

Uniting 4 Development

The United Nations Inter-agency Network on Youth Development

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Preface

Representing over 40 per cent of today's global population, the generation under the age of 25 is larger than ever before. Over 18 per cent of the global population is between 15 and 24 years of age and the number of young women and men is projected to grow further in the coming two decades.

This is an unprecedented opportunity for global development: youth can be drivers of economic growth and poverty reduction, if they are fully integrated in their societies and recognized as valuable human capital. As mentioned in the Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, youth *“are shaping social and economic development, challenging social norms and values, and building the foundation of the world's future.”*

At the same time, the global demographic situation presents a huge challenge: 87 per cent of youth live in developing countries. Youth are demanding more and better job opportunities, a good education, peaceful and equitable societies, and clamoring for a sustainable environment. The international community can build a strong basis for sustainable and inclusive development by addressing the multiple challenges faced by young people across the globe.

Now is the time to shape the development agenda beyond 2015 when the Millennium Development Goals transition into a new vision of sustainable development goals for the coming decades. Let's make sure that young people play an important role in this global endeavor, which will help shape their future. The way the international community takes the challenges of adolescents and youth, particularly girls, and ensures they have the opportunities to reach their full potentials, will influence the well-being and quality of life of present and future generations.

The United Nations system is called upon to address the needs of the largest generation of young people the world has ever known. This will require the joint effort of all United Nations entities active in the field of youth development. As the United Nations Inter-agency Network on Youth Development, we have joined forces to serve the needs of youth around the world. This network is an important mechanism for integrating the efforts of individual United Nations entities and in ensuring that through more and better cooperation, we can achieve greater results. What started as a knowledge sharing platform to exchange information between United Nations entities has grown into a strong advocate and joint partnership for youth development on a global, regional and national level.

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ⁱ United Nations. A new global partnership. Eradicate poverty and transform economies through sustainable development. The Report of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, 2013.

Acronyms

CBD	The Convention on Biological Diversity Secretariat
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DPI	United Nations Department of Public Information
DSD	United Nations Division for Sustainable Development
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ESCAP	United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic Commission for Western Asia
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
IANYD	United Nations Inter-agency Network on Youth Development
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
ITU	International Telecommunications Union
IYY	International Youth Year
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSAA	Office of the Special Advisor on Africa
OSRG/CAAC	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict
SRSG-VAC	Office of the Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children
SWAP	System-wide Action Plan on Youth
SWG	Sub Working Group
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNAOC	United Nations Alliance of Civilizations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UN DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNMC	United Nations Millennium Campaign
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNPBSO	Peacebuilding Support Office
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNWTO	World Tourism Organization
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WPAY	World Programme of Action for Youth

Introduction

The United Nations has a long history of working with and for young people. In 1965, the Member States of the United Nations acknowledged that young peoples' *imagination, ideals and energies are vital for the continuing development of the societies in which they live.*ⁱⁱ Twenty years later, the General Assembly declared 1985 as the International Youth Year. Under the title: *Participation, Development and Peace*, it drew international attention to the role of young people in the world and their potential contribution to development. In 1995, the General Assembly adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) that remains the basis for United Nations policies in the field of youth development to this day. In 2007,ⁱⁱⁱ five priority areas have been added to the WPAY, in order to respond to the changing challenges faced by young people.

The increased interest in youth at all levels has also led to the expansion of youth-related activities across the United Nations system and has made it more and more important for United Nations entities to work together, leading to regular meetings of United Nations entities involved in youth development topics. As the benefits of sharing experience and closer collaboration started to show, the group decided to move to a more structured form of cooperation and in 2010 formally created the United Nations Inter-agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD).

The present booklet gives an overview of the work of this network, summarizes its history and composition and outlines milestones and achievements since its establishment. It also provides an inventory of "Who does what?" in the field of youth development, giving an overview on the mandates and focus areas of each of the network members. Project spotlights highlight concrete examples of intervention on the ground. For more in-depth information on the work of individual entities, the booklet lists key publications as well as relevant websites.

Timeline

1965: Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding Between Peoples

1985: International Youth Year: Participation, Development and Peace

1995: General Assembly adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY)

2001: General Assembly resolution on Promoting Youth Employment

2007: WPAY reviewed, addition of five focus areas

2010: Official establishment of the IANYD, adoption of the Terms of Reference

2010: United Nations Framework Approach for the International Year of Youth 2010-2011

2010: International Youth Year: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding

2011: General Assembly High-level Meeting on Youth

2013: Appointment of Mr. Ahmad Alhendawi as the SG's Envoy on Youth in 2013

2013: Launch of United Nations Youth Volunteer Programme

2013: Youth SWAP endorsed

2013: IANYD Open meeting with youth-led organizations, networks and movements

I. The United Nations Inter-agency Network on Youth Development

Growing together

In recent years, Member States have increasingly asked the United Nations system to intensify the collaboration between the different United Nations entities and to develop a shared strategy to address the challenges of young people¹ around the world. The IANYD jointly works towards an enabling and inclusive environment that gives every young woman and man the opportunity to actively participate in the political, social and economic life of his or her society.

In view of the multifaceted challenges that youth are facing today, the IANYD pushes for a holistic joint strategy that takes into account key aspects of the life of a young person growing up in the 21st century: employment, entrepreneurship, political inclusion, civic engagement and protection of rights, education and health.

The World Programme of Action for Youth: the backbone of UN youth engagement

In 1995, the General Assembly adopted the **World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY)**. Until today, the WPAY builds the basis for UN policies in the field of youth development. In the programme, the international community agreed on priority areas and defined practical guidelines on how to improve the situation of young people around the world. In 2007,¹ Member States adapted the WPAY to the changing challenges ten years after its first adoption. Today, the programme covers fifteen youth priority areas and proposes concrete actions therein.

For more information on the WPAY, please visit:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/wpay2010.pdf>

¹ In this document, the word “youth” may be used interchangeably with the term “young people”.

Growing stronger

Since its creation in 2010, the IANYD has grown both in membership and integration and has become an important mechanism for the United Nations to better respond to the specific challenges young people face.

ADVOCATE FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT: Being a member of the network has led to a changing mindset within many organizations, highlighting the importance of youth inclusion and participation when it comes to policy development and programming. As such, the network has played an important role in bringing youth development issues into the international development agenda and pushing for the inclusion of young people in the discussions around the post-2015 Development Agenda.

SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE: The IANYD has improved the internal coordination within the United Nations both in policy development and programming. For example, the IANYD helped member entities to better accord their positions and speak with one voice on international conferences and forums.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION: The IANYD is not only pooling the efforts of different United Nations entities but it also offers a platform for engagement with young people by exploring innovative ways of working more closely with youth.

Innovative ideas for youth participation

In September 2013, the IANYD and over 100 youth-led organizations, networks and movements came together at the UN Headquarters in New York to jointly identify ways in which the IANYD could better work with and for young people. The main goal of the meeting was to come up with innovative ways to strengthen youth participation in the United Nations system overall, and to partner with young people in the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan on Youth.

The Open Meeting was an important step towards increased cooperation between the IANYD and youth-led organizations and will lead the way for future cooperation. The commitment of the network members to closely work with youth-led organizations was reinforced as it has been decided that an open interaction with youth-led organizations should become a regular part of IANYD meetings. Furthermore, structured ways for partnerships, collaboration and participation between the IANYD and youth organizations have been discussed, for example, through the establishment of youth advisory boards.

The co-chairs: continuity and fresh ideas

The permanent co-chair of the IANYD is UN DESA, the efforts of which are led by the Division for Social Policy and Development. In its convening role, UN DESA ensures the continuity of the network and facilitates exchange and cooperation between the members. The second co-chair is selected by network members and rotates on an annual basis. Previous co-chairs have been UNESCO (2010), ILO (2011) UN-Habitat (2012) UNFPA (2013) and UNIDO (2014). By putting forth their organizational priorities, mandates and strengths they have developed the network further and come up with fresh ideas on how the United Nations can adapt and improve its services to address the needs of young people.

The United Nations Focal Point on Youth

The United Nations Focal Point on Youth is the permanent co-chair of the United Nations Inter-agency Network on Youth Development. Based within the Division for Social Policy and Development at UN DESA, its mandate is predominantly based on the World Programme of Action for Youth.

Through its work and programmes, the United Nations Focal Point on Youth aims at:

- Enhancing awareness of the global situation of youth and increasing recognition of the rights and aspirations of youth (including the biennial *World Youth Report*);
- Promoting national youth policies, national youth coordinating mechanisms and national youth programmes of action in cooperation with both Government and NGOs;
- Strengthening the participation of youth in decision-making processes at all levels in order to increase their impact on national development and international cooperation (including the Youth Delegates Programme).

For more information on the United Nations Focal Point for Youth, please visit:

<http://undesadspd.org/Youth.aspx>

Or contact: youth@un.org

Regional and national coordination

The IANYD not only focuses on joint policy development but also strongly aims to contribute to better coordination between its members when it comes to programming of concrete activities on the ground. Therefore, the IANYD promotes the creation of inter-agency networks at the regional and country level. These networks are an important tool for United Nations entities in the field to share knowledge and information, avoid duplication of activities and help to identify opportunities and potential for increased cooperation. The close cooperation of the IANYD and national and regional networks ensures the global and cross-regional coordination of programmes and initiatives.

The United Nations Asia-Pacific Inter-agency Group on Youth

A very active example for cooperation at the regional level is the [United Nations Asia-Pacific Inter-agency Group on Youth](#). The group serves as platform to coordinate programming and implementation of the different UN entities engaged in youth-related activities in the region (including ESCAP, FAO, ILO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA and UNICEF).

The Group was formally established in 2010 to enhance coordination and promote the principle of “Delivering as one UN”. The Inter-agency Group supports the regional implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth and allows UN entities to effectively share information, enhance cooperation and coordination on the ground, as well as disseminate good practices and lessons learned.

Project Spotlight

Regional Mapping

During the International Year of Youth, the Asia-Pacific Inter-agency Group on Youth conducted a mapping of youth-related programmes implemented in the region. The mapping focused on the major issues identified under the World Programme of Action for Youth, and recommended potential areas of collaboration for the Inter-agency Group. The main findings of the mapping can be accessed at:

<http://social.un.org/youthyear/docs/ESCAPFinal5.pdf>

Thematic sub-working groups

The thematic sub-working groups of the IANYD allow interested network members to engage in in-depth discussions and interactions on specific thematic areas. An important feature of the thematic sub-working groups is the inclusiveness of their composition as they allow Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), in particular youth-led organizations, to be members. This participatory approach ensures a multi-angled view on selected relevant issues and gives the opportunity to learn from CSOs who are active in a specific topic and exchange best practices, lessons learned and discuss the way ahead. The sub-working groups greatly contributed to the work of the IANYD by delving into specific issues – mostly brought up by the youth themselves – developing new ideas and approaches which then fed back into the general IANYD discussions. Currently, thematic sub-working groups are working on the following thematic areas: Youth Participation, Employment, Environment, Youth Participation in Peacebuilding, Social Media, Youth Policy, Inclusive Youth Volunteering, and the Post-2015 Agenda.

IANYD sub-working group on Youth Participation in Peacebuilding

A successful example for cooperation in IANYD sub-working groups and their inclusive and participatory approach is the IANYD sub-working group on Youth Participation in Peacebuilding, which is co-chaired by the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and the international NGO Search for Common Ground. The sub-working group is a platform for coordination, information-sharing, joint advocacy and policy discussions for UN entities, NGOs and civil society organizations promoting youth participation in peacebuilding. The sub-working group includes over 70 members from UN entities, to NGOs, youth CSOs and academia.

Recognizing that civil society organizations are at the forefront of programmatic and advocacy work on youth participation in peacebuilding, the sub-working group has made the direct participation of civil society organizations one of its priorities.

Currently, the sub-working group is developing an operational guidance note that will offer concrete assistance to project managers on how to support youth participation in peacebuilding programming and ensure that youth are part of peace building processes.

Achievements and results:

- Enhanced coordination and collaboration between the UN and NGOs
- Advocated for youth participation in peacebuilding in both youth and peacebuilding forums in the UN
- Organization of several Brown Bag events to facilitate discussions among stakeholders
- Contribution to post-2015 agenda discussions
- Developed the Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding



2010

- Official establishment of the IANYD
- Launch of the International Year of Youth

Co-Chair: UNESCO

A key milestone in 2010 was the official **launch of the network**, at the first **Meeting of the Heads of Youth Programmes in the UN system**, hosted at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. In the year of UNESCO's co-chairmanship, the IANYD enabled the harmonized coordination of the UN preparation and celebration of the **International Year of Youth on "Dialogue and Mutual Understanding"**. Especially important was the increased **harmonization of UN inputs**, position and representation at key global events during the Year, including at the World Youth Conference (Mexico, August 2010). Furthermore the network played an important role in identifying, analyzing and assessing the common recommendations emanating from global and regional youth events, laying the ground for the development of the UN System-wide Action Plan on Youth.

2011

- High-level Meeting of the General Assembly

Co-Chair: ILO

As the IANYD co-chair in 2011, in close cooperation with the Focal Point on Youth, the ILO supported several initiatives to **strengthen inter-agency cooperation** in the area of youth development. A particular focus was on themes relating to the promotion of decent work for young people, in order to advance the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth, especially in the areas that were the subject of Member States' deliberations during the **International Year of Youth**. Furthermore the IANYD continued to advocate for the International Year of Youth and coordinated joint activities of the network in this regard. This included the coordination of joint IANYD inputs to the **High-level Meeting on Youth** organized by the General Assembly in 2011. In the context of the High-level Meeting, the network has furthermore promoted and facilitated **youth participation** as well as their contribution to the outcome document.

2012

- United Nations Secretary-General's Five-year Action Agenda
- Development of the Youth-SWAP

Co-Chair: UN-Habitat

As well as a notable increase in membership at the IANYD, the year marked the further development and integration of the network. In close consultation with the Member States the IANYD explored opportunities for setting incremental steps in strengthening youth participation in the UN. The co-chairs of the IANYD were furthermore actively engaged in the **establishment of the office of the SG's Envoy on Youth**, assisting in the institutional setting up as well as resource mobilization. The **Youth 21 Initiative** launched by UN-Habitat aimed at supporting youth to take up leadership in the 21st Century and focused on building an aid architecture for youth engagement in the UN system. The highlight of the Youth 21 Initiative was the **Youth 21 week in Nairobi** organized by UN-Habitat, UN DESA and UNDP in March 2012. Furthermore UN-Habitat held the **African Youth Conference on the Post-2015 Development Agenda** to review the progress made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and discuss the future and plight of youth beyond 2015. An important role and accomplishment of the network under UN-Habitat's co-leadership was the development of the Youth-SWAP.

2013

- Implementation of the Youth-SWAP
- Open Meeting with Youth Organizations

Co-Chair: UNFPA

As the current co-chair of the IANYD, UNFPA strongly advocates for **youth participation**. In close cooperation with UN DESA as the permanent co-chair, UNFPA organized the **Open Meeting with Youth-led Organizations** and initiated an accountability and reporting mechanism to capture the involvement of youth-led organizations in the implementation of the Youth-SWAP. A clear milestone of progress, 2013 was the **first year of implementation of the Youth-SWAP**, where UNFPA particularly supported a participatory process to better include youth. In its role as co-chair of the IANYD, UNFPA has continued to provide support to the SG's Envoy on Youth, in particular by seconding a staff member to the Office of the SG's Envoy on Youth, Mr. Ahmad Alhendawi, for his first year in office.

For the continuation of the co-chairmanship, UNFPA will prioritize the facilitation of the implementation of the SWAP at the regional and national levels, providing technical support to country teams of countries who have expressed interest in participating in the SWAP process.

2014

Co-Chair: UNIDO

SPOTLIGHT ON: The International Year of Youth, August 2010 – 2011

In August 2010, the second International Year of Youth was proclaimed under the theme “Dialogue and Mutual Understanding”. The main aim of the year was to encourage dialogue and understanding across generations and promote the ideals of peace, respect for human rights and freedoms, and solidarity.

During the International Year of Youth, the IANYD has proven to be a very important forum, as the members not only developed a joint framework for collective efforts and concrete joint activities, but also coordinated their inputs to conferences and events, speaking as one United Nations on youth development issues. Through joint activities, the IANYD raised awareness on youth-related topics and promoted the importance of youth development at the top of the international agenda. The IANYD further fostered mobilization and engagement of youth and promoted cooperation between the United Nations and youth organizations.

At the occasion of the launch of the International Year of Youth, 27 heads of UN entities signed a **joint statement** in which they committed to working together, to make youth development a priority in their organizations’ work and to enhance direct collaboration with young women and men.

As a highlight of the International Year of Youth, the General Assembly organized a **United Nations High-level Meeting on Youth**. Representatives from 400 youth groups, Member States, as well as experts from numerous UN entities gathered to discuss how to strengthen international cooperation on challenges to youth development and how to enhance dialogue, mutual understanding and active youth participation. The IANYD strongly advocated for the involvement of young people and facilitated the participation of youth-led organizations and youth movements in the meeting. To make sure that the outcome document reflected the ideas of young people, the IANYD facilitated inputs of youth organizations to the outcome document. The outcome document acknowledged the role of the IANYD to facilitate the coordination between UN entities and intensify efforts towards a more coherent, comprehensive and integrated approach to youth development.

For more information on the IYY, please visit: <http://social.un.org/youthyear/>

II. The System-wide Action Plan for Youth Development

How it began

In the beginning of 2012, the Secretary-General outlined his Five-year Action Agenda, defining main priorities to be addressed by the United Nations and the international community as a whole in the coming five years. One of the top priorities is addressing the needs of youth by deepening the youth focus of existing programmes on employment, entrepreneurship, political inclusion, citizenship and protection of rights, and education, including on reproductive health. The Secretary-General furthermore put a strong emphasis on increased cooperation of different actors of the global community as well as on system-wide partnerships to achieve this goal.

The Five-year Action Agenda called for the development and implementation of a System-wide Action Plan for youth development. Furthermore, the Five-year Action Agenda called for the appointment of an Envoy on Youth as well as the establishment of a youth volunteer programme under the umbrella of the United Nations Volunteers.

The Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth

As part of his Five-year Action Agenda, and in recognition of the growing importance of youth issues in the world, the Secretary-General created the position of the United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth. In a groundbreaking appointment, the first envoy, Mr. Ahmad Alhendawi was appointed by the Secretary-General in 2013.

Mr. Alhendawi advocates for addressing the development needs and rights of young people, as well as for bringing the work of the United Nations with and for youth closer to youth. The work-plan of the Envoy on Youth responds to the Secretary-General's Five-year Action Agenda, and is guided by the World Programme of Action for Youth. The work-plan of the Envoy outlines four priority areas: Increase youth participation at all levels, advocate for youth development needs and rights, promote multi-stakeholder partnerships on youth development, and to work as a catalyst to enhance the harmonization of UN work on youth development. The Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth actively collaborates with the Inter-agency Network on Youth Development in all areas, including in developing and implementing the United Nations Youth-SWAP. Furthermore, the Envoy encourages the development of mechanisms for young people to participate in the work of the United Nations and Governments to develop youth engagement strategies.

For more information on the SG's Envoy on Youth, please visit: <http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/>

The IANYD was called to support the implementation of the youth-related goals set in the Five-year Action Agenda and played a crucial role in the development of the System-wide Action Plan for Youth. The IANYD coordinated the development of the Youth-SWAP by

bringing together all United Nations agencies active in the field of youth development and coordinating their inputs as well as reaching out to the youth worldwide to learn about their development priorities.

The co-chairs of the IANYD further contributed to the implementation of the other goals set by the Secretary-General by facilitating the setting up of the office of the Envoy on Youth as well as the United Nations Youth Volunteer Programme.

What is the SWAP?

The main aim of the Youth-SWAP (System-wide Action Plan for Youth) is to enhance coherence and synergy of United Nations system-wide activities in key areas related to youth development as well as building a concrete plan of action for the coming years. The Youth-SWAP builds on the specific mandates, expertise and capacities of individual United Nations entities, pooling the strengths of the whole United Nations system and promoting joint programmatic work. The SWAP will guide the priorities of the IANYD in the coming years and sets a clear focus for the work of its member entities in the field of youth development.

The SWAP addresses issues relevant to different age groups of young people, including adolescents (aged 10-19 years) and youth (aged 15-24 years). Taking into consideration the differing definitions of youth by country context, the Youth-SWAP may also apply to young people older than 24.

The SWAP builds on the World Programme of Action for Youth and through its commitments and measures the SWAP will help the United Nations in implementing the WPAY.

Youth participation in the SWAP

The System-wide Action Plan for Youth is the result of a consultative process and has strongly benefitted from inputs from youth and United Nations entities. To make sure that the SWAP is rooted in young people's development priorities and takes into consideration their proposed solutions, the IANYD conducted a survey amongst 13,500 youth from 186 countries.

The participation and engagement of young people in the SWAP will continue beyond the initial youth survey and will be at the core of the entire process of implementation. Members of the IANYD will team up with youth in carrying out regional and national activities. Furthermore, youth will be actively engaged as partners in the monitoring and reporting process of the Youth-SWAP through shadow reports, online surveys and/or crowd-sourced reports. Last but not least the IANYD is committed to keeping youth informed about the SWAP process and achievements on a regular basis through frequent online updates, media campaigns via social networks such as Facebook and twitter, as well as other ongoing exchanges with youth CSOs.

Implementation and monitoring

While the Youth-SWAP is an important tool for cooperation between United Nations entities, helping to better focus and coordinate initiatives on a global level, the implementation on the regional and national level is meant to be at its core. The SWAP will assist to better coordinate national and regional programming, to increase synergies and facilitate joint programming. Therefore the creation and further fostering of national and regional networks will be important to reach the goals set in the SWAP and bring its implementation down to the programming level.

The IANYD will annually report on the progress made in the implementation of the SWAP at all levels. To make the progress measurable, a set of indicators has been developed and a baseline for each of the indicators will be established through the reporting in the first year.


Thematic areas of the Youth-SWAP

Based on the Secretary-General's Five-year Action Agenda, the System-wide Action Plan focuses on the following thematic areas: employment and entrepreneurship, political inclusion, civic engagement and protection of rights, education, including comprehensive sexuality education, and health. Each thematic area of the Youth-SWAP includes one overarching goal: the long-term objective to which the United Nations system will contribute in this area.

Thematic area	Overarching goal
Employment and entrepreneurship	Ensure greater opportunities for youth to secure decent work and income over the life cycle, contributing to a virtuous circle of poverty reduction, sustainable development and social inclusion.
Protection of rights and civic engagement	Ensure the inherent rights of youth are recognized and upheld to enable young people's engagement in all aspects of their development.
Political inclusion	Ensure the progressive, substantive inclusion of young people in political and decision-making processes at local, national, regional and international levels.
Education, including comprehensive sexuality education	Ensure that young people, on an inclusive, equitable and universal basis, are actively learning in formal or non-formal education systems, and are receiving quality education on sexual and reproductive health.
Health	Ensure that young people, on an inclusive, equitable and universal basis, enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.


EMPLOYMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Youth unemployment is not only a problem in developing countries: young people all around the world face the challenges of unemployment and underemployment. The global youth unemployment rate was estimated at 12.6 per cent in 2013, meaning that 73 million young people were out of a job in 2013.^{iv} Also, youth are more likely to be engaged in informal employment compared to older workers and transitions to decent work are often slow and difficult. Furthermore, youth frequently face special difficulties and hindrances when establishing or developing their own businesses. For example, access to finance is often lacking: due to their perceived high lending risk and lack of collateral, young people often cannot access the credit needed.

 Responding to these challenges, the SWAP sets the overall goal to ensure greater opportunities for youth to secure decent work and income over the life cycle, contributing to a virtuous circle of poverty reduction, sustainable development and social inclusion.


PROTECTION OF RIGHTS AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Participation is a fundamental right. It is one of the guiding principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that has been reiterated in many other Conventions and Declarations. Through civic engagement, young people are empowered to play a vital role in their own development as well as in that of their communities, helping them to learn vital life-skills, develop knowledge on human rights and citizenship and to promote positive civic action. To participate effectively, young people must be given the proper tools, such as education about and access to their civil rights.^v

 Therefore, the SWAP calls to ensure the inherent rights of youth are recognized and upheld to enable young people's engagement in all aspects of their development.

POLITICAL INCLUSION


Among other factors, social progress is dependent on the ability and willingness of our societies to incorporate young people's contributions into the building of the future. Youth are not adequately represented in formal political institutions and processes such as parliaments, political parties, elections, and public administrations. The average age of parliamentarians globally is 53, only 1.65 per cent of parliamentarians around the world are in their 20s and 11.87 per cent are in their 30s.^{vi}

 To enhance the political inclusion of young people, the SWAP aims at ensuring the progressive, substantive inclusion of young people in political and decision-making processes at local, national, regional and international levels.

EDUCATION, INCLUDING COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION


Education is central to development and to ensuring sustainable livelihoods for young people around the world. Education can become a catalyst for eradicating poverty and hunger as well as in promoting sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth. However, data shows that much remains to be done to ensure access to education for all young women and men: for example, 10.6 per cent of youth globally are non-literate.^{vii}

Efforts to enhance youth education have to take into consideration the need for **Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)** that emphasizes a holistic approach to human development and sexuality. Evidence has shown that CSE can provide young people with the knowledge, skills and efficacy to make informed decisions about their sexuality and lifestyle.^{viii} Education has been identified as a priority area in multiple internationally agreed development goals, as it is a prerequisite to eradicate poverty and hunger and for the promotion of sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth.

 In line with these internationally agreed goals, the SWAP aims at ensuring that young people, on an inclusive, equitable and universal basis, are actively learning in formal or non-formal education systems, and receive quality education on sexual and reproductive health.

HEALTH

The United Nations call for a physical and social environment that promotes good health, offers protection from disease and addiction and is free from all types of violence.^{ix} More than 1.8 million young people aged 15 to 24 die each year, mostly due to preventable causes. A much greater number of young people suffer from illnesses that hinder their ability to grow and develop to their full potential. For example, every year at least 20 per cent of adolescents experience a mental health problem, most commonly depression or anxiety.^x Health issues affecting young people include early pregnancy and childbirth, HIV/AIDS, malnutrition, mental health issues, tobacco use and harmful use of alcohol, violence and injuries.

 The SWAP has therefore set the goal to ensure that young people, on an inclusive, equitable and universal basis, enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

III. Who does what?

The following section gives an overview of the IANYD member entities and their work in the field of youth development. Their individual and specific mandates make their areas of work as well as their levels of intervention very different. The individual entities touch on very different aspects of a young persons' life. These 40 entities form the United Nations Inter-agency Network on Youth Development that helps bring all these aspects together and promotes a holistic concept of youth development as it is anchored in the WPAY and as it is being implemented through the Youth-SWAP on a global, regional and national level.

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

The CBD is an intergovernmental treaty with three major objectives essential to sustainable development: the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of the components of biological diversity, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. The Secretariat of the CBD supports the intergovernmental process and implementation of the Convention's provisions. In 2010, the Conference of the Parties to the CBD adopted the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and stressed the importance of involving all stakeholders in order to reach its targets. To support the implementation of the Strategic Plan, the United Nations General Assembly at its 65th session declared the period 2011-2020 the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity.

Why youth?

Due to human activity, biodiversity is being lost at the fastest rate known in recent geological history. If our production and consumption practices do not change, species will continue to be lost and ecosystems and the services they provide may be irreversibly damaged. The importance of safeguarding biodiversity is a common concern of all humankind. With nearly half of the world's population under the age of 25, youth will have to bear the consequences of today's decisions. They are also critical stakeholders in the global economy and will be the main actors and motors for change in the near future. With their energy, enthusiasm and dedication, they are also the key to finding solutions and educating others about the importance of biodiversity and behavioral change.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Promote involvement and networking by encouraging youth initiatives on biodiversity and supporting efforts of youth in establishing the Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN)
- Engage youth in decision-making. Youth organizations can be represented as observer organizations in meetings of the CBD
- Enhance partnership with various organizations dealing with youth and children including universities to raise awareness and encourage positive action
- Educate children and youth about biodiversity, e.g. the [Green Wave](#) project
- Provide internship opportunities for university students at the CBD Secretariat

Project spotlight

International Youth Forum Go4BioDiv

The International Youth Forum Go4BioDiv is a youth-led project that has enabled young people from many countries to share their conservation experience with their peers, the wider public and decision-makers. Go4BioDiv messengers worked, lived in or researched on a natural World Heritage site and have first-hand experience and knowledge of the state of biodiversity and conservation challenges in those areas. The forum has been supported by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the World Heritage Centre of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO WHC) and the CBD Secretariat and funded by the German Government.

For more information, please visit:

<http://go4biodiv.org>

Key publications

- [Youth Guide to Biodiversity](#) (YUNGA, 2013)
- [Biodiversity Challenge Badge](#) (YUNGA, 2010)
- International Day for Biological Diversity thematic educational booklets on various topics: [Water](#), [Ocean](#), [Forest](#)

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The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

FAO leads international efforts striving to achieve food security for all while also aiming to enhance sustainable food production globally. Serving both developed and developing countries, FAO acts as a neutral forum where all nations meet as equals to negotiate agreements and debate policy. FAO is also a source of knowledge and information, helping countries to modernize and improve agricultural policies.

Why youth?

Young people, particularly girls, are among the most vulnerable to hunger and malnutrition. Furthermore, agriculture represents a – if not the – main employer in developing countries: in sub-Saharan Africa, for example, half of the young labour force works in agriculture. For these reasons, support targeted at youth is a priority area under FAO's strategic objectives and many of FAO's regular programmes offer youth-specific activities. FAO has designated a youth Focal Point in each of its regional and country offices, responsible for coordinating regional and national actions for and with youth, and actively participates in the Inter-agency Network for Youth Development. FAO also hosts the Secretariat of the Youth and United Nations Global Alliance (YUNGA), a global partnership between United Nations agencies and civil society which produces educational materials for children and young people on matters of sustainability and equity, empowering youth to become agents of change.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Development and distribution of educational materials
- Promotion of agricultural, life and entrepreneurship skills
- Awareness-raising and capacity development on issues of global environmental and social importance (e.g. youth and climate change)
- Cooperation with education networks and youth-led CSOs

Project spotlight

The Junior Farmer Field and Life School (JFFLS) programme

In order to help address the specific needs of vulnerable rural youth in developing countries, FAO and ILO have jointly developed the [Junior Farmer Field and Life School \(JFFLS\) programme](#). The goal of the JFFLS is to empower vulnerable youth, and provide them with the employment and livelihood options needed for long-term food security while reducing their vulnerability to destitution and offering them risk-coping strategies. The programme's strength lies in its unique methodology and curriculum, which combines agricultural, life and entrepreneurship skills in an experiential and participatory learning approach uniquely suited to rural communities and low literacy levels. Since 2004, the JFFLS programme has trained over 25,000 young people in 25 countries.

Key Publications:

- [Feeding Minds, Fighting Hunger](#) (FAO, 2013)
- [The Right to Food: A Window on the World](#) (FAO, 2006)
- [The Education for Rural People Toolkit](#) (FAO, 2013)
- [Setting Up and Running a School Garden](#) (FAO, 2005)
- [Biodiversity Challenge Badge](#) (YUNGA, 2010)
- [Climate Change Challenge Badge](#) (YUNGA, 2010)
- [Forests Challenge Badge](#) (YUNGA, 2013)
- [Ending Hunger Challenge Badge](#) (YUNGA, 2013)
- [The Ocean Challenge Badge](#) (YUNGA, 2013)
- [Water Challenge Badge](#) (YUNGA, 2013)
- [The Youth Guide to Biodiversity](#) (YUNGA 2013)

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The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

IFAD is dedicated to eradicating rural poverty and hunger in developing countries by empowering poor rural women and men in those countries to achieve higher incomes and improved food security. Through low-interest loans and grants to governments, IFAD develops and finances programmes and projects that enable poor rural people, including rural youth, to overcome poverty themselves, for example, by increasing their access to financial services, markets, technology, land and other resources.

Why youth?

IFAD recognizes that in many developing countries young people represent a large proportion of the rural population. IFAD's commitment to enable poor rural people to overcome poverty is therefore highly dependent on finding ways for young women and men in rural areas to give value to their untapped productive capacity and energy. IFAD puts a specific emphasis on poor rural women and girls needs by enabling them to find fairly paid work or start small businesses of their own.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development in rural areas for young women and men

- Skills and vocational training to improve youth employability
- Technical and financial support to implementation of on and off-farm income generating activities all along the value chains
- Support to enterprise creation and development (specific advice, finance, access to market)
- Cooperation with community development organizations
- Youth empowerment within youth and small farmers organizations
- Demilitarization and reintegration of former child soldiers by offering assets to settle

The Rural Apprenticeship Training Programme, Rwanda

The programme enhances the creation of jobs for unemployed and out of school youth in rural areas and trains them in sectors with great potential, in terms of profitability and availability of jobs. The training is practical, and designed to reach a relatively large number of beneficiaries in the shortest time possible, while at the same time ensuring the acquisition of basic knowledge to enable programme recipients to practice or exercise their newly acquired knowledge and skills. For many young women and men in Rwanda, this programme represents their only access. The project thus fills a major gap in vocational training in the country. Since 2004, more than 6,500 youth were trained for six months to one year in 30 different professions by 538 participating enterprises in all 30 districts of Rwanda.

Project spotlight

Key Publications

- [Investing in the future. Creating opportunities for young rural people](#) (2011)
- [IFAD's President ViewPoint: Putting young people first](#) (2011)
- [Facilitating access of rural youth to agricultural activities IFAD/FAO/MIJARC joint publication](#) (2012)
- [Youth Guidance Note](#): designing programmes that improve young rural people livelihoods (2013)
- [Youth Policy Brief](#): Improving young rural women's and men's livelihoods – the most sustainable means of moving to a brighter future

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The International Labour Organization (ILO)

The ILO is the tripartite United Nations specialized agency that brings together governments, employer organizations and trade unions of its 185 Member States in common action to promote decent work throughout the world. The ILO is devoted to promoting social justice and advancing opportunities for decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Its main strategic objectives revolve around the promotion of rights at work and decent employment opportunities, improvement of social protection systems and strengthening of social dialogue in the areas related to the world of work.

Why youth?

The ILO is actively engaged in promoting decent employment opportunities for young people, assisting countries in developing coherent and coordinated interventions on youth employment. This integrated approach combines macro-economic policies and measures targeted at disadvantaged youth, addressing labour demand and supply, as well as the quantity and quality of employment for young people.

How? The main areas of intervention:

- Data collection and research on youth employment, unemployment and under-employment
- Analysis of the effectiveness of country policies and programmes on youth employment and dissemination of good practices
- Technical assistance in formulating and implementing national youth employment policies and programmes
- Advisory services to strengthen monitoring and evaluation functions
- Policy advice and capacity-building for governments, employers' organizations and trade unions
- Advocacy and awareness-raising activities as well as strategic partnerships at global, regional and national levels to promote decent work for youth

Project spotlight

Under the sponsorship of the MDG-F, funded by Spain, the ILO lead the implementation of joint United Nations programmes on youth employment and migration involving joint action across several United Nations agencies, resulting in more integrated and mutually supportive approaches. The 15 joint programmes on youth employment and migration spanned from rights at work to integrated youth employment initiatives, measures to improve conditions of work, labour migration policies and protection of migrant workers. The programmes enhanced national and local capacity for the development, implementation and monitoring of effective youth employment and migration policies and programmes. It is estimated that over 14 million young people benefitted from the joint programmes.

Key Publications and resources

- [Global Employment Trends for Youth 2013](#)
- [The Youth Employment Crisis: A call for action](#) (2012)
- Surfing the labour market: Job search skills for young people (2013)
- [Labour market transitions of young women and men, various countries and regions](#)
- [Resource guide on youth employment](#). Online information resource, regular updates.
- [DW4Y](#): The Decent work for youth platform
- [Youth Employment Inventory](#); [Global database of policies for youth employment](#)

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The International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

ITU is the leading United Nations agency for information and communication technology issues, and the global focal point for governments and the private sector in developing ICT networks and services. ITU's unique membership model – comprising not only Member States but over 700 private sector companies – helps bring together the most influential representatives from government and industry to exchange ideas, knowledge and technology for the benefit of the global community.

Why youth?

ITU research has shown the benefits of ICT access across all major sectors. For young people, access to information means better access to capital, markets and training needed to pursue a career or studies; increased participation in political processes, and recognition of youth as responsible citizens in today's society. ITU continues to explore innovative methods for bringing young people closer to its technical and development work. As a highly specialized organization, ITU's focus is evolving from engagement with a broad-based youth audience to targeting the next generation of ICT engineers, researchers and economists. As avid and creative users of ICTs, young people are key contributors to building an inclusive information society and bridging the digital divide.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Research and statistics / usage trends
- ITU Telecom Young Innovators Competition
- Exposing youth to international ICT diplomacy, treaty making and standardization
- Facilitating increased access to information for young people.

Project spotlight

BYND2015 Summit

In September 2013, ITU and the Government of Costa Rica co-organized the BYND2015 Global Summit on Youth and ICT with a view to highlighting the priorities of young people and capturing their combined voice in crucial national and international policy and decision making processes, focusing primarily on the United Nations Post-2015 negotiations. The BYND2015 Summit is recognized as a starting point for ITU's continued dialogue with young people, and while the Summit itself targeted a broad profile of young participants, the ITU's outreach will evolve to target young ICT engineers, researchers and economists. The Summit's outcomes included a crowd-sourced multi-media [declaration](#) garnered from an online community of young people. The declaration outlines the five hottest trends in social tech, and calls on ITU's members to continue lowering barriers to access for young people, who desperately require such information and knowledge sharing tools for their continued social, political and economic empowerment.

For more information on BYND2015 please visit:
<http://www.itu.int/en/bynd2015/Pages/default.aspx>

Key Publications

- [ITU Measuring the Information Society \(MIS\)](#) - published annually since 2009
- [ITU Child Online Protection Guidelines](#) (2009)

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The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

OHCHR represents the world's commitment to universal ideals of human dignity. It has a unique mandate from the international community to promote and protect all human rights. OHCHR's work is focused on three broad areas: human rights standard-setting, human rights monitoring and supporting human rights implementation at the country level.

Why youth?

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights recognizes that young people are in a situation of structural vulnerability in the exercise of their rights. Such disadvantage derives from social, economic and/or political structures requiring the adoption of specific measures to counter discrimination and to ensure equality in the exercise of their rights.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Mainstream the human rights of youth into the work of the treaty bodies and the special procedures
- Integrate human rights into the work of the United Nations on youth
- Ensure that international human rights standards are implemented on the ground through greater country engagement and our field presences
- Build partnerships with governments, civil society, national human rights institutions, other United Nations entities, international organizations, private sector and others in their efforts to promote and protect the human rights of young people

**Project
spotlight**

Expert Meeting on the Human Rights of Youth and follow up

On 25 and 26 July 2013, OHCHR organized a meeting of experts to analyse the human rights framework applicable to young people and to formulate possible ways forward for the human rights of youth at the international level.

In 2014 OHCHR will continue working with partners to bring the human rights of youth to the attention of the Human Rights Council.

Key publications

- E/CN.4/Sub.2/1992/36 of 18 June 1992 Final report on human rights and youth, submitted by Mr. Dumitru Mazilu, Special Rapporteur
- A/HRC/19/55 of 21 December 2011, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Margaret Sekaggya
- Executive summary and outcomes of the OHCHR 2013 Expert Meeting on the human rights of youth

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Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (SRSG – CAAC)

The Office of the SRSG – CAAC is called to appoint a Special Representative as a high-level independent voice for children affected by armed conflict. The Special Representative's mandate is to assess the protection of children in situations of armed conflict; promote the collection of information about the plight of children affected by armed conflict and encourage the development of networking; work closely with other UN bodies and specialized agencies as well as NGOs; and foster international cooperation to ensure respect for children's rights in these situations and contribute to the coordination of efforts by different actors.

Why youth?

Children and youth continue to bear the brunt of today's conflicts. Violations of children's rights occur daily in new and deepening crises, often on a large scale. Responding to this, the SRSG-CAAC promotes and protects the rights of all children affected by armed conflict and promotes the sustainable reintegration of conflict affected children and youth.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Advocating for the protection and well-being of boys and girls affected by armed conflict
- Suggesting and implementing ideas and approaches to enhance the protection of children affected by armed conflict and promoting a concerted protection response
- Undertaking humanitarian and diplomatic initiatives to facilitate the work of operational actors on the ground with regard to children and armed conflict

Project spotlight

Campaign to end the recruitment and use of children by government armed forces in conflict by 2016

This initiative announced in 2013 builds on recent commitments and measures taken by Government forces to ensure that children are not recruited or used by parties to conflict in any capacity. This campaign will be a joint effort led by the Special Representative and UNICEF in collaboration with other UN partners. The objective of this campaign is to mobilize political attention and further support, including through technical assistance, governments who are taking measures to professionalize their armed forces, ensuring that they become and remain 'child free'.

Key publications

- [Children and Conflict in a Changing World. Machel Study](#) (2009)
- [Child Protection in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations](#) (2011)
- Working Papers (updated in 2013):
 - [The Six Grave Violations Against Children During Armed Conflict: The Legal Foundation](#)
 - [The Rights and Guarantees of Internally Displaced Children in Armed Conflict](#)
 - [Children and Justice During and in the Aftermath of Armed Conflict](#)

Contact

<http://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/>



United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children (SRSG-VAC)

The mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children (SRSG-VAC) was established in 2009 by the United Nations General Assembly in line with the recommendation of the United Nations Study on Violence against Children. The Special Representative is a high-profile independent global advocate for the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against children, and acts as a bridge builder and catalyst of action in all regions and across sectors and settings.

Why youth?

In adolescence, it is vital to invest in young people's skills and empowerment to prevent the risk of violence and prevent their stigmatization and manipulation in violent incidents and criminal activities, to protect them from armed and community violence and to support their active contribution to a violence free society. Therefore the Special Representative has given a special emphasis to the protection from violence in schools, to the promotion of violence-free juvenile justice systems and restorative justice initiatives, in addition to prevention of gender-based violence, violence associated with harmful practices and violence against young people at risk. The Special Representative strongly supports children and young people's participation and their role as advocates, change makers, advisors, documenters, facilitators and researchers.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Enhance children and youth participation
- Cooperation with civil society organizations
- Facilitation of collaboration at the regional level
- Monitoring, evaluation and data collection
- Development of child and youth-friendly resources on violence related issues

Project Spotlight

Violence against Children project

With the support of civil society organizations, an active youth network has been set up in West Africa to address violence against children related topics. This network maintains regular cooperation with the SRSG-VAC who supports their significant efforts. Their Violence against Children project is a coordinated effort to support action by young people to raise awareness about the incidents of violence and to share experience and initiatives about ways of preventing and addressing them.

Key publications

- [Toward a World Free from Violence - Global Survey on Violence against Children](#) (2013)
- [Restorative justice for children](#) (2013)
- [Prevention of and responses to violence against children within the juvenile justice system](#). (2012)
- [Safe and child-sensitive counselling, complaint and reporting mechanisms to address violence against children](#) (2012)
- [Protecting children from harmful practices in plural legal systems](#) (2012)
- [Tackling Violence in Schools: Bridging the Gap between Standards and Practice](#) (2011)
- [Child Friendly Versions of the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and on a Communications Procedure](#) (2013)

For additional publications, please visit: <http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org/publications>

Contact

<http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org>
<http://facebook.com/martasantospaispage>

<http://twitter.com/srsgvac>
<http://youtube.com/srsgvac>



The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

UNAIDS is an innovative joint venture of the United Nations family. It brings together the efforts and resources of ten United Nations system organizations to the global AIDS response covering HIV prevention, treatment, care and support for people living with HIV and their families.

Why youth?

Young people are at the center of the global HIV epidemic. It is estimated that 5.4 million youth are living with HIV, 58.5 per cent of them female. More than one-third of the estimated 6,800 new infections each day are among youth. Despite the high numbers of young people living with HIV, youth-friendly services, such as access to HIV information to prevent future transmission of HIV among this group, and adequate health and social support services, are insufficient. There is still a need to mobilize policy makers, parents, media and faith-based organizations to influence public opinions and policies on HIV and young people.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Facilitate increased participation of young people in international AIDS conferences
- Enhance access for youth to confidential sexual and reproductive health services
- Provide strategic information and policies to leaders, policymakers and planners
- Track, monitor and evaluate the AIDS epidemic among young people
- Mobilize financial, human and technical resources to support an effective AIDS response among young people
- Educate young people on AIDS

Project spotlight

CrowdOutAIDS: Youth-led recommendations

In 2012 Youth leaders from around the world presented a set of youth-defined recommendations that will guide the UNAIDS Secretariat's work on HIV and young people through 2015. Based on the voices and views of more than 5,000 young people from 79 countries, the recommendations resulted from *CrowdOutAIDS*, an innovative youth-led policy project initiated by UNAIDS. Leveraging crowdsourcing technology and new media tools, the five-month project enabled young people to fully participate in the development of strategic recommendations for the UNAIDS Secretariat's youth agenda.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.crowdoutaids.org/wordpress/>

Key publications

- [Securing the Future Today – Synthesis of Strategic Information on HIV and Young People](#) (2011)
- [Fact Sheet: Adolescents, young people and HIV](#)
- [UNAIDS practical guidelines for intensifying HIV prevention: towards universal access](#) (2007)
- [Preventing HIV/AIDS in young people: evidence from developing countries on what works. A summary of the WHO Technical Report Series No. 938](#) (2006)
- [HIV/AIDS and human rights—young people in action. A kit of ideas for youth organizations](#) (UNESCO/UNAIDS, 2001)

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The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

UN Women works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; the empowerment of women and for the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security. UN Women's work is grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the United Nations Charter, and guided by the priorities set in the Beijing Platform for Action and in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Why youth?

UN Women recognizes that young women encounter particular challenges due to the double discrimination they face based on their gender and age. Challenges span critical areas of concern including poverty, education, employment, migration, health, participation in decision-making, information and communication technology, HIV/AIDs and armed conflict. UN Women works to ensure that public policies, programmes and legislation targeting youth have a gender perspective, and likewise, that public policies, legislation and programmes targeting women taken into account a youth perspective.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Support in formulation of policies, global standards and norms
- Assist Member States to implement standards (including technical and financial support)
- Enhance young women's leadership, participation and economic empowerment
- Strengthen the role of women in the peace and security agenda
- Advocacy for gender equality

Project Spotlight

Tutorial programme for young women running for political office

In Uruguay, where both women and youth are under-represented in parliament, UN Women, together with UNDP and UNFPA, conducted a unique tutorial programme aimed at young women between the ages of 18 and 30, to equip them with skills for running for political office and decision-making. The programme allowed participants to extend their formal and informal political networks, gain communications and debating skills, and enhance their understanding of the ground rules of politics. Furthermore, they attempted to bring home to the parties the conviction that, by involving women, parties and politics stand to gain.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2013/1/young-uruguayan-women-aim-to-boost-their-role-in-politics>

Key publications

- [Voices Against Violence](#) (2013)
- [Gender-based Violence and Child Protection among Syrian Refugees in Jordan, with a Focus on Early Marriage](#) (2013)
- [Breaking the Silence on Violence against Indigenous Girls, Adolescents and Young Women](#) (2013). Jointly by: UN Women, UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO, OSRSG/VAC
- [Progress of the World's Women: In Pursuit of Justice](#) (2012)

Contact

www.unwomen.org



The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

UN-Habitat aims to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities, with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all. It advocates for sustainable urbanization and urban poverty reduction, provides technical cooperation and innovative financing for urbanization and specific shelter needs of the urban poor, and creates strategic partnerships to leverage resources and coordinate international programme activities that work toward similar ends.

Why youth?

Young people constitute a large proportion of the urban population in rapidly urbanizing developing countries. Any effective intervention to improve the living conditions of the urban poor and slum-dwellers must deal with the challenges facing youth. UN-Habitat works to initiate and foster collaboration between youth, local authorities, national governments, youth-led organizations and United Nations agencies to advance the urban youth agenda. Working with young men and women and understanding their diverse abilities, realities and experiences is an essential element of UN-Habitat's work for sustainable urbanization.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Engage young people in local governance and participatory processes for sustainable urbanization
- Support to grassroots urban youth-led groups
- Provide youth with access to services (health services, recreation and skills training)
- Research and advocacy

Project
spotlight

Urban Youth Fund Projects

The Urban Youth Fund supports grassroots youth-led groups in developing countries that demonstrate innovation and initiative for positive change in their communities through youth empowerment. As of 2013, 238 groups based in 66 countries and 172 cities, have been funded. Selected projects are supported with grants and capacity building for the youth group.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.unhabitat.org/categories.asp?catid=637>

Key publications

- [The State of the Urban Youth: Youth in the Prosperity of Cities](#) (2013)
- [Advancing Youth Civic Engagement and Human Rights With Young Women and Young Men](#) (2013)
- [Young People, Participation and Sustainable Development in an Urbanizing World](#) (2012)
- [State of the Field in Youth-Led Development](#)
- [ICT Urban Governance and Youth](#)
- [Youth 21 – Building an Architecture for Youth Engagement in the United Nations System](#)

For additional publications, please visit <http://www.unhabitat.org/list.asp?typeid=15&catid=531>

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United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)

UNAOC is a special initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General that assists in diminishing hostility and promoting harmony among the nations. The UNAOC is a soft power tool for building a more peaceful, more socially inclusive world by fostering mutual respect among peoples of different cultural and religious identities, highlighting the will of the world's majority to reject extremism and embrace diversity.

Why youth?

The UNAOC sees youth as key agents of change when it comes to building peaceful and inclusive societies. We understand that if youth participation is enhanced, society as a whole will benefit. We seek to expand the recognition of the work of young people and for them to be included into larger processes to advance the objectives of the UNAOC.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Promote dialogue among a wide-range of stakeholders
- Advocacy on the important role youth play in enhancing cross-cultural understanding
- Support youth organizations to implement projects in their communities
- Facilitate networking among youth
- Strengthen youth's individual and organizational capacities
- Enhance youth participation to advance the objectives of the UNAOC

Project spotlight

Young Euro-Med Entrepreneurs in Interculturality Project (YEMEI)

The YEMEI project brings together aspiring young social entrepreneurs from the Euro-Med region for a week-long training and six months of mentoring aiming at supporting their efforts to combat youth unemployment, a known driver of conflict, while addressing marginalization, radicalization and extremism. There are many opportunities linked to either leveraging cultural and religious diversity for the social and economic betterment of the community, or seeking to address the challenges linked to this diversity which may hinder national growth and development. Equipped with the right tools and knowledge, dynamic and innovative young people can become social entrepreneurs and therefore generate employment while improving the quality of life in their community.

Key resources

- A UNAOC Youth website by youth and for youth interested in intercultural understanding with searchable databases of relevant tools developed by youth, as well as organizations and opportunities: <http://unaocyouth.org/>
- PLURAL+ is a contest, festival and distribution platform of youth-produced videos on migration, identity and social inclusion: <http://pluralplus.unaoc.org/>

Contact

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<http://unaocyouth.org/>



Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

Desertification, along with climate change and the loss of biodiversity were identified as the greatest challenges to sustainable development during the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. Established in 1994, UNCCD is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment, development and the promotion of healthy soils. The Convention's 195 signatory Parties work to alleviate poverty in the drylands, maintain and restore the land's productivity, and mitigate the effects of drought.

Why youth?

Young people living in drylands face several challenges, such as poverty and access to education, health care and land. Many of these challenges frequently result in, or are exacerbated by, conflicts and migration. Furthermore youth, often the most vulnerable segment of society, are frequently affected disproportionately by desertification.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- **Awareness raising:** The UNCCD request the affected country Parties to promote awareness and facilitate the participation of local populations, particularly youth, with the support of NGOs, in efforts to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought. In this regard, the secretariat has been working with several partners to raise the awareness of the young population on desertification, land degradation and drought.
- **Poverty alleviation:** Poverty, affecting young people, is highly prevalent in drylands and there is a causative relationship between drylands and poverty. Thus, poverty in countries in the arid zones of the Sahelian region of Africa is more prevalent than in more humid zones of the region.
- **Engaging youth organizations:** The Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD recently requested the Parties to further to promote the active involvement of CSOs, including those of youth, in the Convention process at the international level, in the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies.

Project spotlight

National Environment Youth Corps Projects

The secretariat implemented the National Environment Youth Corps Projects in Argentina, China and Mozambique to enhance the capacity of youth for implementing sustainable development policies and programmes at the local level, while gaining immediate revenues.

These projects aimed to reduce the presence of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere together with the rehabilitation of ground vegetation for restoring degraded land addressing the three Rio Conventions objectives. Moreover, they involved youth between 15-24 years of age living in degraded areas into the processes to combat desertification in order to provide them with education, awareness rising, training, expertise, employment and income generation.

Key publications

- [Learning to Combat Desertification](#)
- [A Creative Approach to Environmental Education. Teaching Resource Kit for Dryland Countries](#)
- *Soils Challenge Badge* guide for teachers and youth leaders on soil matters prepared in collaboration with FAO, World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) and World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS)

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The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)

UNCDF is the United Nations capital investment agency for the world's 49 least developed countries. It creates new opportunities for poor people and their small businesses by increasing access to microfinance and investment capital. It provides seed capital—grants and loans—and technical support to help microfinance institutions reach more poor households and small businesses, and local governments finance the capital investments will improve poor peoples' lives. UNCDF programmes help to empower women, and are designed to catalyse larger capital flows from the private sector, national governments and development partners.

Why youth?

The lack of vibrant private sectors able to absorb new generations of young people in many LDCs, along with the challenges young people face in acquiring marketable skills or capabilities for lifelong learning, has dual negative effects: it jeopardizes individuals' chances to break a vicious cycle of persistent and deepening poverty as well as prospects for sound equitable economic growth for LDC countries. UNCDF recognizes that access to social and financial assets, such as savings, and to educational opportunities, are essential to helping youth realize their full potential and reduce their vulnerability.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Increase access to financial services such as a safe place to save or an appropriately structured loan for investment in an enterprise or education for youth
- Enhance the financial component with non-financial services such as training in entrepreneurship and financial literacy, and mentorship opportunities
- Raise awareness on the importance of having financial regulatory frameworks that are both youth friendly and protective of youth rights (e.g. provide maximum control to youth to open and use a savings account, minimize age and identity restrictions)
- Promote the development and implementation of national strategies on financial literacy that are youth focused and take into account in particular the needs of young women and girls

Project
spotlight

The YouthStart programme

In 2010 UNCDF partnered with The MasterCard Foundation to launch YouthStart, a US\$12 million programme aimed at increasing access to financial and non-financial services for youth in sub-Saharan Africa. As of September 2013, some 221,545 youth (43 per cent young women and girls) had saved US\$ 7.4 million either in the form of an individual savings account or through group-based savings mechanisms; 34,784 had received an individual or group loan to start up or expand their own business; and 236,353 had participated in financial literacy sessions.

Key publications

- [Building the Business Case for Youth Services](#) (2013)
- [Offering Youth Financial and Non-financial Services: Trainer's Guides](#) (2013)
- [Client Protection for Youth Clients](#) (2013)
- [Policy Opportunities and Constraints to Access Youth Financial Services](#) (2012)
- [Assessing New Youth-Focused Products: Pilot Testing Financial and Non-financial Services for Youth in Sub-Saharan Africa](#) (2012)
- [Listening To Youth: Market Research to Design Financial and Non-financial Services for Youth in Sub-Saharan Africa](#) (2011)

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Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)

UN DESA works closely with governments and stakeholders to help countries around the world meet their economic, social and environmental goals. As the Secretariat entity responsible for the development pillar of the United Nations, UN DESA addresses a range of cross-cutting issues that affect peoples' lives and livelihoods. UN DESA is committed to addressing the world's most pressing concerns and taking the necessary steps to help create a better world for all – a world that is inclusive, prosperous and sustainable.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

The United Nations has long recognized that the imagination, ideals and energies of young women and men are vital for the continuing development of the societies in which they live. Therefore UN DESA works actively on including youth in the international development agenda – both as partners and beneficiaries. Within DESA's mandate, different departments cover different aspects of youth development.

- The **Division for Social Policy and Development** seeks to strengthen international cooperation for social development, focusing on social inclusion of youth. Within the Division, the United Nations Focal Point on Youth enhances awareness of the global situation of youth and increases recognition of the rights and aspirations of youth; promotes national youth policies; and aims to strengthen the participation of youth.
- The **Division for Sustainable Development** works actively to ensure the involvement of children and youth in protecting the environment and promoting economic and social development through organizing partners selected by the youth themselves.
- The **Statistics Division** promotes the development and availability of statistics and indicators needed to identify and address issues of relevance to youth at national, regional and global levels.
- In addition, the **Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination** supports the organization of ECOSOC Youth Forums.

Project spotlight

The UN Youth Delegates Programme

One form of youth participation at the United Nations is through the inclusion of youth delegates in a country's official delegation to the United Nations General Assembly and various functional Commissions of the Economic and Social Council. The youth delegate programme is coordinated by the Focal Point on Youth at the global level, but it is the responsibility of the Member States to establish a youth delegate programme at the national level, and to decide who will represent the young people of their country. Youth delegates have demonstrated themselves to be of great value to their Governments and Foreign Ministries who benefit from their fresh perspectives, creativity and idealism.

Key publications

- [United Nations World Youth Report](#) (biennial)
- [Youth Participation in Development: Summary Guidelines for Development Partners](#)
- [Principles and recommendations for population and housing censuses](#)
- [Millennium Development Goals Report](#) (annual)
- [Guide to Youth Delegates to the United Nations](#)
- More publications available at: <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/publications>

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The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Advancements in sustainable human development are at the core of what UNDP does as the United Nations global development organization. Present in 177 countries and territories, UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to create opportunities to empower lives, help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. UNDP's focus is helping countries build and share solutions to achieve poverty reduction, democratic governance, crisis prevention and recovery, energy and environment for sustainable development. In all activities, UNDP encourages the protection of human rights, capacity development and the empowerment of women.

Why youth?

UNDP supports youth empowerment as an end in itself. Additionally, from a development perspective, the involvement of young men and women in participatory processes and planning and policy making at all levels plays a pivotal role in ensuring that youth rights are promoted, youth voices are heard, inter-generational knowledge is shared, and innovation and critical thinking are encouraged from a young age, to support transformational change in their lives and communities.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Develop the productive capacities of young women and men
- Promote an enabling environment for enhanced youth employment and employability
- Support inclusive and effective participation of young people in all branches of States, politics, and decision-making
- Empower youth to be positive agents of change
- Identify and strengthen youth capacities for resilience in conflict and transition settings

Project Spotlight

Strengthening youth political participation

Political capacities of youth leaders have been strengthened in Latin America and the Caribbean through partnership with the Virtual School on Human Development for Latin America and the Caribbean, in online training on communication strategies and political campaigns, with priority placed on Afro-descendent, indigenous and female youth leaders. Also in support of youth empowerment and thought leadership, the UNDP-supported regional platform www.juventudconvoz.org which is managed by and for youth, enables access to information, promotion of regional and national debates on youth and democratic governance issues with strong emphasis on post-2015 discussions.

Key publications/knowledge platforms

[Enhancing Youth Political Participation throughout the Electoral Cycle](#) (2013)

[Green Jobs for Women and Youth: What Can Local Governments Do?](#) (2013)

National Human Development Reports on Youth (most recently - [Somalia](#), [Qatar](#), [Nicaragua](#))

Resources on Youth and Democratic Governance can be found [here](#).

Knowledge and resource platform on women and politics: www.iknowpolitics.org

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The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

Established in 1958 as one of the United Nations five regional commissions, the ECA's mandate is to promote the economic and social development of its Member States, foster intra-regional integration, and promote international cooperation for Africa's development. Made up of 54 Member States, and playing a dual role as a regional arm of the UN and as a key component of the African institutional landscape, the ECA is well positioned to make unique contributions to address the continent's development challenges.

Why youth?

The Commission's work on youth must be seen in the context of the size of the youth population in the region: young people aged between 15 and 24 years alone account for about 20 per cent of the population. Africa's youth often face considerable hurdles to participating in economic, social and political spheres of life. This is why youth concerns are prominently represented in the programmes of activities of all divisions at the headquarters in Addis Ababa, and in five ECA sub-regional offices in the continent.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Conduct research and analyze trends and policies in youth relevant priority areas
- Enhance capacities of Member States to integrate youth in development processes and policies
- Advocate for the involvement of youth in regional consultations
- Develop and maintain strong partnerships with youth-led organizations and CSOs working on youth-related issues
- Focus on information and communication technologies (ICT) and youth
-

Project Spotlight

UNECA knowledge platform

The ECA developed a tool, a knowledge platform, to share its work and best practices on social policies including youth issues. The platform was used by both policy makers and young people and was used to facilitate the sharing of good practices at the individual and country level on issues of youth employment. The platform enhanced peer learning, information sharing and knowledge creation among ten countries including Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Nigeria, the Gambia, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe on how their countries were addressing youth unemployment issues. The platform was also used to obtain the views and input of young Africans on the area of the creative economy as a new development pathway for youth employment in Africa.

Key publications

- African Youth Report 2009 - [Expanding opportunities for, and with young people in Africa](#)
- African Youth Report 2011 - [Addressing the youth education and employment nexus in the new global economy](#)
- African Youth Report 2013 - A new development path for youth employment in Africa

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The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)

The UNECE strives to foster sustainable economic growth among its 56 Member States located in the European Union (EU), non-EU South-East Europe, Western and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and North America. All these countries engage in dialogue and cooperate under the aegis of the ECE on economic and sectoral issues. To this end, the ECE provides a forum for analysis, policy advice and assistance to governments. Through the development of conventions, norms and standards, the ECE aims to harmonize action and facilitate exchanges between Member States. The key areas of expertise of the ECE are economic cooperation and integration, energy, environment, housing and land management, population, statistics, timber and forests, trade and transport.

Why youth?

The ECE recognizes that young people represent an asset upon which the future of any society depends. The ECE region is home to about 179 million youth, representing approximately 15 per cent of the total population. In many countries of the ECE region, young people are facing an erosion of their opportunities to gain education, employable skills, and a decent job and income. It is estimated that 18 million young people in the countries in transition and emerging market economies are neither at school nor in employment.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Policy analysis and advice
- Data collection and research
- Organization of Regional Youth Forums
- Promotion of youth entrepreneurship in the region
- Promotion of road safety initiatives

Project spotlight

The Generations and Gender Programme (GGP)

The ECE is coordinating the Generations and Gender Programme (GGP) of data collection and research. The GGP has two pillars: the Generations and Gender Surveys collecting micro-data information and the contextual databases containing information about the policy framework. Both taken together aim at improving the knowledge base for policymaking in UNECE countries. The surveys conducted in this programme cover the age range from 18 to 79 years. Many of the issues studied are specifically relevant for young people such as the processes of family formation and home-leaving and a broad range of their determinants, including education, the labour market, housing, intergenerational relationships and contraception.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.unece.org/pau/ggp/welcome.html>

Key publications

- [How Generations and Gender shape demographic change: towards policies based on better knowledge](#) (2009)
- [The Youth Declaration for Road Safety](#) (2007)
- [What UNECE does for you - UNECE works on Generations and Gender Programme](#) (2008)
- More publications are available under: <http://www.unece.org/transport/resources/publications>

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The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

ECLAC's mandate is to promote economic and social development through regional and sub-regional cooperation and integration. The commission undertakes studies and research programmes supporting its objectives and disseminates its findings to governments to help plan, organize and execute national projects of technical cooperation.

Why youth?

ECLAC recognizes that the prospects for young people differ significantly depending on their socio-economic situation, their racial/ethnic background, and whether they come from rural or urban areas. ECLAC is the leading agency for the production of information and documents regarding youth in Latin America and the Caribbean. ECLAC supports governments in their endeavor to develop youth-related policies and reforms and provides evidence-based policy analysis and technical assistance with respect to data analysis on a variety of youth-related issues.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Monitoring and research
- Collect and share relevant data regarding youth in Latin America and the Caribbean
- Technical cooperation
- Assist governments in developing social protection policies for youth
- Advocate for the promotion of young people's rights
- Provide evidence-based policy analysis guidance
- Capacity building
- Cooperation with CSOs, especially youth organizations

Project Spotlight

Addressing youth social inclusion and violence

ECLAC has recently initiated a project on youth social inclusion in contexts of increasing violence, with a focus on Central America. This project aims at promoting the effective social inclusion of youth by strengthening the capacity of governments to assess and design more effective policies to confront youth exclusion and violence. The project will also seek to foster enhanced sharing of data and information on critical economic and social challenges for youth in Latin America and the Caribbean in order to support national and regional decision-making. As part of this project ECLAC will work in close collaboration with regional actors, such as the United Nations Inter-agency Working Group on Youth, the Secretariat for Central American Social Integration (SISCA), and the Iberoamerican Youth Organization (OIJ).

Key publications

- [Regional population report in Latin America and the Caribbean 2011: investing in youth](#) (*Invertir en juventud: Informe Regional de Población en América Latina y el Caribe*, published jointly with UNFPA)
- [20 good practices in youth public policies 2012](#) (*20 Buenas Prácticas en Políticas Públicas de Juventud*, published jointly with OIJ, UNDP, UNFPA, and UNESCO)
- [Crisis and recovery in youth employment 2012](#) (published jointly with ILO)
- [Series of bulletins entitled *Desafíos*](#) (published jointly with UNICEF).

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United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

UNEP acts as a catalyst, advocate, educator and facilitator to promote the wise use and sustainable development of the global environment. To accomplish this, UNEP works with a wide range of partners, including Governments, United Nations entities, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and civil society at national, regional and international levels.

Why youth?

UNEP recognizes the critical role young people can and must play in addressing environmental issues. Deteriorating environmental conditions have a profound effect on young people's health as well as on their socio-economic situation. It is therefore important to have the concerns of young people on environmental issues heard, provide them with opportunities to develop valuable lifelong skills, and also engage them to make tangible actions that contribute to the health and wellbeing of people and the environment. UNEP engages young people in environmental activities in order to foster a generation of environmentally conscious citizens, capable of positive action.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Promote environmental awareness and information exchange
- Build capacities of youth to address environmental issues
- Enhance youth participation in decision-making
- Strengthening of young people's engagement
- Build strong partnerships with youth organizations and networks
- Enhance environmental education and education for sustainable development

Project spotlight

The Tunza Programme

Tunza is UNEP's long-term strategy for engaging young people in environmental activities and in the work of UNEP. Tunza means "to treat with care and affection" in Kiswahili. The Tunza Programme consolidates all of UNEP's activities for young people into a unified global programme. The Tunza strategy focuses on four thematic areas: awareness creation, information exchange, capacity-building, and youth participation in decision-making. Tunza also has a clear focus on the involvement and active participation of girls and young women in all activities. Concrete activities of the Tunza programme include:

- The biennial UNEP [Tunza International Youth Conference](http://www.unep.org/tunza/youth/) and regional meetings
- The Tunza Global Gathering
- Annual International Children's Painting Competition
- Quarterly youth publication – Tunza Magazine

For more information on Tunza please visit: <http://www.unep.org/tunza/youth/>

Key publications and resources

- [Tunza Acting for a better world: GEO-5 for youth.](#)
- The [Tunza magazine](#) produced by youth for youth to disseminate environmental information to young people.
- <http://www.youthxchange.net/>, containing several training kits & guidebooks.

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United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

ESCAP is the regional development arm of the United Nations for the Asia-Pacific region. It has a membership of 62 governments. ESCAP, as the United Nations convening authority for Asia and the Pacific, conducts analytical, normative and technical cooperation work in a range of economic and social sectors.

Why youth?

ESCAP's work on youth focuses on the untapped potential of young people to further contribute to development in the region, recognizing that young people can play much greater roles in decisions that influence the opportunities they face and the environments they live in. Within ESCAP, the Social Development Division (SDD) works on a range of social development thematic areas, including youth. In particular SDD works to enhance knowledge, capacity and regional cooperation, and aims at improving the situation young people face, by assisting Governments to develop comprehensive national youth policies and engaging young people.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Research on the situation of youth in the Asia-Pacific region
- Strengthening the capacity of governments in Asia and the Pacific, Africa and Western Asia in formulating inclusive and sustainable development policies
- Enhancing youth participation
- Advocacy
- HIV/AIDS and substance use prevention and treatment

Project spotlight

Project

Over the period 2014-2016, ESCAP will lead the implementation of an interregional project to strengthen the capacity of governments in the ESCAP, ECA and ESCWA regions to promote youth policies and programmes that address inclusiveness and sustainability through the engagement of young people. As a key project output, a policy toolbox will fill a gap in the currently fragmented landscape of youth-led movements and organizations across the three regions by providing practical inputs for policymakers to maximize the impact of youth organizations' interventions in policymaking processes. The project will furthermore seek to increase the capacity of youth organizations in actively participating in relevant policymaking processes that impact their lives and futures.

Key publications

- [Investing in Youth Policy](#) (2011), in collaboration with other members of the Asia-Pacific Interagency Group on Youth
- [A Tool Kit for Building Capacity for Community-based Treatment and Continuing Care of Young Drug Users in the Greater Mekong Subregion](#) (2008)

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United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

With the ultimate goal of building peace in the minds of people, UNESCO is the specialized organization within the United Nations system that promotes international cooperation among its Member States in the fields of education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture and communication.

Why youth?

Around the world, youth are driving change and claiming respect for fundamental freedoms and rights, improved conditions for themselves and their communities, and opportunities to learn, work and participate in decisions that affect them. At the same time, due to persistent crises, they are faced with acute challenges affecting important aspects of their lives. More than ever, it is now time to improve investment in research, policies and programmes to create an enabling and rights-based environment where youth prosper, exercise rights, and engage as responsible actors. Recognizing young women and men as agents of change, UNESCO acts towards ensuring that they are engaged in policies and programmes affecting them and that they lead action to promote peace and sustainable development in their countries and communities. Youth are concerned or affected by UNESCO's work in different ways: as beneficiaries of services and activities; as independent actors and as partners.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Accompany Member States in the formulation or review of inclusive and integrated public policies on youth
- Build capacities and improve the educational and learning environment for youth
- Provide opportunities for youth to put their skills and competencies to practice
- Promote youth civic engagement and youth participation in decision-making
- Enhance youth entrepreneurship and social innovation
- Foster the role of youth in conflict prevention and in the consolidation of peace

Key interventions 2014-2021

In collaboration with other United Nations entities, UNESCO will provide upstream policy advice for the development or review of transversal and inclusive public policies on youth, in line with national needs. The concept of youth civic engagement will be further developed and support will be provided for youth participation in democratic consolidation and for youth-led community action for sustainability and peace. Within the United Nations system's collaborative work, UNESCO will work to up-scale effective youth and adult literacy programmes, including media and information literacy, and build entrepreneurial and cultural management skills. National capacities in TVET will be further developed, in terms of supporting transition from school to work. UNESCO will work with United Nations entities to integrate education for sustainable development (ESD) into education plans and curricula, non-formal education and lifelong learning and will promote quality comprehensive HIV, sexuality and health education. Support for civic education and arts education programmes will be maintained and opportunities will be provided for youth to pursue studies and careers in the field of science technology and innovation.

Key interventions

Key publications

- [UNESCO Operational Strategy on Youth 2014-2021](#)
- [Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2012: Youth and skills](#) - Youth version
- [Youth matters: equipping vulnerable young people with literacy and life skills](#)
- [Manuel d'apprentissage de la démocratie pour les jeunes en Tunisie](#)
- [The UNESCO Youth Forum. Celebrating a decade of youth participation](#)

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United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

ESCWA promotes economic and social development through regional and sub-regional cooperation and integration. It formulates and promotes development assistance activities and projects commensurate with the needs and priorities of the region.

Why youth?

ESCWA's work is based on multiple global and regional mandates to work on youth empowerment in the region, working to help member countries capitalize on the demographic window of opportunity. ESCWA creates information products and provides technical assistance to aid the creation of informed, relevant, responsive, and effective national youth policies and programmes of actions following the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) framework.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Research on youth in the Western Asia region
- Technical assistance to Governments for the development of national youth policies and programmes of action
- Capacity building and knowledge sharing

Project spotlight

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

The project will focus on filling in existing gaps in areas where efforts are still lagging behind, such as the identification of the needs and priorities of young people. The project will strengthen the capacities of policy makers to formulate or revise and upgrade existing national youth policies in line with the identified youth priorities as well as assist governments in formulating national plans of action for youth including indicators to monitor progress in WPAY priorities.

Key Publications

- [Youth in the ESCWA Region: Situation Analysis and Implications for Development Policies](#) (2011)
- [Youth Exclusion in the ESCWA Region: Demographic, Economic, and Cultural Factors](#) (2011)
- [Technical Paper on International Migration of Youth in Arab Countries](#) (2009)
- [Youth Development in the ESCWA Region: Statistical Profiles, National Strategies and Success Stories](#) (2010)
- [National Youth Policy: Priorities and Paradigms](#) (2009)
- [Impact of ICT on Arab youth: Employment, education and social change](#) (2013)
- [Technical Paper on Gender Mainstreaming in Youth Strategies](#) (2011)

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The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

The UNFCCC secretariat supports the intergovernmental negotiations on climate change under the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol through arrangements for UNFCCC conferences and meetings and the provision of technical information and support. The secretariat also supports Parties to implement the Convention through, for example, the engagement of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, including youth organizations.

Why youth?

Partnering with and for young people is key to tackling climate change: youth is the main driving force that needs to be mobilized to reverse global environmental degradation and address the consequences of climate change. Countless examples from around the world show children and youth to be resourceful, innovative thinkers, advocates and leaders on climate change action.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Mobilize youth participation in the intergovernmental climate change process
- Enhance the involvement and participation of youth in activities related to climate change education, training, public awareness, public participation and public access to information
- Closely collaborate with and build capacities of youth-led organizations
- Promote information sharing

Project spotlight

Project

The UNFCCC secretariat coordinates the work of the [United Nations Joint Framework Initiative on Children, Youth and Climate Change](#), through which many members of the United Nations Inter-agency Network on Youth Development collaborate closely with youth-focused and youth-led organizations by conducting joint activities, sharing information and empowering children and young people to take action on climate change. The UNFCCC secretariat also hosts the [Climate Change Information Network](#) (CC:iNet), an open platform for sharing of information on climate change education, training, public awareness, public participation and public access to information. CC:iNet includes the [UNFCCC Youth Portal](#), which provides a dedicated space for youth organizations to highlight their climate change actions on the UNFCCC website. The Youth Portal offers a broad range of information on climate change initiatives, projects, campaigns, educational tools, websites and publications, produced by and for young people.

Key publications

In collaboration with members of the Joint Framework Initiative and youth organizations from around the world the UNFCCC secretariat has produced the following key publications on children, youth and climate change:

- [Youth in Action on Climate Change: Inspirations from around the World](#) (2013)
- [Youth Participation in the UNFCCC Negotiation Process](#) (2010)
- [Growing Together in a Changing Climate](#) (2009)

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The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

With offices in over 140 countries and territories and bringing specialized expertise in demography and sexual and reproductive health and rights, UNFPA supports countries to collect and analyze population data, understand emerging trends, identify the most marginalized and formulate effective policies and programmes to invest in adolescents and youth development and human rights. UNFPA supports youth-led organizations and networks and convenes diverse stakeholders to put young people's priorities and participation at the center of the development agenda, including in humanitarian and fragile contexts, to deliver a world where every young person's potential is fulfilled.

Why youth?

For millions of adolescents around the world, puberty - the biological onset of adolescence - brings not only changes to their bodies but also new vulnerabilities to human rights abuses, particularly in relation to their sexuality, marriage and childbearing. Millions of girls are coerced into unwanted sex or marriage and face a high risk of unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, sexually transmitted infections and HIV, and death or disability due to childbirth. Investments in young people's education, livelihoods, sexual and reproductive health, including HIV, participation, leadership and human rights are not only cost-effective but they also mean a more resilient present and future.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Enable evidence-based advocacy for comprehensive policy and programme development, investment and implementation
- Promote comprehensive sexuality education
- Build capacity for sexual and reproductive health service delivery including HIV prevention
- Take bold initiatives to reach marginalized and disadvantaged adolescents and youth, especially girls
- Promote youth leadership and participation

Project spotlight

The Adolescent Girls Initiative

In 12 countries UNFPA is intensifying efforts to protect adolescent girls' rights, in particular delay age at marriage and childbearing, empower the most marginalized girls, and elevate their status in communities. By making targeted investments at scale in girls over five years of age, thousands of vulnerable girls at risk are supported primarily through community-level girl groups that provide opportunities for social participation and leadership, gaining life skills and literacy, and accessing health services including family planning and HIV services – while creating a more favourable environment for adolescent girls at the community and national levels.

Key publications

- [UNFPA Strategy on Adolescents and Youth](#) (2012)
- [The Case for Investing in Young People](#) (2010)
- [Marrying Too Young: End Child Marriage](#) (2012)
- [Framework for Action on Adolescents and Youth](#) (2007)
- [Adolescent and Youth Demographics: An Overview](#) (2011)

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The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

UNHCR is mandated to lead and coordinate international action to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems worldwide. Its primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees. UNHCR strives to ensure that everyone can exercise the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge in another state, with the option to return home voluntarily, integrate locally or to resettle in a third country. It also has a mandate to help stateless people.

Why youth?

Among refugees, internally displaced and stateless people, children and youth constitute a majority of people in need of protection. Youth are at greater risk than any other group of sexual and gender-based violence, abuse, exploitation, trafficking and forced recruitment into armed groups. In addition to protection risks, displaced young people often have limited access to development opportunities. These burdens, coupled with new responsibilities of independence or caring for family members in the absence of a social support network, may pose further challenges and greater vulnerability. When given the opportunity, resources and voice, young people are very effective at promoting change. Provided with guidance, training and tools, youth can lead projects that improve protection and foster development.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Support young refugees' and asylum seekers' leadership, empowerment and participation
- Promote economic independence
- Improve community access to technology
- Support educational opportunities (including scholarships for young refugees and access to online courses and certifications)
- Cooperation with youth-led organizations
- Foster social integration through community projects
- Research and statistics

Project spotlight

The Morocco Playground Project

The project is a common effort by UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM and several NGOs to use sports as a tool to overcome cultural barriers, create new opportunities for networking, improve social integration, and contribute to the development of a favourable protection environment for refugees and asylum seekers. The MPP connects street basketball to activities designed to build capacity in education, conflict mediation, confidence-building, arts, entrepreneurship, project management and leadership. The project specifically targets girls and women, expecting to reach 40 per cent of female participation in activities that are often considered only for boys and men.

Key publications

- [A Global Review. UNHCR's Engagement with Displaced Youth](#) (2013)
- [UNHCR Annual Statistics Reports](#) (annually)
- [The UNHCR Global Report](#) (annually)
- [The UNHCR Global Appeal](#) (annually)

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The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

The fundamental mission of UNICEF is to promote the rights of every child below the age of 18, with particular emphasis on the most disadvantaged and excluded. In its work, UNICEF is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Why adolescents?

The United Nations defines adolescents as individuals aged 10–19: in effect, those in the second decade of their lives. This time marks a phase separate from both early childhood and adulthood, a period that requires special attention through appropriate policies and services attentive to the needs and capabilities of adolescent girls and boys. UNICEF works with and for adolescents to promote their rights to positive development and meaningful participation.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting adolescent development

- Ensure the participation of adolescents in processes that affect them
- Facilitate skills-development for meaningful employment
- Promote respect for the rights of children in conflict with the law
- Promote girls' empowerment through education, life-skills education and participation
- Facilitate the demobilization and reintegration of child soldiers
- Provide education and psycho-social support in emergency situations
- Promote the prevention of substance abuse, enhance access to health services for children and adolescents and increase efforts for the prevention of HIV transmission

Project spotlight

Innovation Labs

UNICEF has established several Innovation Labs around the world, including in Uganda, Zimbabwe and Kosovo. While the focus and nature of collaboration varies according to a country's need, all labs are spaces for engaging young people, technologists, the private sector, and civil society in problem-solving.

For more information on Innovation labs, please visit:

<http://www.unicefinnovationlabs.org>

Key publications and resources

- [State of Our World. Adolescence. Beyond the Stereotypes](#) (2011)
- [The State of the World's Children. Adolescence: An Age of Opportunity](#) (2011)
- [Progress for Children. A Report Card on Adolescents](#) (2012)
- [Adolescence: A Time That Matters](#) (2002)
- Voices of Youth: <http://www.voicesofyouth.org/>
- [U-report](#), a SMS-based system that allows young Ugandans to speak out about what's happening in their communities.

Contact

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The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

UNIDO aspires to reduce poverty through inclusive sustainable industrial development. All countries should have the opportunity to grow a flourishing productive sector, to increase their participation in international trade and to safeguard their environment. By focusing on poverty reduction, inclusive globalization and environmental sustainability, UNIDO offers a vast set of services and tailor made solutions to address the specific challenges faced by developing countries and countries in transition.

Why youth?

Creating jobs for youth is one of the most pressing challenges around the globe, and especially in developing countries and economies in transition. The creation of productive and decent work is a prerequisite for long-term economic and political stability. This is why UNIDO interventions in the area of youth development extend the necessary support to assist youth in becoming actively engaged in the socio-economic development of their societies by creating productive and decent work for youth. The overarching goal is to contribute to the economic empowerment of young people and inclusive and sustainable industrial development.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Promote an enabling environment for youth-led businesses (training and financial assistance)
- Promote an entrepreneurial culture in secondary schools and develop the capacities of local business service providers to offer high quality financial and non-financial assistance to young entrepreneurs
- Increase the skill capacities of young people to respond better to the demand of the private sector
- Promotion of innovation and technology transfer (South – South cooperation)
- Development of value chains with high potential for youth employment

Project spotlight

Productive work for youth: Engaging Tunisian Youth to Achieve the MDGs

Funded by the Spanish MDG fund, this project was jointly implemented by UNIDO, FAO, IOM, ILO and UNDP to support the Government of Tunisia in its efforts to create jobs for young people. UNIDO's intervention focused on a threefold approach that aimed at reinforcing local support structures (public, private and CSOs), assisting young entrepreneurs to create and develop viable enterprises by providing non-financial assistance (including coaching, access to market, cooperative creation in close cooperation with the ILO) and adequate financial means through the set-up of a dedicated fund (Souq Attanmia) in cooperation with UN partners, domestic and foreign private sector companies, the AfDB, and national financial institutions. UNIDO supported youth civic and political engagement through the establishment of a [web-based platform](#) for the exchange of successful cases, innovative ideas, and youth-generated solutions. Moreover, through partnership with other UN entities, a network of online mentoring and coaching was made available to young potential and existing entrepreneurs.

Key publications and resources

- [Factsheet: Productive Work for Youth](#) (2013)
- [Tunis Declaration on Productive Work for Youth in Tunisia and the MENA region](#)
- [Background Paper: International Conference on Productive Work for Youth in Tunisia and the MENA region](#) (2012)

For further publications, please visit www.unido.org

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The United Nations Millennium Campaign (UNMC)

UNMC informs, inspires and encourages people's involvement and action for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It supports citizens' efforts to hold their governments accountable for the promises they made at the Millennium Summit in 2000. Working at both the national and international levels, the ambition of the Campaign is to inspire a global movement to achieve the Goals and eradicate extreme poverty by 2015. The Millennium Campaign's premise is simple: we are the first generation that can put an end to extreme poverty around the world, and we refuse to miss this opportunity! The Millennium Campaign seeks to address the challenges faced by youth across the world by focusing on youth as a primary constituency to partner with and mobilize as part of the campaign.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Encourage youth participation in the MDG process and the Post-2015 discussions, for example through online-tools such as the "My World" survey and the "World We Want" consultation
- Establish key strategic partnerships, including with youth organizations
- Organize national youth consultations
- Set up portals on popular social networking sites including Facebook and Twitter

Project spotlight

Facilitate youth consultation and participation through online tools

- The "My World" survey is a United Nations global survey where citizens from all over the world are voting on issues they think are important in their lives. The "My World" survey offers individuals a list of 16 issues to choose from. The voters are then required to prioritize six of those issues they consider most important to their lives. The survey results will be used for the future development agenda of the UN after the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) end in 2015. Response so far has been remarkable: 1 million voters from 194 countries have participated online, through mobile phones or offline, using pen and paper. Approximately 850,000 voters are below the age of 30. The survey continues until 2015, but current results and data can be accessed online on: <http://data.myworld2015.org>
- The "World We Want" is an online consultation aimed at finding out what young peoples' views on sustainable development are and hearing their proposed solutions to youth issues in development. Feeding into the post-2015 discussions, the "World We Want" consultation steers discussions on the post-2015 agenda and enhances youth participation to make sure that young peoples' voices are taken into consideration when setting the new development agenda. For more information, please visit: www.worldwewant2015.org/youth.

Key publications

- Incremental Steps in Strengthening Youth Voices and Actions in the Post 2015 Development Agenda (*Forthcoming*)
- [Youth MDG Action Guide: Only with your voice](#)
- [Youth and the MDGs: Challenges and Opportunities for Implementation](#) (2005)
- <http://www.millenniumcampaign.org/whos-doing-what/youth/>

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The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

UNODC assists Member States in their struggle against illicit drugs, crime and terrorism. The three pillars of the UNODC work programme are (a) normative work to assist States in the ratification and implementation of international treaties, the development of domestic legislation on drugs, crime and terrorism, and the provision of secretariat and substantive services to the treaty-based and governing bodies; (b) research and analytical work to increase knowledge and understanding of drugs and crime issues and expand the evidence-base for policy and operational decisions; and (c) field-based technical cooperation projects to enhance the capacity of Member States to counteract illicit drugs, crime and terrorism.

Why youth?

UNODC recognizes that getting youth on board in the fight against substance abuse is essential, as statistics show that illicit drug use is much more prevalent amongst young people than adults. The use of illicit drugs has a range of serious negative physical and psychological effects that in turn can exact a high toll on families and communities. The younger people start using substances, the higher the probability of developing substance dependence later in life.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Contribute to the prevention of substance abuse and crime amongst youth
- Enhance treatment and rehabilitation of drug dependence
- Reform juvenile justice systems to prevent juvenile crime
- Involve youth in the development of prevention activities
- Enhance youth participation in policy making
- Build capacities of youth CSOs to implement drug use and crime prevention projects

Project Spotlight

The UNODC Youth Initiative

The Youth Initiative engages young people to reflect on the effects of substance use in their communities and to start taking action against it. The Initiative connects youth globally through social media to discuss, inspire, and learn from each other on the ways of promoting healthy lifestyles and start mobilizing their peers, families, schools, and communities. The Initiative empowers youth to plan and undertake activities that support freedom from psychotropic substances, respect for health and social cohesion. The Youth Initiative has so far connected over 700 schools and youth groups from over 100 different countries.

*For more information, on the Youth Initiative please visit: www.unodc.org/youth
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Youth-Initiative/205542506204854?sk=wall>.*

Key publications

- [A Participatory Handbook for Youth Drug Prevention](#) (2002)
- [School-based Education for Drug Abuse Prevention](#) (2004)
- [Monitoring and Evaluating Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Programmes](#) (2006)
- [International Standards on Drug Use Prevention](#) (2013)

Contact

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The Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO)

Established in 2005, PBSO helps to sustain peace in conflict-affected countries by garnering international support for nationally owned and led peacebuilding efforts. The office assists and supports the Peacebuilding Commission, administers the Peacebuilding Fund, and supports the Secretary-General's efforts to coordinate the United Nations system in its peacebuilding efforts.

Why Youth?

Young people are a cross-cutting priority for the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) it manages. Young people are considered an essential group to target and engage throughout the main areas covered by the Fund.

How? Interventions targeting youth development are funded through PBF's priority areas:

- Support to implementation of peace agreements and political dialogue
- Promote coexistence and peaceful conflict resolution
- Revitalize the economy and immediate peace dividends
- (Re)build essential administrative services and infrastructures

This translates into funding support channeled through United Nations agencies in post-conflict countries in areas such as, for the year 2013, youth employment and empowerment (Comoros, Niger, Liberia and Guinea), literacy and citizenship education (South Sudan), and youth political participation (Myanmar and Yemen).

Project Spotlight

Peacebuilding Fund: Empowerment of Youth at Risk through Job Creation

Funded by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, UNRWA, UNICEF and the ILO empower Palestinian youth in Lebanon through productive activities. The main aim of the project is to help young Palestine refugees find and retain gainful occupation, thereby stabilizing their socio-economic environment. The project involves vocational training, the establishment of a youth empowerment and job creation programme, and micro-credit facilities. In parallel, data on the Palestinian labour force is collected and analyzed. Another component is the improvement of information on the demand-side of the Lebanese labour market undertaken by national partners and NGOs.

Key Publications

- [Report of the Secretary General on Peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict](#) (2012)
- [Report of the Secretary-General on Women's participation in peacebuilding](#) (2010)
- [Women and Natural Resources: Unlocking the Peacebuilding Potential](#) (2013)
- [Building Just Societies: Reconciliation in Transitional Settings](#) (2012)
- [Thematic Review of Security Sector Reform \(SSR\) and Peacebuilding](#) (2012)
- [Thematic review of DDR contributions to peacebuilding and the role of the PBF](#)
- [Peace Dividends and Beyond: Contributions of Administrative Social Services to Peacebuilding](#) (2012)
- [The Benchmarking Handbook](#) (2010)

Contact

<http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pbso/>



The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and is mandated to provide assistance and protection to a population of some 5 million registered Palestine refugees. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank and the Gaza Strip to achieve their full potential in human development, pending a just solution to their plight. UNRWA's services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, and microfinance.

Why youth?

Young women and men between 15 and 29 years of age account for almost 29 per cent of the registered refugee population; this group is growing at an unprecedented rate. UNRWA recognizes that youth are the future human capital and source of productivity of the refugee community, a vital engine for prosperity and a positive force for change in the societies where they live. UNRWA is committed to deepening its involvement with refugee youth, to bolster their human capital and improve their life chances, thereby providing a foundation for the prosperity of future generations of Palestine refugees across the region.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Provide children and youth with access to education
- Improve access to preventive and curative health services for young refugees
- Provide youth with access to vocational and technical training
- Enhance access to employment opportunities for youth
- Offer young entrepreneurs access to finance to start their businesses
- Establish mechanisms to ensure youth participation
- Advocate for the rights of young refugees

Project spotlight

UNRWA Education Programme

UNRWA runs one of the largest education systems in the Middle East, opening the doors of its 699 schools to nearly 500,000 pupils each day and employing 17,000 teachers. All refugee children of school age are eligible to enroll in UNRWA's schools, which provide free basic education across nine grades in the West Bank, Gaza and Syria, ten grades in Jordan, and eleven in Lebanon. Around half of all pupils at UNRWA schools are girls. To facilitate the creation of academic and intellectual leadership in the refugee community, UNRWA provides small numbers of project-funded scholarships for university tuition, awarded on merit and to particularly disadvantaged groups.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.unrwa.org/what-we-do/education>

Key publications

- [UNRWA'S Ten Youth Commitments](#) (2012)
- [Engaging Youth Background Document](#) (2012)
- [UNRWA's Role in Engaging Youth](#) (2012)

Contact

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United Nations Volunteers (UNV)

UNV has been actively engaged with youth and youth volunteering since 1976, when the United Nations General Assembly mandated UNV to promote and advance the role of youth in development through volunteerism. Since then, UNV has worked with stakeholders to engage youth on a wide range of issues, encouraging policymakers, communities and youth themselves to see young people as valuable, underutilized resources for local and national development and the achievement of the MDGs. UNV mobilizes close to 8,000 volunteers from over 160 countries and from diverse professional and technical backgrounds.

Why youth?

In his Five-year Action Agenda the United Nations Secretary-General identified youth and volunteering as a priority, and called for the creation of a United Nations Youth Volunteers Programme under the umbrella of UN Volunteers. UNV's commitment to engaging youth was formalized through the establishment of the United Nations Youth Volunteers Programme. In 2012, nearly 1,000 international and national United Nations Volunteers and 7,000 United Nations Online Volunteers were under the age of 29.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Give youth the opportunity to serve as United Nations Youth Volunteers for between six months and two years
- Facilitate the involvement of youth in global peace and sustainable human development through volunteerism
- Raise awareness on the contribution of youth to global peace and sustainable human development through volunteerism
- Provide technical assistance to develop volunteerism
- Mobilize volunteers nationally and internationally
- Support young people to realize their full social, economic and human potential

Project
spotlight

Online Volunteering Programme

UNV's online volunteering service provides development organizations access to a global pool of knowledge and resources to enhance their capacities, while offering individuals worldwide opportunities to volunteer for development and contribute to achieving the MDGs. The online volunteering service has enabled over 900 non-profit development organizations (civil society organizations, government institutions, academic institutions and United Nations organizations) to benefit from the support of more than 9,500 individuals from 172 countries. Anyone interested in learning how to become an online volunteer can do so at www.onlinevolunteering.org.

Key publications

- [UNV Youth Volunteering Strategy 2014-2017: Empowering Youth through Volunteerism](#)
- [UNV Annual Report: Creating Lasting Impact](#)

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World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

UNWTO is the United Nations specialized agency responsible for the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism. As the leading international organization in the field of tourism, UNWTO promotes tourism as a driver of economic growth, inclusive development and environmental sustainability and offers leadership and support to the sector in advancing knowledge and tourism policies worldwide. UNWTO works in six main areas – competitiveness, sustainability, poverty reduction, capacity building, partnerships and mainstreaming – to achieve responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism. UNWTO's membership includes 156 countries, 6 Associate Members and over 400 Affiliate Members representing the private sector, educational institutions, tourism associations and local tourism authorities.

Why youth?

Youth travel has become an increasingly important part of global tourism in recent decades and the sector offers vital socio-economic opportunities for young people. According to rough estimates, in 2010 young travelers generated US\$ 165 billion towards global tourism receipts, affirming their financial value to the global tourism sector as well as their contribution to local economies. The social and cultural benefits for young travelers and the communities that host them are far reaching, long-term and measurably more sustainable than other forms of tourism. As the tourism sector itself goes through unprecedented change, it is youth travel that has the most to contribute through the innovation required of it by pioneering, heavy tech-using, conscious customers, i.e., young people.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Research and analysis of the impact of tourism on development
- Raise awareness on the opportunities that tourism offers to youth
- Promoting sustainable tourism development
- Advancing tourism's contribution to poverty reduction and development
- Fostering knowledge, education and capacity-building
- Building partnerships, including with youth organizations

Project spotlight

Regional Seminar on Responsible Tourism Opportunities for Women and Youth

The Regional Seminar on Responsible Tourism Opportunities for Women and Youth, held in Calabar, Nigeria in 2012, explored the ways in which the tourism sector can improve conditions for women and young persons throughout the region, and, in so doing, benefit the tourism trade at large and enhance tourism's positive effects on the economic and social development of Africa. The Seminar gathered policy makers, representatives of the tourism industry, communities engaged or interested in tourism development, women's cooperatives, educational institutions, NGOs and civil society organizations.

Key publications

- [Annual Reports](#)
- [The Power of Youth Travel](#) (2012)
- [Youth Training Module: International Campaign Against Sexual Exploitation of Children in Tourism](#) (2001)

Contact

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



The World Bank Group

The World Bank Group is the world's largest source of public financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. Its mission is global poverty reduction and the improvement of living standards. To this end, the World Bank provides low-interest loans, interest-free credit and grants to developing countries for overall development, including specific assistance to sectors such as education, health, infrastructure and communications.

Why youth?

The World Bank Group has expanded its work on youth in response to increasing demands from country clients, donors and civil society. The WBG understands that young people are key to reducing extreme poverty and achieving shared prosperity, and recognizes that we now have an unprecedented opportunity to use the potential of the largest pool of youth in history to achieve these objectives. The World Bank recognizes that youth can be a positive force for change, but that young people can face considerable barriers to entering productive and happy adulthood. Growth and poverty reduction are enhanced by strategic investments in human capital.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Identify key vulnerabilities and build evidence for what works to enhance youth development
- Promote strategic opportunities for scaling up effective investment in and for youth
- Increase lending and promote access to finance for young people
- Engage in analytical and advisory activities
- Compile and disseminate knowledge of good practices, provide technical assistance and develop practical tools for the implementation of youth-focused programmes
- Facilitate the economic empowerment of young women and men
- Engage young people in post-conflict reconstruction, participation and conflict resolution

Project spotlight

Adolescent Girls Initiative: Learn Work Thrive

In 2008, the World Bank launched the Adolescent Girls Initiative to promote the transition of young women from school to productive employment. The program is being piloted in eight low-income countries (Afghanistan, Haiti, Jordan, Lao PDR, Liberia, Nepal, Rwanda and South Sudan) and is currently reaching some 17,000 girls. Interventions range from business development to technical and vocational training targeting skills in high demand; all projects include life skills training. The design of each pilot is tailored to the local context and addresses the specific constraints faced by girls. Many of the programmes also include rigorous evaluations for strategic learning to develop evidence-based tools and lessons for policy.

For more information, please visit:

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTGENDER/Resources/Results2012-Agi.pdf>

Key publications

- [World Development Report 2013: Jobs](#) (2012)
- [The Youth to Youth Community: engage, inspire, empower](#)
- [World Development Report 2007: Development and the Next Generation](#)
- [Supporting Youth at Risk—A Policy Toolkit for Middle-Income Countries](#) (2008)
- [Youth advisory groups—new allies in the World Bank's work, Working Paper Series No. 6](#) (2008)

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The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)

The WFP is the world's largest humanitarian organization and the United Nations' frontline agency in the fight against world hunger. The WFP has reached hundreds of millions of people with food assistance to meet emergency needs and support economic and social development in an average of 80 countries a year. In 2012, the WFP fed more than 97 million people around the world.

Why youth?

The World Food Programme believes in the potential of today's youth as future decision makers and hopes that informed young adults can become well-informed leaders. The WFP educates youth on the significance of global hunger, inspiring adolescents to action on this worldwide issue. By supporting youth in vulnerable communities through safety-net programmes, the WFP ensures that children and young people affected by hunger can maximize their potential for future success.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

- Educate youth on global hunger
- Cooperate with governments and partners to provide school feeding programmes in food-insecure areas
- Encourage girls to continue secondary schooling through school feeding programmes
- Enhance vocational training for young adults through "food for education" initiatives
- Promote youth engagement and participation in global issues

Project spotlight

Promoting young people's engagement

Because today's youth adapt quickly to media and technology, the WFP is continually incorporating programmes through which youth can learn about global hunger using entertainment and media outlets.

- Molly's World - In 2011, the WFP gave a video camera to a young girl named Molly living in the slums in Nairobi, Kenya. She recorded scenes from her daily life, and the [resulting video](#) gives viewers a glimpse into what it's like to receive WFP school meals. Taking the quiz at the bottom of the page provides a meal to a child in need.
- Freerice - This engaging, hunger-fighting vocabulary game expands adolescents' language skills while donating free rice to the hungry. For every vocabulary challenge answered correctly, sponsors donate rice to the WFP. The rice donated has already translated into WFP food rations for thousands of hungry, poor people, including pregnant women in Cambodia, schoolchildren in Uganda and Bhutanese refugees in Nepal. It can be played online at www.freerice.com.

Key Publications

- [State of School Feeding Worldwide](#) (2013)
- [The Year in Review](#) (2012)
- World Hunger Series (2009): [Hunger and Markets](#)
- World Hunger Series (2007): [Hunger and Health](#)
- World Hunger Series (2006): [Hunger and Learning](#)

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World Health Organization (WHO)

WHO is the directing and coordinating authority for health within the United Nations system. It is responsible for providing leadership on global health matters, shaping the health research agenda, setting norms and standards, articulating evidence-based policy options, providing technical support to countries and monitoring and assessing health trends.

Why youth?

There are sound public health, economic and human rights reasons for investing in the health and development of adolescents. Even though many adolescents are healthy, a significant proportion of them face a range of problems that have implications for their health now and in the future. The WHO envisions a world in which children and adolescents enjoy the highest attainable standard of health and development, a world that meets their needs, as well as respects their rights, enabling them to live to their full potential.

How? Main areas of intervention targeting youth development

In addition to the development of technical guidance, WHO contributes to the goal of improving adolescent health in two main ways: by recommending comprehensive, multisectoral and evidence-informed adolescent health approaches; and by delineating and supporting the critical contribution of the health sector, including the leadership role of health ministries. To strengthen the health sector tools, support is provided on:

- Gathering and using strategic information
- Developing supportive, evidence-informed policies
- Scaling up the provision and utilization of health services and commodities
- Strengthening action and linkages with other government sectors

Project spotlight

Health for the world's adolescents

A report on Health for the world's adolescents is being prepared to focus on action to be taken by the health sector to improve the health of adolescents worldwide and feature WHO recommendations on these key health issues. The report is planned to be launched in May 2014.

Key publications

- [HIV and adolescents: Guidance for HIV testing and counseling and care for adolescents living with HIV](#) (2013)
- WHO guidance note: comprehensive cervical cancer prevention and control: a healthier future for girls and women (2013)
- [Making health services adolescent friendly: developing national quality standards for adolescent friendly health services](#) (2012)
- [Preventing early pregnancy and poor reproductive outcomes among adolescents in developing countries](#) (2012)
- Adolescent Job Aid (2010)
- [The sexual and reproductive health of young adolescents in developing countries: Reviewing the evidence, identifying research gaps, and moving the agenda](#) (2010)
- [Global school-based student health survey](#) (GSHS)

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<http://undesadspd.org/Youth/WorldProgrammeofActionforYouth/Participation/SocietyandDecisionMakingFactsheet.aspx>

^{vi} IPU. Global Parliamentary Report. The Changing Nature of Parliamentary Representation. 2012. <http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/gpr2012-full-e.pdf>

^{vii} UNESCO. UIS Fact Sheet: Adult and Youth Literacy. 2013.
<http://www.uis.unesco.org/literacy/Documents/fs26-2013-literacy-en.pdf>

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<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001832/183281e.pdf>

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http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/wpay_text_final.pdf

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<http://undesadspd.org/Youth/WorldProgrammeofActionforYouth/Health/Healthfactsheet.aspx>