Habitat World Bank	ECE ECLAC World Bank	ECLAC UN-Habitat World Bank
Mixed impact of globalization	UNESCAP	UNESCAP	UNESCAP			UNESCAP		
Armed conflict	World Bank	ESCWA World Bank	ESCWA World Bank	World Bank		World Bank	World Bank	World Bank
Policy-oriented research	ESCWA	ESCWA	ESCWA				ESCWA	
Demographic issues, Family, cultural change	ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC			ECLAC	ECLAC	ECLAC
Urbanization	UN-Habitat	UN-Habitat				UN-Habitat	UN-Habitat	UN-Habitat

Source: Survey results.

2.3 Coverage and scope

Since there are several key youth issues outlined in the questionnaire, it is important to understand which of those issues are subject to research by the surveyed UN organizations, and which are under-researched. Some youth issues may be critically important either for policy recommendations or for public awareness but due to inadequate methodological means, lack of data or insufficient human and financial
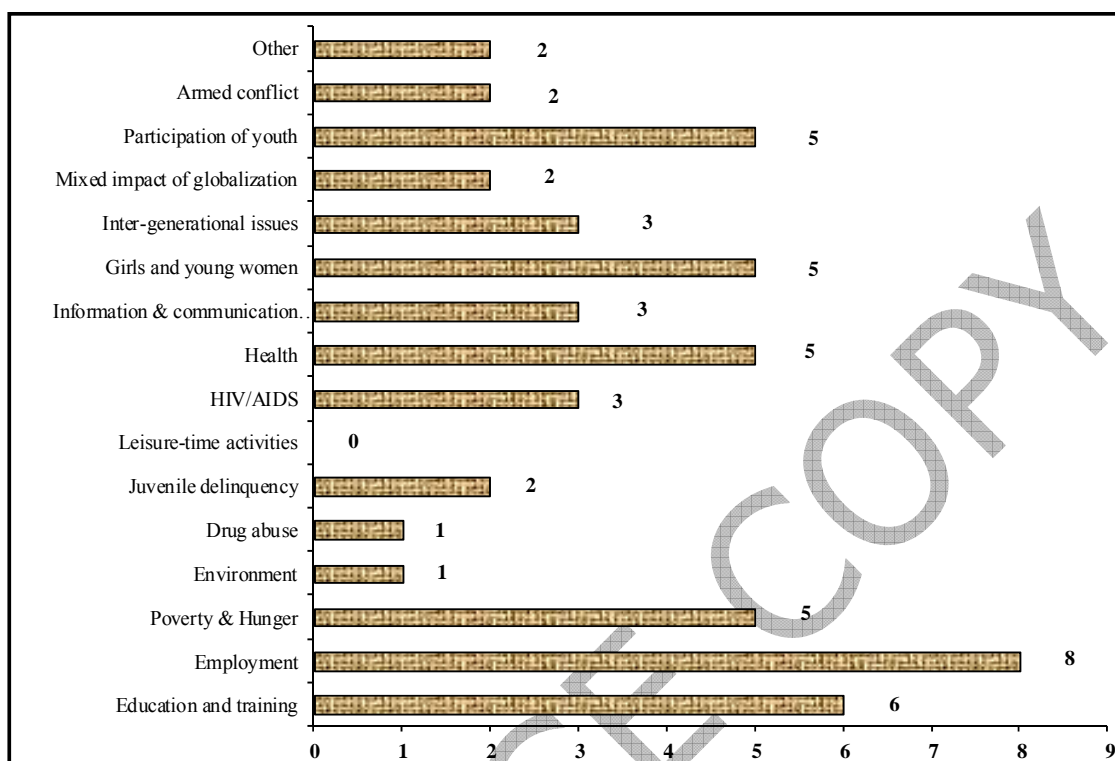
resources, those areas may also remain under-researched. Moreover, there might be areas that are researched by the different organizations, but due to lack of a common age definition or the use of different methodologies, the results might be different. Finally, it is important to check whether the rural-urban balance and the gender dimension are adequately addressed by the organizations when handling youth research issues.

Based on the survey results, and out of the fifteen priority youth issues identified in the questionnaire, most of the UN organizations have focused on several of those issues, driven mainly by their mandate and the relevance of the focus areas of the organization. DESA devotes specific attention to youth by addressing them in its main reports in all areas (with a certain focus on youth employment) as part of its role in implementing WPAY, and its designation as the UN system Focal Point of Youth. ESCWA and ECE focus on 5 areas; ECLAC and ESCAP focus on 7 areas in addition to other areas not covered in the questionnaire; UN-HABITAT and the World Bank focus on 10 youth issues, in addition to an area not covered in the questionnaire; UNV focuses on two issues; and WHO focuses on three issues that are associated with adolescent health. Figure 2 shows the frequency of youth issues covered by the 9 UN organizations in an aggregated manner, whereas Table 1 shows the focus of each organization. As Figure 2 also illustrates, there are some specific youth issues that are under-researched despite their importance, such as environment, inter-generational issues, and information and communication technology.

Three organizations pay due attention to gender issues. Seven organizations cover rural-urban dimensions, whereas UN-HABITAT focuses only on urban aspects (as per its mandate[3]). The World Bank, in some specific areas, focuses only on urban or female issues, and its age bracket is wider (0- adulthood). Hence, several organizations surveyed pay due attention to both gender issues and rural-urban dimensions.

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[3]   It is mandated by the UN General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all. Source: (http://ww2.unhabitat.org/about/mandate.asp).

Figure 2. Frequency of Youth Issues Covered by Nine UN Organizations

Horizontal bar chart showing frequency of youth issues:
- Other: 2
- Armed conflict: 2
- Participation of youth: 5
- Mixed impact of globalization: 2
- Inter-generational issues: 3
- Girls and young women: 5
- Information & communication..: 3
- Health: 5
- HIV/AIDS: 3
- Leisure-time activities: 0
- Juvenile delinquency: 2
- Drug abuse: 1
- Environment: 1
- Poverty & Hunger: 5
- Employment: 8
- Education and training: 6

Source: Survey results.

Gaps: Several youth issues are heavily researched, but it is not clear if there is a coordination mechanism to avoid overlapping and ensure that they complement each other based on the comparative advantage of each UN organization.

Although the focus on employment is understandable, it may come at the expense of research in other important areas, such as the environment, inter-generational relations and political participation.

2.4   Human and financial capacity

UN organizations need to be well equipped with the human staff and financial resources to enable them to conduct research on a systematic basis. Clear plans for future research work should be based on well specified priorities and adequate financial resources. Otherwise, any youth-related research will remain ad-hoc and may fall short of the needs and objectives of a given UN organization.

Based on the survey results, some of the organizations have devoted a specific unit or section for youth and other issues (ESCWA, UN-HABITAT, DESA, WHO, ESCAP), and such units also act as a focal point for youth related issues (both within the organization itself and between the organization and other agencies). For example, in the case of WHO, the maternal children and adolescent health (MCA) department is responsible for the work on adolescent health, including research. In UNV and ECE there is no specific unit, but rather two focal points, though in other parts of those organizations, specific research on youth takes place.
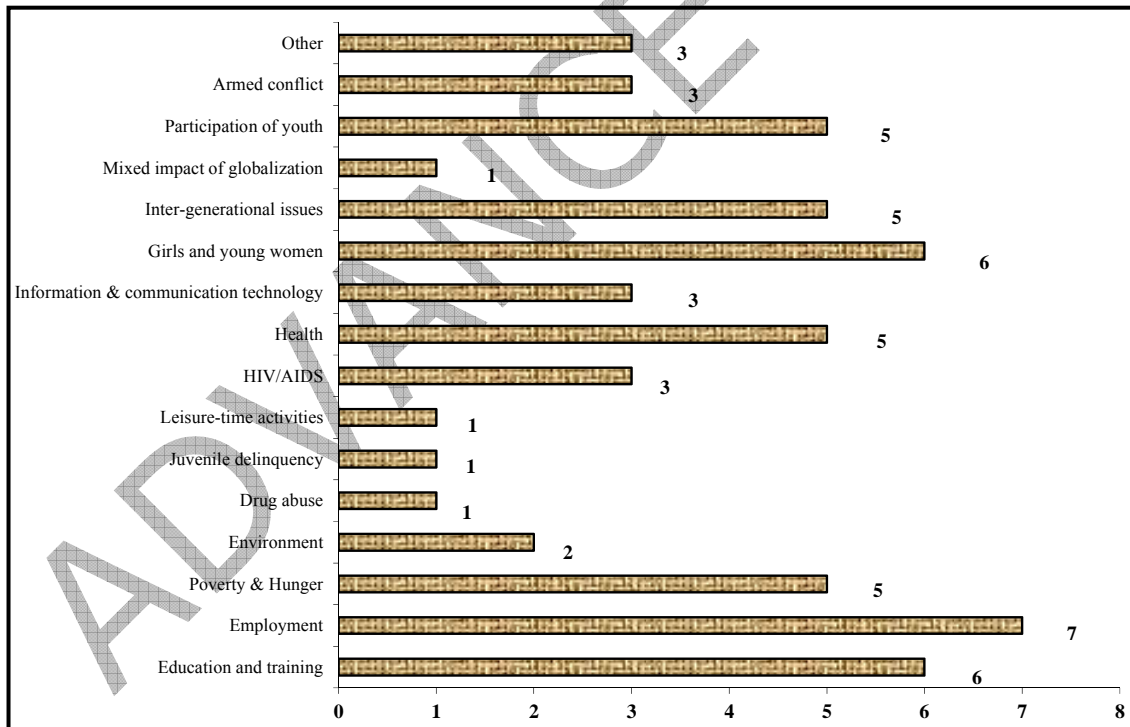
In general, most if not all organizations suffer from constraints in terms of human capacity, overlapping mandates with other departments, as well as financial constraints. The funds allocated for

undertaking youth-related projects in the last financial year ranged from around USD 25,000 (excluding additional extra-budgetary funds) in ESCAP to USD 500,000 in ESCWA and USD 2.3 million in UN-HABITAT. Several organizations were unable to determine the budget allocated in 2010 or mentioned that there we no specific allocations.

Some organizations follow specific planning cycles for youth-related research (which vary from one year to five years), and plan formulation also vary significantly from one organization to another. In some cases, it is set by the concerned department in the organization (ESCWA, UN-HABITAT). In other cases, it is set after consultation with donors, partners, and recipients (UN-HABITAT, ESCAP); set in collaboration with the beneficiary according to her needs (World Bank); set by the UN General Assembly (DESA); or guided by the program strategy (UNV, ECE). Some organizations do not have any specific research plans for the future, as such plans tend to be related to projects and coordination between different departments.

Future youth research plans tend to be ad hoc and in general build on past work and activities. Yet some organizations have specific youth-related projects to be implemented in the future, such as, for example, an observatory in the case of ECLAC; an urban youth research network in UN-HABITAT; and developing leadership among youth and mapping youth policies in ESCAP. Figure 3 shows the youth issues considered for future research in an aggregate manner, which tend to be almost identical to those in Figure 2, with slight variations. Table 2 identifies the areas of future research for each UN organization. Most of the organizations do not intend to change the methodology they apply in the future.

Figure 3. Frequency for the Areas considered for Future Research

Source: Survey results.

TABLE 2. AREAS CONSIDERED FOR FUTURE RESEARCH BY THE SURVEYED UN ORGANIZATIONS

Research area	ECE	DESA	ECLAC	ESCAP	ESCWA	UN-Habitat	UNV	WHO	World Bank
Education and training	√		√	√	√	√			√
Employment	√	√	√	√	√	√			√
Poverty & Hunger	√		√			√			√
Environment				√		√			
Drug abuse				√					
Juvenile delinquency									√
Leisure-time activities						√			
HIV/AIDS				√				√	
Health	√		√	√				√	√
Information & communication technology			√			√		√	
Girls and young women	√		√	√		√		√	√
Inter-generational issues	√				√	√			√
Mixed impact of globalization				√					
Participation of youth			√	√	√	√	√		
Armed conflict					√	√			√
Other			√1/			√2/			√3/

Source: Survey results.

1/ Youth and demographic dynamics, youth and family, youth and cultural changes.

2/ Urbanization.

3/ Skills and entrepreneurship.

Gaps: Most organizations lack staff and funding to carry out systematic research on youth issues. There may also be internal lack of coordination with the responsibility of carrying out youth research being split between different substantive divisions.

Planning for future youth research seems ad hoc, lacks a clear vision, and does not consider the possibility of increasing the capacity of research associated with new youth issues, as well as diversification of methodologies.

2.5 Outreach and effectiveness

Among the important elements of making good use of research are the means used to disseminate and evaluate it. If dissemination is restricted due to limited access, then the research effectiveness is compromised. If there are no evaluation mechanisms to measure research effectiveness, UN organizations will never be sure whether the research they undertake meets its objective. Moreover, youth-related research should engage youth at different stages in the process of research, including its evaluation and dissemination.

Based on the survey results, most of the organizations surveyed intensified their efforts to include youth in the process of research. The most common used ways have been conferences (by designing specific sessions and/or roundtables) and web-based means (such as virtual forums), with the aim of providing realistic policy proposals and input to future programs and projects, as well as enhancing public awareness on specific youth-related issues. Some other organizations identified other means, such as focus groups and interviews (UN-HABITAT, World Bank, ESCAP). All the organizations pointed out that they intend to include youth in future research projects through both concrete and virtual means.

All the organizations used different means to disseminate their work and provide it free of charge, with the exception of WHO which noted that some of its publications are not free of charge. They also adopt feedback mechanisms (mainly via electronic mail and/or surveys or specific helpdesks or focal points). DESA is the only surveyed organization that has used blogs to receive feedback on its publications. Some

organizations include specific indicators to assess the effectiveness of their work, including ESCAP, ESCWA and the World Bank (which uses the number of citations of its work to evaluate its impact). The World Bank also has built-in evaluation mechanisms in its projects. Some of the organizations (ESCWA) have adopted specific key performance indicators for the projects initiated and allocated specific amount of project budget for evaluation of the project. UN-HABITAT identified that it intends to introduce new means in the future, including internet surveys and assessment reviews.

Gaps: Performance assessing the performance is a key issue that needs to be strengthened to measure the impact of youth-related research and projects in the future. The survey revealed that measures adopted, especially in the case of research, are either insufficient or ad hoc.

Youth involvement in different stages of research should be strengthened though increased participation in carrying out the research, where feasible, and through other means that ensure the effectiveness of their involvement.

2.6   Coordination

Effective coordination between different departments in the same UN organization or amongst different UN organizations is a crucial consideration. It ensures that there is no overlap or waste of resources, which is particularly important given the human and financial constraints that negatively affect the ability of UN organizations to undertake youth-related research.

The survey identified that coordination within the UN system as well as between the UN organizations and non-UN organizations (such as, governments, NGOs and research institutions) face common problems, including logistical and administrative problems (mentioned by 4 organizations), lack of clarity of roles (mentioned by 2 organizations), and overlapping mandates (mentioned by 1 organization). Other problems which affect coordination are issues related to data scarcity and quality, lack of comprehensive youth policies, and limited instruments that can be used to interact with NGOs.

Coordination takes place through signing MOUs (ESCWA); cooperation agreements (UN-HABITAT); jointly designing the work or joint committees (UN-HABITAT, ESCAP); through existing networks, such as IANYD (World Bank, DESA); or other UN coordination mechanisms (for example, meetings and video-conferences). Coordination prevails in different forms and in different research phases (including pre-development phases, joint teams, and dissemination phases). Web-based means have been heavily utilized for coordination including the usage of social media with NGOs (DESA).   Some organizations subcontract research centres for undertaking necessary research (UNV).

Gaps: Coordination is essential to ensure the effectiveness and complementarity of research, especially in an environment which suffers from human and financial resources constraints. However, it seems to be undermined by logistical and administrative problems, even though IANYD has facilitated coordination aspects.

As revealed by the limited responses received, sensitivity among UN organizations or even different coordination networks (for example, IANYD and ECESA's Social Cluster) and overlapping mandates also seem to impact negatively on coordination mechanisms.

MATRIX: YOUTH-RELATED ISSUES WITHIN UNITED NATIONS' ORGANIZATIONS

Agency/Organization	Research/Programs/ Projects/Methodologies	Age groups	Coverage	Involvement	Dissemination	Capacity	Coordination	Future plans
1. World Health Organization (WHO)	- Research areas: Health, HIV/AIDS, Education & Training, and Information and communications technology is the main area of research - Methodologies: Comparative, descriptive, situation analysis, ethnogenic (behavior), cultural, gender, survey analysis, quantitative analysis of a certain issue, and other techniques are the applied research methodologies at different times. - Goals: Health policies guideline formulation and public awareness. Data for advocay and programming are the final goals of research undertaken by the agency are the final goals of research undertaken by the agency.	- Adolescents as 10-19, young people as 10-24 (WHA 64.25)	-	- Interviews - Focus Groups - Web based - means	- Hard Copies - Workshops - Conferences - Most research of WHO is free of charge, and some have to be bought.	- WHO is updating its research prioirtiress agenda. - Specific unit: The MCA (maternal children and adolescent health) department is responsibel for the work on adolescent health including research. In other parts of the organization theme specific research on youth takes place. - WHO's budget was closer to 100.000 last year and is far too small amount for the needs and existing questions.	- In some of the UN coordination mechanisms (i.e. IATT) research may be discussed. - Coordination is done through joint teams for research and in dissemination phase - WHO coordinates with non-UN organizations (government, NGOs, research centers, consultants) as it runs a network of collaborating centers, some of which focus particularly on youth, others as part of their work. - Coordination between WHO and non-UN organizations is done in pre-development	- WHO future plans for work on youth include: joint research projects with UN organizations, joint research projects with non-UN organizations, individual research and renewing research priorities list on adolescent health. - Mains areas for future research are HIV/AIDS, health, information and communications technology and girls and young women. - Mains areas for future projects and programs are HIV/AIDS, health and girls and young women.

Agency/Organization	Research/Programs/ Projects/Methodologies	Age groups	Coverage	Involvement	Dissemination	Capacity	Coordination	Future plans
							phase of the research project, joint teams for research, and dissemination phase.	
2. TheUnited Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)	- Research areas: Poverty & Hunger, Drug abuse, HIV/AIDS, Employment, Health, Girls and young women, and the mixed impact of globalization. - Methodologies: Comparative. Descriptive, situation analysis, gender, and survey analysis. - Goals: More effective, comprehensive and integrated youth–related policies and greater participation of youth in the development process are the final goals of projects and programs undertaken by the agency. - Insightful analysis, policy suggestion, and public awareness are the final goals of research undertaken by the agency.	- UN definition: age bracket is between 15-24 years old.	- Male and female. - Rural and urban areas.	- Interviews - Focus Groups - Conferences	- Hard Copies - Workshops - Conferences - Specific indicators are used to assess the impact of research undertaken. - Feedback from national counterpart organizations and feedback from project partners and national counterpart organizations are used to assess the impact of youth programs or projects carried out by the organization.	- The organization follow a one-year plan on topics to be researched related to youth. - The organization follows a two years plan on projects concerning developing leadership among youth. - Specific unit: Five P staff and four GS staff, with support from several other P staff as well as GS staff when needs arise with background in economics, health, development studies, legal issues, anthropology and psychology.	- UNESCAP is the chair of the United Nations Asia-Pacific Interagency Group on Youth; regular meetings and communication occur to coordinate between the organization and other UN organizations on youth related issues - Coordination between UNESCAP and other UN organizations is done via joint teams for research and in dissemination phase. - Meetings and communication are used to coordinate between the	- UNESCAP future plans for work on youth in the coming five years include: joint research projects with UN organizations, joint research projects with non-UN organizations, and Individual research. - UNESCAP future plans in the coming five years on doing projects or programs on youth include: developing leadership among youth and mapping youth policies. - Mains areas for future research, projects and programs are education and

Agency/Organization	Research/Programs/ Projects/Methodologies	Age groups	Coverage	Involvement	Dissemination	Capacity	Coordination	Future plans
							organization and non-UN organizations. - Coordination between UNESCAP and non-UN organizations is done in pre-development phase of the research project, joint teams for research, and dissemination phase. - joint research and convening of meetings and events are the ways of coordination between UNESCAP and other UN organizations and non-UN organizations.	training, employment, poverty & hunger, environment, drug abuse, the mixed impact of globalization, girls and young women, health, HIV/AIDS, the full and effective participation of youth in society and in decision-making. - UNESCAP intends to engage youth in the process of research (on youth) making and dissemination in the future through: interviews, focus groups, conferences, and social media.
3. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)	- Research areas: Education & Training, Inter-generational issues, Employment, Health, Girls and young women are the main areas of research.	- Age bracket depends on the research objective and	- Male and female. - Rural and urban areas.	- Interviews - Web based means (Internet).	- Workshops - Conferences - Web based means (Internet) - Detailed access statistics for	- The organization follows a ten years plan on GGP project. - The plan is developed through decision	- WG-CYR and ad hoc coordination with regional UN agencies. - Coordination between UNECE and other UN	- UNECE future plans in the coming five years include: joint research projects with UN

Agency/Organization	Research/Programs/ Projects/Methodologies	Age groups	Coverage	Involvement	Dissemination	Capacity	Coordination	Future plans
	- Methodologies: Comparative, descriptive, ethnogenic (behavior), gender, survey analysis, quantitative analysis. - Goals: Better understanding of demographic and social developments and of the underlying factors are the final goals of Generations & Gender Programme (GGP) undertaken by the agency. - Insightful analysis and policy suggestion are the final goals of research undertaken by the agency.	availability of data. The most recent research has focused on young adults in the 25-34 years bracket.			publications are used to assess the impact of research undertaken by the agency. - GGP meetings and events are used to assess the impact of youth program (GGP) carried out by the organization.	undertaken by senior management - No specific department dealing with youth issues. - No budget allocations were made for undertaking research on youth in UNECE in the last financial year.	organizations is done in Pre-development phase of the research project and dissemination phase - Meetings (incl. videoconference), exchange of documents are used to coordinate between the organization and other UN organizations - Coordination between UNECE with governments is ensured by the official programme of work. - Coordination between UNECE and non-UN organizations is done in Pre-development phase of the research project and Dissemination phase	organizations, joint research projects with non-UN organizations, and Individual research. - UNECE future plans in the coming five years on doing projects or programs on youth include: GGP by GGP consortium, and UNDA youth research project by WG-CYR - Education and training, Employment, Poverty & Hunger, Health, Girls and young women, Inter-generational issues are the main areas for future research. - Inter-generational issues is the main area for future projects and programs.

Agency/Organization	Research/Programs/ Projects/Methodologies	Age groups	Coverage	Involvement	Dissemination	Capacity	Coordination	Future plans
							- Meetings of inter-governmental bodies, user conferences and workshops are used to coordinate between the organization and non-UN organizations.	- UNECE intend to engage youth in the process of research (on youth) making and dissemination in the future through interviews and conferences.
4. The United Nations Volunteers (UNV)	- Research areas: Education and training, employment, the full and effective participation of youth in society and in decision-making. - Methodologies: Comparative, descriptive, situation analysis, survey analysis. - Goals: UNV has been working with partners to create an enabling environment for youth participation through volunteering. Towards that aim, it has launched successful programmes supporting the establishment of youth volunteer schemes, youth centers and volunteer corps. UNV also supports few researches focused on	- UN definition (15-24 years old) at national level, flexible to country definition	- Male and female. - Rural and urban areas.	-	- Hard Copies - Conferences - Field Units and partners - Internet - Projects initiated based on agency report (in some cases) are used are used to assess the impact of research undertaken by the agency. - Project evaluation which evaluates the results of project but no long term assessment of impact is the mechanism	- Plans on topics to be researched related to youth are usually one-year plan integrated in the Work Plan of the Section. - UNV does not follow a plan on projects or programs to be carried out related to youth but its initiates are guided by a programme strategy. - UNV does not have a specific department dealing with youth issues but has 2 focal points assigned to youth issues.	- UNV is a member of the Inter Agency Network on Youth (IANYD). - Inputs from research are used for joint advocacy purposes, to illustrate the importance of volunteering as a way to support youth participation in development. - UNV is collaborating with a few research centers which have research expertise related to volunteerism and participation	- UNV future plans for work on Youth plans in the coming five years include: joint research projects with UN organizations, Joint research projects with non-UN organizations - UNV future plans in the coming five years on doing projects or programs on youth include: important project on youth volunteer infrastructure in the Arab States. (6 countries)

Agency/Organization	Research/Programs/ Projects/Methodologies	Age groups	Coverage	Involvement	Dissemination	Capacity	Coordination	Future plans
	youth and volunteerism but this is not a main activity. - Investigate on the impact that youth volunteerism can have on youth themselves and in development areas. Mainly to support advocacy and programming work. - The full and effective participation of youth in society and in decision-making and Employment are the main areas of research. - Create enabling environment for youth participation and leadership through volunteering is the final goal of projects on Youth Volunteer Infrastructure and Youth Participation in Peace and Development. - Policy Suggestion and Input to other specific program/project suggestion				used for assessing the impact of Youth Volunteer Infrastructure youth project carried out by the organization.	- The youth focal points responsibilities are on top of other major responsibilities carry out by the staff members. - The 2 focal points are in charge of coordinating required inputs and disseminating the information to other units/sections. UNV is thinking of creating a coordination group for youth related issues.	in development. In most of the cases. UNV does not carry out the research itself but subcontract research centers or researches to carry them out. - Coordination between UNV and non-UN organizations is done in Joint teams for research and Dissemination phase.	which is a programme under development, and National Youth Volunteer Infrastructure as per national request for support. - The full and effective participation of youth in society and in decision-making are the main areas for future research. - Education and training, employment, environment, the full and effective participation of youth in society and in decision-making are the main area for future projects and programs. - UNV intends to engage youth in the process of research (on youth) making and dissemination in

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Agency/Organization	Research/Programs/ Projects/Methodologies	Age groups	Coverage	Involvement	Dissemination	Capacity	Coordination	Future plans
								the future through: interviews, conferences, and web based means.
5. UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)	- Research areas: Employment. - Methodologies: Comparative, descriptive, situation analysis, gender and quantitative analysis. - Goals: Implementation of the WPAY is the final goal of programs and projects undertaken by DESA - Policy suggestion and public awareness are the final goals of research undertaken by the agency.	- UN definition - Age bracket is between 15-24 years old. -	- Male and female. - Rural and urban areas.	- Conferences - Web based means	- Hard Copies. - Workshops. - Conferences - Follow up mechanisms are used to assess the impact of the organization research	- DESA follows a plan on projects or programs to be carried out related to youth. - The plan is developed by the UN General Assembly. - DESA has a specific department dealing with youth issues, includes 6 full time staff, with backgrounds in development, economics and social sciences.	- Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD) is the mechanism to coordinate between DESA and other UN organizations. - Coordination between DESA and other UN organizations is done in pre-development phase of the research project, Joint teams for research, and dissemination phase. - ECOSOC accreditation / meetings / by email / web site / facebook / twitter are used to coordinate between DESA and non-UN organizations.	- DESA future plans for work on Youth plans in the coming five years include: Joint research projects with UN organizations. - Employment is the main area for future research. - DESA intends to engage youth in the process of research (on youth) making and dissemination in the future through: conferences and web based means

Agency/Organization	Research/Programs/ Projects/Methodologies	Age groups	Coverage	Involvement	Dissemination	Capacity	Coordination	Future plans
							- Coordination between DESA and non-UN organizations is done in pre-development phase of the research project and dissemination phase.	
6. UN-Habitat	- Research areas: Education & training, poverty & hunger, information & communication technology, inter-generational issues, the full and effective participation of youth in society and in decision-making, employment, environment, juvenile delinquency, girls and young women, the mixed impact of globalization, and urbanization are the main areas of research. - Methodologies: Comparative, descriptive, situation analysis, gender, survey analysis, ethnographic, participatory, and quantitative analysis. - Goals: Enabling youth-led agencies to affect	- Age bracket is between 15-32 years old. -	- Male and female. - Urban areas.	- Interviews - Focus Groups - Web based means - Conferences - Youth advisory Council	- Hard Copies - Workshops - Conferences - Program evaluation and ongoing/ participator Evaluation are the mechanisms used for assessing the impact of youth programs or projects carried out by the organization.	- UN-Habitat follows a five year plan on topics to be researched related to youth. - UN-Habitat follows annual and bi-ennial plans on projects or programs to be carried out related to youth. - The plan is developed by the leading department on the issue or consultation with donors, and with recipeints. - UN-Habitat has a specific department dealing with youth issues, with 15 person	- IIAND, attendance of workshops/plann ing (Child Friendly Cities), through partners (university, etc) is the mechanism used to coordinate between UN-Habitat and other UN organizations on youth related issues. - Coordination between UN-Habitat and other UN organizations is done in Pre-development phase of the research project, Joint teams for research, and	- UN-Habitat future plans include: Joint research projects with UN organizations, joint research projects with non-UN organizations, individual research, and establishment of Urban Youth Research Network. - Expansion to different cities in Latin America, Asia and Africa, and further expansion of training programs so as to facilitate scalability are the future plans

Agency/Organization	Research/Programs/Projects/Methodologies	Age groups	Coverage	Involvement	Dissemination	Capacity	Coordination	Future plans
	positive change in their communities, and bring about urban sustainability, and raising profile of youth led agencies locally, nationally and globally are the final goal of Urban Youth Fund program undertaken UN-Habitat. - Providing space for youth in urban centres to practice youth-led development, and providing training and capacity building for youth and youth groups in the areas of health, recreation, skills/entrepreneurhsip are the final goal of Urban Youth Centres project undertaken by UN-Habitat. - Mainstreaming youth within UN-Habitat programs is the final goal of Mainstreaming prgram undertaken by UN-Habitat. - Insightful Analysis, policy suggestion, and public awareness are the final goals of research undertaken by the agency.					staff including JPOs and consultants, 1 phd student (urban planning and youth), 4 Masters graduates. - inter-agency committees are used to coordinate between different departments - 2.3 million dollars is the budget allocated for undertaking research on youth in UN-Habitat in the last financial year.	Dissemination phase, through sitting jointly on planning committees and jointly-delivering programs. - Direct cooperation agreements, networks (Urban Youth Research Network), co-organizing of conferences (World Urban Forum) are the mechanisms used to coordinate between UN-Habitat and non-UN organizations. - Coordination between UN-Habitat and non-UN organizations is done in Pre-development phase of the research project, Joint teams for research, and Dissemination phase.	for Urban Youth Centres project. - Expansion of program with partnerships with different funders is the future plan for Urban Youth Fund Project. - Expansion to different cities is the future plan for projects of Climate Change, and Sports & Development. - Education and training, employment, poverty & hunger, environment, leisure-time activities (sports), information and communications technology, girls and young women, inter-generational issues, the full and effective participation of youth in society and in decision-making, armed

Agency/Organization	Research/Programs/ Projects/Methodologies	Age groups	Coverage	Involvement	Dissemination	Capacity	Coordination	Future plans
								conflict, urbanization are the main areas for future research. - UN-Habitat intends to engage youth in the process of research (on youth) making and dissemination in the future through: Interviews, Focus Groups, Web based means, Conferences, and Urban Youth Research Network. - UN-Habitat intends to have assessment review as new means of assessing the impact of research on youth.
7. World Bank (WB)	- Research areas: Education & training, poverty & hunger, HIV/AIDS, inter-generational issues, the full and effective	- For country-specific work, WB generally adopts the	- Male and female. - Rural and urban areas.	- Interviews - Focus Groups - Conferences - Needs assessments	- Hard Copies - Workshops - Conferences - Direct mailing to educational	- WB follows a three years plan on topics to be researched related to youth.	- On the global level (between central units), collaboration through the Interagency	- WB future plans in the coming five years include: Pilot projects and evaluations as

Agency/Organization	Research/Programs/ Projects/Methodologies	Age groups	Coverage	Involvement	Dissemination	Capacity	Coordination	Future plans
	participation of youth in society and in decision-making, employment, juvenile delinquency, health, girls and young women, armed conflict. - Methodologies: Comparative, descriptive, gender, situation analysis, survey analysis, ethnogenic (behavior), quantitative analysis of a certain issue, and quantitative and (to a lesser extent) qualitative data collection and analysis; monitoring, project evaluation, and impact evaluation (policy and project experiments). - Goals: Insightful Analysis, Policy Suggestion, Input to other specific program/project, general knowledge creation, policy dialogue, basis of Bank's youth agenda, influence the international youth community are the final goals of research undertaken by the agency.	country's own definition; for non country-specific documents, it is largely driven by the data. Thus, often 15-24, but WB 2006 World Development Report used the age range 12-24		- Data analysis - Web based means (Youthink)	institutions, - World Bank bookstore (and on-line ordering), emails. - e-mail, World Bank information services, World Bank publishing office are the mechanisms for receiving feedback on the work done. - ad-hoc reviews and feedback; selected analysis of how often work has been cited in other publications are the mechanisms for assessing the impact of youth research undertaken by WB. - A great deal of attention within youth-oriented programming – as well as other domains of Bank activity –	- All WB projects are identified in a 3-year "Country Partnership Strategy", which is a contract between the Bank and the country government on the projects and research support that the Bank will provide over the time horizon. The CPS is developed at the country level. - The plan is decision undertaken by senior management for the specific country. - WB has a specific department dealing with youth issues, but the department was closed July 2011. After July 2011, youth issues are managed in the respective	Network on Youth. On the project level, very little in the preparatory phase, and often on a case-by-case (at the country level) basis. More collaboration in dissemination, particularly at partner events. - Coordination between WB and other UN organizations is done in pre-development phase of the research project, and dissemination phase. - WB often contracts research centers or civil society organizations – who are specialists in the issue of study - to carry out parts of WB research and to implement projects and	well as large-scale operations, especially in education and training, labor markets, etc. See lists below. - Education and training, poverty & Hunger, employment, juvenile delinquency, HIV/AIDS, health, girls and young women, inter-generational issues, armed conflict, skills, and entrepreneurship are the main areas for future research, programs and projects. - WB intends to engage youth in the process of research (on youth) making and dissemination in the future through: interviews, focus groups,

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Agency/Organization	Research/Programs/Projects/Methodologies	Age groups	Coverage	Involvement	Dissemination	Capacity	Coordination	Future plans
					is paid to evaluation and learning; many projects are designed with explicit impact evaluation components to assess the impact of youth programs or projects carried out by WB.	departments depending on specific topic (e.g. youth employment in labor market team). - The department included until July 2011, 5 staff, 6 full time consultants. 5 with Ph.D. (economics, child development, education), other 6 team members MA/MS (international economics, statistics, public policy). - Coordination between different departments takes place on a case-by-case basis with regional and operational teams, largely through personal contacts. The youth focal points team (representatives	programs. A lot of informal coordination with NGOs via personal channels. - Coordination between WB and non-UN organizations is done in Pre-development phase of the research project, Joint teams for research, and Dissemination phase, through contracts for data collection, data analysis, report preparation, dissemination events, translation and printing.	conferences.

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Agency/Organization	Research/Programs/ Projects/Methodologies	Age groups	Coverage	Involvement	Dissemination	Capacity	Coordination	Future plans
						from each region and different departments) meets regionally. Before July 2011, the Children and Youth Unit facilitated coordination and provided an information hub to link project managers in region to each other. -		
8. UN-ESCWA	Research areas: Education & training, poverty & hunger, The full and effective participation of youth in society and in decision-making, employment, armed conflict. Methodologies: Comparative, Descriptive, Situation analysis, Cultural, and Survey analysis are the applied research methodologies. Goals: Dealing with the importance of youth bulge in the ESCWA Region. Facilitating and assisting the ESCWA member countries to develop and implement national youth policies and plans of action	UN definition Age bracket is between 15-24 years old.	Male and female. Rural and urban areas.	Conferences Web based means. The 26th ESCWA Ministerial session included a Roundtable on "Youth in the Arab World: Challenges and Opportunities". A dialogue was opened between a group of young people and ministers and delegates from ESCWA Countries. The Roundtable was concluded with the adoption of the 2010 Western Asia Declaration under	Hard Copies. Workshops. Conferences Specific indicators, Projects initiated based on the agency report, and follow up mechanisms are used to assess the impact of the organization research. A number of quantitative indicators of achievement (IoAs) with respective means of verification will be used to monitor and assess the	ESCWA follows a one year plan on topics to be researched related to youth. ESCWA follows a plan on projects or programs to be carried out related to youth The Plan is developed by the leading department on the issue. ESCWA has a special department dealing with youth issues, Population and Social Development Section (PSDS) of the Social	In the mentioned DA-funded youth project, ESCWA acts as the Leading agency in cooperation with UNFPA Country Offices in the involved Member Countries to coordinate between ESCWA and other UN organizations. Coordination between ESCWA and other UN organizations is done in Pre-development phase of the research project, Joint teams for research, and	ESCWA future plans in the coming five years include: Joint research projects with UN and non-UN organizations. ESCWA plans in the coming five years include capacity building. The project aims at strengthening national capacities by identifying regional priority issues and required indicators for monitoring progress in the area of youth development and

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Agency/Organization	Research/Programs/ Projects/Methodologies	Age groups	Coverage	Involvement	Dissemination	Capacity	Coordination	Future plans
	in the context of WPAY is the final goal of programs and projects on Capacity Building undertaken by UN-ESCWA. Policy Suggestion and input to other specific projects.			the banner "Renewing the Commitments to Youth Policy is an Opportunity for Development".	implementation of the Capacity building (DA-funded Project on "Strengthening capacities of policy makers in the ESCWA region to formulate national youth policies and plans of action: Responding to the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY)" and the realization of its expected accomplishments. Moreover, 2% of the project funds ($7,500) are allocated to undertake an external substantive evaluation of the project once it has been fully executed.	Development Division (SDD): 5 staff members as follows: Title: Chief (Education: Post-Master Degree in Population and Demography, Specialization: Population and Demography.) Title: Social Affairs Officer (Education: Ph.D. in Social Sciences - MS in Population Studies, Specialization: Population and Development, Gender). Title: Associate Population Affairs Officer (Education: M.A. in Migration Studies, Specialization: Migration). Title: Research Assistant (Education: M.Sc. in Development Studies, Specialization: Social Development). Title: Team Assistant (General Education).	Dissemination phase through MOU which will be signed soon, in addition to reciprocal invitation to national/regional meetings, coordination preparatory meetings… In the mentioned DA-funded youth project, ESCWA acts as the Leading agency in cooperation with the Pan Arab Project for Family Health (PAPFAM) at the League of Arab States to coordinate between ESCWA and other non-UN organizations. Coordination between ESCWA and other non-UN organizations is done in Pre-development phase of the research project, Joint teams for research, and Dissemination phase through MOU which will be signed soon, in addition to	youth policy formulation. Education and training, Employment, Inter-generational issues, the full and effective participation of youth in society and in decision-making, armed conflict are the main area for future research and projects and programs. ESCWA intends to engage youth in the process of research (on youth) making and dissemination in the future through: conferences.

Agency/Organization	Research/Programs/ Projects/Methodologies	Age groups	Coverage	Involvement	Dissemination	Capacity	Coordination	Future plans
							reciprocal invitation to national/regional meetings, coordination preparatory meetings… PSDS/SDD is the main Section dealing with youth issues and policies. It coordinates with other divisions (for example, Statistics Division) in relation to common areas of interest.	
9. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)	Research areas: Education & training, poverty & hunger, information and communications technology, full and effective participation of youth in society and in decision-making, employment, health, girls and young women, demographic issues, family, cultural change. Methodologies: Comparative, descriptive, situation analysis, cultural, gender, survey analysis, and quantitative analysis. Goals: To become a monitoring tool for youth-policies by official youth government institutions	Iberoamerican official range of youth. Age bracket is between 15-29 years old.	Male and female. Rural and urban areas.	Conferences Web based means (virtual forums_and questionnaires)	Hard Copies. Conferences.	ECLAC has a direct face-to-face relation, normally under coordination of the Director of the Social Development Division, in coordination with experts of other Divisions in ECLAC with expertise in youth employment, youth and demographic change, youth and health.	The mechanism to coordinate between ECLAC and other UN and non-UN organizations is that normally research and data collecting is done by ECLAC, upon demand and financing by other UN or non-UN organization. During project/research/dat a collecting there is a continuous feedback among both agencies until reaching full consensus regarding content, approach, and data.	ECLAC future plans in the coming five years include: Joint research projects with UN and non-UN organizations. ECLAC plans in the coming five years include; Iberoamerican Youth Report, Youth survey design, and Latin American and Caribbean Youth Report. Education & training, poverty & hunger, information and communications

Agency/Organization	Research/Programs/ Projects/Methodologies	Age groups	Coverage	Involvement	Dissemination	Capacity	Coordination	Future plans
	within the countries of the region is the final goal of regional reports of overall and detailed youth situation and dynamics. To be applied with Iberoamerican Youth Organizations in all iberoamerican countries in order to have comparable data of youth situation, values, and perceptions is the final goal of Survey designs. To be used by national youth institutions, academics, NGOs in order to monitor changes in youth situation in the most diverse topics is the final goal of System of Indicators on Youth in Iberoamerican Region. Policy suggestion, insightful analysis, and public awareness.						Sometimes, joint teams for research are part of the project. Coordination between ECLAC and other UN and non-UN organizations is done in pre-development phase of the research project, joint teams for research, and dissemination phase.	technology, The full and effective participation of youth in society and in decision-making, employment, health, girls and young women, youth and demographic dynamics, youth and family, youth and cultural change are the main area for future research. ECLAC intends to engage youth in the process of research (on youth) making and dissemination in the future through: conferences and Web based means (Virtual forums).

PART II. BASIC ELEMENTS OF A FUTURE UN RESEARCH STRATEGY

1.   Introduction

The current generation of youth represents around 17.6% of total world population (UN DESA, 2010[4]), with the majority of youth (84%) living in developing countries (WPAY[5]; UN DESA, 2008[6]; UNESCO, 2010[7]). The role played by youth in different societies around the globe has been increasingly recognized. The changes brought about globalization and technological development have enabled young people to play a more active role in their societies on the political, economic, and social fronts, and have also highlighted that youth research remains relatively inadequate to understand their needs and meet their demands. The most vivid recent example has been the Arab Spring which was initially led by youth in Tunisia and Egypt and has impressed the whole world by the ability of young people to promote regime change and to express their hopes for a better future in a peaceful way. However, the Arab Spring has also highlighted the fact that different international organizations (as well as national and regional ones) failed to adequately anticipate the hopes and demands of youth.

> *The aim of this strategy is to ensure that UN organizations respond in a more effective way through youth related research to current and future youth challenges and unmet needs with the ultimate goal of providing better living standards for the world's youth and thus ensuring their effective participation in building their societies*

One exception in this regard was the emphasis on unemployment put forward by many organizations of the United Nations system as a major youth problem facing both developing and developed countries.

But other challenges, including access to basic services, enjoyment of human rights, political participation, and socio economic integration, among other urgent matters, tend to be inadequately tackled by youth research at both national and international levels.[8] In this regard, and in line with the assessment in Part I, this proposed strategy provides some key elements that could be considered by UN organizations – either in the context of IANYD or ECESA's Social Development Cluster – in the future for undertaking coordinated youth research.

> *The aim of this section is to provide a summary of the main gaps and challenges highlighted in the assessment and mapping survey*

The proposed strategy aims to serve as a catalyst for collaboration among the different stakeholders involved in youth research. It is envisaged as a tool to develop a comprehensive vision for coherent and concrete actions to be undertaken by UN organizations in the field of youth related research with the final goal of developing more appropriate policies for youth and enhancing their

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[4]   UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs DESA (2010), *World Youth Report, 2010: Youth and Climate Change*, New York: UN, available at http://social.un.org/index/WorldYouthReport.aspx

[5]   United Nations (1996), "Resolution adopted by the General Assembly: World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond (WPAY)", Distr. General A/RES/50?81, 13 March 1996, available at http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/50/ares50-81.htm.

[6]   UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs DESA (2008), *World Youth Report, 2007: Young People's Transition to Adulthood: Progress and Challenges*, New York: UN, available at http://social.un.org/index/WorldYouthReport/2007.aspx.

[7]   UNESCO (2010), *UNESCO SHS Strategy on African Youth: Towards an Enabling Policy Environment for Youth Development and Civic Engagement in Africa (2009-2013)*, 184 EX/INF. 11 Paris, 7 April 2010, available at http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001875/187571e.pdf.

[8]   According to UNESCO (2010) there are over 200 million youth worldwide who live on less than US$1 a day, 160 million in a status of undernourishment, 130 million who are illiterate, more than 10 million who live with HIV/AIDS, and 88 million who are unemployed.

full participation in their societies. It is fully compatible with the World Programme of Action for Youth and hence represents a continuation of UN efforts to enhance the work on youth related issues by providing an integrated and holistic approach to youth related research.

2.   Situation Analysis

UN organizations have been undertaking research on youth for a relatively long time. The adoption of WPAY and the creation of IANYD have boosted their interest in this issue. Yet, and as identified in Part I, youth research is not fully mainstreamed into in the work of many UN organizations and there is not always a clear mandate for youth research, making it ad hoc, often project-related and highly vulnerable to unexpected changes.

The UN organizations focus mainly on policy oriented research and analysis, although some of them are also involved in advocacy and awareness raising. In many cases the research acts as an intermediate step for undertaking programs and projects. However, UN organizations do not always take the comparability aspect of their research adequately into consideration. For example, Part I of this report identified a clear problem with youth definition (even taking into account the specific reasons of some organizations for deviating from the UN standard definition of youth), which can create different findings among the UN organizations and hence have different policy implications.   The assessment in Part I also pointed out that certain methodological tools are not widely used despite their importance for investigating youth-related issues. In particular, methodologies which provide evidence based information (for example, ethnogenic and cultural information) on youth issues seem to be less utilized than desk-based studies using existing material.

Regarding the scope and coverage of youth related research carried out by the UN organizations, the discussion in Part I showed that several youth issues are heavily researched. Yet it is not clear if there are adequate coordination mechanisms among the UN organizations to avoid overlapping and ensure that they complement each other, based on the comparative advantage of each UN organization. In contrast, some problem areas are relatively understudied despite their importance to youth; whereas the areas that are heavily researched, such as employment and unemployment, do not always adequately cover the root causes of such problems, as well as the solutions. This might be a result of either the specific mandate of a given UN organization or the paucity of related data and information.

Regarding agency capacity to undertake youth related research, the assessment in Part I pointed out that many UN organizations suffer from constraints in terms of human resources capacity, overlapping mandates with other departments, as well as financial constraints, which is identified as a major concern for the majority of organizations. Moreover, there may also be internal lack of coordination, given that the responsibility for carrying out youth research is often split between different substantive divisions or sections. Planning for future youth research seems ad hoc, often lacks a clear vision, and does not make sufficient effort to address emerging youth issues, as well as the diversification of methodologies.

Based on the findings of Part I, most of the organizations surveyed made some efforts to include youth in the process of research formulation and implementation. But youth involvement in different stages of research should be strengthened further through their increased participation in such research, together with other measures to ensure the effectiveness of their involvement. Although there have been several positive steps undertaken by UN organizations in youth related research, several challenges remain. These challenges will be addressed in the following eight sections – or guiding principles – of this proposed strategy.

3.   Guiding Principles

The strategy should be based on a number of guiding principles (see Figure 1 of Part II) that can be identified as follows:

3.1 Youth Categorization:

Youth should not be dealt with in the research agenda of UN organizations merely as a segment of the general population but as a *specific socio-demographic group* that requires specific attention. This entails a change in the view of how some UN organizations perceive youth. Furthermore, even when such specific categorization of youth is considered, it is important to also understand that young people *themselves are not a homogeneous group* (see UN DESA, 2008), as there are several age groups within the youth category, as well as specific gender, cultural, and geographical aspects that need to be taken into consideration. At the same time, due attention should be paid to the specific age group (15-24 years old) in the official UN definition.

3.2 Knowledge building and management:

Systematic efforts must be made to improve both qualitative and quantitative knowledge and information on youth. The current research undertaken by UN organizations remains heavily constrained by the lack of information and data at the national level, which in turn negatively affects the quality of research. Hence a starting point for meaningful research is to ensure that the *required knowledge and national information are made available to UN agencies and other key stakeholders.*

3.3 Inclusion:

Any youth related strategy should be inclusive, with a focus on *comprehensive youth representation*, paying particular attention to social, gender, economic, geographical status of young people. Moreover, young people facing special circumstances, such as marginalized youth and youth living in post conflict and/or post disaster situations, should be devoted extra attention. As pointed out by a major European Commission report on youth research[9] "the involvement of those who are the subjects of the policies to be developed is essential if unintended consequences are to be effectively addressed".

3.4 Policy dialogue and policy development:

UN organizations have adopted different mechanisms to coordinate with different stakeholders and have also established mechanisms for coordinating among themselves through ECESA's Working Group on Coordinated Youth Research (WG-CYR) and the UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD). Given that WG-CYR has a fixed term mandate that will expire with the submission of this report to ECESA's Social Development Cluster, *there is an urgent need for more effective coordination, not only among UN organizations, but also between the Social Development Cluster and IANYC.* In addition, UN organizations should make greater efforts to coordinate with other stakeholders, including governments, academia, and different youth representatives. As emphasized in the previous section, young people's participation in policy formulation and implementation is important to ensure better policy outcomes. In this regard, the strategy should act as a catalyst for collaboration among different stakeholders and hence serve as a solid base for forging strong alliances amongst different stakeholders. System-wide research coordination should be dynamic enough to incorporate new and emerging youth challenges. New challenges continuously emerge and coordination through effective policy dialogue and policy development should be able to respond to such challenges.

3.5 Empowerment:

A coordinated UN youth research agenda should focus not only on key youth problems and challenges but also *on how to empower youth* as a cross cutting research objective. *Empowerment implies integrating youth concerns into the development agenda at the national, regional and global levels.* This requires

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[9] The European Commission (2009), "European Research on Youth: Supporting young people to participate fully in society" Policy Review EUR 23863 EN, available at http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/pdf/policy-review-youth_en.pdf.

institutionalizing youth participation in processes of policy formulation and implementation at all levels. Policies and strategies to empower young people should provide them with the needed skills and capabilities to deal with their main problems and challenges. For example, it is important for research to identify what type of unemployment is faced by different youth segments in order to identify distinct empowerment and capacity building policies to be targeted on those different segments, such as, for example, young men and young women.

3.6 Monitoring implementation:

An effective research strategy requires a well defined system for monitoring and evaluation. The monitoring and evaluation process should focus on identifying whether youth related research has achieved its expected goals. This has been a major loophole in WPAY: according to UNESCO (2010), "while the WPAY has been instrumental in guiding the development of national youth policies, it did not provide any guidelines to assess the progress made towards achieving the broad goals it identified". *Specific evaluation measures and performance indicators should be set at all stages, from research design to implementation.* Lessons learned from such monitoring and evaluation schemes should also guide future research agendas and coordinated research initiatives.
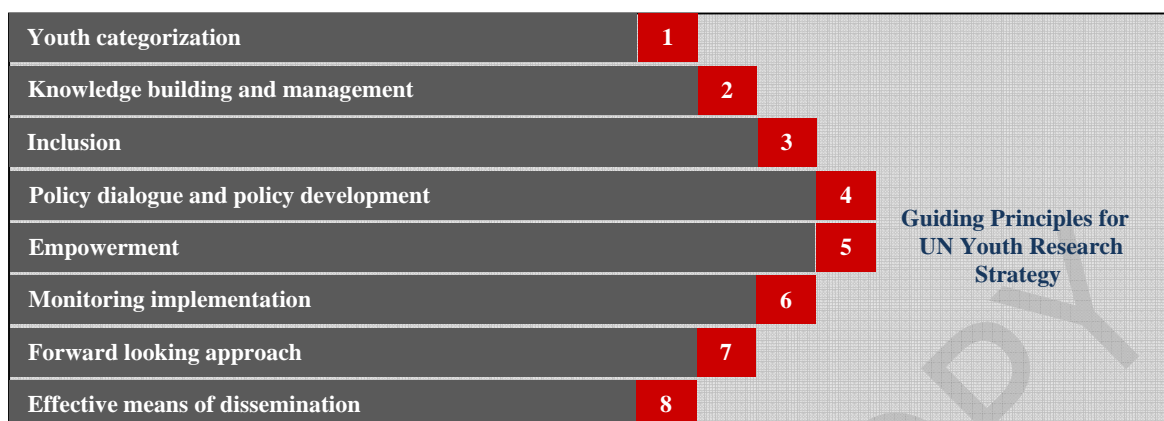
3.7 Forward looking approach:

The coordinated research strategy should not only deal with the challenges at hand, but also anticipate challenges which youth are likely to face in the future. For example, key global issues like climate change should be examined in terms of its impact on youth. (see UN DESA, 2010). In fact, climate change can impact on several WPAY priority areas, such as employment, hunger and poverty, health, environment, participation and armed conflict. *The role of research should not be confined to the analysis of the existing challenges, but also help predict and respond to future trends.* Hence, any strategy should be flexible enough to include the impact of potential challenges on youth. In addition, there is a need to align youth related research with major global or regional initiatives, such as the Millennium Development Goals and the Global Jobs Pact. Research recommendations should also take into consideration broader developmental constraints at national, regional and global levels (see for example DESA, 2008). *Recommendations that tend to be youth exclusive in isolation of the broader developmental context are unlikely to maximize positive impacts.*

3.8 Effective means of dissemination:

An important element of effective research is dissemination. The assessment in Part I noted that most UN organizations disseminate the results of their research free of charge via different methods including workshops and electronic means. However, *extra effort is needed to ensure wider and effective dissemination. This requires a change in the research output format as well the channels of transmission.* It is widely known that policy makers have limited time, and hence policy briefs might be a more suitable mean of targeting policy makers than full reports. In addition, using such additional channels as electronic mail notifications and social networks would contribute to improved dissemination. *The channels of dissemination should be tailored according to the target audience.*

Figure 1. Guiding Principles for UN Youth Research Strategy

Youth categorization	**1**
Knowledge building and management	**2**
Inclusion	**3**
Policy dialogue and policy development	**4**
Empowerment	**5**
Monitoring implementation	**6**
Forward looking approach	**7**
Effective means of dissemination	**8**

Guiding Principles for UN Youth Research Strategy

4. Proposed Strategy: Phases and Steps

4.1 Phase 1: Getting started

(1) Research capacity building:

The survey in Part I identified that UN organizations suffer from significant financial and human resources constraints. This is an important aspect that needs to be tackled if useful research is to be conducted. Sufficient financial resources should be secured and sufficient human resources made available to divisions and sections dealing with youth research. Many UN organizations could also make greater capacity building efforts to strengthen national youth research, which has been highlighted in WPAY. Figure 2 (in Part II) describes the steps required to enhance capacity building in a wider context and how it links with coordination and empowerment (which are other two important pillars of the strategy).
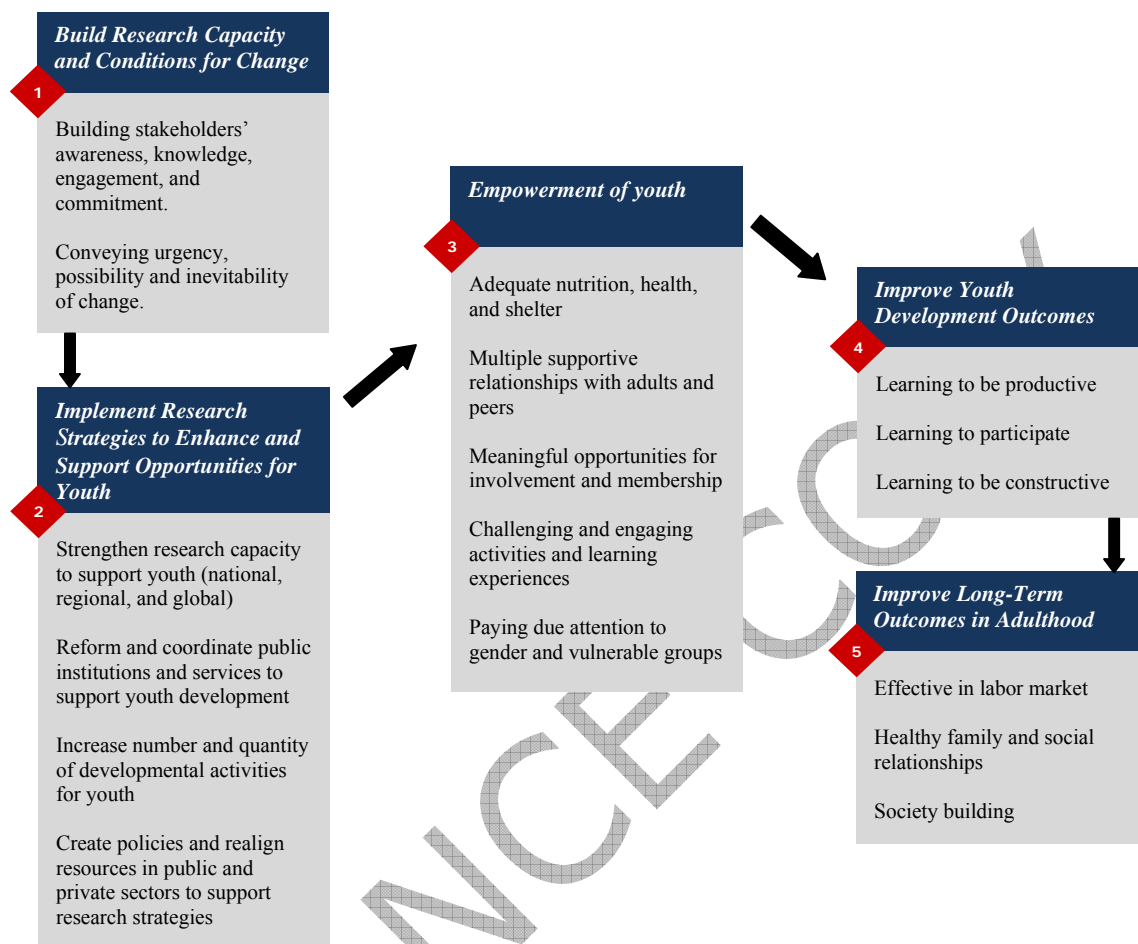
(2) Knowledge information gathering:

An ambitious survey for collecting information and data on youth, following a harmonized methodology, should be developed. The survey should cover the different socio-economic, demographic and geographical aspects of youth by country and/or region. Socio-economic, institutional and psychological dynamics associated with youth should be considered in designing the survey. Examining issues associated with family socio-economic conditions, level and quality of education, training experience, technical expertise, etc. should be included and linked together to provide a comprehensive overview of youth status. Even if there are regional or national differences, such differences should be clearly highlighted in the survey in order to address the harmonization aspect. For example, even if some UN organizations use different definitions of the youth age group, the survey should tackle both the UN definition and other specific definitions and make them both available. This will enable comparability among different research initiatives carried out by different UN organizations.

(3) Choice of methodology:

The assessment in Part I showed that there is a tendency for existing youth research to use conventional methodologies at the expense of more innovative ones that may be best suited to coordinated youth research. It is thus advisable that the choice of research methodology be based on a more objective approach that fits the nature of the research. Moreover, broadening the conceptual research framework is often required to cover emerging youth areas. Examples of such emerging areas have been provided by the European Commission (2009) and include social psychology theories (that introduce such ideas as belonging, trust and accessibility of resources) and political theory (especially areas related to democracy, equity and participation). In addition, youth related issues are generally multi-faceted and hence require multi-faceted approaches that take into consideration macro, micro and meso level explanatory factors.

Figure 2. Research Action Framework for Youth Development

Build Research Capacity and Conditions for Change

1

Building stakeholders' awareness, knowledge, engagement, and commitment.

Conveying urgency, possibility and inevitability of change.

Implement Research Strategies to Enhance and Support Opportunities for Youth

2

Strengthen research capacity to support youth (national, regional, and global)

Reform and coordinate public institutions and services to support youth development

Increase number and quantity of developmental activities for youth

Create policies and realign resources in public and private sectors to support research strategies

Empowerment of youth

3

Adequate nutrition, health, and shelter

Multiple supportive relationships with adults and peers

Meaningful opportunities for involvement and membership

Challenging and engaging activities and learning experiences

Paying due attention to gender and vulnerable groups

Improve Youth Development Outcomes

4

Learning to be productive

Learning to participate

Learning to be constructive

Improve Long-Term Outcomes in Adulthood

5

Effective in labor market

Healthy family and social relationships

Society building

(4)   Setting joint global and regional research agenda and identifying priorities:

A joint UN research agenda should identify common youth themes after interagency consultations through existing UN coordination mechanisms. The UN regional commissions could play an important role at the regional and national levels as they can highlight the main challenges at those levels, consolidate such challenges and coordinate with other global UN agencies in formulating the long term agenda. Regional comparative studies should be undertaken (once data and information are harmonized) to identify joint research priorities. In addition, the research agenda should incorporate a bottom-up approach by involving youth organizations in the broader consultation process (see next section). The list of key research priorities could begin by taking a close look on the above-mentioned 15 priority areas of WPAY and adjust or even change them, as required, according to key global or regional developments.

4.2   Phase 2: Managing the process

(5)   Effective coordination:

Effective coordination requires not only improved interagency collaboration but also the involvement of a wider circle of youth stakeholders, including young people themselves. Ad hoc youth representation should be avoided, in favour of representative groups of youth, taking into account different age, gender, educational status, social background, etc. In addition, National Youth Councils, other youth organizations, associations, think tanks and networks at both national and regional levels should also be consulted.

Among the UN organizations, coordination has been facilitated by the establishment of the IAYND and by ECESA's Social Development Cluster initiatives. But such coordination mechanisms also need to coordinate between themselves.

    (6)   Ensure inclusion and avoid exclusion:

Inclusive approaches should place special emphasis on gender equality, different age groups, and geographical distribution within the national boundaries. Exclusion is highly prevalent among vulnerable groups, including youth groups. The reasons behind such exclusion should be one of the research areas of focus. Tackling exclusion should focus on marginalized youth groups and also address the specific challenges faced by youth in conflict or post-conflict and post-disaster areas. Examining the reasons (social, cultural, economic, natural and political) behind the exclusion of vulnerable and marginalized youth groups should thus be one of the main focus areas of a future coordinated youth research agenda.

    (7)   Exercising and enhancing empowerment:

Empowerment implies encouraging youth to make an active contribution to the development of their societies, and strengthening such fundamental values as human rights and gender equality. There is a need to enhance the skills and capabilities of young people to deal with the key areas and challenges to be examined by the coordinated research initiative. For example, with regard to youth unemployment, research should focus on what types of training are provided for youth to enhance their skills and their capabilities to match labour market requirements. Evaluating training programs – including their design, implementation and ability to respond to both education and labour market needs – is a crucial aspect of a coordinated research agenda to empower youth. Yet undertaking this role requires institutionalizing the engagement of young people in youth related research. In this regard, UN organizations could widen the scope of their research methodology to consider socio-economic, institutional and psychological dynamics associated with youth, and should be ready to provide technical assistance to different concerned stakeholders for implementing research outcomes and recommendations.

4.3   Phase 3: Sustainability

    (8)   Monitoring scheme and performance indicators:

A well designed monitoring scheme and performance indicators' system should be set according to the UN standards. The monitoring scheme and performance indicators should be simple and focus on evaluating the main research aims. Its impact on achieving its intended goals should be evaluated following a clear evaluation scheme that allows comparability among different types of research carried out in this field. *There is a need to ensure that research effectiveness is evaluated not only in quantitative but also qualitative terms*, as in many cases qualitative appraisal allows for understanding several aspects that are not revealed by quantitative data and conventional performance measures.

    (9)   Effective dissemination schemes:

Research work on youth needs to be better recognized, and hence there is a need to consider or intensify new dissemination approaches. Dissemination should involve several new channels depending on the type of targeted recipients. As identified above, policy briefs are needed to address such key stakeholders as policy makers and senior government officials, whereas such new channels as social media and blogs should be enhanced to address youth. Dissemination needs not to be confined to the UN organization that produced the research, but rather should be shared by other relevant UN organizations. Translation into other languages can also increase the dissemination effect. Finally, ECESA's social development cluster may consider creating a specific website for UN youth related research – managed by DESA and possibly linked to the IANYD website – which could also host a database on research activities, carried out by all organizations of the UN system.

The detailed actions explained in the three phases above are listed in Table 1 (Part II), whereas Table 2 (Part II) provides a matrix containing a set of proposed actions to be undertaken by UN organizations to ensure an effective youth research strategy over a proposed time period of 5 years.

TABLE 1. PILLARS AND STEPS OF THE STRATEGY

		8 Monitoring scheme and performance indicators	**9** Effective dissemination schemes
		-There is a need to ensure that effectiveness is evaluated both in quantitative and qualitative terms.	-Dissemination should involve several new channels depending on the type of targeted recipients
5 Effective coordination	**6** Ensure inclusion and avoid exclusion	**7** Exercising and enhancing empowerment	
-Effective coordination requires both improved interagency collaboration and the involvement of other key youth stakeholders.	-Inclusive approaches should place special emphasis on gender equality, different age groups, geographical distribution within the national boundaries, and vulnerable youth groups.	There is a need to enhance the skills and capabilities of young people to deal with the key areas and challenges to be examined by the coordinated research initiative.	
1 Research capacity Building	**2** Knowledge and information Gathering	**3** Choice of methodology	**4** Setting joint agenda and identifying priorities
-Sufficient financial resources should be secured, and adequate human resources made available.	-An ambitious survey for collecting information and data on youth, following a harmonized methodology, should be developed	-Broadening the conceptual framework is required to cover emerging youth issues and areas.	-The role of UN regional commissions in highlighting the main challenges at the regional and national levels, in close collaboration with the UN global agencies, should be strengthened.

Phase 3: Sustainability

Phase 2: Managing the process

Phase 1: Getting started

TABLE 2. MATRIX OF ACTIONS (5-YEAR SPAN)

Actions	Time Span (Years)				
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Research capacity building:					
✓ Sufficient financial resources	•	•	•	•	•
✓ Adequate human resources	•	•	•	•	•
✓ Improved national capacities for undertaking youth research	•	•	•	•	•
Knowledge and information gathering:					
✓ Socio-economic aspects	•	•			
✓ Demographic aspects	•	•			
✓ Geographic aspects and other aspects	•	•			
Choice of methodology:					
✓ Developing an objective approach	•	•	•	•	•
✓ Adopting a broader conceptual framework	•	•	•	•	•
Joint research agenda:					
✓ Long term plan		•	•		
✓ Consultation with stakeholders		•	•		
✓ Better coordination between different categories of UN agencies and different coordination mechanism (ECESA, IANYD, etc.)		•	•		
✓ Bottom up approach		•	•		
✓ Undertaking regional comparative studies		•	•	•	•
Effective coordination:					
✓ Representative youth groups	•	•	•	•	•
✓ National Youth Councils, youth organizations, associations, and think tanks	•	•	•	•	•
✓ Advocacy role by UN organizations	•	•	•	•	•
✓ Effective mechanism for joint work and reporting system	•	•	•	•	•
Ensure inclusion and avoid exclusion:					
✓ Special emphasis on gender equality, different age groups, and geographical distribution within the national boundaries	•	•	•	•	•
✓ Extra attention to vulnerable youth groups in post conflict and post disaster areas	•	•	•	•	•
Exercising and enhancing empowerment:					
✓ Encouraging youth to make an active contribution to the development of their societies	•	•	•	•	•
✓ Ensuring better intercultural understanding and strengthening fundamental values as human rights and gender equality	•	•	•	•	•
✓ Developing youth competence in different areas (physical, social, cognitive, vocational, and moral)	•	•	•	•	•
Effective Monitoring scheme and performance indicators:					
✓ Evaluation of research			•	•	•
✓ Comparability of different types of research			•	•	•
✓ Appropriateness of the methodology used			•	•	•
✓ Qualitative appraisal			•	•	•
Effective dissemination schemes:					
✓ New channels depending on the type of recipients			•	•	•
✓ Policy briefs			•	•	•
✓ Creation of specific website for UN youth related research			•	•	•
✓ Translation to other languages			•	•	•