



The Youth Employment Network



The Secretary-General's Youth Employment Network (YEN) Newsletter, November 2006

News Flash

Launch of new YEN Office for West Africa (YEN-WA)

With support from the Governments of Sweden and the UK, a **YEN office for West Africa (YEN-WA)** has been established in the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) in Dakar, Senegal. YEN-WA has a wide mandate that includes facilitating national strategies on youth employment; identifying existing programmes and activities related to youth employment to determine synergies, building linkages and sharing experiences; coordinating resource mobilization approaches region-wide; and increasing private sector involvement in initiatives to create youth employment opportunities.

As a first task, the new office is undertaking a study (together with UNIDO) on "Best Practices, Policy Environment, Tools and Methodologies for Youth Employment in West Africa"

We would like to welcome Mr Jude Aidoo, a Ghanaian National, to the YEN team as he takes up his post of Senior Specialist on Youth Employment for YEN-WA.

To find out more about YEN-WA or to contribute information on projects or programmes related to youth in West

Africa please contact Jude at aidoo@un.org

Updated version of the report on Youth Unemployment and Regional Insecurity in West Africa now available

The UNOWA has produced a new version of its publication "Youth Unemployment and Regional Insecurity in West Africa". The report is a hands-on and practical guide for action on youth employment and includes 26 concrete recommendations for Governments, NGOs, UN agencies and social partners in the region.

To access the report, please see: www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/yen/download/unowa.pdf

Core Partner Activities



Preparation of World Youth Report 2007 Underway

The World Youth Report 2007 (WYR07) will examine the challenges and opportunities existing for the roughly 1.2 billion youth between the ages of 15 and 24 in the world. Distinct from the 2003 and 2005 editions, it will provide a regional overview summarizing the major youth development issues in the fifteen priority areas of the World Programme

of Action for Youth, including employment, education, health, poverty and violence. Simultaneously, it will highlight youth as a positive force for development and provide recommendations for supporting their essential contributions to national and global development. The WYR07 is expected to be launched next year.

For updates on the launch, please see: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/wyr07.htm>

African Development Forum V

The African Development Forum is a multi-stakeholder platform for debating, discussing and initiating concrete strategies for Africa's development. The 5th Forum was organized under the theme "Youth and Leadership in the 21st Century" by the Economic Commission for Africa jointly with its strategic regional partner, the Africa Union and in collaboration with other stakeholders in African development, and took place from November 16-18, 2006, in Addis Ababa. The objective of ADF-V was to give meaningful expression to the recognition of youth as a development asset and to deepen strategies at the regional and national levels for translating the potential of youth as a development asset into practical benefits for Africa's democratic, gender-equal, peaceful and rights-based development, in line with the objectives of the African Union Youth Charter, NEPAD and internationally agreed development goals including the MDGs.

The Forum adopted a consensus statement vowing, among other issues, to enhance youth capacity and empowerment. The document acknowledges that young people face a range of challenges that constrain them from fulfilling their potential as both current and future leaders. It covers a range of issues affecting the lives of young people and recommends actions

to improve gender equality, access to education, employment prospects, health issues, civil society involvement, input into decision-making, religious tolerance and conflict resolution. Key to attaining these improvements is the operationalization of the African Youth Charter, which was also launched at the conference. Youth employment was a key strand of the discussions and with the kind support of the ILO Regional Office for Africa a number of youth from YEN Lead Countries participated in the Forum <http://www.uneca.org/ADF/>

Young Leaders Tackle Development and Peace at UN Summit, New York, October 29 – 31, 2006

Young leaders from around the world tackled global development challenges in New York City at the first-ever United Nations Global Youth Leadership Summit.

Organized by the UN Office for Sport for Development and Peace, the Summit was the culmination of several regional summits that highlighted the power of sport to rally people from all walks of life to improve education, health and development as well as to build peace. The three-day Summit was aimed at strengthening the movement to engage young people in decision-making in their communities, their regions and the emerging global society. The event featured an intergenerational dialogue with President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal and other Government leaders, as well as a UN system panel on tackling poverty.

The Summit concluded on 1 November with a declaration in which delegates committed themselves to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and called on Governments to fulfil the goals by 2015. Reviewing the progress made during the Summit, Adolf Ogi, Special Adviser to the Secretary-

General on Sport for Development and Peace, described sport as an essential low-cost, high-impact instrument for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

<http://www.unyouthsummit.org>.

Expert Group Meeting on Youth in Africa

UNDESA and the United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSSA) convened an Expert Group Meeting on “Youth in Africa: Participation of Youth as Partners in Peace and Development in Post-Conflict Countries” held in Windhoek, Namibia from 14 to 16 November 2006. The meeting was organized in cooperation with the Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA).

The Expert Group Meeting aimed to critically analyse the complexity and gravity of the challenges youth face in post-conflict situations in Africa, with the core objective of devising specific strategies and mechanisms to include youth as central stakeholders in rehabilitation, reconciliation, and rebuilding of war-torn communities, while contributing to sustainable development in their countries.

The meeting was conducted in Plenary, as well as working groups in the form of multi-stakeholder dialogue, focusing on three main themes: (i) integration of youth, in particular the reintegration of ex-combatants into societies; (ii) creation of job/work opportunities and income generating activities for youth; and (iii) community-based rehabilitation and rebuilding with a focus on securing access to basic services.

The main outcome of the meeting was a set of policy recommendations, based

on the analysis contained in expert contributions and the outcomes of the working groups, to promote the productive inclusion of youth in society and their participation as partners in post-conflict peace building and conflict-prevention efforts.

http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/egm_namibia.htm



Publication on Global Employment Trends for Youth released by the ILO

The ILO has released a publication titled ‘Global Employment Trends for Youth 2006.’ The report is an updated and more comprehensive version of the 2004 report, providing ‘a valuable analysis of the current labour market trends of young people.’ In addition to presenting a global overview, the report provides regional youth employment trends. New research on the concept of working poverty among youth and a framework for quantifying youth who suffer most from the deficit of decent work opportunities is also offered in the report. Some key statistics demonstrate the rising number of unemployed youth globally, increasing from 74 million to 85 million, between 1995 and 2005 (14.8 per cent). Moreover, more than 300 million youth, or approximately 25 per cent of the youth population, were living below the US \$2 per day poverty line.

The publication was released during the United Nations Global Youth Leadership Summit in New York (October 29 – 31, 2006)

For more information, please see:
www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/global.htm.



Launch of World Development Report

The launch of the World Development Report (WDR) 2007 took place at the World Bank's Annual Meeting in Singapore. Entitled *Development and the Next Generation*, the report focuses on youth and contains a subsection on employment.

The report argues that developing countries which invest in better education, healthcare, and job training for their young people between the ages of 12 and 24 years of age, can produce surging economic growth and sharply reduce poverty.

With 1.3 billion young people now living in the developing world, the largest-ever youth group in history, the report says there has never been a better time to invest in youth because they are healthier and better educated than previous generations, and they will join the workforce with fewer dependents because of changing demographics. However, failure to seize this opportunity to train them more effectively for the workplace, and to be active citizens, could lead to widespread disillusionment and social tensions.

The report says that young people make up nearly half of the ranks of the world's unemployed, and, for example, the Middle East and North Africa region alone must create 100 million jobs by 2020 in order to stabilize its employment situation. Moreover, surveys of young people in East Asia and Eastern Europe and Central Asia-carried out for the report-indicate that access to jobs, along with physical security, are young peoples' biggest concern.

According to Emmanuel Jimenez, lead author of the report, and Director of

Human Development in the World Bank's East Asia and the Pacific Department, "Most developing countries have a short window of opportunity to get this right before their record numbers of youth become middle-aged, and they lose their demographic dividend. This isn't just enlightened social policy. This may be one of the profound decisions a developing country will ever make to banish poverty and galvanize its economy"

For more information, please see:
<http://www.worldbank.org/wdr>

The YEN Secretariat, in partnership with the Geneva World Bank Office, hosted both pre and post European launch events for the WDR 2007.

News from Partners

YES Network Global Summit September 13-16

The YES Network's 3rd Global Youth Employment Summit, and the first of its kind in Sub Saharan Africa, was held in Nairobi, Kenya. The summit was inaugurated by HE President Mwai Kibaki of Kenya. In his speech, Kibaki sited unemployment as the single most serious problem facing youth today. He said lack of adequate employment opportunities was a source of severe anxiety for youth.

The Summit featured 2000 delegates from all over the world and over 100 countries were represented from all continents. The Ministers and the high-ranking government delegations that attended the Ministerial Forum crafted several recommendations contained in a Ministerial Declaration which was read out by the Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Kenya, at the closing session of the Summit. These included the setting up of the first African Regional YES Network and the launch of a Youth Employment Fund by the

Government of Kenya for promoting youth entrepreneurship in the country.

High-level participation from UN agencies, the major international donors and private sector was evident in support of the YES Campaign in its next phase.

UNESCO Thematic Youth Week and Open Forum on Youth, August 14 - 18, 2006

In connection with International Youth Day 2006 and the 60th anniversary celebrations of UNESCO, a week was devoted to exploring UNESCO's action with and for young people. As part of the thematic week, a series of roundtable sessions, exhibitions and interactive activities took place at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. In addition the Open Forum of the UNESCO NGO Liaison Committee, which took place at UNESCO Headquarters on 28 September 2006. This one-day event, organized in cooperation with the Joint Programmatic Youth Commission of the NGO Committee, aimed at highlighting best practice of partnerships with and for youth and served to define the way forward.

For more information on the thematic youth week and the Open Forum, please see:
www.unesco.org/youth.

News from Youth

1st African Youth Peace Conference (AYPC), Abuja, Nigeria, September 20-21, 2006

With the theme "The African Youth: A bridge for Peace and Socio-economic Advancement in Africa", the two day peace conference for youth was held to commemorate the UN World Peace day at the World Bank Country office in Abuja. The Conference was organized by CADA International, in partnership with the Clean & Green

Cities Foundation, Peace Corps of Nigeria, West Africa Youth Network, Afemai Youth Initiative Network, in collaboration with the Universal Peace Federation-IIFWP, Nigeria Chapter. Technical support was provided by UNHCR, Nigeria and the World Bank Country Office, Nigeria.

The aim of the Conference to commemorate the UN World Peace Day was to gather the new generation of African youth leaders between the ages of 18 and 35, from various organizations and promote the concept of non-violence ideologies amidst African Youths and to Educate African Youth to further the pursuit of World Peace.

One of the main recommendations stemming from the conference addresses youth employment: African leaders should tackle poverty and unemployment vigorously, and ensure speedy ratification, domestication and implementation of the African Youth Charter and other relevant international and regional instruments for youth development.

Launching of the World Scouting Report, Geneva, 28th September 2006

Regina Monticone, Secretary of the Youth Employment Network, joined Dr. Eduardo Missoni, Secretary General of World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) in launching the first World Scout Report. Youth organisations, such as WOSM, offer millions of young people who are unemployed or lack adequate training the chance to acquire the life skills thus increasing their chances of finding work. WOSM, which includes 28 million members, and operates through a network of local groups supported by national Scout organisations in 215 countries and territories, tackles this crucial issue in the first World Scouting Report, launched under the

theme "Youth, a force for development."

Appeal of the General Secretariat of the Pan-African Youth Union (PYU) on the Occasion of the African Youth Day, 1 November, 2006

The African Continent met, for the first time ever, to celebrate November 1st as the African Youth Day and, at the same time, commemorate the third anniversary of the Pan-African Youth Union (PYU).

At the occasion of the 7th Ordinary Session of the General Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union, coupled with the adoption of the African Youth Charter, it was recognised that there was an urgent need to promote the development of African youth, encourage their involvement in the African development programmes, while at the same time encouraging policymakers to develop youth-friendly policies. The 1st of November of each year was proclaimed African Youth Day and 2008, the African Youth Year.

The Pan-African Youth Union was pleased with the adoption of the African Youth Charter by the Heads of State and Government, as an instrument for the promotion of the African youth. The Pan-African Youth Union called upon the African States to begin the process of ratifying this important document.

In light of the magnitude and gravity of the phenomenon of underground immigration of African youth, the PYU launched an appeal to the African States to put in place appropriate national youth policies to prevent this by creating more job opportunities, and thereby, reducing poverty.

For more information on the conference and the charter, please see: <http://www.panafricanyouth.org/>

The EXIT Festival, a Major European Music Event Turns on Efforts to Combat Youth Unemployment, Novi Sad, Serbia, 11 July 2006

The Citizens Pact for South East Europe, a group of NGOs and municipalities, and EXIT, the largest music festival in southeast Europe, sponsored a joint campaign to boost youth employment at its 2006 event. The MTV Foundation and the ILO's Youth Employment Programme supported the campaign to increase public awareness of youth employment as a key development issue.

According to estimates of the National Employment Office, young people make up one-third of all unemployed people in Serbia. Each year the EXIT festival provides hundreds of jobs to young people. The four day summer event drew more than 300,000 youth from across Europe and some of the big names on the international pop music scene. When the youth in the audience was not rocking to bands like Franz Ferdinand, they were playing football with European Union Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn, who spoke about opportunities in an expanding Europe.

Yen Associates

As highlighted in the September, 2006 newsletter under a YEN-Canadian CIDA partnership agreement, eight young Canadians have been placed in eight YEN Lead countries as YEN Associates for a period of seven months. A short profile of each YEN Associate's work can be found in the lead country updates below.

Ms. Sofia Jadvaji (YEN-SL, Sri Lanka)

Ms. Robyn Agoston (Ministry of Youth and Sports, Namibia)

Ms. Nermeen Mouftah (Ministry of Manpower, Egypt)
Mr. Mohamed Sultan (YEN/ UNOWA Office for West Africa, Senegal)
Ms. Robyn Davis (ILO, Brazil)
Ms. Rachel Gottfried (Ministry of Labour and Skills Development, Rwanda)
Mr. Trafton Koenig (ILO, Azerbaijan)
Ms. Amrit Atwal (Jamaica Employers Federation, Jamaica)

News from lead countries

Nigeria

Employment Policy Review Toolkit

The YES Country Network in Nigeria has created an Employment Policy Review Toolkit designed to help youth review existing Government legislation. The Nigerian National Employment Policy has been in place since 2002 and therefore the main aim of this review is to determine the impact of the policy on the lives of youths based on their own perception of the opportunities, challenges and constraints of the policy.

The goal is to demonstrate to policymakers the relevance of youth input and the vital need for ongoing and sustainable youth participation in policymaking processes. Ideally, evidence gathered through this process will convince Government to include substantive youth participation in any future revisions of the National Employment Policy.

This effort is being supported by a diverse range of partners including the Ministry of Employment Labour and Productivity, the Senate Committee on Labour and Employment, NEPAD, GTZ, Abuja Enterprise Agency, The World Bank, JCI, the National Youth Council, the World Bank Network and YES Nigeria members.

Jamaica

Jamaica is in the early stages of formulating its NAP. Jamaica YEN (J-YEN) has a timeline to develop a first draft by the end of 2006. J-YEN has created a steering committee comprised of individuals representing the key national stakeholders to oversee its activities. Four sub-committees - Employability, Equal Opportunities, Employment Creation and Entrepreneurship - have also been created.

YEN Associate, **Amrit Atwal** is supporting the NAP process through the development of the J-YEN website, which includes features such as a NGO database for youth services, an employment register that will match labour demand with supply, and information on interview skills, resumé building and job searching techniques. Amrit is also helping to organize regional employment fairs and business development seminars, and conducting research on parent and sibling support workshops relating to youth with special needs. Raising awareness, providing intervention and prevention strategies for HIV/AIDS and seeking to link youth living with HIV/AIDS with the employment network is another main focus of Amrit's work. Moreover, she is involved in outreach work and research in rural areas where youth are hard to target due to violence and political tensions.

Azerbaijan

Since a National Employment Strategy (NES) was approved and signed by the President in October, 2005, an Action Plan has been developed to implement the NES. The ILO and the UNDP both contributed to the development of this Plan. Within the framework of this overall Employment Action Plan, the Government is committed to give youth issues a specific focus, and will develop a National Action Plan on Youth Employment (NAPYE).

Moreover, the Government of Azerbaijan has committed to host the Fourth Global Youth Employment Summit (YES) in 2008.

YEN Associate **Trafton Koenig** is helping NAP developments through the drafting of a report on youth employment in Azerbaijan. He is also involved in consulting with NAP partner organizations, preparing meetings with stakeholders, and determining other experts within the UN system that can offer their expertise in youth employment issues.

Sri Lanka

A multi-stakeholder Youth-SL National Task Force has been overseeing the country's commitment to develop and implement its National Action Plan (NAP) on youth employment, reviewing relevant policy options and developing an operational mechanism to implement the NAP, whilst ensuring strong participation of youth in the process.

A Youth Employment Strategic Document, as well as a Policy-Level and a Programme/Project-Level Recommendations Action Plan, has been submitted for approval by the Cabinet. Upon subsequent formation of an inter-ministerial Youth Employment Council, a coordinated final version of the NAP will be developed.

A positive step has been the incorporation of the NAP into the Government's Ten Year Horizon Development Framework (2006-2016), with approximately US\$97 million being allocated towards increasing youth employment over the next decade. YEN-SL will play a key role in implementing the recommendations of the NAP.

YEN Associate **Sofia Jadavji** is assisting the YEN-SL and the ILO in the progression of the NAP. Her work includes planning for a launch of the

final NAP in the early part of next year. In addition, she is preparing a concept note and a one-year work plan for the Japanese government to implement a project that is in accordance with one of the recommended actions of the NAP. Also in accordance with the NAP, she is developing a proposal for a nationwide social communication campaign to raise awareness and change attitudes of youth (and other selected groups) to employment, and ultimately increase youth employment in diverse sectors. This project would focus on developing targeted media-based interventions to tackle cultural and social barriers to employment, including tackling negative perceptions towards the vocational training system (in parallel with going work to upgrade the quality of the training) both from students and employers, promoting non-traditional occupations for women, and highlighting the private sector and self-employment as viable career options for youth.

Brazil

The ILO is supporting the Government evaluation of its *Primeiro Emprego* (First Employment) programme through a number of activities including the development of an inventory of youth employment programs supported by federal institutions, identifying their focus concerning the four Es (employment creation, entrepreneurship, employability, equal opportunities), their duration, and the number of youth who have benefited.

Furthermore, it is assisting in the establishment of a "Youth Net", a system whereby youth could consult with other youth about how they got their first job, started a business, training unavailability and funding possibilities.

YEN Associate, **Robyn Davis**, is supporting these developments through

reviewing and summarizing the findings of past evaluations of youth employment programs in Brazil, and putting together a general list of criteria that have yielded success for such programs. She is creating a database of youth employment programs in Brazil as a resource for youth seeking opportunities and also a database of Brazilian NGOs that deliver youth employment programmes. Moreover, she has drafted a questionnaire to be posted in the ILO Brazil website which invites Brazilian youth who have had success in their first job or in an entrepreneurial venture to fill out the questionnaire as a first step towards the Youth Net venture.

Egypt

A multi-stakeholder process involving political level decision makers and technical experts is underway in Egypt in order to develop its NAP. As a first stage in this process a comprehensive study on youth employment has been prepared. Stakeholders are now using this evidence in order to determine the key challenges young people face, the appropriate mix of policy interventions needed to address their problems and devise an implementation strategy for the Plan. A finalized NAP is expected in early 2007.

YEN Associate, **Nermeen Mouftah**, is supporting NAP developments through providing assistance to the work of the NAP Secretariat based at the Ministry of Manpower and Migration. She is engaging with partners to ensure strong working relations, providing logistical and capacity building support for the effective running of the NAP decision-making and drafting structures and providing training support to the Egyptian Youth Consultative Group, which has been formed by youth with the support of the government to provide youth voice and advice to the NAP process.

Rwanda

The Rwandan NAP was finalised in late 2005 and has now been presented to the Rwandan Cabinet for their endorsement.

YEN Associate, **Rachel Gottfried**, is supporting the Ministry of Employment initiative, in the NAP process, to develop an implementation and donor support strategy. Rachel's work incorporated the development of relations with partners including UNDP, the World Bank UNICEF and CIDA, the preparation of an English executive summary of the NAP and the organization of a National Conference on youth employment scheduled for December 2006. The National Conference aims to raise awareness of the Plan, ensure that it is clearly linked to national development processes in the country, and to serve as a platform for the development community in Rwanda to determine their political, technical and financial support for the Plan.

Senegal

In Senegal, the NAP is currently being finalised by national stakeholders. The stakeholders are drawing on the findings of the World Bank / ILO activities under the activities of the German BMZ funded project – *Support to Lead Countries of the YEN* (also supporting NAP developments in Sri Lanka)

YEN Associate, **Mohamed Sultan**, is working in Senegal in support of the recent launch of the YEN Office for West Africa (see page 1.) He has carried out desk research on the upcoming YEN / UNIDO study on "Best Practices, Policy Environment, Tools and Methodologies for Youth Employment in West Africa" and has been responsible for sending out over

140 surveys to Governments, NGOs, civil societies and international agencies in West Africa.

Namibia

The Ministry of Youth National Service, Sport & Culture developed a preliminary outline of a NAP in December, 2005. This document principally outlined the government-supported National Youth Service and the vision for it to serve as an integrated experimental learning, training and employment creation initiative for Namibian youth.

YEN Associate, **Robyn Agoston**, based within the Ministry, is supporting the preliminary outline to expand this initial work. Robyn, with the support of the Ministry, has travelled extensively throughout the country to determine the challenges youth face in the labour market and the existing national responses. She is now organising a national conference on youth employment, scheduled for January 2007, which will seek the endorsement of all national stakeholders for a holistic strategy on youth employment and set a timeline for the implementation of such a strategy.

Calendar

World Aids Day

1 December 2006

<http://www.worldaidscampaign.org/wadcd2006/en/day.html>

Human Rights Day: Fighting Poverty, a Matter of Obligation not Charity

10 December 2006

<http://www.cyberschoolbus.un.org/humanrightsday2006/guidelines1.asp>

International Conference on National Youth Policy

11-14 December, Vienna

<http://www.icnyp.net/www/eng/main.html>

UNEP Global Youth Retreat at the Governing Council

1-4 February 2007

Nairobi

<http://www.unep.org/Tunza/youth/Conferences%5FEvents/>

Commission for Social Development 45th Session

7-16 February 2007, New York

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/csd/csocd2007.htm>

8th Annual Global Youth Service Day

20-22 April 2007

<http://www.GYSD.org>

Press round up

31-10-2006

Philippine Daily Inquirer, Phillipines
Job Prospects for Young Filipinos Not Bright

2-11-2006

Financial Express, India
Generation gap – only growth can ease youth unemployment

8-11-2006

The Korea, Herald, Koreas
Asia Faces Tough Job Finding Work for its Young

20-11-2006

Business Report, South Africa
Unemployment a social 'time-bomb' for Africa
<http://www.busrep.co.za/index.php?fSectionId=&fArticleId=3548763>

22-11-2006

Christian Science Monitor
Why frogs brighten Thai youths' futures
<http://www.csmonitor.com/2006/1122/p06s01-woap.html>

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