



Youth at the United Nations

www.un.org/youth



September 2005

Welcome to the United Nations YouthFlash, a service of the United Nations Programme on Youth, keeping you up to date on the youth agenda of the UN and partnering youth organizations around the world. We encourage you to forward this Youth Flash to people in your network.



World wide celebrations on International Youth Day

The UN Programme on Youth received an enormous response from around the world to its call to youth organizations to send an overview of their activities planned for International Youth Day, 12 August 2005. A selection of these activities has been posted on the website: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/iyd2005.htm>. The commemoration of International Youth Day at UN Headquarters was very successful with dialogues, performances, a basketball tournament, and - in the presence of Mr. and Mrs. Annan - the opening of the exhibition *Chasing the Dream* (www.chasingdream.org). Photographs of events at UNHQ can be found at: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/iyd2005.htm#unhq> (follow link under "Events at UNHQ").

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News from UN Headquarters

General Assembly to review WPAY on 6 October 2005

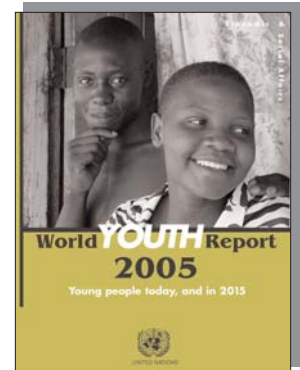
On 6 October 2005, the General Assembly will convene in two plenary meetings to discuss the achievements made in the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY). Various events will take place that week, including:

- 4 October: launch of the World Youth Report 2005: Young people today and in 2015.
- 5 October: round table discussion between youth organizations and Member States.
- 6 October: review of WPAY by the General Assembly.
- 3-7 October: side events, film evenings and information fair.

NB: It is no longer possible to register for participation or to submit a request to organize a side event. For more information on the events taking place that week, and the increasing numbers of youth delegates, visit the website: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/ga60.htm>

Launch World Youth Report 2005

On 4 October, the United Nations Programme on Youth will release the World Youth Report 2005. This second edition of the report examines the situation of young people in relation to the priority areas identified in the World Programme of Action for Youth adopted by Member States in 1995. These issues are grouped into three cluster areas, namely young people in a global economy, young people in civil society, and young people at risk. For each of these clusters, the report also presents an in-depth analysis on a related topic, specifically youth and poverty, the emergence of a global media-driven youth culture, and the effects of conflict on the lives of young people.



The Report will be available in English only, and can be downloaded from the website <http://www.un.org.youth> or purchased from 4 October onwards at <https://unp.un.org> (Sales No. E. 05 IV.6).

The role of young people in poverty reduction strategies

The United Nations Programme on Youth and the National Council of Swedish Youth Organizations, with financial support of the Swedish Government, have initiated a technical assistance project called "Tackling Poverty Together: The Role of Young People in Poverty Reduction Strategies."

The project will recruit a team of 28 youth participants from the following countries: Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Sweden, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. Two workshops will be organized to enable young people to strengthen their role in poverty reduction strategies in Africa.

Expected outcomes include: (1) The development and implementation of a series of strategic plans; (2) Contributions in support of the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth; (3) Contributions in support of achieving the MDG to reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than one dollar a day; and (4) A final project report incorporating the strategic plans and associated research undertaken by youth participants, the papers commissioned from academic and policy experts and the results of the two workshops.

Feature: Eveline Herfkens, Coordinator for the UN Millennium Campaign

From 14 to 16 September, the High Level Plenary of the 60th session of the General Assembly, also known as the World Summit, will take place at UN Headquarters in New York.

The Summit will be the largest-ever gathering of world leaders (more than 170 Heads of State and Government are expected to attend) who will tackle some of the biggest global challenges, such as global poverty, human rights, terrorism and United Nations reform.

The review of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will be one of the agenda items.

Eveline Herfkens is the coordinator of the United Nations Millennium Campaign. Involving young people in achieving the goals has been one of her priorities. We asked her a few questions about her work and the role young people can play.

Q. Can you name three concrete actions that young people can take to reach the MDGs in their countries?

"There are a great many things young people can do to help the global fight against poverty. Young people really are the future of the world. It will not be the old grey haired men at the Millennium Summit or World Trade Organization who suffer the consequences if governments don't keep their promise to end poverty, it will be you, the young people who will have to live in a world that allows more than a billion people to live on less than \$1 US dollar day. It is your future; it only makes sense that you become part of the solution.

Quite simply, without the help of young people, the Millennium Development Goals cannot, and will not be achieved by 2015. So now we get to the question of what you can do to help achieve the Goals. This depends whether you are from a rich or poor country. If you live in a rich country, your government has promised to achieve Goal 8, which is to develop a true partnership between rich and poor countries by providing more and better quality aid, more debt relief, and more trade opportunities for poor countries. Young people from developing countries should know that their governments promised to achieve the first seven Goals, which ensure everyone has equal access to education, health care, food and water.

The first thing that you should do is get the facts. One of the key indicators for Goal 8 is their promise to give 0.7% of their national income to the poorest countries of the world. You can visit our website to find out how your country is doing. If you're from a developing country you should find out if your government is using the Millennium Development Goals in its decision-making. Does your government have a plan to raise poor people out of poverty, and get every child, boy and girl, into school? If not, they're not living up to their promises.

The second thing you can do is to help get the word out about the Goals. You would be surprised how few people know that their government promised to reduce poverty by 2015. Let your friends and family know what the Goals are and why they are important. You could pass out flyers on the Millennium Development Goals or even have a school assembly on the Goals. Be creative, you know the best way to reach your friends.

The third thing you can do is let your government know that you want the Goals to be achieved in your country. Many young people have successfully become involved in their youth parliaments or councils to lobby governments to achieve the Goals. You could also start a letter writing campaign to remind

an elected official of their promises, or organize a rally in your community. I've always felt that the best ideas are homegrown and you probably have many more creative ideas than I do on how to draw attention to the problems.

The more voices you can get together, the more powerful you become. Many young people think that because they cannot vote yet, their voices don't matter. But just imagine if you were a government official and only one person called you to fix a broken road. You might not pay much attention, but if 1,000 people called you to complain, you might change your mind. I'm convinced that when young people team up and unite their voices, they can do whatever they want to."



"..without the help of young people, the Millennium Development Goals cannot, and will not be achieved by 2015".

Q. The UN World Youth Report 2005 argues that, in order for the MDGs to be achieved, investments in youth development should be 'scaled-up'. Would you agree that young people are a specific group that need more focused attention from policy makers and donors?

"Certainly, young people have to be considered as part of the solution.

Over 2.8 billion people on our planet today are under the age of 25, and if we don't take the time to listen to these voices we will never have any hope of ever achieving the Millennium Goals in ten years.

We must not only do more to understand the unique problems young people face, we must also do much more to include young people in the process of development.

I am proud to say that while I was the Minister for Development Cooperation in the Netherlands, I led my delegation at the Children's Summit and not only did our youth representative deliver the national speech in the plenary, she also wrote the entire speech by herself without any interference from any adult.

I really do believe that the youth of the world today have the motivation and abilities to make poverty a thing of the past and achieve all of the Millennium Goals by 2015."

Q. Are the MDGs still reachable before 2015?

"I have been working in development cooperation my entire life and I can tell you that before the year 2000, the world wasted 25 years disagreeing about the best way to end poverty. With the Millennium Goals, we have for the first time in history a global promise that everybody agrees on.

We can finally put all the talking behind us and concentrate on action to improve the lives of the millions who go to bed hungry every night. Now there has been a lot of talk about whether we will, or will not reach the Goals by 2015. I think this is counter-productive. We should instead be asking ourselves, "Why aren't we going beyond the Goals by 2015?"

I don't think it is too much to ask the world to ensure every boy and girl can attend primary school. I am not ashamed to demand that our environment isn't polluted for our children.

The beauty about the Goals is that if we achieve one it helps achieve the others. You can't solve HIV/AIDS without education, and you can't eliminate hunger without having a healthy environment.

All of the Goals are clearly within our reach; the only element missing is the political will of politicians to implement what they promised. The world has enough money, resources, and knowledge to end poverty. All we need is to raise our voice to get our governments to act to keep their promises.

Q. Is there anything you would like to add?

Just one story. A few years ago, I was giving a speech to a group of children on the Millennium Development Goals and the need of governments to ensure that every boy and girl go to school by 2015. At the end of my talk a ten-year-old girl stood up and asked me, "But Madam Minister, why do you want to wait until 2015."

I am normally one of those politicians who always has an answer to everything, but this time I had no credible excuse for her. I was so ashamed to be part of a generation that allowed today's babies to grow up to become part of the millions that cannot afford to go to school or feed their own families.

I sincerely hope none of you will ever be put in the same situation I was in. I want your world to be different. You deserve a world where stories of young boys and girls dying of diseases that cost pennies to treat only exist in history books. You deserve a world where equal education for all is a reality instead of a dream. You deserve a world where no one knows what it's like to go to bed hungry.

The beautiful thing is, if we achieve the Goals, we can do all of this, but only if we all work together. We are the first generation that can finally put an end to the disgrace of poverty.

Please, please join me and refuse to miss this historic opportunity."

To find out more about the UN Millennium Campaign and how you can join the global fight against poverty, please visit their websites:

www.millenniumcampaign.org and
www.millenniumcampaign.org/youth

Visit the World Summit page: <http://www.un.org/summit2005/>



News from UN Agencies

World Bank: World Development Report 2007 will focus on youth

The focus of the World Development Report (WDR) for 2007 will be young people.

The report, to be published in September 2006, will focus on crucial capabilities and transitions in a young person's life: learning for life and work, staying healthy, working, forming families, and exercising citizenship. For each, there are opportunities and risks; for all, policies and institutions matter.

The consultative process over the next several months will include extensive discussions with young people, beginning mid-September.

For more information, visit www.worldbank.org/wdr2007.

Calendar of youth events

(NB: Some events are open for participation by invitation only)

19-23 Sept 2005 UNICEF ADAP Global Networking Meeting

UNICEF, New York. The Adolescent Development and Participation Unit (ADAP) will convene its first Global Networking Meeting. The meeting will bring together over 40 regional and country-level advisors and senior programme staff working in UNICEF's range of programme areas and priorities for adolescent/youth development, including health, education, HIV/AIDS, child protection and social policy.

The meeting will also be attended by representatives from UN agencies' adolescent/youth focal points, external resource persons and experts and senior staff from UNICEF's Headquarters.

30 September - 2 October 2005 Fourth UNESCO Youth Forum

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris. The theme of the fourth UNESCO Youth Forum is "Young People and the Dialogue among Civilizations, Cultures and Peoples - Ideas for action in education, the sciences, culture and communication".

The Forum will form an integral part of the 33rd UNESCO General Conference - the highest decision-making body of the Organization. Around 200 young delegates from more than 120 Member States and observers from international youth organizations, intergovernmental organizations and UN agencies and programmes are expected to attend this event.

The Youth Forum is a unique opportunity for young people to express and exchange their ideas, make their voices heard and ensure their views are integrated in UNESCO's programmes and policies.

For more information, please consult:
<http://unesco.takingitglobal.org> and
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001345/134501e.pdf>

3-7 October 2005

Review of the World Programme of Action for Youth

UN Headquarters, New York. Several events will take place during this week to mark the ten-year review of the World Programme of Action for Youth. On 6 October 2005, the General Assembly will devote two plenary meetings, morning and afternoon, to an evaluation of the progress made in the implementation of the World Programme. The day prior to the plenary meeting there will be an informal, interactive round-table discussion on the theme "Young people: Making Commitments Matter", which will be open to the participation of Member States, observers, organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental youth organizations. Further information related to these events, including the confirmation of official youth delegates, side events and registration information are available at: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/ga60.htm>

10-11 October 2005

Convention on the Rights of Young People in Latin America

Badajoz, Spain. The Member States of the Organización Iberoamericana de Juventud (OIJ, which includes Latin America, Portugal and Spain) will convene to sign the Ibero-America Convention on the Rights of Young People. The Convention is structured around (1) civil and political rights, (2) economic, social and cultural rights, and (3) mechanisms and norms for the implementation of the Convention. The idea for the Convention was born in 1998 during the World Conference of Ministers for Youth, and it builds on to the United Nations World Programme of Action for Youth.

12 - 18 October 2005

Tunza International Youth Conference

UNEP, Bangalore. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in conjunction with the Centre for Environment Education (CEE), India, is hosting the second TUNZA International Youth Conference. The Conference is one of the key activities under UNEP's TUNZA long-term strategy for engaging and involving young people in environmental activities and in the work of UNEP. The Conference will bring together 150-250 youth, between 15-24 years, from around the world to discuss their role in environmental decision-making. The main theme of the conference is "The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and cooperation among youth organizations". For more info, visit: www.sayen.org/tunza.htm or contact tunza@ceeindia.org.

20-23 October 2005

African Global Hip-Hop Summit and Concert

Johannesburg, South Africa. The African Global Hip-Hop Summit and Concert, organized by UN-HABITAT and Native Rhythms Productions, form part of a global initiative called the "Messengers of Truth Project" that brings together socially committed Hip-Hop artists, youth representatives, the media and the private sector to help raise youth awareness of the Millennium Development Goals, and to support youth empowerment and local youth development initiatives. The Summit represents the African follow up to the first Global Hip-Hop Summit, held in Barcelona, Spain, in 2004, and it will prepare for the second Global Summit to be held in Vancouver in 2006. For more info, contact:

Native Rhythms Productions: siphos@gallo.co.za, or
UN-HABITAT: bestpractices@unhabitat.org

24-27 October 2005

Conseil International des Jeunes de la Francophonie

Paris, France. The Conseil International des Jeunes de la Francophonie (international council of youth organizations, CIJEF) of the Agence Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie will hold its first General Assembly meeting in the presence of 53 Member States and several international organizations, including the United Nations, UNESCO, World Bank, and Council of Europe. The CIJEF will be the channel for dialogue between young people and the Member States and Secretariat of the Francophonie. The CIJEF will also encourage the establishment of national youth councils in the Member States.

For more info, visit: <http://www.jeunesse.francophonie.org/>

31 October - 3 November 2005

African Development Forum V devoted to youth issues

UNCC, Addis Ababa. The UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) brings together stakeholders in Africa's development - including heads of state, ministers, heads of international organizations, civil society leaders, research institutes and Nobel Laureates - to debate and discuss policy alternatives and emerging strategic issues for Africa's development. In order to put the issue of youth on the African development agenda, the fifth African Development Forum will be devoted to youth development issues. For more information, please contact: Kwabia Boateng, Office of Policy and Programme Coordination, UN ECA, kboateng@uneca.org.

Contact information

UN Youth Flash is a free service of the UN Programme on Youth, of the Division for Social Policy and Development, within the Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) at the United Nations Secretariat in New York.

Currently working with the programme are Joop Theunissen (Focal Point on Youth), Fred Doulton (Associate Social Affairs Officer), Julie Larsen (Associate Social Affairs Officer), Charlotte van Hees (Associate Expert on Youth Policies and Programmes), Mike Thiedke (Consultant), Sylvie Pailler (Administrative Assistant) and Frank Cohn (Intern).

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