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editorial

Dear Reader of the YEN Newsletter,

Happy new year from the YEN secretariat! Looking back on 2009, it has been a very good year for the Network. Our revised strategy to focus on a few tangible products targeting policy makers and practitioners working on youth employment has started to pay off. During the past year YEN was able to mobilize 10 Million USD for the Network.

We are very grateful to the Swedish International Development Agency for recently extending its support to YEN. Their long term commitment has been crucial to guarantee continuity of our work. We are also very excited about the opportunity to be part of the new Youth Entrepreneurship Facility for East Africa supported by the Danish led Africa Commission. This joint program with ILO will be launched in the first quarter of the New Year. Finally, we are very proud of having secured the support of the International Olympic Committee for our work in four post conflict countries in West Africa. Using sport as a vehicle for improving the employability of youth is an area we are hoping to expand in 2010.

The recent YEN Lead Country Network Meeting hold in Lusaka, Zambia, showed that government officials from Ministries of Labor or Youth are very interested in YEN's new benchmarking tools on youth employment policies and programs. A key part of the event was to train government counterparts how to report on youth labor market indicators which will be the basis of a peer review mechanism comparing performance and setting targets to aim for. We expect to come out with the first benchmarking report this year.

Best wishes,

Markus Pilgrim
YEN Manager

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YEN is a global platform of action dedicated to developing and implementing strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work. YEN's work is made possible thanks to support from the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida).

We welcome both feedback and contributions to this newsletter:
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Denmark awards \$23 million to ILO and YEN to create jobs in East Africa

The Government of Denmark announced last month the award of US\$ 23 million over 5 years to the ILO and YEN to fund initiatives aimed at generating decent jobs for young women and men in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda through entrepreneurship.

The programme, entitled the "Youth Entrepreneurship Facility" is one of five key topics identified by the Africa Commission - a Danish led initiative whose goal is to improve development cooperation with African countries and find new and innovative strategies for creating jobs for youth. The Young Entrepreneurs Facility will be implemented through six main components:

1. Promotion of a culture of entrepreneurship
2. Entrepreneurship education in schools

3. Business development services to young entrepreneurs
4. Youth access to finance
5. A Youth-to-Youth Fund to support youth-lead entrepreneurship projects
6. Evidence based advocacy through impact evaluations

The ILO will be responsible for coordinating components one through four while YEN will coordinate components five and six.

It is expected that the Facility will create 23,000 new jobs and more than 11,000 new businesses. In its first phase, the programme will be implemented in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.

The Danish Minister for Development Cooperation, Ulla Tørnæs, applauded the initiative, stating "Active involve-

ment of youth in the commercial development in Africa will create a better foundation for economic development in Africa as well as contribute to the fight against poverty through increased employment of young people, who might else be subject to unemployment or under employment."



The Africa Commission was launched by the Prime Minister of Denmark in 2008. It consisted of Heads of State and governments, politicians, experts, representatives from international and regional organisations as well as the business community, civil society and the academic world. More information to be found on www.africacommision.um.dk or by contacting Markus Pilgrim at pilgrim@ilo.org

Annual Steering Committee - Passing the torch

The Annual YEN Steering Committee Meeting took place on January 27th in Geneva. This committee consists of three senior managers of UN, ILO, and World Bank plus the Manager of the YEN Secretariat. It guides and supervises the work of the Secretariat.

The Steering Committee congratulated YEN for its work in 2009 and endorsed the plan of YEN to focus in 2010 on its 4 major areas of work: benchmarking youth em-



Arup Banerji

ployment policies and programs, promoting impact assessments of active labor market programs for youth, facilitating youth participation through a Youth-to-Youth fund, and brokering partnerships.

The seat of the World Bank in the Committee was handed over from Robert Holzmann, new Research Director of the World Bank Marseille Center for Mediterranean Integration, to Arup Banerji, the new director of the Bank's sector

department for Social Protection and Labor. In his career at the World Bank, Arup has worked on both research and operations in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Africa and the Middle East – on a variety of issues relating to governance, employment, institutions, public sector reform, social sector reforms, poverty reduction and economic growth strategies.

YEN would like to thank Robert Holzmann again for his great support and welcomes Arup Banerji on board.

Contact: Markus [Pilgrim@ilo.org](mailto:pilgrim@ilo.org)

Benchmarking Tools and Best Practices in Youth Employment: Fourth Lead Country Meeting

YEN recently organized the fourth in a series of Lead Country Meetings bringing together policymakers and practitioners to discuss and share experiences in the promotion of youth employment. The meeting was jointly sponsored by the U.K. Government, the ILO Office in Lusaka, and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Forty youth employment practitioners and policymakers came together to participate in the Fourth Lead Country Meeting, entitled "Benchmarking Tools and Best Practices in Youth Employment". Organized jointly by YEN, ILO Lusaka, and the Commonwealth Secretariat, under the auspices of the Government of Zambia, the meeting served as a platform for training and knowledge sharing on measures to promote and improve employment opportunities for youth.

YEN introduced the new configuration of the Lead Country Network and trained its focal points – government officials – in the use of the recently developed benchmarking tools, which respond to the commitment of the countries in establishing a peer review mechanism to identify successful youth employment policies and programs as well as sharing information on youth employment.

The benchmarking tools are:

1. [An integrated excel template that allows users to input data and computer youth labor market indicators, and](#)
2. [A questionnaire to gather information on youth employment policies and programs](#)



Participants gather in Lusaka

ABOUT THE LEAD COUNTRY NETWORK

The Lead Country Network is a vehicle for the promotion of employment opportunities for young people around the world. It is comprised of a diverse group of countries that have committed to tackling the youth employment challenge at the highest level.

It was instituted in 2001 as the flagship product of the YEN, the joint policy response of the UN, the World Bank, and the ILO towards a better integration of young people into the labor market.

Benefits for lead countries are outlined in a portfolio of services that seek to support countries in the design and implementation of measures to counteract youth employment barriers. The services include: technical assistance from YEN and its core partner agencies, capacity building on how to engage youth in employment initiatives, support in devising fund-raising strategies, and access to information and worldwide best practices through meetings of member countries.

Commitments of lead countries are chiefly expressed through active participation in a benchmarking exercise to spot successful youth employment policies and programs. In addition, lead countries are expected to regularly report to the YEN Secretariat, share information with peer members, and maintain an open channel of communication.

YEN Lead Countries are:

Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia, Jamaica, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tanzania, Togo, Turkey, and Zambia.

The training sessions concluded with a strong commitment from lead countries in using the benchmarking tools and reporting the results to the YEN Secretariat by February 26th, 2010. Overall results of this exercise will be shared among lead countries and interested parties during the next Lead Country Meeting, planned for Autumn 2010.

The meeting also provided information on evaluation evidence of youth employment interventions and lessons learnt in design and implementation. Participants shared their own experiences and there were interactive discussions around the design of entrepreneurship schemes based on the current work of the Commonwealth Youth Program in a number of developing countries. Key messages

from the sessions and discussions highlight (i) equipping youth with integrated services (in-classroom and on-the-job training, life skills, mentoring, etc) and (ii) maintaining a demand-driven approach in their design and delivery.

For more info contact Susana Puerto-Gonzalez at puerto-gonzalez@ilo.org

SPOTLIGHT:

International Olympic Committee joins YEN's Youth-to-Youth Fund

YEN interviews Mr. Thomas Sithole, Director of International Cooperation at the International Olympic Committee about the IOC's partnership with YEN to create jobs opportunities for youth in the Mano River Union (Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire) through sport.

Why has IOC chosen to partner with YEN to create employment opportunities for young men and women in post-conflict states in West Africa?

Sport is a powerful tool to heal young people affected by war. Sport can work to rebuild communities, bridge broken relationships and foster trust and fellowship. It can also teach youth important life skills that will lead to successful careers and create employment opportunities for others. YEN's

intervention to support job creation for youth in war-torn West Africa makes a sustainable investment to young people's futures. Youth are often the primary beneficiary of IOC programmes and we would like to do our best to ensure that youth have access to decent employment opportunities which will lead to better lives.



Thomas Sithole - IOC

What role can sport play in developing the employment potential of youth?

Being involved in sport can equip young people with specific and soft skills that can raise their level of employability. Specific skills include those that are directly associated with coaching and sport management or in the athletic equipment or apparel industry. Soft skills include the skills and values that are learned through sport, such

as: cooperation, leadership, respect for others, knowing how to win and lose, knowing how to manage competition.

How will the Youth-to-Youth Fund contribute to youth learning employability skills through sport?

The Youth-to-Youth Fund will launch a grant window on youth employment and sport. The window will accept proposals from youth lead civil society organizations in three distinct areas: training for jobs and sports, re-integration of former athletes onto labour markets and skills development through sport. The primary objective of the Fund will be to support youth-lead employment projects, ensuring

young people's participation in their country's development process. Youth-lead organizations in Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire will be able to apply to the receive financing from the Fund.



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Why does the IOC place special importance on supporting young girls development?

Young girls face many barriers in realizing their potential to lead productive lives including gender discrimination, lack of training/education opportunities and traditional stereotypes. The IOC Gender equality programme promotes women's participation in sports with particular attention on developing women's leadership potential. Support is primarily delivered through IOC Olympic Solidarity programme and through National Olympic Committees.

When will sport organizations be able to apply to receive support from the Fund?

The Youth-to-Youth Fund will begin accepting applications in March 2010. More information can be found on by contacting Drew Gardiner at gardiner@ilo.org

ITC/ILO Impact Evaluation course for youth employment staff

The ILO's International Training Centre in Turin, Italy, organized, jointly with the Evaluation department of the ILO, the International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), the Understanding Child Work Research Project (UCW), the YEN and the World Bank Development Research Group, a new course on: "Con-

ducting Impact Evaluations of Development Programs: An application to ALMPs, CCTs and Training for Youth" from 16-20 November 2009. The 25 participants in the course included policy makers and project staff working on active labour market programs, youth employment and child labor.

Participants spent the first three days learning about rigorous evaluation techniques. The final two days were spent applying learning to the design of live evaluation projects. The major outcome of the course was the elaboration of three evaluation designs. Below is a brief summary of the designs:

Name of Project	Primary research question	Outcome indicators	Identification strategy	Sample and Data
South Africa's Department of Labour: Basic Entrepreneurial Skills Development (BESD) programme	Does one-on-one BDS training of business employees improve productivity and employment?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Employment status of the learner 2. Income and profits of the self employment activity 3. Formality status of the business 4. Number of jobs created 5. Soft skills /psycho-social well being of the learner 	Randomized selection with pipeline comparison	Selection of 16 early and 16 late training locations with up to 70 trainees in each site
ILO Mongolia: International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour project	Can skills training lead youth from hazardous work in mining to decent work in other sectors?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Employment rate in hazardous work (15-17) 2. Child Employment rate in non-hazardous work (15-17) 	Propensity score matching (correcting for selection bias by predicting control and treatment participation)	Data collected from Labour Force and Child Labour surveys
Sierra Leone's Ministry of Youth: Youth Enterprise Development Programme (sponsored by the UN's Peacebuilding Fund)	To what extent did entrepreneurship training combined with micro- finance contribute to higher level of income youth?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Loan repayment rate 2. Youth earnings increased 3. New jobs created 	Propensity score matching (correcting for selection bias by predicting control and treatment participation)	350 control/350 treatment using data provided by BDS intermediaries

For more information on evaluations in youth employment, consult <http://yenclinic.grouppsite.com>

The ILO/ITC will offer the second edition of the course in December 2010. For more information, contact Alex Kolev at kolev@itcilo.org

Youth creating decent jobs in Côte d'Ivoire

Gnihonde is a one of fifteen grantees of YEN's Youth-to-Youth Fund sponsored by UNIDO and the Japanese government. Gnihonde's project aims to increase the revenue and improve the working conditions of young women in the fish smoking sector by introducing a more modern fish smoking system. The project is expected to reach 30 young women in the towns of Grand Bassam, Douékoué and Bangolo. In addition, five young men will be trained in the construction of the modernized fish smokers being introduced by Gnihonde.

On 11 December 2009, Gnihonde organized the first of three hand-over ceremonies in the town of Grand Bassam. During the ceremony the Ambassador of Japan to Côte d'Ivoire, Mr. Yoshifoumi Okamura, officially handed over ten ovens to the first class of ten young women. The new ovens reduce, by over 50%, the amount of wood fuel required to

smoke fish while increasing the quality of the smoked fish, and reducing the negative health impacts related to smoking fish. The ten beneficiaries received training on how to use the ovens and complimentary accounting classes to help them grow their businesses. Through the new ovens, the young women will be able to almost double their previous earnings and work under decent conditions.

During the ceremony, the Ambassador expressed the commitment of the Japanese government in promoting new and innovative ideas among youth while urging Ivorian youth to follow the example of Japan who, even after the tragic events of the World War II, didn't become discouraged, but worked hard to rebuild their country. Municipal authorities

from the project locations committed to supporting and closely



The Japanese Ambassador cuts the tape

monitoring the activities. They promised to ensure the sustainability by promoting young women as leaders and supporting their economic empowerment.

To find out more about this and other youth-led projects YEN is funding please contact Tendai at pasipandya@ilo.org

Joint training: YEN and YEP to cooperate to deliver advisory services to focal countries

Mr. Michael Zillich from Denkmodell GmbH, Berlin, dropped by the ILO headquarters to deliver a joint training for youth employment staff on group facilitation techniques. Michael, the former CEO of a Swiss based IT start-up and a senior trainer in facilitation, shed light on novel techniques in moderating group work including mind-mapping, metaplan, station talks and evaluations.

Staff of YEN were joined by their colleagues at the ILO's Youth Employment Programme (YEP), an intra-departmental umbrella programme that coordinates ILO action on youth

employment. YEP's recently appointed programme coordinator, Mr. Gianni Rosas, also serves as YEN's focal point at the ILO.

The two programmes were able to apply the techniques learned in the workshop through a collaborative planning exercise, defining joint activities for 2010. It was agreed that YEN and YEP would deliver jointly the following activities:

1. A training course on evidence based youth employment strategies
2. A coaching exercise for the im-

plementation of National Action Plans for Youth Employment in two pilot countries

3. A "Smart Note" series on what works in youth employment

The workshop signaled the beginning of a stronger collaboration between the two programmes in supporting the development and delivery of evidence based youth employment policy in ILO focal point countries.

For more information contact Markus Pilgrim at pilgrim@ilo.org