



DECENT WORK FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The Youth Employment Network



Youth Employment Network (YEN) Newsletter, April 2003

News from the Core Partners

The political process underpinning this global focus on youth employment is now firmly anchored. [UN Resolution 57/165](#), spearheaded by Senegal and having gathered 106 co-sponsors, was adopted unanimously in December. It encourages Member States to prepare National Reviews and Action Plans on youth employment and to involve youth organizations and young people in this process. The

Resolution also invites, the ILO, in collaboration with the UN Secretariat, the World Bank and other relevant specialized agencies, to assist and support, upon request, the efforts of Governments in the elaboration of national reviews and action plans on youth employment.

To assist nations, a Guidance Note was circulated with the [Note Verbale](#) to all Member States last month.

The Core partners---the UN, the World Bank and the ILO---have highlighted youth employment and the Network in country assistance programmes and missions, press conferences, speeches, publications, and by establishing country teams, and convening regional and local workshops.

Youth unemployment : The facts

More than 1 billion people today are between 15 and 25 years of age and nearly 40 per cent of the world's population is below the age of 20. Eighty-five per cent of young people live in developing countries where many learn and work in a context of extreme poverty. The ILO estimates that around 74 million young women and men are unemployed throughout the world, accounting for 41 per cent of the 180 million people globally who are classified as unemployed. However, many more young people are working long hours for low pay, struggling to eke out a living in the informal economy. Throughout the world, young people are two to three times more likely to find themselves unemployed when compared to adults.

In December, the [UN Expert Group Meeting on the Integration of Youth Employment](#) into public investment policies and the framework of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP), took place in Ouagadougou. As a result, 8 African countries agreed to form a network to prioritize youth employment in their national investment policies and PRSPs. The UN Department of [Economic and Social Affairs \(DESA\)](#) also organized and funded one of the [High Level Panel's Working Group meetings](#)-- on Employment Creation--in January in Geneva.

The [World Bank's Social Protection Unit](#) commissioned [two papers](#) to help define its upcoming youth employment research agenda and to identify policy challenges and promising strategies. The first, "*Overview of Youth Employment Issues in Developing/Transition Countries*" by Martin Godfrey, will analyze youth employment trends. The second, "*Policy Options for addressing youth employment issues in developing and transition countries*" by Niall O'Higgins, will tackle data needs and research on the effectiveness of options. Under the World Bank's Children and Youth Initiative, the Small

ILO participated with a presentation on the YEN, highlighting YEN progress in Indonesia.

ILO Director General, Juan Somavia, took the youth employment message to both the Porto Alegre World Social Forum and the Davos meetings in January. Interviewed on CNN at the Davos World Economic Forum, he spoke of the very high youth unemployment and the need for targeted policies. He also made youth employment a key element in his [speech](#) to the Organization of the Islamic Conference on 27 February. The ILO [Global Employment Trends](#) report, released in March points to the fact that in many countries, young people were most affected by unemployment. It notes that in the Middle East and North Africa some 25 percent of young people are out of work and that university graduates often find it impossible to land a job.

Spotlight on Youth: Social Entrepreneurs Leading Change

Sonia Torrico was 17 when she started Ayudemonos, "Let's Help Each Other", to save lives by increasing organ donation. Recognizing the large discrepancy between Latino and Caucasian organ donors, Sonia developed a plan to educate recently immigrated families to the US and uninformed community members about organ donation needs. Sonia and her team created Spanish language pamphlets and distributed them through local Departments of Motor Vehicles (DMVs) in an effort to educate the Latino population. To follow up, her team visits DMV locations and polls visitors to assess their understanding of the issue. "In the year 2000, Caucasians donated more than six times as many living organs as Hispanics," Sonia explained. She aims to change that statistic. She was able to get started with support from the [Youth Venture program](#). (Excerpt from "Social Entrepreneurship: Towards an Entrepreneurial Culture for Social and Economic Development" by Susan Davis, International Board Selection Committee, [Ashoka: Innovators for the Public](#).)

ILO's Inter-American research and documentation centre on vocational training based in Uruguay, Centro Interamericano de Investigacion y Documentacion sobre Formacion Profesional (Cinterfor)—has issued its [second thematic bulletin on Decent Work and Training for Youth](#).

The ILO's institution-wide [Task Team](#) on Youth Employment is coordinated by Taka Ueda. It strives to connect policy formation with local projects in the field. It also interacts with ILO's constituents,—workers and employers—to ensure broad based in-country support. Individual team

members represent YEN in a variety of fora ranging from meetings of the [YCare](#), for instance, to leading workshops, such as trade



Grants Competition selected 8 proposals focussing on youth employment. These projects will be completed by 30 May 2003. They range geographically from Serbia, Montenegro and Moldova, to Chile, Ethiopia and Honduras and thematically from Local Level Youth Initiatives to AIDS and youth at risk. In March, the World Bank co-hosted with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) a [videoconference on Youth Employment](#) in ASEAN countries, which brought together representatives of different national ministries as well as youth councils. The

union training on employment policies. [An inventory of ILO youth related activities currently under way is available.](#) The ILO has also set up a task team on better statistics and indicators on youth employment. This new information will feed into the overall monitoring of implementation of the Millennium Declaration as well as underpin the YEN's policy work.

News from High Level Panel

Allan Larsson, Rapporteur and member of the 12 person [High Level Panel](#) addressed the DS Conference in Rome in January at the invitation of former Prime Minister D'Alema, on Welfare and Social Inclusion with: "[Fighting poverty and social exclusion—in the global village, in Europe and in Italy](#)". In this speech Mr. Larsson talks about, amongst other things, the training challenge and preventing unemployment and social exclusion especially for young workers. Mr. Larsson also shares with us a short text on youth in the new European Employment Strategy, a [discussion paper on the table of European Heads of State](#)

Ralph Willis' contribution to the [High Level Panel's Working Group meeting](#) in Geneva in January on Employment Creation can be seen on "[Integrating Youth Employment Creation into Macro-Economic Policies](#)".

He will also be actively involved as YEN Indonesia evolves.

Rick Little raised youth employment at the World Economic Forum in Davos. He has since stepped down as the head of the [International Youth Foundation](#). The IYF continues actively building long-term strategic partnerships amongst the business, public and civil society sectors through programmes ranging from Entra 21 in Latin America and the Caribbean with the Inter-American Development Bank---Lucent Technologies and Microsoft amongst the first corporate partners as well as USAID; to IT4Youth in the West Bank and the Global Alliance for Workers and

Communities with its new approach to corporate responsibility; and [Make a Connection](#) in South Africa where IYF has partnered with Nokia.

[International Centre for Research on Women](#) President Geeta Rao Gupta was recently in Geneva to confer on the meeting which she has organized of the High Level Panel's Equal Opportunity Working Group, scheduled for May.

News about the High Level Panel's Working Groups

Two of the High Level Panel's Working Groups on the four priority areas—Employability, Equal opportunities, Entrepreneurship and Employment creation—have met to concretely refine their policy recommendations with Road Maps to provide guidelines to countries in preparing their national youth action plans. The Entrepreneurship Group met on 5 December at the World Bank with Youth Business International acting as Secretariat, and Chaired by Ralph Willis. The Employment Creation Group met in Geneva with Secretariat support from the United Nations

Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The final two are taking place in May: The Equal Opportunity Group will meet in Washington chaired by Geeta Gupta, ICRW, and the Employability Group chaired by Rick Little,

will meet in Geneva, the latter with International Youth Foundation providing secretariat support. An integrated policy paper will be produced in May, for consideration by the Panel and subsequent transmission to UN Member States.

News from Lead Countries

As invited by the YEN High Level Panel in their policy recommendations ([UN Resolution A/56/422](#)), five countries have stepped forward to volunteer as [lead countries for the YEN](#): Senegal, Namibia, Egypt, Sri Lanka, Indonesia. In Indonesia, an I-YEN (Indonesia – YEN) has been



formed with a technical secretariat set up by the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration under the guidance of the Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs [\[Full description of intended activities, targets and focus\]](#) Senegal spearheaded Resolution 57/165, which garnered 106 co-sponsors and was passed unanimously in December. Sri Lanka has set up a steering committee under the Finance Ministry and with the involvement of ILO constituents, to craft an employment strategy for ex-combatants, most of whom are youth.

News from around the globe

The 10th ILO Africa Regional Meeting, taking place this December will bring together governments and social partners from across the region under the theme, “*Strengthening Social Dialogue for the Employment Agenda in Africa*”. Youth employment will be a focus, with particular emphasis on investing in youth in post-crisis situations.

[ILO Asia and Pacific region](#) has been active on youth employment. National workshops were held in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. The Report from [ILO/Japan Tripartite Regional Meeting on Youth Employment in Asia and the Pacific](#) held last spring has been published. An action manual and policy paper are in the works.

The new Brazilian government is developing a national programme to mobilize new Decent Work opportunities for Brazilian youth with active ILO involvement led by the Brasilia office. The programme anticipates a launch in May.

The Arab region has also highlighted youth employment. The Regional Workshop on Youth Employment, originally scheduled for May, has been postponed to the summer due to the current political situation in the Middle East.

The following countries have approached the ILO for assistance on youth employment. Follow up missions have been undertaken or are planned in these and a number of other countries, often resulting in

concrete measures to both develop projects and to include youth employment in the country’s policy framework:

Ghana • Nigeria • South Africa • Bahrain • Saudi Arabia • Iran • Estonia • Lithuania • Azerbaijan • Philippines • Vietnam • Argentina

News from Partners

Richard Street, Director of the [Youth Business International](#)(YBI) launched the Youth Business Foundation in Manila at the end of March, based on the principles of YBI. He also addressed the Rotary International Conference in Panama on behalf of the Youth Employment Network and YBI.

The [Youth Employment Summit \(YES\)](#) was held in Alexandria, Egypt from September 7-11, 2002, with over 1600 delegates from 120 countries including 70 Ministerial delegations, forty led by Ministers. In India in December, YES will hold its first regional event of the YES Decade Campaign of Action launched at Alexandria, and is continuing its national campaigns through YES country networks.

The [World Organization of the Scout Movement \(WOSM\)](#) is supporting the work of the Youth Employment Network. The 28 million scouts in 216 countries and territories are involved in increasing the employability of young people through non-formal education, and are running youth employment programmes in developing countries.

The [Social Science Research Council](#) continues to work on youth activism, violence and citizenship, supporting junior researchers in Africa. Linkages are being explored with the YEN.

YEN Secretariat

The ILO delegation at the Youth Employment Summit in Alexandria was led by Executive Director Göran Hultin. Taka Ueda, Coordinator of the ILO Task Team, also participated.

Mr. Diop, Executive Director, Social Protection Sector and Mr. Paraiso, Director of the ILO Office in Dakar met with Prime Minister Idrissa Seck of Senegal about youth employment, in December, together with Steve Miller, YEN Secretary. Steve Miller, attended the meeting of 8 African countries in Ouagadougou in December (see page 1). Steve Miller also addressed the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars in February on “A United Nations Priority: Youth Employment and its Implications for the Youth Explosion in Developing World Cities”.

Visitors to the Secretariat

Rick Little, *IYF*
Geeta Gao Gupta, *ICRW*
Alan Williams, *IYF*
P.C. Misra, *Indian Institute of Youth Development*
S. Amarasinghe, *Sri Lankan Youth Council*
O. Omotade, *Permanent Secretary of the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Employment, Labour and Productivity*

Media Sampler

Junior Chamber International to Organise more Youth Programmes in Remote Areas
15 March 2003, Bernama Daily Malaysian News

Growing Unemployment in Saudi Arabia threatens Foreigners
13 March 2003, The Guardian, Marie-Beatrice Baudet

Estudian dar incentivos fiscals a firmas que contraten juvenes
3 March 2003, La Nacion, por Silvia Stang

Towards Empowering the Youth
11 February 2003, All Africa

Young, jobless, hopeless: A time bomb in the U.S.

7 February 2003, International Herald Tribune, Bob Herbert

Quotes

‘Youth Employment is a question of national security’

Prime Minister Idrissa Seck of Senegal, commenting to Steven Miller, December 2002

Nepalese and Sri Lankan Officials at Ministerial level commenting to Duncan Campbell during ILO Mission

‘In his very first policy pronouncement by Mir Zafarullah Jamali, Prime Minister of Pakistan, stressed that his government gives the highest priority to reducing the rising levels of unemployment in recent years especially amongst the youth and in the less developed regions’

The News, 9 January 2003, Job Problem in Pakistan, Dr. Rashid Amjad

‘Some 14 million Arab adults lack the jobs they need to put food on the table, a roof over the heads of their families and to put hope not only in their hearts, but in the hearts of their children. 50 million more Arab young people will enter the already crowded job market over the next 8 years. But economies are not creating enough jobs’

US Secretary of State Powell unveiling the US-Middle East Partnership, 12 December 2002

Spotlight: Projects

GENPROM PROJECT: MORE AND BETTER JOBS FOR YOUNG WOMEN IN VIETNAM

Vietnam is a country that places youth at the core of its national development agenda. This project aims to: (i) implement practical interventions for improving employment opportunities for young women in selected provinces; and (ii) strengthen the institutional capacity of the employment services centers of the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), the Women's Union, youth and labour unions, Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other partner organizations to more effectively address the issues of young people entering the labour market.

The project started off with a survey, which was conducted to determine how well the education/training system prepares young people for the labour market, their perceptions and aspirations for entering the labour market, how they actually conduct the job search, the influence of the family in choice of occupations, whether they prefer wage or self employment, the barriers to and supports for entry into the labour market, attitudes of employers towards hiring young workers, how young people view work, marriage and family responsibilities, and the gender differentials – especially why it is harder for young women than for young men to make the transition from school to work. The survey was implemented between April and July 2002 and covered 1,200 female and male interviewees from five target groups: in-school youth, job seekers, young employees, young self-employed and own-account workers, and employers and managers of young people. The questionnaires have been printed in the GENPROM Series on Gender in the Life Cycle, so as to be widely available for adaptation by other countries. The school-to-work transition survey is being currently being replicated in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Bahrain.

Currently, training materials on gender issues, women workers' rights, and business start-up are being adapted and translated. The materials will be used to provide awareness raising and skills training for young women in export processing zones and rural areas. The next phase of the project will look at involving the private sector in providing youth with access to skills development, e-learning and information communications technology.

In a workshop to review the findings of the survey, the social partners highlighted the importance of the project because roughly 65 per cent of the country's population is aged between 15-34 years and also pinpointed quality education and training for youth as a key priority for the country to reach its goals of modernization and industrialization. The survey yielded useful information for planning policy and programme interventions. For example, many young people indicated that a job offering career and personal development was more valuable than a job simply offering a good salary and that marriage should come after having a stable job. The gender differentials were also evident in that many more young women than young men were leaving school because of lack of financial resources or to start earning incomes to support their families.

Contact: Theresa Smout, smout@ilo.org

Related Issues

Young Workers and HIV/AIDS.

The need for a strategic response

There is a growing recognition that preventing HIV/AIDS among young workers is critical to achieving decent work.

The work experiences gained by 15-24-year-olds are one of the most important determinants of behaviour and attitudes that persist throughout life. Targeted interventions are urgently needed to minimize the sources of vulnerability faced

by young workers and to strengthen their role in the workplace as the key to preventing the spread of the epidemic.

ILO is currently developing strategies to adapt the [ILO Code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work](#) to the circumstances and requirements of young workers. ICFTU, in collaboration with ACTRAV, ILO/AIDS and other partners are developing a 'tool box' on HIV/AIDS for young workers. Based on the ILO Code of Practice, the issues covered by the tool box will include workers rights, gender equality, occupational safety and health and non-discrimination. The final product will be in a

'youth-friendly' format, and will be useful for both information and campaign purposes containing knowledge building, awareness raising and advocacy.

Contact: Sonia Smith, smiths@ilo.org

Sport for Development and Peace

The UN Secretary-General's Representative on Sport for Development, Mr. Ogi—former Swiss President—addressed an institution-wide meeting at the ILO on the first [International Conference on Sport and Development](#), which was held in Magglingen, Switzerland. The promotion of employment creation in the sports sector was highlighted through developing organizational capacities of sports associations, modernizing training and relations with universities and strengthening the role of local governments to use partnerships and local resources

Contact: Giovanni di Cola, dicola@ilo.org

Donors

With appreciation to Sweden who are underwriting the YEN Secretariat for 2003, Hungary, who allowed start-up with the first \$10,000 for activities in 2002, and the Netherlands who are supporting the youth employment program in Indonesia.

We welcome both feedback and contributions. We would like to hear from you at monticone@ilo.org and encourage you to share this Newsletter with colleagues and friends.

Photo credits: ILO/Japan Regional Meeting on Youth Employment in Asia and the Pacific

2003 CALENDAR

- 8-9 April** Conference on Youth, Poverty and Conflict in South East Asian Cities organized by Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, the Urban Management Center and the Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok
- 11-13 April** Global Youth Service Day
- 23 April** Workshop on Sport for Development: Local Development, Job Creation and Social Dialogue, ILO, Geneva
- 2 June** World Bank meeting on Labour Markets and youth, Washington
- 30 Jun/1 July** YEN High level-Panel meeting, ILO, Geneva
- July/August** Middle East Regional Meeting on Youth Employment, ILO, Beirut
- 12 August** International Youth Day, *focused on Youth Employment*
- 1 September** Launch of ILO key Indicators of the Labour Market, including new estimates of youth unemployment
- 24-26 Sept** CIS Youth Forum, Kiev
- 14-18 Dec** YES Regional Forum, Hyderabad, hosted by the Government of Andhra Pradesh
- December** African Regional Meeting, ILO, **venue to be confirmed**