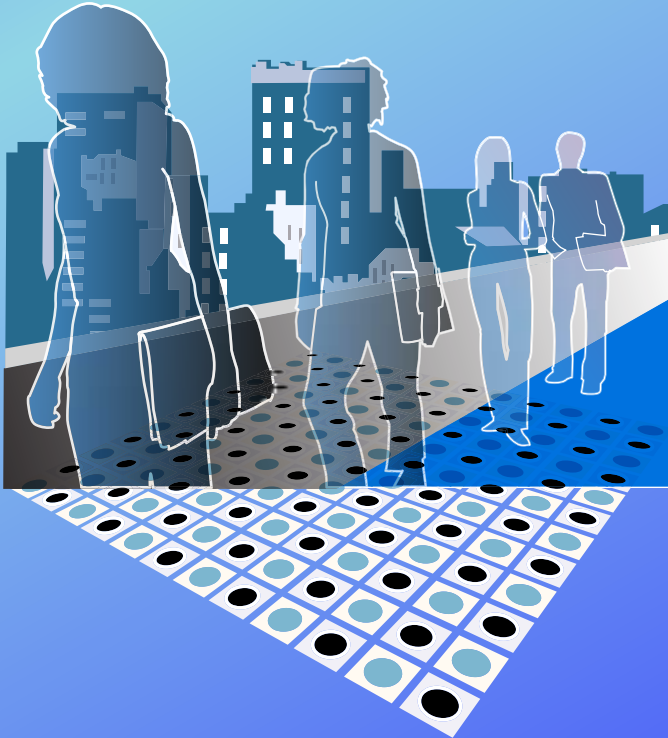


Review of National Action Plans on Youth Employment

Putting Commitment into Action



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

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Executive Summary

This review of National Action Plans (NAPs) reveals valuable information about both the process of formulating an NAP and the substantive issues addressed therein. Innovative national initiatives to address youth employment concerns are evident in this report and the sharing of these experiences will benefit countries in tackling their own challenges.

In response to a call from the United Nations General Assembly, 41 countries submitted National Action Plans or progress reports on youth employment, demonstrating a genuine commitment to youth and the resolve to tackle the complex challenges that young people face. Guidelines on drafting a National Action Plan for youth employment were prepared by the United Nations Secretariat and the Youth Employment Network (YEN). Furthermore, YEN support is made available to facilitate the development of plans. Despite the availability of guidelines and assistance, only a few countries have taken advantage of these services.

A critical and self-critical review of past policies is essential in the preparation of an action plan on youth employment and is the first step toward a change in policy and practice. There was little indication in the submissions that a review had been undertaken nor was information provided on previous policies and strategies, such as poverty reduction strategies, national youth policies, national employment policies, and reports to relevant ILO Conventions. Only one country reported on a current review of their employment policies, specific youth plans and poverty strategies to develop a comprehensive strategic approach to addressing youth employment. This suggests countries are in the very early stages of developing their NAPs.

The review of the process of formulating NAPs demonstrates the benefits to be gained by involving key stakeholders, especially youth themselves, in all policy-making decisions. Governments need the commitment of other actors in order to put in place measures that are effective, feasible, relevant, and sustainable. Drawing on the knowledge, experience and expertise of relevant stakeholders in the design and realisation of plans enhances their quality and efficacy. The YEN recommends that all relevant stakeholders be involved in policymaking and implementation at both global and national levels, including civil society, the business community, employers, trade unions and youth organizations as well as Government Ministries and Departments, such as those responsible for employment, labour, youth, education, finance and planning.

Consultation is recognised by some countries as part of their process to develop a youth employment strategy, but it is not evident in the majority of the submissions. Involvement of employers' organizations and Government Ministries other than those directly working on youth or labour is more fre-

quent. Those who reported engaging other stakeholders note the added value to policy design and implementation. The most popular form of collaboration is within the Government. Many submissions noted the engagement of other agencies in special committees, round-table discussions, task teams or workshops. Although some Governments are meeting their commitment to involve youth in the development of National Action Plans, significantly more effort is necessary to secure the active involvement of youth and youth organizations.

Qualitative and quantitative data on the evolution of youth employment in the country facilitates the development of adequate policies and programmes. All available or potential sources of information on youth employment and unemployment (and related variables such as underemployment, child labour, self-employment, employment by occupation and employment in the informal economy) need to be sought. Many countries cite national statistics on the various dimensions of youth employment while others report a need to improve their capacity. However, very few countries reported on the establishment of indicators to measure progress, and even fewer mention an evaluation approach.

Very few countries sought assistance from the YEN core partner institutions (United Nations Secretariat, World Bank, ILO) or other outside institutions in the process of developing a National Action Plan. Some countries note the involvement of other actors in providing technical support to specific programmes in place.

A coherent, integrated approach to policy development, involving different Ministries as well as representatives of the social partners and other concerned groups (especially young people themselves) is essential if the youth employment issue, in its diverse forms, is to be effectively tackled. Strategies to promote youth employment need to be linked to a macroeconomic policy that promotes economic growth, through an employment-oriented development programme, focuses on labour supply and demand, and addresses both the quantity and quality of employment. A few countries indicated developing such an approach in their submissions. Several others indicated the policies needed to address the challenges in their countries, but had not integrated them into an action plan to date.

It is clear from the submissions that those countries that integrate employment creation into their macroeconomic policies do not necessarily have a youth focus. Some countries reported they are trying to create an economic environment for employment growth, placing particular emphasis on small and medium enterprises or on particular sectors. Others have facilitated access to finance, encouraged innovation and supported the creation of new businesses. Subsidies and tax incentives are also offered to businesses creating jobs for youth.

Laws and regulations can influence economic growth and development, and at the same time protect workers' rights and social interests more gener-

ally. Laws and regulations designed with the involvement of social partners are more likely to ensure that employment promotion and enterprise development do not compromise workers' rights and are arguably the best means of ensuring the quality of the jobs created. Job creation is paramount, but the jobs created must be productive, sustainable, provide opportunities for advancement and have decent working conditions. Most submissions did not address the issues of quality and sustainability of employment, but some did report on working conditions.

The promotion of entrepreneurial activity is recognised in many NAPs as an important means of employment creation. Governments contribute to making entrepreneurship a viable option for youth by building an enterprise culture, promoting an environment conducive to creating and maintaining a business while providing access to the necessary tools and resources. Many countries are implementing measures to support youth to start their own businesses by reviewing and amending legal and regulatory frameworks to facilitate and reduce the time and money spent on establishing a business. Many initiatives simply seek to facilitate the process of doing business. Some have adopted a 'making work pay' approach and favour across the board social security and taxation reforms. Reducing 'red tape' and unnecessary regulatory burdens is promoted to attract investment, foster entrepreneurship and stimulate new businesses.

To prepare trainees effectively for the labour market, skills training needs to be broad-based and geared to the existence of market opportunities while, at the same time, flexible and responsive to changing conditions. Opportunities for work experience, combined with adequate labour market information, guidance and counselling, as well as effective job placement mechanisms help young people find a decent job. A wide range of employability issues were well addressed in the reports submitted.

Policies have been undertaken to improve the general knowledge of the workforce and many countries are seeking to reduce the number of early school leavers. Equal opportunities are provided through the right of access to a minimum level of basic skills and, in some cases, the right to secondary education as well. There have also been efforts to make education available to the poor, improve the quality of existing programmes and expand access. Some countries are addressing cultural barriers and making it more acceptable for young girls to attend school and complete their education.

Vocational training is an integral part of all the submissions. Some countries are establishing more training institutions, while others are improving existing training centres and programmes. Training assistance for those with learning disabilities is mentioned as are training grants to students. Many countries have increased funding for vocational training and introduced courses on how to set up and run a business. There have also been efforts to improve the effectiveness of entrepreneurship training in vocational schools and to develop a media campaign to promote youth entrepreneurship.

Employers in some countries recognise that the enthusiasm, energy, commitment, innovation and willingness to embrace change which young people bring to the workplace is good for business, and have voluntarily provided work opportunities. Efforts to encourage and foster partnerships between employers, workers and educational institutions are seen as valuable.

Governments recognise that they must provide support for youth to realise their full potential. They noted that improving the preparation of graduates for the labour market is important and that they were addressing this issue. In most countries, the education system is principally responsible for student career counselling and guiding students into higher education or professions.

Employment services such as job fairs, improving and increasing job centres and information, and enhancing job-seeking skills of candidates are all mentioned as ways to support young job seekers. A few National Action Plans mention programmes that specifically target disadvantaged youth. The provision of accurate and adequate information is essential, as is infrastructure such as physical or online job banks and services. Communication through radio, television, newspapers, billboards, telephones and the Internet are used to advertise employment services. In addition, a number of countries maintain a registry of active job-seekers, which is made available to employers seeking to fill vacancies.

Many submissions draw attention to improving employment opportunities for youth through internships and apprenticeships, which provide tangible work experience often required by employers. Some programmes establish formal training agreements with employers while others subsidise enterprises that hire youth. Countries reported they were implementing strategies to establish closer links between formal and non-formal education as well as between classroom instruction and workplace learning. A combination of work experience and vocational training seems to be the most effective strategy, with most success arising from placements with private sector employers rather than through temporary placements in public sector job creation projects. In developing countries, basic skills training and traditional apprenticeships were seen as particularly important.

In general, young women face greater difficulties than young men in gaining and retaining work because of discriminatory policies, structural barriers and cultural prejudices. Countries are addressing the issue of equal opportunities, which, in order to be effective, needs to be mainstreamed into policies at all levels and across all areas. Many submissions reported that this issue has been addressed and, more importantly, it has been addressed as a cross-cutting concern. Moreover, in many countries it is recognised that discrimination on the basis of gender is not the sole form of exclusion, and youth with disabilities, young migrants and ethnic minorities, among others, have received specific attention in some of the NAPs.

Some countries are making significant strides to tackle youth employment issues, as evidenced in the submissions to this report, while others are taking initial steps in developing an integrated approach to addressing the issue. Most of the submissions focused on identifying measures to address the YEN's four global priorities—employability, entrepreneurship, employment creation and equal opportunities, with a greater focus on employability issues. Most plans or progress reports address education, vocational training, work experience, career guidance, job counselling and the school-to-work transition. Many countries also have initiatives to address equal opportunities and to encourage entrepreneurship. A few action plans and progress reports link youth employment to macroeconomic policy, developing strategies to stimulate demand and to create additional jobs for new labour market entrants.

Preface

Young women and men everywhere set out in life with dreams, hopes and aspirations. Yet, these young women and men often face many challenges in the labour market. If young people are to be given opportunities, then multiple pathways to decent employment are needed. Achieving decent work for young people is a critical element in poverty eradication and sustainable development, growth and welfare for all.¹

The Youth Employment Network (YEN) was established in 2001 to bring together policymakers, employers and workers, young people and other stakeholders to pool their skills, experience and knowledge in order to find new, innovative and sustainable solutions to the youth employment challenge.²

In July 2005, the Report of the Secretary-General³ entitled “Global analysis and evaluation of national action plans on youth employment” was prepared by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the YEN Secretariat, within the framework of the Youth Employment Network, in response to two United Nations General Assembly resolutions.⁴ This present report is a more comprehensive version of the Report of the Secretary-General and its analysis of the complexity and diversity of concerns expressed in National Action Plans (NAPs), which provide the basis upon which to build and facilitate peer partnerships. It also sets the stage for a new phase for the YEN—an annual global analysis of NAPs to determine the ‘state of the world’s youth employment’, as recommended in the Secretary-General’s Report.⁵ This will form the basis of a peer review mechanism based on best performance, outlining the goals and progress made by countries towards established benchmarks.

Chapter 1 of this report presents an overview of the issues and challenges of youth employment. It highlights the complexity of the issues and the magnitude of the challenges. The costs of youth unemployment and underemployment and the benefits of investment in youth are presented to demonstrate the need for immediate and serious action. The relationship between the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), youth employment and NAPs is outlined.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of National Action Plans⁶. Drawing on the 41 NAPs or progress reports submitted under this review, it looks at the significance and importance of developing a plan to tackle youth employment challenges and highlights the means by which commitment can be put into action. Specifically, it examines the various processes countries have used in the development of their NAPs, including the use of reviews of relevant policies, the involvement of key stakeholders in the process, and whether youth employment issues were monitored and evaluated.

Chapter 3 details the substance and focus of NAPs, using the global priorities mapped by the YEN's High-level Panel⁷, viz. employment creation, entrepreneurship, employability and equal opportunity. There is an assessment of the extent to which these strategies have been embedded in policies, and the degree of coordination between different Ministries in tackling the youth employment challenge. Each sub-section concludes with suggestions for determining benchmarks to assess progress towards the goal of creating opportunities for decent and productive work for young women and men. These benchmarks are drawn from submissions to this Review, recommendations of the YEN's High-level Panel and the *Conclusions on promoting pathways to decent work for youth* (ILC, 2005). Countries are encouraged to consider these benchmarks to assess their performance and learn from the experiences in other countries.

The report concludes with a summary of key issues and findings and sets out recommendations on how to improve the benchmarks and to from best practice to best performance. This global review of National Action Plans allows countries around the world, at all levels of development, to share and gather experiences of good practice in addressing youth employment challenges. It is hoped that individual countries will self-evaluate their NAPs, and identify the strengths and weaknesses of these plans. Monitoring the impact of measures put in place will help to improve policies and programmes. Furthermore, this review will serve to educate the international community on what works and what does not. This in turn will help countries to establish benchmarks and to improve upon them so that they can move forward and set more ambitious targets and goals towards tackling the challenges of youth employment they face.

Chapter 1

Youth Employment: Issues and Challenges

Young women and men bring numerous assets to the labour market such as relevant and recent education and training, new ideas, enthusiasm, willingness to learn and be taught, openness to new skills and technology, as well as mobility and adaptability. In many countries, young people can also help meet the challenge of an ageing workforce.⁸ They have much to contribute to societies as human beings, citizens, innovators, entrepreneurs, workers and consumers.

Overview

Young women and men between the ages of 15 and 24 represent almost one-fifth (18 per cent) of the world's population. Many are in education⁹ or employed in decent and productive jobs. However, a very significant number are unemployed, underemployed¹⁰, between jobs or working in the informal economy. Others face serious barriers to decent jobs for a variety of reasons such as their lack of employability, a shortage of decent work opportunities, discrimination, forced labour, work in hazardous occupations, extreme poverty, armed conflict, forced migration or HIV/AIDS. These young people represent an enormous untapped potential. Their numbers have increased significantly in the recent past and will increase further if no action is taken.¹¹

There is growing awareness among countries across the globe, the international community and international agencies—including the UN, ILO and World Bank—of the importance of tapping this important resource and mitigating the negative consequences of youth unemployment and underemployment. Youth unemployment and poor jobs contribute to high levels of poverty and lost opportunities for economic growth, which increase as this cohort ages without gaining relevant experience in the work force. There is strong evidence that prolonged unemployment in early life can permanently impair employability, future earnings and access to quality jobs. Persistent youth unemployment results in a waste of investments in education and training, a reduced taxation base and higher social welfare costs. Moreover, high and rising unemployment levels among youth may be a source of social instability, increased substance abuse and crime. In general, unemployment creates a sense of despair and idleness that can be especially severe among already vulnerable groups such as youth. The socially excluded have little or no voice in policymaking and will try to find a sense of belonging elsewhere. This may create unrest and social conflict and thereby undermine social cohesion.

A poor economic and social environment can foster conditions in which youth are recruited or forced into armed conflict not only within their own borders, but also in neighbouring countries. Civil wars and social conflict can negatively impact economic growth, investments, and the secure development of an entire region. Employment growth is a key to reducing the tensions underlying many security issues today, as well as other social challenges such as irregular migration, trafficking, gender inequality and poverty. The issue of youth employment and conflict is therefore not just a national concern—it is a regional and international one as well.

Investment in youth entails benefits for individuals, communities and societies. Decent work for young people unleashes multiplier effects throughout the economy and society, boosting investment and consumer demand and ensuring more stable and cohesive social ties across generations, including the sharing of institutional workplace knowledge. It shifts young people from social dependence to self-sufficiency, helps them escape poverty and enables them to actively contribute to society.¹²

The youth employment challenge is bound to the general employment situation and, while it has its own dimensions, is influenced by a number of general factors, including:

- Demographic trends;
- The impact of globalisation;
- The impact of structural reforms in developing countries;
- The level of, and fluctuation in, aggregate demand;
- The level of economic activity, public and private investment and sustainable growth;
- The employment intensity of growth in developing countries;
- An enabling regulatory environment for both enterprises and the protection of workers' rights;
- Entrepreneurship and enterprise creation options, including cooperatives;
- Education and training outcomes;
- The relationship between education and labour market needs; and
- Work experience and labour market services.

As new entrants to the labour market, some young workers lack the specific training or seniority that may buffer older workers from swings in market conditions. Their employment, therefore, is highly dependent on the state of the economy. During economic downturns, the practice of “last hired, first fired” and the lack of vacancies take a toll on young workers who are least equipped to find new employment.

Whilst some young people move effectively from education to work, this transition is problematic for too many others. Young people who do not possess the basic literacy and numeracy skills necessary to access vocational training and to become employable face particular difficulties. Another major

concern are young people who are not in employment, education or training for protracted periods of time. In other instances, some young people do not complete schooling and/or have insufficient skills to gain secure and sustainable employment opportunities.

When young people fail to find jobs this may be attributed to the lack of relevant skills and training opportunities, to low demand for the skills in which young persons have trained, or to changing demand in the labour market. Such mismatches that emerge in the labour market can lead to long periods of job seeking, higher unemployment and sustained periods of lower skilled and precarious work.

Lack of opportunities for work experience and entrepreneurial development, combined with the absence of adequate labour market information, vocational guidance and counselling, and poor job placement mechanisms exacerbate the problem of finding a decent job.¹³

Just as there is not one cause for youth unemployment and underemployment, there is not one single approach or strategy for tackling the youth employment challenge. However, the partners of the Youth Employment Network emphasise the value of an integrated and comprehensive approach. In other words, policymakers need to prepare young people for the labour market and, at the same time, prepare the labour market for young people. There are different approaches to employment creation, but all these need to be comprehensive and include macroeconomic policies as well as targeted actions that focus on both labour supply and demand, and address the qualitative and quantitative dimensions of employment through a consultative process. Policies and programmes need to be based on labour market information and measured using well-defined indicators.

Youth and the Millennium Development Goals

238 million young people are living on less than \$1 per day; approximately 462 million young people are living on less than \$2 per day, and over 160 million youth are undernourished.¹⁴ With this in mind, the enormous challenge of halving world poverty by 2015 will simply be unachievable without sustainable growth in decent and productive employment for young people. In short, decent employment provides the only certain route out of poverty for unemployed and underemployed youth and their families.

Youth employment is an integral part of the Millennium Declaration, both as an important target in its own right in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and a key contribution to meeting other MDGs.¹⁵ The international community must recognise the challenge of poverty and the right to decent and productive work for young people, the nexus between poverty and unemployment, the cycle of poverty reproduction through unsustainable use of natural and financial resources and the difficulties of attaining good governance without eradicating poverty and providing decent work for youth.

The direct relationship between poverty and unemployment and underemployment is evident: decent work gives people a real chance to escape the poverty trap. Youth, especially young women, are particularly vulnerable to unemployment and underemployment. They are often at risk of becoming trapped in dangerous, insecure and low paying activities in the informal economy. Goal 1 indirectly calls on Governments to create the economic environment necessary to provide stable labour markets that can create employment opportunities which can empower those in poverty. Concerted action to address youth unemployment and underemployment can have a profound impact on the fight against extreme poverty and hunger. Halving the world's youth unemployment rate and bringing it in line with the adult rate would add as much as \$3.5 trillion to global GDP (7 per cent of the 2003 value). If this can be done, it is estimated that the largest relative gains would be in sub-Saharan Africa where the GDP could improve by 12 to 19 per cent.¹⁶

Goal 2 aims to ensure that children everywhere—boys and girls alike—are able to complete primary schooling as well as eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education. Education provides young people with a stronger voice in society, and creates a generation of workers better able to compete in the global economy. It is estimated that at least 200 million children in school today do not receive the quality education that will give them the skills and knowledge they need to help lift themselves and their society out of poverty—they are not learning enough to meet basic needs. Governments must not only focus on ensuring basic literacy and numeracy, but also place greater emphasis on linking what students learn to the needs of the labour market. Governments must ensure that the next generation of young people are given the life-skills and vocational qualifications that make them employable upon finishing their education. The type of skills that young people need in the 21st century are different from those needed in the past. The world is changing ever faster and youth need to be innovative, creative, entrepreneurial, adaptable, be able to work in teams, and have management skills.

Goal 3 calls for gender equality and the empowerment women. How can a country develop if half of its productivity, energy and creativity is stifled? Setting out a strategy to review, rethink and reorient policies to ensure that there are equal opportunities for young women when they enter the workforce and throughout their working lives will put countries on track to achieving this goal.

Goals 4, 5 and 6 address issues of health but are also closely related to employability and productivity. Health directly impacts on an individual's and their families' ability to find and retain a job. Reduced child mortality and better maternal health not only save lives and prevent suffering but also create a greater pool of human assets to assist in the development of nations.

An estimated 10 million young people aged 15 to 24 are living with HIV/AIDS.¹⁷ The trend in HIV infection indicates that young people are more susceptible to HIV/AIDS than any other single group, accounting for half of all new infections. HIV prevalence is rising among young women, in particular. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, 76 per cent of youth living with HIV/AIDS are young women.¹⁸ The increased burden on HIV-affected households creates pressure on young people, women in particular, to drop out of school in order to provide financial support and/or care for their siblings, parents and other family members. In addition, an estimated 13 million AIDS orphans worldwide—many of whom have become heads of households and breadwinners—are growing up without any responsible adult present in the household. As a result of economic necessity, young people may start work prematurely (i.e. child labour) and may be inadequately prepared in terms of basic skills and training. Moreover, the depletion of the skills and revenue base as a result of AIDS deaths within the working population negatively impacts on other areas of development which disproportionately affect young people and influence their chances of finding decent work. These areas include investment in education (both by the family and the government), and the adequate supply of teachers.

Goal 7 aims to ensure environmental sustainability. Not only are youth active in protecting the environment, there are also significant opportunities for livelihood creation for young people in this field. For example, youth-led renewable energy enterprises are a viable means of achieving sustainable development. They promote environmentally friendly technologies while, at the same time, providing sustainable income-generating opportunities for youth. Natural resource management, eco-tourism, and recycling activities can also provide remunerative employment and productive occupational opportunities for young people as individuals or in a community-based setting.

One form of renewable energy that is especially suitable for West Africa is the use of solar cookers. In this region, trees have disappeared at an alarming rate, largely owing to the rising demand of fuel-wood and the increased cost of charcoal. Women and girls who generally burden of collecting fuel-wood are obliged to walk ever-longer distances in search of wood. Propagation of this simple technology would be a source of employment for many women if funding could be forthcoming. Freed in large part from the immense burden of searching for fuel-wood and maintaining fires, hundreds of thousands of women could be empowered to participate in income-generating employment.¹⁹

Goal 8 calls for a global partnership for development. Within this goal, target 16 explicitly urges countries to “develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth.” The Secretary-General’s Youth Employment Network was put in place as a mechanism to facilitate the attainment of this target.

The Youth Employment Network: A Mechanism to Address Goal 8

The Youth Employment Network was established in 2001 to facilitate and support the global commitment of developing and implementing strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work. By setting up the YEN, the Secretary-General of the United Nations put in place a mechanism which underpins and supports all the MDGs.

With the establishment of the YEN, the Secretary-General appointed a High-level Panel of experts to advise him on youth employment issues. The High-level Panel has developed policy recommendations on youth employment and advised that NAPs focus on four priorities—employability, equal opportunities, entrepreneurship and employment creation (also known as the “four Es”). The activities of the YEN are mandated and supported by two United Nations General Assembly resolutions 57/165 of 18 December 2002 and 58/133 of 22 December 2003. These resolutions encourage countries to prepare National Action Plans and reviews—as a vehicle to prioritise and operationalise action on youth employment—with the assistance of the ILO, the United Nations and the World Bank as well as other specialized agencies, and with the participation of young people themselves.

To date, nineteen countries—Azerbaijan, Brazil, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Egypt, Georgia, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Jamaica, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Uganda and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland—have volunteered as Lead Countries of the YEN, with commitment at the highest political level, to share experiences and guide the way in formulating National Action Plans on youth employment. Many more countries have expressed interest in following suit.

The YEN promotes young people as an asset—a catalyst for development—rather than as passive beneficiaries for whom employment must be found. Consultations with young people are instrumental in the work of the YEN and must form an integral part of any national youth employment strategy. In 2004, a YEN Youth Consultative Group (YCG) was launched, comprising representatives of large international and regional youth organizations to provide advice and guidance to the work on youth employment (see the sub-section).

The Network combines a political strategy with the technical experience and implementation capacity of its partner organizations to address the ongoing challenges of unemployment and underemployment of young people. The YEN can therefore play an important role in facilitating communication and sharing information, linking important initiatives and stakeholders, and filling a key international coordinating role in operationalising peer partnerships.

Key achievements
of the YEN to date include:

- Supporting the formulation of National Action Plans on youth employment in YEN Lead Countries; providing, through its core partner agencies, technical guidance, and assisting programmes to build capacity for the implementation of the plans;
- Creating a network of networks for youth employment and a constituency within the youth community, which is given full and equal participation at the High-level Panel meetings through a standing Youth Consultative Group;
- Developing and implementing youth participation mechanisms;
- Producing enhanced policy-oriented indicators on youth employment;
- Reinforcing linkages between youth employment and poverty reduction initiatives;
- Strengthening the policy coherence and technical cooperation of the UN, the World Bank, and the ILO;
- Raising funds to support the continued work of the YEN Secretariat and country level support to National Action Plans on youth employment; and
- Offering coordinated technical and strategic support to the UNITED NATIONS and ILO constituents as they negotiate and adopt resolutions and decisions on youth employment, and draft reports in follow-up to these resolutions.

Chapter 2

The Process of Developing a National Action Plan

The United Nations General Assembly encourages all United Nations Member States to prepare a National Review and Action Plan on Youth Employment. A guidance note for the preparation of these action plans encourages Governments to carry out reviews of past policies, to consider an integrated concept for employment policy, to establish a consultative process, to base their action plans on existing documents and analyses and to review the quality and range of available statistics regarding employment, unemployment and underemployment of young people. This section looks in detail at these suggestions to determine the extent to which Governments followed these guidelines and the benefits of doing so. It will also help to assess the value of the guidelines themselves and to determine whether they need to be revised or set out in more detail.

The Guidance note for the preparation on NAPs,²⁰ suggests that countries:

- **Conduct a policy review:** an analysis of past policies and programmes on youth employment such as Poverty Reduction Strategies, National Youth Policies, National Employment Policies, and reports to relevant ILO Conventions²¹ to ensure that the plan is integrated into national policy making processes and funding mechanisms before moving forward;
- **Consult and involve:** Governments need the commitment of other actors, including enterprises, employers' organizations, trade unions and young people, in order to put in place measures that are effective, feasible, relevant, and sustainable. Involving civil society in the design and realisation of policy spreads responsibility and enhances the quality and efficiency of decision-making by drawing on the knowledge, experiences and expertise of other parties. Unilateral decision-making will undermine the success of such undertakings;
- **Establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation** of the National Action Plan and provide baseline indicators or statistical data to monitor progress; and
- **Seek assistance** from the YEN core partner institutions (i.e. ILO, World Bank or UN) or from other institutions in this process.

Policy Review

A critical and self-critical review of past policies is essential in the preparation of an action plan on youth employment. This allows Governments to evaluate what works and what does not, so that the positive aspects can be retained

and built upon, while abandoning or improving weaker components. Several countries have taken these measures as the first step toward defining their policy and practice.

The **Republic of Korea's** 2005 NAP was based on the evaluation of a previous NAP (2003) by a task force on youth employment. In addition, a survey of the general public and a review by the Board of Audit and Inspection of Korea were undertaken, determining weak linkages between projects for youth employment and tools to provide information to youth. As a result, several amendments were made to the current NAP. Evaluation standards are now being developed and improvements will be made based on the outcomes.

Kenya reported that efforts towards youth development programmes have been based on other policy documents such as the 1997-2001 Development Plan and the National Poverty Eradication Plans 1999-2015. Along the same lines, Lithuania's submission provides a review of laws and institutions that are currently in place to address youth employment and unemployment issues. The progress report submitted by Nicaragua refers to surveys and studies carried out, although the focus is on employment issues in general rather than on youth employment specifically.

Brazil conducted an assessment of a number of projects that had been established in partnership with NGOs in developing their "Young Entrepreneur Programme." In Japan, a review of two major plans, the "Basic Plan for Employment Measures" and the "Basic Plan for Human Resources Development", was carried out to determine their relevance given the current employment situation.

Rwanda has drawn on many strategic papers in formulating its NAP, notably its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, the Education Policy and a draft Employment Promotion Policy. In addition, it has established an "Education for All" policy and plan of action, which includes second chance programmes for school dropouts.

Finland, in amending their Youth Work Act (to be titled Youth Act) to make youth policy a permanent part of the administrative system across the spectrum of Government Ministries, is conducting a review of relevant legislation. **Germany's** submission reported on numerous measures that had been implemented to address youth employment, with a view to assessing their current relevance.

Reports to the ILO under the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No.122) were referenced in the submission by **Norway**, covering issues such as employment, unemployment and labour market policy.

The National Action Plan for Employment (2004) was adapted by **Slovenia**, upon review, culminating in the Programme for Active Employment Policy (2005). This helped to ensure its harmonisation with the European Employment Strategy (EES).

Uganda's submission drew on numerous policy documents, notably the Poverty Eradication Action Plan, which forms the basis of its Poverty

Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), the Social Development Sector Strategic Investment Plan and the Education Sector Investment Plan. **Tanzania** used a similar approach, drawing on the “Poverty Reduction Strategy Review” and the revised Youth Development Policy.

Consultation and Participation

While Government leadership is critical, Governments cannot successfully tackle the youth employment challenges alone. An integrated, coherent and coordinated approach to youth labour market issues requires that all stakeholders—Governments (at all levels and across Ministries), enterprises, employers’ and workers’ organizations, education and training institutions and youth organizations—cooperate in building networks and partnerships to make it work.²² Frequently, one or more of these key players are ignored—and all too often it is youth themselves. This has often led to the development and implementation of policies that have failed to address the underlying concerns of young people and the causes of youth unemployment and underemployment. It is unlikely that efforts to address the youth employment challenge which do not take the expectations, aspirations and frustrations of young people vis-à-vis the labour market into consideration will take root. Young people must be seen as partners in devising solutions to a common problem.

Business also has a substantial interest in making the most of the potential of young people, and in avoiding the negative consequences of widespread youth unemployment. In general, employers recognise that employing young people is good for business, as they bring enthusiasm, energy, commitment, creativity, ingenuity, new ideas and the willingness to embrace change to the workplace. There is also a role for networks and partnerships among Governments at the national and local levels, employers’ organizations, trade unions, youth organizations and other civil society groups. These groups can learn from each other and pool their efforts and resources. Therefore civil society, the business community, employers, trade unions and youth organizations should be invited to contribute to policymaking and implementation at the global, national and local levels. There is also a need for Government Ministries and Departments responsible for employment, education, youth, finance, planning and trade to be involved in the preparation of National Action Plans.²³ Because of their position in, and knowledge of, the labour market, they have important roles to play in designing and implementing labour market policies, strengthening the links between institutions and the requirements of the labour market and determining sectoral policies and public works schemes, among other things.²⁴

Consultation with various stakeholders ensures that their interests, knowledge and experience are considered, and more importantly, that their support is secured. To facilitate this, Governments could, for instance, establish a national consultative mechanism involving youth organizations and

representatives of employers' and workers' organizations, private sector and civil society organizations. This can, for example, take the form of youth advisory groups or tripartite committees on youth employment.

Although such consultation is recognised by some countries as part of their process to develop a strategy, it is not evident in the majority of the submissions. Where consultation was reported, these were more likely to take the form of collaboration within the Government, as many submissions note cooperation with other Government Agencies and Ministries in special committees, round-table discussions, task teams or workshops. Those who reported engaging other stakeholders also note the added value of to policy design and implementation. Some indicated the involvement of other actors such as the YEN core partners, other international organizations, donors and civil society.

Few Governments reported engaging youth in policymaking while others noted they encourage youth groups and organizations. Some Governments provide financial or technical support to youth movements, and others encourage cooperation between youth organizations and Governments on local and national levels to protect youth interests and needs (see the following subsection).

The **Kenyan** Government, through the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources Development, has set up a network (the "Stakeholders Roundtable Initiative on Youth Employment") of experts and practitioners on youth employment, to provide advice in the areas of policy harmonisation, stakeholder linkages, capacity building, entrepreneurship, and resource mobilisation.

The **Syrian Arab Republic** engages a women's national union to discuss rights and equality issues at the national and local levels. In addition, they hold youth camps and promote youth dialogue with local Governments and relevant Ministries.

Mexico promotes a youth power programme that enables youth to communicate with Government and social organizations, including private enterprises. Radio, Internet, magazines and social centres are all avenues through which youth can be heard.

Argentina's National Programme on Youth Inclusion (INCLUIR) aims to promote activities to increase youth participation through capacity building, focusing on their labour market participation and sustainability as a necessary tool to generate social networks, which contribute to active citizen participation. The project is partially funded by the Inter-American Development Bank.

The Government of **Rwanda** has brought together key stakeholders to develop their NAP, including the Ministries of Youth, Labour, Education, Finance and Gender, the private sector federation, the National Youth Council, the Rwanda Chapter of the Youth Employment Summit (YES) Network and the *Jeune Chambre Economique du Rwanda* (JCER).

The **Republic of Korea's** 2005 NAP was prepared by the Youth Unemployment Task Force which is composed of members of relevant Government agencies, youth unemployment experts, job counsellors in high schools, colleges and civil organizations and reflects the views of college students, unemployed youths, persons in charge of helping youths find a job and businesses. The plan was finalised by the Special Committee on Reducing Youth Unemployment, which was formed to coordinate, review and evaluate youth employment action plans. The Committee consists of representatives of labour, management, civil organizations, academia, women's organizations, youth unemployment experts and ministers. The chairperson of the committee is the Prime Minister.

Some countries seek to build bridges between Government, educational institutions and the business community, identifying future labour needs and educating and training youth to meet those demands. Businesses, in particular foreign-owned companies, can often provide expertise on technology, industry standards and skills. In this regard, the **Republic of Korea** ensures that industry and universities work together to meet future skills demand. Universities that establish new departments to meet industrial needs through a contract with companies are eligible for Governmental financial support for facilities and research. In addition, a system has been established to evaluate whether college curricula meet industry demands.

The **United Kingdom's** Sector Skills Councils, employer-led bodies licensed by the Government, are leading the drive to significantly improve skills and productivity in industry and in the public sector. They work with partner agencies, negotiating deals and identifying solutions to address agreed priorities. **Poland** also engages employers to develop and implement the country's programme, "Premier employ", a socio-economic strategy to create employment.

A number of submissions noted the technical or financial support of international organizations, donors, NGOs and other institutions. For instance **Uganda** reported on their partnerships with the German Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) on various activities. Others such as **Azerbaijan, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Nicaragua** and **Uganda** noted utilising YEN core partners as support mechanisms in their attempts to address youth employment.

*Youth: A Critical Component*²⁵

Youth can play an important role in development if they are provided with the right tools, the knowledge and empowerment to use those tools, as well as a supportive environment in which to apply them. Young people must be engaged as active partners in the design and implementation of policies, not passive beneficiaries. Rather than being a target group for which employment must be found, they must be engaged as partners in developing solutions. Hence, youth are not the problem but part of the solution.²⁶

The inflow of young people into the labour market is an opportunity for economic and social development. Young people want to be the beneficiaries of policy initiatives but, equally important, they want a seat at the table when these policies are being developed. They are asking to be part of macro-economic policy formulation that impacts directly on job creation. Not including youth in decisions on issues that directly impact them creates problems of legitimacy of these decisions. A secure society can be built and enhanced through collaboration and partnerships not only with the private sector and civil society, but with young people.

Youth represent enormous opportunity and potential for the world's present and future development. Young people have a better understanding of the ramifications and realities of youth unemployment and, as such, have much to offer policymakers. Involving young people in policymaking initiatives that affect their lives is not only cost effective but can also increase the transparency and democracy of governance. Young people urge Governments to address their concerns by ensuring that their voices are heard and their ideas are integrated into policies that affect them. Since youth are the political leaders, entrepreneurs and workers of tomorrow, they must be considered as partners of today.

Upon review of the extent of youth participation in their development of NAPs, the Youth Consultative Group reveals that only eight of the submissions to the Global Analysis specifically mention the involvement of youth or youth organizations in their policies and programmes concerning youth employment.²⁷

One of the Government of **Azerbaijan's** key partners on youth employment is the National Assembly of Youth Organizations (NAYORA). More

The role of the Youth Consultative Group

- The YEN in close partnership with its Youth Consultative Group (YCG)²⁸ is building linkages with youth groups in the YEN Lead Countries, thereby actively supporting national youth groups through the provision of regional and international linkages to facilitate their effective and substantive participation in the NAP process.
- At the global political level, the YCG works to represent the concerns of young people on the functioning and strategic priorities of the YEN through interaction with the High-level Panel and other YEN structures.
At the national level, the YCG, through its affiliates, acts as a catalyst and resource to support youth participation in the development, implementation and review of NAPs in the YEN Lead Countries and beyond.

than 20 youth NGOs and other civil society organizations, led by NAYORA, have formed the Youth Employment Coalition of Azerbaijan (YECA). The coalition is working with the Government, including the Ministries of Labour, Education and Youth, workers' and employers' organizations and other stakeholders to provide youth inputs into the country's NAP. They have collected proposals on a national employment strategy from young people in all regions of the country, which will be discussed at a National Youth Employment Forum. In November 2004, NAYORA initiated a youth conference entitled "Challenges and Opportunities facing Young People in Azerbaijan", the main goal of which was to identify priorities and contribute to strategies for improving the lives of young people.

Brazil recognised that it has a great deal to gain by incorporating the views of young people in its development programme on job creation and income support. During 2004, youth consultations on the action plan and a round table were held with the participation of more than 90 youth organizations and movements. In addition, the Department of Public Policies for Labour and Employment for Young People is developing an information network, dialogue and liaison among the public authorities and young workers' and employers' organizations. The Government committed to involve young people more consistently in the development and implementation of *Primeiro Emprego* (First Employment) and other youth employment policies. In support of this commitment the YEN-Brazil youth advisory committee was launched as a mechanism to provide youth input into the *Primeiro Emprego*.

Indonesia launched its National Action Plan (IYEAP) in 2004. Feeding directly into this drafting process were the findings of a series of *Youth for Youth* consultations and a school-to-work transition survey. In the youth consultations, covering 3 provinces, more than 400 young Indonesians were given the opportunity to express their views and to get actively involved in the Indonesia-YEN (IYEN). The IYEN, however, is conscious that additional measures are needed to ensure that young people, and in particular young women, are provided with sufficient opportunities to participate and contribute to the implementation phase of the IYEAP (2005-2007). As such the YEN, through its Youth Consultative Group, has offered to lend its support to strengthening youth participation in the IYEAP process.

As the coordinating body of all youth policy in **Senegal**, the Ministry of Youth is working to involve young people in all policy decisions relating to education and employment promotion, and, as such, has a close working relationship with the national chapters of international youth organizations, such as the World Organization of the Scout Movement, and national and local youth organizations.

The Government of **Tanzania** has emphasised the importance of youth participation in its NAP. It has set out a vision for youth which focuses on developing the potential of young people to engage in gainful employment and develop responsible civic values and ethics. It noted that its NAP was

based on inputs from the Youth Employment Summit (YES) Network,²⁹ their poverty reduction strategy consultation review process and issues raised by youth during forums organized by the Department of Youth Development. Within the action plan, the promotion of youth is prevalent as the Government of Tanzania intends to support the establishment of youth economic groups throughout the country,³⁰ facilitate participation of youth in national exchange programmes and international fora to share experiences, and facilitate the establishment of the National Youth Council.

The Hashemite Kingdom of **Jordan** has replaced its Ministry of Youth with the Higher Council of Youth, which includes representatives of the private sector in the membership of its Board of Directors along with representatives of the relevant Government authorities. A technical committee has been set up by this Council, which represents all Governmental and non-Governmental sectors and relevant international organizations. A 'Listening to Youth Campaign' was organized with the participation of 100,000 young women and men, including university and other higher education faculty students, secondary-school students and members of youth centres, school drop-outs and jobless graduates.

The Government of **Slovakia's** National Action Plan of Employment (NAPE) represents a comprehensive and updated review of national strategy in the field of employment and labour market. The principle of employment elaborated within the NAPE expands on young people up to 25 years, which, in Slovakia, are considered as a disadvantaged group.

In **Uganda**, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development in partnership with the German GTZ and youth organizations, and supported by the YEN, held a National Conference on youth employment in Kampala in June 2005 to raise awareness of youth employment as a key development issue in the country and determine the need for a National Action Plan. The conference resulted in the Government's commitment to develop such a plan, while requesting to become a Lead Country of the YEN. Youth groups were involved in the planning and organizing of this conference and they will be involved on an ongoing basis in the National Stakeholders Roundtable which is being set up to drive forward the design and implementation of the country's NAP.

Despite these encouraging examples, the majority of Governments do not involve youth or youth organizations in the preparation of National Action Plans nor in their implementation. These Governments are relying on traditional stakeholders that often exclude civil society actors.

Some Governments respect the principle of and need for youth involvement in employment policy processes. Youth organizations are peripherally involved through the sharing of views, testimonies and opinions on youth employment issues. This consultation has often been passive in nature—through meetings and surveys that give youth the opportunity to offer their ideas and opinions—but does not extend to creating mecha-

nisms for long-term effective youth participation in the design, implementation and review of policy developments. In other words, youth are not given equal status with other stakeholders in defining national policies on youth employment.

In some countries efforts are underway to create ‘a space at the table’ for youth participation in the decision-making processes through formal mechanisms such as youth advisory groups or the creation of a youth ‘seat’ in national coordinating structures designing and implementing NAPs.

It is evident that some Governments are meeting their commitment to involve youth in the development of National Action Plans, but significantly more effort must be made not only to promote youth employment as a central development issue for Member States, but also to ensure the active involvement of youth and youth organizations in policy development at all levels.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Statistics and other data on the evolution of youth employment in the country facilitate the development of effective policies and programmes to address the multidimensional nature of youth employment. All available or potential sources of information on youth employment and unemployment (and related variables such as underemployment, child labour, self-employment, employment by occupation, sector, wages, working hours and employment in the informal economy) need to be tapped. If a regular labour force survey is not currently being carried out, Governments could consider launching such a survey. Other available data sources such as household surveys are also relevant.³¹

It is essential to have good quantitative and qualitative data on youth employment on a national level, disaggregated by age and sex, and by other variables relevant in individual countries, such as ethnicity, geographic location and residency status, before embarking on policy decisions. Information on the working conditions of young women and men, in both the formal and informal economy, is necessary to ensure the quality aspect of youth employment strategies.

Many countries cited national statistics on the various dimensions of youth employment while others reported a need to improve their capacity. However, very few reported on the establishment of indicators to measure progress, and even fewer mention an evaluation approach. Many countries mention the importance of monitoring without a discussion of how they are proceeding to deal with it.

Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, and Senegal incorporate mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of the plan during its implementation and at its conclusion, including measures of the number of jobs created for youth and the number of microenterprise start-ups.

Indonesia’s youth employment National Action Plan acknowledges the need for an appropriate statistical framework that can enable the IYEN to

monitor its implementation of the programme. The IYEN has invited the Central Bureau of Statistics to publish annual reports on the youth employment situation in Indonesia based on the National Labour Force Survey and the National Socio-Economic Survey.

Realising the need for sound statistical data in order to measure indicators, the **Ugandan** Government is in the process of developing a Labour Market Information System within the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, in cooperation with the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, the Ministry of Education and Sports and the German GTZ.

Conducting follow-ups on the programmes in place, **Azerbaijan**, was able to report on the number of jobs created, the number of young people trained, as well as the growing prominence of information and communication technologies (ICT).

Germany presents a list of labour market policy intervention indicators which measure such things as the impact of specific plans developed to assist unemployed youth enter the labour market.

Assistance in Formulating a Plan of Action

Governments were invited to seek additional guidance and assistance in the preparation of their Action Plans from one or more of the following: ILO field offices; World Bank field offices; the United Nations Secretariat; the United Nations Regional Commissions and other relevant bodies within the United Nations System.³² Despite the fact that the YEN Secretariat is aware of consultation, very few countries acknowledged this in their submissions.

To confirm **Indonesia's** political commitment to youth employment, the Government established the Indonesian Youth Employment Network. IYEN, with technical support from the ILO and in consultation with key stakeholders has prepared the country's NAP.

The Report submitted by **Nicaragua** referred to technical assistance from international organizations (such as the ILO) regarding technical education and professional training programmes in relation to the MDGs. The Government of Tanzania noted that it developed a strategy on youth employment with the input of the YES Network.

Azerbaijan's progress report benefited from technical assistance from UNDP, the World Bank and the ILO. The programme on Poverty Reduction and Economic Development of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2003-2005 was developed in close collaboration with the World Bank. The Coordination Commission for Development of an Employment Strategy in the Republic of Azerbaijan was constituted through technical and financial support from UNDP and the ILO.

Chapter 3

Substance and Priorities of National Action Plans

This section reviews the extent to which countries have focused on developing an integrated approach to the youth unemployment challenge and on implementing the 4 E's highlighted by the High-level Panel. At the end of each sub-section, a box summarises the main issues which countries are encouraged to take into account when developing NAPs or assessing their performance.

Integrated Approach

National policies to promote economic growth and development, to reduce poverty, to protect workers' rights, and to foster equality of opportunity in society influence the general economic environment and the climate for investment. This in turn affects the overall level of employment and the opportunities for young people to obtain their first job. If the wider policy environment is conducive to pro-employment growth, youth strategies are more likely to succeed in promoting lasting, high-quality job opportunities for young women and men. If, on the other hand, the wider policy environment is unfavourable to or does not focus on employment promotion, or it does not seek to foster growth in sectors where young people are likely to find work, youth employment initiatives are less likely to have the desired effect.

Meeting the youth employment challenge calls for an integrated and coherent approach that combines macro- and microeconomic interventions and addresses both labour demand and supply as well as the quantity and quality of employment. Youth employment needs to be considered in all relevant social, employment and economic policies through a well-balanced policy mix. Supportive trade, industry, training and wage policies, with appropriate involvement of significant stakeholders, are also required to meet the youth employment challenge.

The employment prospects of young people are intrinsically linked to the general employment situation yet can be especially vulnerable to fluctuations in economic conditions. Consequently, targeted interventions aimed at overcoming disadvantage are required. Policies and programmes that aim to prevent cycles of disadvantage from being repeated across generations are critical in achieving social inclusion and decent work for youth.³³

Those countries which stated they adopted an integrated approach to tackling the youth employment challenge focused on building a competitive private sector, encouraging foreign and local investment, promoting entrepreneurship and enhancing employability of the workforce and equal opportunities, while seeking to reduce the rate of long-term unemployment.

The approach applied by **European Union Member States** sets out measures addressing both the supply and demand side for all age groups.

Youth are included in all policies and the obligation for Governments to act in favour of youth is strong. They specifically address active and preventive measures to address long-term unemployment, enhance job creation and entrepreneurship, promote human capital, gender equality, combat discrimination and transform undeclared work.

EU Governments also implement specific policy measures to address diverse needs and conditions according to local circumstances. The **Netherlands** designed a plan to tackle the country's specific challenges to youth employment and set up a Task Force focusing on cooperation, communication and campaigning to encourage and facilitate employers and other stakeholders at local, regional and sectoral level to create an extra 40,000 jobs for youth, support local authorities, and initiate and encourage innovative activities.

The **Republic of Korea** has forged a tripartite social pact on job creation. The Government strives to create a better investment environment for business, devise measures to improve income levels of low-income families and enhance social safety nets. It is reported that employers' organizations will expand investment on youth employment, minimise artificial employment barriers and use human resources more effectively. Workers' organizations agree to cooperate in improving productivity and stabilising the income level. To help implement this pact, the Government manages a Job Creation Committee in which tripartite representatives participate to create a society where workers, employers and the Government commit to address youth employment.

In determining benchmarks, the aim is to break away from the conventional view that employment accompanies growth and review economic and labour policies from the perspective of job creation to balance employment and growth. In addition, it is important to focus on establishing a business-friendly environment. Efforts are needed to stabilise the labour market and improve the corporate investment and management environment based on cooperative labour management relationships, as well providing subsidies to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) that create jobs. Several countries have acknowledged the range of policies needed to address these challenges, but have not made progress in integrating them into their NAPs. In establishing benchmarks on the development of a coherent integrated approach for employment policy in their NAP, countries should consider whether:

- All relevant social and economic policies have been successfully mobilised with the aim of getting young people into full and productive employment;³⁴

- Supportive trade, industry, training and wage policies have been included, with the direct involvement of the respective Government Ministries and Agencies;
- Data on the state of youth employment in the country has been gathered and disaggregated by sex, ethnicity, residency status and other relevant variables;
- The NAP drew on existing reports or policy statements on youth employment such as PRSPs, reports to the ILO on the Employment Policy Convention 1964 (No. 122), and National Youth Policies or National Employment Policies;
- Representative youth organizations were fully involved in the formulation of the plan;
- Other relevant stakeholders, particularly employers' and workers' organizations actively participated in the development of the plan.

Employment Creation

High and sustained economic growth is a necessary condition for the generation of employment, including quality employment for young people. This requires macroeconomic policy supportive of increased and sustainable employment growth through expanded investment, productive capacity and aggregate demand in conditions of economic and political stability. Social progress and economic growth must go hand in hand. Policies relating to globalisation, including trade and foreign direct investment, should, wherever necessary, promote the creation of decent jobs for young people. Monetary, fiscal, trade and social security policies must be coherent with the overall objective of increased and sustainable economic growth, employment generation and social protection. Assessment of the likely employment implications of macroeconomic policy choices can better inform decision-making and entail an adequate policy mix.

Increased and sustainable economic growth, while necessary, is not a sufficient condition for sustainable employment generation, particularly for young people. A range of complementary policies are needed to enhance the employment content of growth while also increasing productivity and ensuring adequate social protection. Policies must seek to strengthen enterprises and enhance labour demand as well as the quality of the labour supply. Governments need to review all policies to ensure they do not discriminate against the hiring of youth.³⁵

It is clear from the submissions that those countries which integrate employment into their macroeconomic policies do not necessarily focus on employment creation for youth but rather expect a run on effect. Some countries report that they are trying to create an economic environment for

employment growth, placing particular emphasis on small and medium enterprises or on particular sectors. Various measures are mentioned, but many initiatives simply seek to facilitate doing business. Some countries have adopted a 'making work pay' approach favouring across-the-board social security and taxation reforms. Reducing 'red tape' and unnecessary regulatory burdens attracts investment, fosters entrepreneurship and stimulates new businesses. Some countries have also facilitated access to finance, thereby encouraging innovation and the creation of new enterprises. Subsidies and tax incentives are also offered to businesses creating jobs for youth.

On a global scale, **Tanzania** has enhanced its involvement and participation in the trade and development arena, urging wealthy nations to make the Doha Development Agenda a reality and to remove trade barriers that hamper growth in the country. In order to improve the overall employment situation, the Government is establishing consistent and stable investment policies to encourage development and promote investment in technology and the export sector.

In an attempt to promote agriculture, **Tanzania** is also undertaking labour-intensive infrastructure development to tackle the rise in the number of school dropouts migrating from rural to urban areas in search of employment opportunities. The Government promotes labour-intensive infrastructure development for youth groups undertaking agricultural activities in green belts around urban centres to absorb unemployed youth. Among other initiatives, the Government offers tax relief on agricultural tools and machinery and supports youth in land ownership by allocating areas for youth infrastructure development and enacting laws to protect youth from discrimination in leasing land.

The **Syrian Arab Republic** has established a national committee to specifically develop and implement activities aimed at generating employment and reducing poverty by creating opportunities in production and service sectors.

Pakistan has instituted a number of projects to develop access to water resources. Dams and canals are being constructed to assist areas where masses of land remain uncultivated. This not only helps fuel further economic and employment growth, but also focuses on rural areas stricken by high unemployment rates. The Government is implementing small public work schemes to generate employment in farm-to-market roads, increasing access to water supply, sewage, garbage collection, spurs, culverts and village electrification to create employment opportunities and improve living conditions.

Azerbaijan identified three major short- to medium-term strategies to job creation: developing active labour market programmes such as public works and wage subsidies; exploiting its revenues from the oil sector to finance public infrastructure projects with employment-intensive technologies; and creating a conducive environment for SME development. The

country's submission signalled a move to streamlining such measures into their NAP.

Brazil has a programme which promotes job creation by giving financial subsidies to companies for each new job they create. This will be closely monitored to guarantee decent working conditions for newly hired young people and ensure that there is no employee replacement effect. Companies who are willing to participate in the programme without incentives—good corporate citizens—are publicly recognised by the Ministry of Labour and Employment through the “Partner Company in the First Job Program”.

Other countries are seeking to take advantage of new opportunities in emerging sectors, to advance industries necessary for development and stimulate economic diversification. In **Oman**, an economic diversification policy is placing great emphasis on sectors such as tourism, recognising its direct and indirect employment creation impact. **Slovenia** recognises that a coordinated response among all Government Departments is necessary to facilitate the creation of new jobs.

Indonesia is creating opportunities in tourism, mass media, health, education, environmental conservation, information and communication technology, product and service industries and agriculture. Specific importance is given to the agro industry as it can strengthen urban-rural linkages critical for job creation, poverty reduction and combating hunger. The country recognises that building up ICT can help create the necessary infrastructure for growth and jobs in other sectors, improve productivity and increase competitiveness.

Establishing benchmarks on employment creation requires consideration of the following:

- Dialogue with all stakeholders, particularly youth, can inform policies that target specific industries and sectors with strong potential for youth employment;
- In developing countries, policies seeking to increase agricultural production, rural non-farm industries, manufacturing, tourism and technological capabilities could provide real prospects for raising both economic growth and decent employment for youth;
- The provision of adequate public services, especially in developing countries, in areas such as health care, education, utilities, power and water is required and will directly generate additional decent work for youth as well as providing an enabling environment for increased private investment and job growth;
- There is considerable scope to expand economic activity in key sectors through public and private initiatives which will also help economic and job growth.³⁶

Ensuring the Quality Dimension of Employment

Labour market policies, social protection policies as well as employment legislation and regulations will ensure adequate protection of young workers and the improvement of their employment prospects if they take international labour standards into account and emphasise the need for social dialogue. The regulatory environment for enterprises should create an investment climate that fosters economic growth and the decent employment of young persons.

Governments, in consultation with employers' and workers' organizations, need to establish labour market information and monitoring mechanisms to ensure a regular flow of information on the employment situation, specifically of young people. In order to avoid precarious employment situations that deny workers' basic rights, and to ensure occupational safety and health protection, labour inspection and national labour administration systems play a key role and need to be strengthened, where necessary.³⁷

Job creation is paramount, but not just any job. The jobs must be productive, sustainable, provide opportunities for advancement and decent working conditions. Although most submissions did not address the issues of quality and sustainability of employment, some did report on working conditions.

The **Republic of Korea** is strengthening its supervision of compliance with statutory working hours. The Government will also focus on improving the work environment (by eliminating hazardous factors), labour wel-

Key Issues

The availability of data on youth unemployment and a relative absence of information on the nature of the work young people are doing (part-time, casual, seasonal, informal work, for example) means that policies have neglected conditions of work.

Many young people in countries across the world often work unacceptably long hours under informal, intermittent and insecure work arrangements.

Young people are often working below their potential, in part-time, temporary, casual or seasonal employment.

Most of the world's youth work in the informal economy, both in rural and urban areas. They lack adequate incomes, social protection, security and representation.

Information on the working conditions of young women and men, in both the formal and informal economy, is necessary for the development of youth employment strategies to ensure the quality aspect of job creation.

fare and public perception of SMEs, thereby enhancing their competitiveness and making them more appealing to young job seekers. There is a move to develop and operate programmes that allow for an adjustment to shift-work management of short-term workers by making working hours more flexible.

Brazil noted that employers must recognise workers' rights deriving from collective agreements and guarantee conditions that allow all young workers to continue or return to school. In this regard, hours of work—as defined in the employment contract—would be made more flexible.

Indonesia is seeking to provide improved protection for women workers overseas. Based on ongoing work with the Ministry for Women's Empowerment in collaboration with the World Bank on migrant women's issues, effective legal and social protection measures are being developed, which will benefit young women.

The submission by **Burkina Faso** mentioned a revision of the Work Code, amending the condition for hiring and dismissal practices which will impact on young job-seekers and employees.

In developing, expanding or adapting NAPs and creating or advancing their benchmarks on the quality aspect of job creation, countries should consider:

- Measures to address the working conditions of youth in the informal economy including small business management training, enhanced cooperation and organization of micro- and small enterprises and the full enforcement of social and labour protection through processes such as well-resourced labour inspection systems, labour courts and functioning tripartite institutions;
- The organization of informal economy workers and employers through their respective organizations;
- Emphasis on regulatory changes (including the removal of barriers to business entry) will facilitate young people in the informal economy to make the transition into the formal economy through incentives such as management training, increased access to credit and simplified registration systems;
- An enabling environment for investment and enterprise creation is essential for growth and employment. This includes effective public and private investment in essential physical and social infrastructure, inclusive of quality public services. It also entails the recognition of property rights, good governance, stable institutions, political stability, the rule of law including labour law, and a conducive legal framework for private investment.³⁸

Entrepreneurship

The development of entrepreneurship among young people is an important component of employment policies. Some young people have the potential to become entrepreneurs and create or join an enterprise or cooperative. This potential needs to be actively nurtured through an enabling environment combining:

- Information on opportunities and risks faced by entrepreneurs and those involved in cooperatives;
- Business development services directed particularly at young people;
- Mentoring and financial services (including access to credit and venture capital); and
- Simplifying registration (including business entry) procedures.³⁹

Promoting entrepreneurial activity is recognised in many NAPs as an important means of employment creation. Policymakers are trying to make it a viable option for youth by building an enterprise culture, creating an environment conducive to creating and maintaining a business while providing access to the necessary tools. Business start-ups are a key factor of the dynamism of any economy and many countries are implementing measures to support youth in this area such as reviewing and amending legal and regulatory frameworks to facilitate and reduce the time and money spent on establishing a business. Such an approach will also impact on Government costs with regards to management.

Improving the effectiveness of entrepreneurship training in vocational schools and developing campaigns to promote youth entrepreneurship is evident in the submissions. In addition, some countries are attempting to change the culture towards entrepreneurship by promoting it as a career choice within the school system.

One initiative in the **United Kingdom** focuses on education for teens to promote the spirit of entrepreneurship among young people. Students aged 14-16 in all secondary schools across England receive at least five days of enterprise education. This is complemented by a business-led campaign, “Make Your Mark”, operating along the same promotional lines. In addition, a vocational training programme focusing on three key areas of activity—enterprising, entrepreneurial education and work-based vocational learning with a relevant qualification—is being developed to expose young people to the technical and managerial skills needed to license and operate their own businesses.

Some general and vocational schools in **Germany** have established “exercise- or student enterprises” that offer real goods and services to the public, thereby providing youth with the opportunity to better understand business operations through hands-on experience.

Indonesia is fostering linkages between large and small enterprises, promoting the sharing of knowledge, expertise, resources and networks, which provides an effective channel for SMEs and start-ups to gain access to necessary support. The country is also seeking to cultivate self-help groups for youth and membership-based organizations including cooperatives, in order to increase access to supplies, credit and market information.

Other approaches involve direct financial support for start-ups. Access to finance and microcredit helps people to establish a business, promote self-employment and expand businesses. Some plans strengthen microfinance institutions and provide incentives for youth who target specific themes. For instance, small bank projects in **Pakistan** have designated funds for small enterprises in the area of rural development. In a similar vein, the **Syrian Arab Republic** promotes young entrepreneurs in rural areas by maintaining a fund for rural development, including developing local infrastructure by small enterprises.

In **Algeria**, young people without a credit history have access to financial services in order to invest in self-employment activities.

Mexico is promoting and supporting young women and men to establish their own business through assistance in formulating project proposals, making finances available, and supporting institutions that aid young entrepreneurs. Meanwhile, **Colombia** provides guidance on developing business plans and provides financial assistance to start-ups: up to 100 per cent funding is available.

Microcredit can play a critical role in empowering young women through respect, independence, and participation in communities, while generating household income. Therefore, some countries have established funds earmarked for women. In addition to financial support, **Saudi Arabia** is providing access to property for women to start up a business.

Burkina Faso not only has funds designated for the initiatives of young women and for youth to establish small and medium enterprises, but also provides funds to help those in the informal sector formalise their business ventures.

The **United Kingdom** has established the “Women’s Enterprise Strategic Framework” which helps create an environment to encourage more women to start businesses and focuses on four key areas for action: improving business support services, access to finance, caring and childcare, and transition from benefits to self-employment. An increase in female owned start-ups is reported.

Countries formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating policies for small enterprises, including entrepreneurship and cooperatives should consider the following:

- Policies need to be reviewed to attract, inform and assist young persons in establishing or joining and to assist young persons in the informal economy to move to the formal economy;
- Small and medium-sized enterprises and cooperatives can be an engine of job creation and seedbeds for innovation and entrepreneurship, but in some countries, small and medium-sized enterprises remain marginal and operate outside of the formal economy;⁴⁰
- Cumbersome procedures and regulations hamper the start-up of new businesses. All countries need to review, rethink and reorient the legal and institutional framework for business to make it easier to start and run a business;
- Governments should make it a top priority to obtain real, reliable and relevant data on the informal economy and on the rules and procedures required to set up and operate a new business within a legal framework;
- On the basis of a better understanding of the institutional obstacles, policies need to be developed to allow this part of the economic system to be integrated into the mainstream economy and raise its productivity through legal facilitation;
- Governments, at the national and local levels, need to encourage a broad and dynamic concept of entrepreneurship to stimulate initiatives which include, but reach beyond, the private sector: small and large enterprises, social entrepreneurs, cooperatives, the public sector, the trade union movement and youth organizations;
- Each country must set objectives and targets for a broad reform programme, based on best practice, which can offer more flexibility for enterprises and more security for workers.⁴¹

Employability

Education, vocational training, core skills (including literacy and numeracy), labour market services, work experience and awareness of labour rights and occupational health and safety are essential components of a comprehensive policy to enhance the employability of young people. Education and vocational training policy must be broad-based, have a link to employment policy and be responsive to the development of core skills being used in the workplace. A key function of the education system must be the progressive development of employability skills among young people.⁴²

In the world today, there are too many people lacking the necessary education and relevant training for good, productive jobs and there are too many unproductive jobs with poor remuneration. Employability begins with literacy. In spite of vast improvements, there is still a huge literacy gap. In many countries, training remains largely unrelated to labour market needs. Young people often lack access to the labour market services and support needed to help them secure decent and productive work. It is time to break the vicious circle of poor education and training, poor jobs and poverty.

Supply side issues, particularly those dealing with the quality of the labour force, received the most attention in countries' submissions. Although basic education is seen as important, improving and increasing vocational training is high on all countries' priority list for advancing young persons' employment prospects. Countries reported seeking increased employability through improving professional and vocational qualifications, recognising the link between education/training and labour market needs. Many aim to improve the skills of young people and identify factors that hinder the employability of more vulnerable groups of young people.

Key Issues

Literacy and numeracy, alongside core work skills, constitute basic skills that are fundamental for working life. Yet, approximately 96 million young women and 57 million young men are illiterate—most of them in developing countries.

The 'transition gap' between completion of initial education and training, and entry to employment has tended to lengthen. Those who find work tend to spend more time in temporary, insecure jobs.

In some countries, many young people fail to find jobs on completing their education or training, because of the mismatch of their skills with labour market requirements.

Many young people, particularly in developing countries, are being trained in skills for which there is little or no demand and/or are disadvantaged in terms of core skills required in the current labour market.

Lack of opportunities for work experience, combined with the absence of adequate, or suitably presented, labour market information, vocational guidance and counselling, poor job placement mechanisms and inadequate demand exacerbate the difficulties of finding a decent job.

Education

Access to universal, free, quality public primary and secondary education and investment in vocational training and lifelong learning are essential for indi-

vidual and social enhancement and preparation for future working life. Education for all is an effective means of combating child labour and eradicating poverty.⁴³

Policies to improve the general knowledge of the workforce are evident in the submissions and many countries are seeking to reduce the number of early school leavers. Equal opportunities for everyone are provided through the right of access to a minimum level of basic education and in some cases also the right to secondary education. Making education available to the poor and improving the quality of existing programmes is sought, as is expanding access by providing more classrooms and teachers. Expanding access to education is extremely important for Governments, and some recognise it as a prerequisite for women's empowerment. Rural areas are identified as more problematic and some Governments seek to increase investment in infrastructure and teachers to provide access in these areas. Some countries are addressing cultural barriers and making it more acceptable for young girls to attend school and complete their education.

Indonesia seeks to make universal basic education more affordable by eliminating fees and reducing book and uniform costs, offering scholarships, and providing incentives to encourage local communities, charitable organizations and the private sector to provide grants and scholarships for students in need. Quality of education is addressed through the establishment of minimum service and qualification standards, making school management more accountable through local assessment bodies, eliciting improved performance by linking it to funding, and increasing teachers' salaries and status while improving their competency and materials.

While the **Syrian Arab Republic** has enacted a non-discriminatory law on compulsory education obliging municipalities to offer education to all, other countries are attempting to address the issue of school dropouts. **Indonesia's** NAP, drawing on their school-to-work transition survey, reveals that youth reported their primary reason for leaving school was that they did not see the purpose given the low quality and inappropriateness of skills acquired.

In **Portugal**, a specific National Action Plan for Early School Leaving Prevention is in place to enhance opportunities for school entrance and continuance. Within this plan, a joint agreement has been signed between the Labour Ministry and the Ministry of Education and Social Security to provide education and training courses for youth at risk.

Hungary reports on its suburban "Sand Lot" school, which recruits disadvantaged young people between the ages of 16 and 25 who have no skills, have dropped out of school and are unemployed. The project helps participants return to school by offering customised education matching their abilities and desires. The programme locates the drifting young people with the help of social workers in local areas.

Germany has stepped up individual assistance to those with learning difficulties (in particular migrants), enhanced equal education opportunities, improved cooperation between schools and parents and provided better consultative services for families. This intervention is aimed at preventing disadvantaged students from leaving school and joining the ranks of the unemployed.

In **Uganda**, the Ministry of Education and Sport has teamed up with the German GTZ to provide non-formal education with elements of pre-vocational training to rural youth in a programme designed to address the school dropout rate in rural areas.

Serbia and Montenegro noted that the unemployment rate is higher among youth with high levels of education. This presents an inauspicious situation for youth who become disenfranchised with education, as few high-skill employment opportunities exist. The need for financial support also means that many young people seek employment prior to completing basic educational training. The socio-economic environment can force children to leave school early and make them vulnerable to trafficking and child labour.

Vocational Education and Training

Vocational education and lifelong training responsive to the evolving demand for skills in the labour market, along with apprenticeship schemes and other measures that combine training with work, are fundamental to improving youth employability. A variety of initiatives, including public and private partnerships, and appropriate incentives for individual and collective investments in human resources development, can ensure the continued relevance of vocational education and training to labour market needs. Enterprises have a critical role to play in investment in training.⁴⁴

Vocational training is an integral part of all of the replies submitted. Some countries are establishing more training institutions, while other countries are improving existing centres and programmes. Training assistance for those with learning disabilities is mentioned as are training grants for students. Many countries report increased funding for vocational training and the introduction of courses on how to set up and run a business. In addition, some countries have sought to change the mindset of youth by presenting entrepreneurship as a viable career choice and/or to create an entrepreneurial culture.

While **Indonesia** is establishing a qualification framework to standardise a nationwide competency-based skill system, **Croatia** and the **Netherlands** are seeking to assist candidates by promoting the use of an employment 'passport', which identifies the skills, employment history and employability of candidates after they have completed a vocational training programme.

Every year in **Oman**, the Government commissions a number of private training institutes to train high school graduates and prepare them for jobs in the private sector. The Government covers the training cost for these young women and men who are then selected to work in private enterprises at the end of their training. This programme, supervised by the Ministry of Manpower, trained more than 12,000 young people in 2003-2004.

In the **Russian Federation**, mobile training classrooms and temporary training centres have been established enabling vocational training opportunities for women living in rural areas to be significantly expanded. Targeted vocational training for women in rural areas, which also promotes and supports entrepreneurship by young single mothers, has also been provided.

Azerbaijan has established computer and linguistic rooms in the General Employment Department, where youth are trained in the English language and ICT. Other courses provide secretary, computer accountant, carpet weaving, seller-cashier and auto repair training. The Government notes that more than 50 per cent of graduating students have found employment after completing these courses.

The **United Arab Emirates'** National Human Resources Development and Employment Authority provides young nationals with training and enhanced career opportunities through a Skills Development Fund, established through an employer levy system.

The **Ugandan** Programme for the Promotion of the Welfare of Children and Youth comprises vocational and business skills training for young people, particularly in rural areas and in war ravaged parts of the country. This programme is carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and GTZ. In addition, the Government, in collaboration with a number of stakeholders, is developing the Uganda Vocational Qualifications Framework which will enable particularly disadvantaged groups to access training based on their experience and knowledge, and to pursue shorter, very targeted courses.

Sector specific training is the focus of some countries as they identify areas in which they are more likely to create employment. In the **Netherlands**, three organizations for education and development for the technical industry and local authorities are working together to enable unemployed young people without basic qualifications to be trained for work in the metal industry. Existing financial resources from local authorities, money from education and development funds, the European Social Fund and assistance for training under a national law are combined as an incentive for employers to participate and offer work experience and training places.

Noting that youth in rural areas face particular difficulties, **Colombia** also takes a sectoral approach to training youth. They primarily focus on the agricultural and fishing sectors, by offering theoretical and on the job training to young women and men in rural areas.

The Technical Citizen Project in **Brazil**, a partnership between the National Information Technology Secretariat and Sun Microsystems, aims to train young people in state-of-the-art technology, offering free software. As an experiment, 500 young people will be chosen to take part in the qualification in four pilot cities.

Jordan seeks to enable youth to take full advantage of national investments in ICT by integrating it into the day-to-day life of communities so that youth will be better equipped to deal with and benefit from globalisation. To facilitate this, computer and Internet training programmes are available in youth centres.

Bulgaria, Germany and Japan take a dual approach to vocational training, offering theoretical training in a vocational school and practical training in businesses. **Bulgaria** targets young people worst hit by unemployment—those with low levels of education and qualification that have dropped out of school early. In addition, a programme implemented by the Bulgarian Industrial Association specifically trains young women in ICT.

In 2004, **Germany** reached a national agreement with the private sector to ensure that all young people who apply for vocational training get a place. The Government promotes initial training by refunding the trainee's wage and by paying a lump sum share of monthly social security contributions. It has also focused its attention on, among other issues, socially deprived and poorly developed rural areas. The Government seeks to provide youth with key social and vocational qualifications to integrate them into society and work. To facilitate this, synergies are created in such areas via an inter-linkage with youth welfare centres and training and employment centres.

In **Finland**, the Government seeks to guarantee every person who completes basic education a place in further training and that a place in training, trainee placement, or a youth workshop be arranged for unemployed youth after three months of unemployment. The target is that at least 96 per cent of those who complete basic education progress to higher education, vocational training or additional education in the same year.

Work Experience

Many submissions draw attention to improving employment opportunities for youth through internships and apprenticeships which provide tangible work experience often required by employers. Some programmes establish formal training agreements with employers while others subsidise enterprises that hire youth.

A significant instrument in the prevention of long-term unemployment of young people in **Slovakia** is National Project IX. This provides school graduates and young people with the ability to acquire work experience and skills in real working environments through graduate practice in their field of study.

Japan offers a “Youth Trial Employment” scheme, which provides financial incentives to companies that offer short-term training jobs to unemployed youth with the aim of assisting the trainee in the school-to-work transition.

Croatia subsidises employers taking on salaried apprentices and interns by reducing contributions to non-wage labour costs such as national insurance schemes. The Republic of Serbia and Montenegro also co-finances wages, but youth must be engaged in research and development projects for employers to receive the subsidy. Awareness raising is another tactic used by Saudi Arabia to encourage employers to hire young women and men.

Algeria notes that aggressive “pre-employment” programmes help young people make the transition from school to the workplace by enabling them to acquire valuable experience in a professional environment which makes them more attractive candidates in attaining permanent employment.

In some countries, employers voluntarily provide opportunities to young people, seeing them as good for business. Encouraging and fostering partnerships between employers, workers and educational institutions is seen to be very valuable.

For example, **Indonesia** seeks to build bridges between educational institutions and the business community. By doing so, employers’ organizations support teachers by advising them on technology and industry standards, and provide opportunities for work experience programmes that help students bridge learning and work, develop new attitudes and gain confidence. In return, business has a workforce that meets their demands.

In **Brazil**, there is coaching support available for companies to help in the preparation of apprenticeships, as well as a permanent forum for discussing and sharing practices. A Declaration of Technical Cooperation has been established between the Ministry of Labour and Employment and public and private companies for hiring young women and men. In addition, a decree was passed to ensure that the more than 155,800 apprenticeships that have been made available are inspected to ensure compliance.

Bulgaria has established a close link between academic circles, business and the Government to provide internships. Coordinated by Bulgaria’s Ministry of Transport and Communications, this programme provides opportunities during the summer school break in public and private enterprises. Summer training for Bulgarian students in leading companies abroad is also organized. In addition, Bulgaria’s public administration is providing opportunities. Immediately after graduating from university, young people are able to begin work in Ministries and Government Agencies in regional and municipal administrations where they gain experience and, in turn, provide Government with increased capacity to deliver services.

The **Principality of Monaco**, realising that work experience through internships and apprenticeships is important to making a smooth school-to-work transition, has held round-table discussions to debate the issue and has

established agreements between enterprises and the State to give young people an opportunity. The programme also supports internships abroad.

A new law in **Germany**, partnered by industry, provides that anyone under the age of 25, who is fit for work, be given an apprenticeship or an opportunity to work. Germany has also established an apprenticeship task force to review current practices and identify possible growth areas.

Career Guidance, Job Counselling and other Labour Market Services

Public and private employment services can provide career guidance and counselling, impart up-to-date labour market information and support young people in finding, securing and retaining jobs. Where necessary, public employment services must be strengthened.⁴⁵

Although career choice tends to be individual, Governments recognise that they must provide support for youth to realise their potential. The submissions note that improving the preparation of graduates for the labour market is important and is being addressed. In most countries, the education system is principally responsible for student career counselling and guiding students into higher education or professions. However, in **Singapore**, the Singapore Workforce Development Agency works closely with educational and vocational institutions by reaching out and providing information and guidance to youth through teachers and career counsellors.

Employment services such as improving the capacity and increasing the number of job centres and information, enhancing job-seeking skills of candidates and job fairs are all mentioned as ways to support young job-seekers. A few action plans mention programmes that specifically target disadvantaged youth. It is recognised that the provision of accurate and adequate information is essential, as is infrastructure such as physical or online job banks and services. Communication through radio, television, newspapers, billboards, telephones and the Internet are used to advertise employment services. In addition, a number of countries maintain a registry of active job-seekers, which is made available to employers seeking to fill vacancies.

The smooth transition from school to work is crucial and many countries are tackling the obstacles encountered by young people in crossing this bridge. **Finland** has developed a committee involving four administrative sectors: youth, social, education and labour authorities, which collaborate at the national and local levels to provide youth workshops. They also seek to open a path to active citizenship and raise young unemployed people's interest in, and motivation for, training and work. The workshops are geared to support personal growth, to cultivate personal strengths and to prepare young women and men for further training or work as well as their participation in society.

The Government of **Norway** points out that the probability of making a quick transition from education to work depends on the intensity of the job search. Therefore, their strategy focuses on placement assistance,

enhancing job searching skills and counselling. For those who do not succeed in finding a job, close follow-up, additional assistance and other labour market programmes are available.

The **Republic of Korea** has many programmes geared towards career guidance and counselling. To improve information and to expand the scope of job counselling for youth still receiving basic education, parents, businesses, and experts will be mobilised as career education instructors at schools and training for teachers will be expanded. Over the mid to long term, professional counsellors will be assigned. The measures also include strengthening partnerships between local employment centres and schools to provide career and job counselling. Teachers and parents will be able to join various career guidance events and tailored support will be given to parents to help them guide their children.

Specifically targeting young women, “Female college student career development centres” will be expanded to provide specialised career counselling to female students facing difficulties. Job networks specialised for female college students will be enhanced by establishing a network between students and graduates through a cyber mentoring service. As another approach to facilitate the school-to-work transition, the **Republic of Korea** has initiated employment contracts among parents, students, schools and companies, while tailored work education will be provided to help vocational school graduates begin work immediately upon their graduation in a field of their choice.

The **Republic of Korea** also integrates and manages job information developed through networks of Ministries and provides necessary information to people seeking employment overseas. A mid- to long-term expansion plan to promote overseas employment will be prepared. **Poland, Slovakia and Monaco** also provide support to youth seeking internships and work abroad.

In **Lithuania**, six new employment centres have opened. The *Jaunimo darbo centrai* (JDC) employs highly qualified consultants who organize special seminars and discussions on youth employment and career choice issues. Youth independence, self-confidence and communication are promoted. Professional state-of-the-art information technologies are available for searching the Lithuanian Labour Exchange database, other job search sites or educational opportunities. Under the JDC, services have also been established between representatives of state and non-Governmental organizations, municipalities and students’ organizations dealing with youth issues.

Saudi Arabia’s Ministry of Labour maintains a registry of jobs and CVs, trying to match candidates with opportunities. A consultative council with representatives from the private sector discusses how to provide opportunities for youth and how to make manual labour and other jobs more appealing to youth.

The **Russian Federation** has increased the employment of young women by providing them with job search assistance while they are still in school. The *Life Planning and Career Planning, Girls and Professional Careers, Start, Choosing a Profession* and other programmes are designed to broaden young peoples' knowledge of professions and how to enter them. The majority of participants in these programmes are young women. They also hold job fairs for women on particular themes or specific professions.

The Government of **Serbia and Montenegro** sought to establish the Centre for Promotion of Employment for Unemployed Young Experts in order to foster education, vocational training and employment. The work was to be supported by domestic and international donors, but unfortunately many donors who had pledged significant sums of money did not fulfil their obligations and the Centre has not been realised.

In determining realistic benchmarks and far reaching goals, all countries need to review, rethink and reorient their education, vocational training and labour market policies to facilitate the school-to-work transition and to give young people—particularly those who are disadvantaged because of disabilities or who face discrimination because of gender, ethnicity or residency status—a head start in working life. To ensure jobs and social justice for youth, each country needs to set objectives and targets based on best practice for investment in education and training and other employability strengthening measures.⁴⁶

A number of mechanisms used in combination to further investment in training and to guarantee access are required:

- National policies must aim to provide all young women and men with the broadest possible access to responsive vocational education and training opportunities;
- Youth employment strategies that focus on a spectrum of factors, including skills development, work experience and labour market services, are more likely to be successful.
- Public employment services (PES) are central to ensuring that young job seekers have easy access to the information they need in seeking jobs suited to their skills, abilities and interests. Employment services need to cater to the diversity of needs among young job seekers, for example through support services available to those facing particular difficulties or through 'self-service' options such as one-stop shops. Computerised data which job seekers can access themselves (sometimes through the Internet) as well as computerised aptitude and interest programmes can help job-seekers identify their work targets and suitable employment opportunities;

- Career development and guidance are an integral part of the range of services provided.

Education and training authorities need to:

- Integrate basic skills such as literacy, numeracy and, where possible, technological knowledge into education, equipping students with a foundation for the world of work;
- Incorporate career guidance and support, knowledge of industry along with industrial relations and essential labour issues, such as occupational safety and health, into curricula;
- Foster career entry and career development, including the recognition of prior learning to facilitate transfer between educational programmes and through the transfer of relevant educational qualifications and credits;
- Make education more responsive to labour market needs by directly engaging educators with industry partners in the sector and encouraging student contact with industry. Programmes, which in the latter school years, combine learning with work experience can bring students and employers together;⁴⁷

Equal Opportunities

Gaining and retaining employment is easier for certain categories of youth. Young people who complete education and are from socio-economically advantaged backgrounds make the transition to work more smoothly, while the economically disadvantaged and socially excluded face greater difficulties. All youth must be viewed as potential contributors to society rather than as a potential problem.

In general, young women have greater difficulties than young men in gaining and retaining work because of discriminatory policies, structural barriers and cultural prejudices. All countries need to review, rethink and reorient their policies to ensure that there are equal opportunities for young women when they enter the workforce and throughout their working lives. Each country must address the gender disparities in access to education, training and labour markets, and develop and implement the necessary gender-sensitive policies in these areas.⁴⁸

Focus on other forms of discrimination is equally important in tackling the full range of youth employment issues. There is growing concern about multiple forms of discrimination and the impact on youth.

Gender Equality

Countries are addressing the issue of equal opportunities through various means. Some examples have been outlined throughout this analysis. The key is

Key Issues

Particular groups of people, such as young women, those living in poverty and/or in rural areas, youth with disabilities, youth affected by HIV/AIDS, indigenous youth, those involved in hazardous work, demobilised young soldiers, young migrant workers and other socially disadvantaged youth are more prone to unemployment and underemployment, with many opting out of the labour force in countries where the possibility of reliance on social security payments exists. There are a number of factors that impact on the ability of some young people to obtain a decent job, including discrimination, economic hardship and access issues.

that issues of discrimination need to be mainstreamed into policies at all levels and across all areas in order to be successful. Addressing disadvantage in education policy, while ignoring it in employment policy, for example, is counterproductive. Many submissions to this global analysis have addressed the gender issue and, more importantly, addressed it as a cross-cutting concern. Diversification of opportunities can be achieved by breaking down occupational gender stereotyping and providing access to training for both young women and young men.

Indonesia is addressing gender stereotypes in curricula and gender segregation in education. In addition, it is embarking on rigorous awareness-raising campaigns to change the perception of traditional gender roles and the division of responsibilities between women and men.

Finland amended the Act on Equality between Women and Men. The amended Act came into Force in 2005. The new Act will reinforce the duty to promote equality and to eliminate discrimination.

The **United Kingdom** is seeking to address occupational segregation and highlights a recent report by the Equal Opportunity Commission that presents a correlation between under-representation of women and skills shortages. It concluded that a gender segregated labour force not only promotes inequality in pay and opportunities, but also denies employers access to the key skills needed to improve productivity. A national strategy is being developed to ensure a consistent approach to tackling occupational segregation. It will be informed by research into reasons why young women and men are not trained in areas where skills shortages exist.

Social Inclusion

It is recognised in many of the submitted documents that discrimination on the basis of gender is not the sole form of exclusion. Youth with disabilities, young migrants and ethnic minorities, among others, have been addressed in some of the NAPs. **Germany**, for example, provides prevoca-

tional training measures for disabled young people, youth from low-income families and those with a weak educational background.

At the end of 2003, **Brazil** launched its national programme to provide a first job to young people. It aims to combat poverty and social exclusion, and to combine employment and income policies with a public and private investment policy, which creates more and better jobs. This programme was designed to meet the needs of young people aged 16 to 24 whose families had monthly per capita incomes of less than half the minimum wage and who are pursuing an education. It primarily targets youth with a low level of schooling, youth from more vulnerable groups and those who are subject to greater discrimination such as young women, descendants of Africans, those with disabilities and youth receiving social assistance.

In **Thailand**, the Ministry of Labour holds career days for juveniles living in detention centres, while **Bulgaria** has special programmes targeted at providing professional guidance and advice to youth who are raised in institutions to prepare them to leave. The Government also provides a subsidy to employers who hire young people with disabilities and orphans, which covers the minimum salary along with insurance contributions. From January to September 2004, more than 300 young people were employed under this scheme.

Nicaragua has a programme which provides support to young women and men in poor rural areas. Some work on their own and others have formed cooperatives to farm agricultural products. They have become more efficient through support from civil society and Government, which provide technical skills and knowledge, access to credit and new technology as well as managerial skills.

The **Dominican Republic** has a specific plan to improve the capacity of placing youth with disabilities in the labour market. The programme helps employers to link up with workers, and helps workers to overcome obstacles to obtaining and sustaining employment. It also provides information to the public about the situation of workers with disabilities.

Some countries highlighted challenges such as breaking down stereotypes of unpopular careers and jobs, migration and motivating discouraged young workers.

The **European Union** has undertaken a 'new start' initiative for young people that provides a tailor-made programme for each youth who has been unemployed for 6 months offering training, retraining, work practice or a job, combined—when appropriate—with ongoing job search assistance.

Initiatives being taken forward in the **United Kingdom** include the New Futures Fund (NFF), which provides intensive support and help for young unemployed people (aged 16-34) suffering from serious disadvantage in looking for work. In addition, the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and Confederation of British Industry (CBI) have welcomed the opening up of legal entry routes for migrant workers into the country via the Government's new managed migration policies. In particular they support the Working Holidaymakers scheme which allows young Commonwealth citizens to come to the United Kingdom to work for up to two years.

Jordan's strategy focuses on strengthening young people's productivity, economic participation, self-reliance and innovation while curtailing their reliance on jobs and other support offered by the Government.

Countries must set objectives and targets to rectify the gender disparities, and other forms of exclusion in access to education, training and labour markets, including:

- Developing appropriate indicators for monitoring and tracking progress toward reducing gaps, including collecting appropriate economic data disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, geographical location, residency status and other relevant variables;
- Reforming curricula and career guidance and other labour market services for marginalised youth, recognising the hurdles inherent in mainstream systems;
- Changing policies to enable disadvantaged youth to attend schools, participate in vocational training courses, and ensure access to distance learning;
- Supporting microcredit and adolescent livelihoods initiatives to broaden the range of training and services, including business development services and an innovative menu of financial and insurance products;
- Offering incentives to businesses that provide support for young women's reproductive roles, including access to lifelong learning, as they are more likely than men to be leaving and then re-entering the work force at different stages of their lives;
- Passing and implementing legislation mandating equal pay for work of equal or comparable value, enforcing sexual harassment policies, supporting young women's efforts to organize their workplaces and ensuring adequate workplace protection against exploitation.

Countries are reminded that active labour market programmes are often used to redress situations where young people have fallen through the cracks and have become marginalised in the labour market or education system. They are more likely to be effective when they:

- Are small-scale, well targeted, well designed and effectively organized;
- Meet the specific requirements of the intended beneficiaries, based on a careful analysis of the local employment situation and participant characteristics;
- Are supported by enterprises; and
- Include measures to improve the competencies and skills of participants.⁴⁹

Chapter 4

Conclusions

Since the adoption of the Millennium Declaration in September 2000, the urgency of the commitment to give young people everywhere access to decent and productive work has only increased. Unemployment and underemployment of young people is not only a social concern, but also has economic and, increasingly, political dimensions.

In countries which have social protection such as unemployment insurance or welfare protection, youth unemployment represents an enormous drain on national and local budgets, while at the same time representing a terrible waste of the capabilities and potential contribution to social development of the best educated generation of young people ever. In countries without institutional social protection, the burden of youth unemployment is felt in other ways. It is felt by families who have foregone income and invested in the education of their daughters and sons, only to find themselves continuing to provide income support to their grown children who, on their part, are increasingly frustrated and bitter to find themselves “unemployable.” It is felt by those from low-income families where young people cannot afford the “luxury” of open unemployment, and therefore are struggling to survive in low-income, dead-end and often dangerous jobs in the informal economy. And the burden of youth unemployment is borne by all those living in communities and societies where youth unemployment is the root cause of destructive and self-destructive behaviour, ranging from neighbourhood gangs to membership of local militias, where unemployed young people are desperately seeking not only income, but also recognition and a sense of belonging.

Given the social, economic and political costs of youth unemployment and underemployment, inaction is not an option.

The 41 National Reports and Action Plans on youth employment that have been reviewed in this report provide the clear message that countries are actively seeking answers, while at the same time doing much and learning in the process. A number of broad conclusions can be drawn from the rich and diverse experiences reported in the national submissions.

The first is that there is no magic bullet, no one single policy that “works” and that can be exported to other countries as a “good practice.” Rather, policies and actions to address youth employment require a coherent and integrated approach, which prepares young people for the labour market, while at the same time preparing the labour market for young people. When the High-level Panel on Youth Employment proposed a coherent and integrated approach to youth employment, based on the four global priorities of employability, entrepreneurship, equal opportunities and employment creation, it stressed the importance of addressing youth employment from the perspectives of both supply and demand in the labour market.

A second conclusion is that the reported youth employment policies have focused largely on the supply side. Many countries have indeed reported on initiatives to make general education more employment oriented. Others have pointed towards the importance of helping young people to create their own employment opportunities through self-employment and entrepreneurship development. Major investments are made in upgrading and continually re-evaluating vocational training programmes to expand the focus from traditional occupations to developing the skills necessary for young people living in a world in which they are likely to change jobs and careers often during their lifetime. Another key element for preparing young people for the world of work is to provide them with work experience. A combination of both training and on-the-job experience underpins the German dual-track training system which has helped keep the youth unemployment rate close to the rate for the general population; a system which has been replicated in different forms to suit national circumstances by many other countries.

A third conclusion is that all these efforts to better prepare young people for the world of work are likely to fail unless accompanied by policies which actually create new and additional employment opportunities for young people coming onto the labour market. While many countries speak of a “mismatch” between skills and the kinds of labour market opportunities available, the overall problem of youth employment is related to the inability of most economic policies to create employment opportunities of the quality which responds to the expectations, and indeed, the aspirations of young people. Rather than asking the younger generation to lower their expectations, policymakers should be working to foster employment-intensive economic growth in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

Therefore policies to foster employability and entrepreneurship must necessarily be accompanied by measures to stimulate demand and create additional jobs. More broadly speaking, employment creation should become a central goal—not a by-product—of Government policies for investment and economic growth. One specific area on which a number of Governments have reported favourably is increasing the employment impact of infrastructure investment policies, including through labour-intensive public works. While these programmes need not be specifically targeted towards young people, new entrants to the labour market will usually be the prime beneficiaries.

Fourth, youth employment should not be approached as a target group or simply as a sub-set of the labour market. If policymakers focus their energies first on creating sound employment outcomes for young people, these results can be expected to have sustainable impact on the youth cohort throughout their life cycle, and to have positive spillover effects on other age groups. Rather than adopting policies which favour youth to the detriment of other age groups, policies in favour of youth employment should be promoted with a view to improving the situation of all age groups within the labour market. For example, employment for young people is essential for the viability and sustainability of retirement funds and unemployment insurance.

Fifth, a consultative process is required for National Action Plans to have broad-based ownership which in turn is required for the measures to reach

their intended impact. Consultation with and participation of representative youth organizations in the preparation of most National Action Plans has been either weak or inadequately reported. The most technically sound policies are bound to fail if they are not developed and implemented through dialogue with the young people who are their intended beneficiaries. Likewise, involvement of representative employer and worker organizations has been, on the whole, inadequate.

Sixth, most countries not only have a lot to learn from each other, but are also thirsty for this information and knowledge. The added value of the Youth Employment Network is that it provides a mechanism for sharing knowledge and experience among its partners based on the fundamental principle that all partners, irrespective of their country's level of development, has something useful to learn and share.

A seventh conclusion is that meeting the commitment on youth employment contained in the Millennium Declaration requires concerted and coordinated action not only at the local and national levels, but also internationally. Whereas Member States must begin their efforts at home and in their local communities, success in achieving decent and productive work for young people is dependent on a number of elements which extend beyond national borders and which are governed by international practices, policies and agreements in areas such as foreign direct investment, international trade, migration and financial flows.

Eighth, developing strategies and programmes for youth employment provides a powerful tool for building political consensus and policy coherence, at the level of international institutions (such as the World Bank and the ILO), as well as at the level of different national Governmental Departments (such as labour, finance, education, foreign affairs, trade and industry), youth organizations, employers' and workers' representatives and civil society organizations. In view of the broad agreement among people from different political and interest groups on the importance of youth employment, joint action on youth employment can build mutual trust and confidence as the foundation for reaching agreements on more controversial issues in economic and social policy, and even for resolving political disputes. Accordingly, it is noteworthy that the Youth Employment Network has become a forum for building coherence and consensus around economic and social policies and for dialogue between young people and policymakers.

Finally, and with respect to building political consensus, youth employment provides a bridge between security, peace building and development. In this regard, the proposal of the High-level Panel on youth employment for a major new policy and action-oriented initiative on the links between youth employment and collective security merits serious consideration and support.

Chapter 5

Recommendations

The Youth Employment Network provides an important vehicle for realising the commitment of the Millennium Declaration to provide “decent and productive work for youth.” The YEN derives its strength and effectiveness from the commitment of its partner entities. In this regard, the growing number of YEN Lead Countries who have committed themselves to ensuring policy coherence for the promotion of youth employment are providing valuable leadership and guidance on this issue. The following recommendations are intended to provide guidelines to Member States, the United Nations system, partners and stakeholders on needed action to urgently address youth unemployment and underemployment.

First, it is important that those countries that have prepared National Reviews and Action Plans on youth employment should move forward to the implementation stage and, through a process of learning-by-doing, to continue to improve the analytical foundations and impact of their actions. Other countries, which have not yet prepared National Action Plans, should be encouraged to do so. All countries that have not yet submitted their National Reviews and Action Plans or progress reports to the Youth Employment Network focal point within the United Nations Secretariat are encouraged to do so as soon as possible;

Second, Governments should develop their National Action Plans through collaboration among Government, representative youth organizations, employers’ and workers’ organizations and civil society, and by promoting partnerships between public authorities, the private sector, educational institutions and civil society. Governments should also integrate their Action Plans into their broader development and poverty reduction strategies and plans, and to prioritise therein the necessary resources for implementation of these plans;

Third, it is important that Governments devise new policy-oriented indicators to monitor and evaluate progress on implementing their National Action Plans. In this regard, the Youth Employment Network should coordinate the work of its core partners to establish an improved indicator which takes into account not only those in open unemployment, but also those young people who are in education, who are underemployed, who are working in the informal economy and who may have dropped out of the labour market altogether. The unemployment rate for 15-24 year olds is simply an inadequate basis for monitoring progress at the national, regional and global levels towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals target of decent and productive work for young people;

Fourth, Governments should consider youth employment as integral to their overall strategies for development and collective security, and within

this context to give renewed attention to the commitment of “decent and productive work for young people” as contained in the Millennium Declaration. This commitment should be seen as an underpinning of and key to achieving the other Millennium Development Goals, including poverty reduction, the achievement of equal opportunities and the fight against HIV/AIDS. Over the next ten years, efforts should focus on giving young people between the ages of 15 and 24 access to decent and productive employment opportunities. By accompanying and nurturing this generation over the next decade, we will provide our global community with its one best chance for attaining all of the Millennium Development Goals by the year 2015;

Fifth, Governments should renew and strengthen the invitation, as contained in General Assembly resolutions 57/165 and 58/133, to the Youth Employment Network, under the leadership of the International Labour Organization and in close partnership with the United Nations Secretariat, the World Bank and other relevant specialized agencies, to assist and support, upon request, the efforts of Governments in the elaboration and implementation of National Reviews and Action Plans;

Sixth, the YEN’s Youth Consultative Group should be strengthened so that, in addition to its overall advisory role, its constituent youth organizations can play a more active role at the country level to support development and implementation of National Action Plans;

Seventh, new countries and partner organizations should be invited to join the Youth Employment Network and the Lead Countries should be encouraged to strengthen the work of the YEN as a peer exchange, support and review mechanism. In support of the further development of this mechanism, the International Labour Organization should be invited, within the framework of the YEN and in close cooperation with the World Bank and the United Nations, to undertake an annual update of this global analysis and evaluation of progress made in the development and implementation of National Reviews and Action Plans on youth employment;

Finally, Member States should be encouraged to provide additional financial resources to strengthen and expand the work of the YEN at the national, regional and international levels.

Annex: Submissions to the Global Analysis

Countries submitting
National Action Plans or Progress Reports
(as of 1 May 2006)

1. Algeria
2. Argentina
3. Azerbaijan
4. Brazil
5. Bulgaria
6. Burkina Faso
7. Colombia
8. Croatia
9. Dominican Republic
10. Finland
11. Germany
12. Hungary
13. Indonesia
14. Japan
15. Jordan
16. Kenya
17. Lithuania
18. Mexico
19. Monaco
20. Netherlands
21. Nicaragua
22. Norway
23. Oman
24. Pakistan
25. Poland
26. Portugal
27. Republic of Korea
28. Russian Federation
29. Rwanda
30. Saudi Arabia
31. Senegal
32. Serbia & Montenegro
33. Singapore
34. Slovakia
35. Slovenia
36. Syrian Arab Republic
37. Tanzania
38. Thailand
39. Uganda
40. United Kingdom
41. United Arab Emirates

Notes

- ¹ “Resolution concerning youth employment,” Resolution adopted at the International Labour Conference, 93rd Session, Geneva, 2005, para. 2.
- ² The YEN is a partnership formed by United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the ILO Director-General Juan Somavia and the then World Bank President James Wolfensohn.
- ³ Report of the Secretary-General on global analysis and evaluation of national action plans on youth employment (A/60/133) and Report of the Secretary-General on global analysis and evaluation of national action plans on youth employment – Corrigendum (A/60/133/Corr.1).
- ⁴ Resolutions A/57/165, para. 2 and A/58/133, para. 11. Member States were requested to communicate their Governments’ National Action Plans, or reports on progress made and plans for their preparation to the United Nations Secretariat. These responses form the basis of this report.
- ⁵ See Recommendations in Report of the Secretary-General on global analysis and evaluation of national action plans on youth employment (A/60/133).
- ⁶ The country examples that appear throughout the text are illustrative of the range of strategies used in a variety of countries. The information is drawn exclusively from the formal submissions unless indicated otherwise.
- ⁷ Members of the High-level Panel are Mr. Saifuddin Abdullah, Mr. Cesar Alierta, Dr. Ruth Cardozo, Mr. Hernando de Soto, Dr. Geeta Rao Gupta, Mr. Allan Larson; Mr. Rick Little, Ms. Maria Livanos Cattai, Mr. Guy Ryder, Mr. Magatte Wade, Hon. Ralph Willis, Dr. Rosanna Wong.
- ⁸ “Resolution concerning youth employment,” Resolution adopted at the International Labour Conference, 93rd Session, Geneva, 2005, para. 3.
- ⁹ Approximately 70 per cent of young people between the ages of 13 and 18 were enrolled in secondary education in 2000, compared to 55 per cent in 1990. The gross enrolment ratio for tertiary level education increased from 16 per cent (of the relevant age group) in 1990 to 24 per cent in 2000. See World Bank (2000). *World Development Indicators*. World Bank, Washington, D.C.
- ¹⁰ Underemployment can be either time or pay related. It refers to employed people who work fewer hours than they want to and are available for additional work or are underpaid for the work they are performing.
- ¹¹ International Labour Office (2004). *Global Employment Trends for Youth*. ILO, Geneva, 2004.
- ¹² “Resolution concerning youth employment,” Resolution adopted at the International Labour Conference, 93rd Session, Geneva, 2005, para. 10.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, paras. 12-15.
- ¹⁴ United Nations (2003). *World Youth Report 2003: The Global Situation of Young People*, New York, p. 78.
- ¹⁵ Investing in youth by promoting youth employment is an investment in meeting the Millennium Development Goals because it can directly contribute to: eradicating extreme poverty and hunger (Goal 1); achieving universal primary education (Goal 2); promoting gender equality and empowering women (Goal 3), and; developing a global partnership for development (Goal 8). By improving the economic and social situation of people, it can indirectly contribute to: reducing child mortality (Goal 4); improving maternal health (Goal 5), and; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases (Goal 6).

¹⁶ *Global Employment Trends for Youth...*, p. 21.

¹⁷ UNAIDS (2004). *2004 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic: 4th Global Report*. UNAIDS, Geneva.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ “Gender perspectives on renewable energy,” Position paper presented by “Women as a Stakeholder Group” at the International Conference on Renewable Energy, Bonn, 1-4 June 2004.

²⁰ See Report of the Secretary-General on promoting youth employment (A/58/229), Annex I.

²¹ For example the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122).

²² ILO (2004). *Improving Prospects for Young Women and Men in the World of Work: A Guide to Youth Employment*. Geneva.

²³ See Report of the Secretary-General on promoting youth employment (A/58/229), Annex I.

²⁴ ILO, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

²⁵ The YEN Youth Consultative Group has assessed the degree to which young people have been involved in the development of National Action Plans on Youth Employment. The information was drawn from the submissions to the Global Analysis. This section draws heavily on this analysis.

²⁶ Letter from the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly (A/56/422), Recommendations of the High-level Panel of the Youth Employment Network.

²⁷ Despite this, information from Youth Consultative Group networks and discussions with the YEN Secretariat suggest that there are other Governments that have a progressive approach to youth participation but are not mentioned in the report or have yet to submit a report to the United Nations. Some of the information presented here draws on this knowledge.

²⁸ The YEN Youth Consultative Group which has YEN partner status, consists of representatives of 13 youth organizations drawn from a wider pool of 30 organizations: World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM); Asian Student Association (ASA); Arab Youth Union (AYU); African Youth Network (AYN); European Youth Forum (YFJ); Latin American Youth Forum (FLAJ); International Confederation of Free Trade Union (ICFTU) Youth; International Organization of Employers (IOE) Youth; Mouvement International des Etudiants Catholiques (MIEC – Pax Romana); International Young Democrat Union; International Federation of Liberal Youth; International Union of Socialist Youth; International Movement of Catholic Agricultural and Rural Youth (MIJARC).

²⁹ The Youth Employment Summit, a YEN partner, was launched by 1600 delegates from 120 countries at the Alexandria Youth Employment Summit, in Egypt on September 11, 2002. Their goals are to build the capacity of young people to create sustainable livelihoods and to establish an entrepreneurial culture where young people will work towards self-employment. See <http://www.yesweb.org/>

³⁰ A series of planned studies by the Government are identified to determine the socio-economic profile of the youth population.

³¹ See Report of the Secretary-General on promoting youth employment (A/58/229), Annex I.

³² Ibid.

³³ “Resolution concerning youth employment,” Resolution adopted at the International Labour Conference, 93rd Session, Geneva, 2005, para. 19.

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- ³⁴ See Report of the Secretary-General on promoting youth employment (A/58/229), Annex I.
- ³⁵ “Resolution concerning youth employment,” Resolution adopted at the International Labour Conference, 93rd Session, Geneva, 2005, paras. 20-22.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 27.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, paras. 28-29.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, paras. 30-31.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 24.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, para. 26.
- ⁴¹ Letter from the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly (A/56/422), Recommendations of the High-level Panel of the Youth Employment Network, para. 24.
- ⁴² “Resolution concerning youth employment,” Resolution adopted at the International Labour Conference, 93rd Session, Geneva, 2005, para. 33.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, para. 32.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, para. 34.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 35.
- ⁴⁶ Letter from the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly (A/56/422), Recommendations of the High-level Panel of the Youth Employment Network, para. 20.
- ⁴⁷ “Resolution concerning youth employment,” Resolution adopted at the International Labour Conference, 93rd Session, Geneva, 2005, para. 34.
- ⁴⁸ Letter from the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly (A/56/422), Recommendations of the High-level Panel of the Youth Employment Network, para. 21.
- ⁴⁹ Peter Auer, Ümit Efendioğlu and Janine Leschke (2005). *Active Labour Market Policies around the World: Coping with the Consequences of Globalization*. ILO, Geneva.

