



DECENT WORK FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The Youth Employment Network



Youth Employment Network (YEN) Newsletter, September 2004

News Flash

Indonesia Launches Youth Employment Action Plan (I-YEAP)

Indonesian Vice President H.E. Hamzah Haz and the Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs [launched](#) the nation's Youth Employment Action Plan (I-YEAP) on [International Youth Day](#) (12 August, 2004)

The launch took place at the Vice Presidential Palace and was followed by an interactive dialogue at the Coordinating Ministry involving the Minister, Indonesian Youth Employment Network (I-YEN) leaders, the ILO and many young Indonesians (from schools, universities and youth and volunteer organizations).

The Action Plan has been developed through the YEN and has involved consultation with and inputs from many interested parties - ministries,

I-YEAP Key Policy recommendations

- Making education affordable for the poor.
- Developing a national skills qualification framework.
- Strengthening the network of vocational education and training centers of excellence.
- Incorporating youth employment goals into economic macro policy.
- Mobilizing business support for action on youth employment.
- Making it easier for young people to start and run businesses.
- Mobilizing private sector support for young entrepreneurs.

business and unions, academics, community and youth organizations, etc. Some of the research leading to the formulation of the Action Plan was also released ([the "School to Work Transition Study"](#) and the "Best of the Best Practices in YE programmes in Indonesian Provinces").

This plan will form the basis of Indonesia's September 2004 National Action Plan submission.

Two African nations join the YEN group of Lead Countries

Rwanda and Mali joined the YEN as lead countries in June and July respectively bringing the number of YEN lead countries to ten.

In a letter to the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, The President of Rwanda, His Excellency Mr. Paul Kagame registered his government's resolve to promote Youth Employment as a strategy to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

YEN produces guidelines to assist countries in the development of National Action Plans.

Launched on International Youth Day this publication ["Improving prospects for young women and men in the world of work: A Guide to Youth Employment"](#) specifies basic considerations, trade-offs and experiences that can be drawn upon to develop and implement policies,

including National Action Plans on youth employment.

Core Partner Activities



International Youth Day

[International Youth Day \(IYD\)](#) was celebrated on 12 August 2004 and focused on the issue of Youth in an Intergenerational Society, in order to stress the importance of solidarity between generations at all levels - in families, communities and nations.

The [United Nations' Programme on Youth](#) celebrated International Youth Day 2004 in Barcelona at the [World Youth Festival](#) together with 8.000 young participants, many NGOs and several UN agencies and bodies including the YEN.

Workshop on Youth in Poverty in Southeast Asia

UNDESA organized, in cooperation with the office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Jakarta, a [workshop on youth and poverty in Southeast Asia](#) 2-4 August 2004 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

The event, hosted by the Government of Indonesia, presented a better understanding of the special characteristics of young people moving in and out of poverty and will contribute to developing policies and programmes specifically focusing on young people in poverty.

The I-YEN team attended this meeting and made the link between its work on youth employment and poverty alleviation strategies in Indonesia (see page 1)

Expert Group Meeting on Strategies for Creating Urban Youth Employment

This [event held in Nairobi](#) on June 21-25, 2004 included both an expert group meeting and youth roundtable. The meeting was organized by UN-DESA and UN-HABITAT in collaboration with the YEN. Experts from different regions of the

world, as well as young people from ten African countries addressed the challenges of creating decent youth employment in cities in Africa.

As well as being full participants in the Expert Group Meeting, youth were involved in a two-day Youth Roundtable, tackling key issues regarding urban youth employment and preparing contributions to the EGM.

Youth produced a set of recommendations that policies and programmes addressing youth employment in cities should take into account:

- Create entry-level positions and opportunities for youth to gain the critical experience required to secure decent jobs in the formal economy:
- Provide accessible and practical skills training that has been developed with youth input, either additionally or independently of formal education:
- Improve access to financing for youth-led employment initiatives:
- Strengthen the commitment and support of institutional partners, such as those involved in the Youth Employment Network, as well as national and local government players that are pro-youth in their approach:
- Increase youth participation and involvement in macro-economic policy decision-making, especially as it affects youth employment:
- Give greater access to information and involve youth concerning decisions that are being made to benefit them:
- Pay particular attention to youth employment problems in the urban context:
- Address the special needs of youth at risk.
- Address the pervasive gender inequality that continues to disadvantage young women in

both the formal and informal economies.

Final youth outcomes available on the UN Youth Unit site www.un.org/youth



World Bank Supports Youth Employment And Empowerment In Nigeria

The Government of Nigeria and the World Bank recently signed a US\$900,000 grant (for the preparation of the [Nigeria Urban Youth Employment and Empowerment Project \(NUYEEP\)](#)). The grant will be provided by the Japanese Government and administered by the World Bank.

The President of the World Bank, Mr. James Wolfensohn, has taken a keen interest in the issue of youth employment and met with Nigerian youths during his visit to Nigeria in March 2004.

This grant from Japan will kick-start what is foreseen as a US\$100 million project. Formulated in part through collaboration with the ILO and the German Governments' GTZ, this project will have three important components:

- Support for a coordinated inter-ministerial dialogue at the Federal and State levels on youth, labour and education policy reforms critical for the success of the long-term resolution of the youth unemployment challenges.
- Employment generation, skills acquisition and social capital enhancement with a specific focus on skills development and job creation for the very poor, most of whom dropped out of the school system too early to master any trade/skills and who are willing to engage in mass employment efforts in areas likely to include public services provision and maintenance.
- Empowerment of youths who have completed tertiary and/or secondary education to organize themselves, undertake entrepreneurial training likely to involve much of agro-processing industrial endeavours, form job-creation cooperatives where desired, and enable youths to better market their skills.

Six states, Anambra, Bauchi, Kaduna, Lagos, Plateau & Rivers, have so far been selected to

participate in the project which is expected to be ready for implementation in 2005.

Ms Ndidi Okonkwo Nwuneli, CEO and Founder of LEAP Africa who among other youth attended the 2003 High Level Panel, is on the projects's Lagos State steering committee.

World Bank Youth, Development and Peace (YDP) conference II, September 5-7, 2004 Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

More than 170 youth representatives from 83 countries met with World Bank President James Wolfensohn and 40 senior officials in Sarajevo for the second [Youth, Development and Peace \(YDP\) conference](#). The meeting summarized progress achieved over the past year since the first YDP conference in Paris and agreed on steps toward expanded engagement that included an agreement to establish a loose and informal network of dialogue and regular interaction between the Bank and youth organisations.



New ILO report says half the world's jobs are under 24

Youth unemployment has skyrocketed worldwide over the past decade to some 88 million, according to a new study by the ILO reaching an all time high with young people aged 15 to 24 now representing nearly half the world's jobless.

[Global Employment Trends for Youth 2004](#), a new analysis prepared by the ILO's Employment Strategy Department, found that while youth represent 25 per cent of the working age population between the ages of 15 and 64, they made up as much as 47 per cent of the total 186 million people out of work worldwide in 2003.

But the problem goes far beyond the large number of young unemployed people: the report says that young people represent some 130 million of the world's 550 million working poor who work but are unable to lift themselves and their families above the equivalent of US\$ 1 per day poverty line. These young people struggle to survive, often performing work under unsatisfactory and hazardous conditions in the informal economy.

News from Lead Countries

Ministers from Indonesia, Brazil, Azerbaijan, Sri Lanka and Namibia have so far confirmed their interest in attending a meeting of [YEN Lead Countries](#) scheduled to take place at the [XV Malente Symposium: Youth Employment, Empowerment and Participation: Securing the Future](#) on 19-20 October, 2004 in Lübeck, Germany.

This meeting, the first time Lead Countries will come together, will be an opportunity to highlight their commitments, share experiences and best practices, and chart a way forward in the development of national youth employment policy.

Azerbaijan

In Azerbaijan, Youth NGO's, led by the National Youth Council for Azerbaijan (NAYORA) have formed a coalition which will work closely with the Government to provide youth inputs into the development of Azerbaijan's National Action Plan.

Brazil

With the institutional support of the ILO, the Ethos Institute on Social Responsibility has launched a national campaign for the promotion of apprenticeships. This campaign calls on national entrepreneurs to fully implement the provisions of the Apprenticeship Law, as a means of fostering youth employability and youth employment. Using this work on youth employment as an entry point, this collaboration is now being broadened to support a national campaign on decent work and the Millennium Goals.

Namibia

In Namibia, the Ministry of Labour has asked the Namibian National Youth Council (NNYC) to

form a multi-stakeholder task team that will work on developing the nation's National Action Plan.

Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka, the Youth Employment Network of Sri Lanka (YENSL) has been created. Housed within the Ministry of Skills Development, Vocational and Technical Education (MOSDVTE) a YENSL Secretariat has been tasked with the development of an integrated Plan of Action on Youth Employment.

In order to achieve this task the YENSL Secretariat has assembled a task force consisting of the Government ministries, employers' and workers' organizations, and other non-governmental organizations and youth organizations who will develop joint solutions.

A first step in the development of Sri Lanka's NAP has been the writing of a National Report on Youth Employment in Sri Lanka, which is currently being finalised.

The YENSL Secretariat was supported in its start-up by the ILO through funding from the Dutch government and further support for 2004 will be made available from the Government of Korea.

Furthermore Sri Lanka is one of two agreed lead countries being supported by the German Government in an agreement signed with the YEN, which commits funds to support National Action Development. (see page 5.)

Sri Lanka's plan will include a specific focus on re-integrating ex-combatants, many of whom are youth, into the workforce.

News from around the globe

Viet Nam

The ILO Office in Viet Nam is carrying out a "Pilot Programme for Youth Employment in Viet Nam." The objective of the pilot programme funded 2004-2006 by the Netherlands Government and supported by United Nations Volunteer (UNV) is to promote decent work for young women and young men in Viet Nam through capacity building for policy development, direct action for enhanced employability and knowledge sharing through youth networks.

Building on existing structures in Viet Nam including the National Youth Committee, the project will work towards the development of a "Viet Nam Youth Employment Network" (V-YEN) with the National Youth Committee as the focal point. This includes links to youth activities in government agencies, non-governmental organizations and international organizations such as the Joint United Nations Task Force on Youth in Viet Nam developed under the United Nations Country Team.

The project will also integrate national youth employment priorities already outlined under "Vietnam's Youth Development Strategy by 2010" into the development of a National Action Plan on youth employment for submission to the United Nations General Assembly as outlined in UN GA Resolution A/57/165.



News from the YEN Secretariat

German Government supports activities in YEN lead countries

In an agreement signed between the German Government and the YEN, the former has committed 790,000 euros for the project "Support for partner countries of the Youth Employment Network" for 2005-2006.

The detailed work plan is still being elaborated but broad objectives of the project include:

- Support for the formulation and implementation of National Action Plans on Youth Employment (NAPs) in selected countries, starting with Senegal and Sri Lanka.

- Building the capacity of youth organizations and other YEN partners in the field of youth employment in order to support their effective participation in the activities of the Network, including through the NAPs.

The Governments of Finland and Ireland have promised additional core funding for the YEN

Discussions held with the All China Youth Federation (ACYF) on a possible YEN Partner Office in China

A delegation from the All-China Youth Federation (ACYF) visited Geneva for discussions with the YEN Secretariat and the ILO about the possibility of setting up a YEN Partner Office in China.

Located in Beijing, hosted by the



ACYF and supported by the Chinese Government in cooperation with the YEN Secretariat and partners from UN and other international organizations, this office would amongst other activities:

1. Conduct comparative studies and provide policy advice based on surveys of the youth employment situation, youth employment policy formulation and project implementation in China;
2. Act as a catalyst and support mechanism for project implementation by YEN partners to promote youth employment and youth business, and to promote best practice;
3. Organize seminars, training courses and other national and international

exchanges on youth employment, and promote exchange and cooperation with YEN lead countries and partners.

In December 2003 The All China Youth Federation and YEN partner Youth Business International (YBI), launched a new youth entrepreneurship organization Youth Business China (YBC) based on YBI's well-documented loans and mentoring model.

YEN involvement in the World Youth Festival

The [Festival](#), held from 8-14 August, 2004, in Barcelona brought together 8.000 young participants, many NGOs and several UN agencies to development issues that matter to young people today.

The YEN was involved in the Central Programme of Festival where Regina Monticone spoke on a panel discussing International Organisations and co-operation with youth, alongside representatives of the Scouts, the Latin American Youth Forum and the Council of Europe's North-South Centre.

The YEN also ran a panel discussion on youth employment during the Festival.

Moderated by Ms Karolina Frischkop of the European Youth Forum (EYF) and Mr Emil Kirjas of the International Young Liberals (IFRLY), both youth partner organisations of the YEN, the panels brought Catalan, Spanish and international experts together to discuss the plight of young migrants, and the mismatch between education systems and the labour market.

A special thanks goes to Mariangels Fortuny of the ILO and Roland Sigg of ISSA who led a special discussion on equal opportunities in a society of all ages tying in with the theme of International Youth Day 2004, intergeneration solidarity.

Roland has also provided the Related Issues feature this month (see page 7).

Youth Employment: Entry Point in the Fight Against Poverty - an interview which YEN Secretary, Steven Miller

"The youth employment question is a key entry point in the battle against poverty," says Steven Miller, in an [interview](#) for the Development

Gateway August 2004 web special on youth employment.

Many thanks

We would like to highlight the good work of Ms. Lisa Mela, a second year student in Economics and Econometrics at the University of Sorbonne in Paris, who volunteered with the YEN team for the month of July. She worked on researching and consolidating a political contacts list for the YEN. Good luck with your studies Lisa!

News from Partners



"Youth participation for Poverty Reduction" - New North-South Center Training Course

The [North-South Centre](#) is organising its 2nd AFRICA-EUROPE Training Course for Youth Organisations: "Youth participation for Poverty Reduction". The Course will take place in the Ceulaj, Mollina, SPAIN from the 8-15 October 2004 in the larger frame of the University on Youth and Development.



New UNESCO publication: "Empowering youth through national policies: UNESCO's contribution"

This [publication](#) is a direct response to several Member States' request for assistance in formulating and developing a national youth policy which adequately responds to young people's needs and concerns, while promoting substantial youth

participation and integration in social development. The publication will serve national decision-makers and diverse actors of civil society to develop a viable national youth policy in active partnership with young people.



Rotary Clubs to support Youth Business development

In June the Parliament of Rotary International – the Council of Legislation approved a Resolution presented by Rotary France -- "requesting the Board of Rotary International to consider encouraging Clubs to offer professional services to youth who start their own businesses and to support the UN's Youth Employment Network (YEN)".

Rotary's Board will now translate this Resolution into practical steps, for example, Clubs to provide mentors, trustees and in some cases funds to competent local youth organisations such as the YBI Programmes.

<http://www.rotary.org/newsroom/>



Development Gateway special on youth employment

To mark UN International Youth Day on August 12 and the World Youth Festival from August 8-14 in Barcelona this [web special](#) looks at the situation of youth people entering the labour market today, offering promising case studies of youth employment programmes from around the world.

Featured examples include perspectives from members of the Glocal Youth Parliament. From the streets of Nablus to fast-food joints in Budapest and the urban unemployed in Dar es Salaam, these accounts give a better perspective of what it means to be young and looking for work.

Pan-African Youth Leadership Summit, Dakar Senegal, 27-30 June 2004.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) organized, together with the Global Peace Initiative of Women, [a Pan-African Youth Leadership Summit](#), as part of the Africa 2015 campaign to call attention to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Similar regional Summits will follow in other parts of the world. All summits will eventually feed into a Global Youth gathering during the UN General Assembly session in 2005 in New York

News from Youth Partners

International Coordination Meeting of Youth Organisations (ICMYO) 9-14 July 2004: Geneva, Switzerland

This meeting, an initiative of the European Youth Forum (YFJ), the International Movement of Catholic Students (Pax Romana) and the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM), brought together representatives of the regional youth platforms and international youth organizations for the first time with the intention to offer a common space for debate and dialogue. The main objectives of this meeting included:

- Coordination of political inputs to the ongoing political processes (e.g. YEN, World Bank Children & Youth Strategy, and evaluation of the WPAY).
- Strengthening cooperation of youth organizations at the global and regional level.

A specific discussion was held on proposals for the development of a standing YEN Youth Consultative Group (YCG). It is expected to launch this YCG during the High-Level Panel meeting of the YEN in Washington D.C, 27-28 September 2004.

Related Issues

Opinion: Looking forward to a society of all ages, for young and old.

When reflecting on the kind of society today's youth will be living in, one fact is striking: the current generation of babies in industrialized countries have a life expectancy of 100 years. That means that more than one in two will reach this age. This is in fact already true for 18-year-old girls in several European countries. Developing countries also face the challenge of ageing populations. For instance, in 20 years, China will have the same proportion of people over 60 as OECD countries today (1 in 5), and in 50 years, one third of the Chinese population will be over 60, the same proportion as in Europe at the same time.

This will have a tremendous impact on all aspects of life, throughout the world. The "ageing revolution" will create completely new sets of intergenerational exchanges, and the world of employment will have to go through a truly radical shift. Not only by necessity, but by choice as well. A choice of both the younger and older parts of society to be and stay active, so that they can contribute to, and engage with, the world in which they live.

Both groups are currently in a difficult situation. Unemployment amongst the young is increasing throughout the world. This is not only a waste, but a major threat for future employment. Older workers are rejected from the labour market, due to preconceptions about their allegedly lower productivity and age discrimination ("ageism"). These trends will not be sustainable in a society that requires ever more workers to maintain the income of the expanding older part of the population.

What needs to change? Firstly, a long-life society needs more investment in education and work integration of young people. A well-trained person will not only find work and have a more interesting career, but will contribute more effectively to the economy. Secondly, the decline in fertility rates in industrialised countries needs to be reversed. Better family policies will be required, to allow families to have the number of children they want and to allow both men and women to reconcile work and family duties.

What about pensions? Is it true that, whatever happens, current schemes will not deliver for the current young generation? Why pay into old-age insurance programmes if you're not going to get a cent back in return? Well, this is one of the many myths surrounding ageing that do not take into account the changes that our society will see in coming years. For instance, economic growth of two percent annually *doubles* real income over 35 years? Couldn't part of this increase be dedicated to sustaining the level of income of the elderly? A truly affordable and adequate pension is perhaps one that not only recognizes the aged as full citizens, but which allows them to make a valuable contribution to society (think of the grandmothers in Sub-Saharan Africa countries who take care of as many as half of the numerous children orphaned through AIDS – they will not be able to do that in the future without some kind of minimum income).

One fact is inescapable. Reducing expenditure on pension and health care for older people will not bring more money to the young. On the contrary. A society built only on individual responsibility will bring with it the burden of poverty, both among the youth and the old. The challenge for the coming society, having fulfilled a long-held dream of extending longevity, is now to bring some value to this extended life.

Better sharing of the additional resources generated by economic growth can guarantee an adequate income for all groups of the population, with the necessary political will. Better involvement of the younger and older segments of the population in the paid workforce could provide a great deal of the additional labour needed by the shrinking working population - provided that work is available, and attractive enough.

This will, in turn, help us to experience a longer, a healthier and a more fulfilling life. And, more importantly, to enjoy it! Because, as Picasso once said, "It takes a long time to become young"!

By Roland Sigg, Head of Research, International Social Security Association (ISSA). sigg@ilo.org

Best practices on youth employment in Kenya

Participants at the Expert Group Meeting on Strategies for Creating Urban Youth Employment visited two youth employment projects in Nairobi.

The first visit was to see two young entrepreneurs working in the Kibera slum of Nairobi whose business ideas had been supported by the [Kenya Youth Business Trust \(KYBT\)](#), an affiliate of YEN partner Youth Business International.

KYBT is working with young people, to provide access to financial support to those who have a viable business proposition but are unable to find finance. It also provides successful applicants with a business mentor.



The second visit was to **Nairobi's One Stop Youth Centre** which gives young people living in slums, rehabilitated street children, youth living with HIV/Aids, aids orphans, school dropouts, and youth recovering from substance abuse a hope for a better future.

The youth centre will equip youth with job search skills including CV and application letter writing, career enhancement and job matching. It will also be a source of valuable information including trade and apprenticeship information, student loans, bursary and training subsidy information.

The centre has been established through a partnership between UN-HABITAT, ITDG-East Africa, COWA and the Nairobi city council. The building was donated by the Kenya Railways Corporation and refurbished with funding from the government of the Netherlands.

Upcoming Youth Employment related events

13-17 September 2004: World Urban Forum
Barcelona, Spain
<http://www.unhabitat.org/wuf/2004/default.asp>

18-21 September 2004: Pan-Asian Youth Leadership Summit, Hiroshima, Japan
<http://www.asiapacific2015.org>

27-28 September 2004: 3rd High-Level Panel Meeting of the YEN, Washington DC, USA

4-7 October 2004: YES Mexico 2004, Boca del Rio, Veracruz, Mexico.
<http://www.yesweb.org/mexico/>

6-8 October 2004: YBI Global Conference, Buenos Aires, Argentina
<http://www.youth-business.org/ybinet/mainpage.htm>

13 –15 October 2004: ILO Tripartite Meeting on Youth Employment: the Way Forward
Geneva, Switzerland

18 October 2004: "Youth and the Job Market - Prepared for each other?" GTZ hosted Youth Dialogue on Employment and Participation, Lübeck, Germany
<http://www.gtz.de/youth/youthdialogue2004/>

19-20 October 2004: XV Malente Symposium: Youth Employment, Empowerment and Participation: Securing the Future, Lübeck, Germany
http://www.draegerstiftung.de/html/e_conf_malente_2004.htm

23-28 October 2004: World Youth Peace Summit
Nairobi, Kenya.
<http://www.worldyouthpeacesummit.org>

2-3 December 2004: Symposium on youth employment
Tokyo, Japan (TBC)

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