

UN YOUTH FLASH

Vol. 5, No. 1, January 2008

WELCOME to the UN Youth Flash, a service of the United Nations Programme on Youth to keep you informed about the work of the UN on youth issues. UN Youth Flash can be read on-line at: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/flash.htm>.

In this issue:

- Feature: Highlights of the World Youth Report 2007
- Highlights from UN Headquarters
- Highlights from UN agencies around the world
- Calendar of Youth Events
- On the Internet

FEATURE: Highlights of the World Youth Report 2007

According to the World Youth Report 2007 - Young People's Transition to Adulthood: Progress and Challenges, today's young people are overall the best educated generation of youth in history. However, for many young people, the transition to adulthood is slowed down by poverty and their inability to find decent work. Investments in youth have improved in all regions over the years and young people's access to education has expanded. In many places where public sector education has fallen short, private education is on the rise. Many more young people, including girls, have completed basic education than ever before and many now have access to higher levels of education.

Yet, in all regions of the world, young people's transition to adulthood is affected by poverty. Because of poverty, and sometimes because of social and cultural constraints, many young people are excluded from accessing quality education, decent employment, health and other resources and services. School attainment varies by wealth in most countries around the world. And despite policies to provide free education in many countries, costs for books, uniforms and transportation are too high for many households. An increasing number of new threats to their health, especially the HIV/AIDS, have also added to the difficulties that youth experience in several regions, especially in Africa and in the transition economies of Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Because of their sheer size, but also because of their higher level of education, the 1.2 billion youth aged 15-24 years in 2007 who constitute 18 per cent of the world's population are an essential and critical part of the development process. Never before has this age group constituted such a large share of the overall population. The Report notes that improvements in girls' education have not translated into better employment opportunities for young women.

With youth unemployment rates high in most countries, many young people turn to the informal economy where they work long hours, are paid low wages and lack social protection. While youth have benefited from globalization and related policy changes, they have also been victims of this process. Contractions in labour markets associated with globalization often affect youth first because they are often among the last to be hired and the first to be fired.

The report identifies migration as a common response for youth from developing regions. From Asia to Africa, Latin America and in the small island developing States, youth who have few local options are migrating in large numbers in pursuit of opportunities abroad. The Report finds that regardless of the existence of pockets of successful youth with a migrant background who become well-integrated in developed market economies, the social inclusion of migrants remains low. It poses many new challenges for sending and receiving communities which must be addressed by Governments and other stakeholders.

- Recognizing that better education is not necessarily the springboard for all youth to move out of poverty
- Lack of access to health services and a quality education hamper transition to adulthood
- Forming one quarter of the working-age population, 15-24 year olds can be a key resource for development
- Informal sector jobs are too often a first rather than last resort for many young people
- Migration has become a way out for many

The Report calls for policy makers to address as a matter of priority the obstacles that continue to limit youth participation in the development of their societies. The Report maintains that youth are not passively waiting for solutions to be handed to them; they are actively searching for solutions. Provided with an enabling environment that includes access to quality education, decent work opportunities and health care, youth can make important contributions to the advancement of a world for which they will be responsible for many decades to come.

Review the full report at <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/wyr07.htm>.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM UN HEADQUARTERS

UN General Assembly adopts resolution on youth and Supplement to the WPAY

The UN General Assembly adopted by consensus a comprehensive resolution on youth. Youth delegates representing their Governments in the General Assembly participated actively in the negotiations and contributed to the text of the resolution that calls for stronger measures by Governments to address youth issues to protect and promote their well-being in the changing global economy. The Supplement to the World Programme of Action for Youth that included the five additional priority areas of globalization, information and communication technology, HIV/AIDS, armed conflict, and intergenerational issues was annexed to the resolution and also adopted by the General Assembly. Issues ranging from unemployment, the eradication of poverty, hunger and malnutrition, formal and non-formal education, health and HIV/AIDS were covered, as well as the rights of girls and young women and other vulnerable young people excluded from the development process. The resolution recognizes that while youth today are better placed than ever before to participate in, and benefit from, global development, many young people remain marginalized, disconnected or excluded from the opportunities that globalization offers. The official edited version will be released in all official languages shortly. To read the advance unedited version, please visit http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/adv_a_res_62_126.pdf.

Commission for Social Development 46th session from 6-15 February

The forty-sixth session of the Commission for Social Development will include youth employment in the discussions of its priority theme “Promoting Full Employment and Decent Work for All” and will consider the recommendations on youth employment contained in the Secretary-General’s Report on “Follow-up to the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond” (A/62/61 & E/2007/7 and Addendum). Youth representatives in Government delegations, young people and youth-led organizations are invited to contribute to the discussions. Two youth-related side events will be conducted that include an interactive discussion entitled “Full employment and decent work for all: Where are the youth?” The discussion will cover strategies that have been found to be effective in tackling youth unemployment and will also highlight roles that Governments, the private sector, the UN system, civil society and young people themselves should play to increase employment opportunities for youth. The second side event will be a roundtable discussion on the recently released World Youth Report 2007 and will include presentations by representatives from UN regional offices. For more information on the Commission and the side-events, please visit <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/csocd46.htm>.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM UN AGENCIES AROUND THE WORLD

Alliance of Civilizations Forum concludes in Spain

Hosted by the Government of Spain, the first Alliance of Civilizations Forum brought together an influential network of political leaders, media heads, youth and civil society leaders, corporate and film industry executives, and religious figures. From 14-16 January, they explored ways of building partnerships to promote greater understanding and respect among cultures. A pre-forum orientation session was also arranged for youth participants. A 100 million dollar investment in a Global Youth Employment Initiative and a multi-million dollar Media Fund were among key initiatives launched at the Forum. For more information on the outcome and other initiatives launched at the Forum, please see <http://www.unaoc.org>.

UNESCO New guidelines for using ICT to advance learning

Realizing that it takes more than just having a computer in the classroom to enable teachers to pass on the skills students need to do well in today’s world, UNESCO has developed new guidelines to help instructors better use information and communication technology (ICT) in education. The new guidelines – ICT Competency Standards for Teachers – was developed by UNESCO in cooperation with technology giants Cisco, Intel and Microsoft, as well as the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) and the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech). The standards take into account the specific needs of teachers, curriculum and school organizations aiming to contribute to the education of a better-informed citizenry able to advance economic and social development. For more information, please see http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=41553&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

UNESCO - New Partnerships for Education For All (EFA)

A global review co-published by UNESCO’s International Institute for Educational Planning and the World Economic Forum, entitled “New Partnerships for EFA: Building on Experience” was just launched at the World Economic Forum in Davos. The review was commissioned by UNESCO to lay the ground work for promoting multi-stakeholder partnerships in education and engaging the private sector in international aid cooperation. It is intended for actors in development at the international and country levels. At the Forum,

UNESCO also presented its perspective on Partnerships for Education (Pfe) signed between UNESCO and the World Economic Forum. For more information, please see http://www.unesco.org/iiep/PDF/pubs/Partnerships_EFA.pdf and <http://www.weforum.org/en/media/Latest%20Press%20Releases/AM08PREducation>.

UNICEF-UNESCO A Human Rights-Based Approach to EDUCATION FOR ALL

Current thinking and practice in the education sector are presented along with a framework for rights-based policy and programme development. This joint UNESCO-UNICEF publication is intended to guide dialogue between United Nations Development Group and Education for All (EFA) partnerships and facilitate a breakthrough from 'right to education' rhetoric to accelerated interventions for attaining the EFA goals and the Millennium Development Goals related to education. To download a copy of the publication, please visit http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_42104.html

UNFPA - Tackling the Taboo Topic of Teen Pregnancy in Ghana

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, has provided a grant to help a community-based NGO offering support to young mothers and other youth in Ghana's rural Volta region, to fund its teen pregnancy awareness programme and the Lady Volta Resource Centre, as well as undertake research on the needs of teenage mothers. The centre provides a referral and counselling service for teens and young adults seeking sexual and reproductive health advice on issues ranging from relationships to family planning to sexually transmitted infections and HIV. For more information, please see <http://www.unfpa.org/news/news.cfm?ID=1095>.

UNICEF - The State of the World's Children 2008

The State of the World's Children 2008 assesses the state of child survival and primary health care for mothers, newborns and children today. These issues serve as sensitive barometers of a country's development and well-being and as evidence of its priorities and values. Investing in the health of children and their mothers is a human rights imperative and one of the surest ways for a country to set its course towards a better future. To download a copy of the report, please visit <http://www.unicef.org/sowc08>.

UNICEF Voices of Youth - Conflict in Kenya -Young Kenyans Speak

During the recent weeks, fear as much as outright attack has driven hundreds of thousands of people from their homes in Kenya. UNICEF is extremely concerned about what these experiences are doing to Kenya's children as fear can have lasting damaging effects on children, and can manifest itself in many ways. UNICEF Voices of Youth gives young people a chance to speak about their trauma at http://www.unicef.org/voy/takeaction/takeaction_4095.html.

UNICEF - United Nations Climate Change Conference concludes in Bali

The Conference, hosted by the Government of Indonesia, took place from 3-14 December and brought together more than 10,000 participants, including representatives of over 180 countries together with observers from intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations and the media. UNICEF supported the launch of a Global Youth Climate Movement by a coalition of more than 30 youth organizations and also held a series of events to highlight the effects of global warming on children and to ensure that young people are involved in the debate on this issue. Young people were given opportunities to speak at a UNICEF convened press conference and spoke about the effects of climate

change on their homes calling for more committed action on climate change. Youth under 30 constitute over 48% of the world's population and made a strong case for their inclusion in the negotiations. For more information, please visit http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/indonesia_42187.html or see <http://www.undispatch.com/archives/youth>.

WHO publishes Fact Sheets on young peoples' access to health services

The World Health Organization's Department of Child and Adolescent Health and Development (CAH) published a package of Fact Sheets on 16 key indicators for assessing access to health services for young people in 2007. These indicators were agreed through international technical consultations with UN and other technical partners, organized by CAH and WHO's Department of Reproductive Health and Rights (RHR). The Fact Sheets are based on internationally comparable data for the period 2000 to 2005, principally Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS). WHO is disseminating the Fact Sheets to Ministries of Health, donors and other key partners to support improved reporting for the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS 2001) and for universal access to reproductive health goals and targets that are being requested in 2008 at country level. For more information see CAH's website: http://www.who.int/child_adolescent_health.

World Bank - WANTED: Your Practical Ideas

The World Bank, the Cities Alliance and the Government of Norway invite young people between the ages of 18 and 25 to participate in the International Essay Competition 2008 on "What can you do to shape the city of your dreams?" As of 2007, for the first time in human history, the majority of people in the world are living in urban areas. As city populations grow, there is a growing need for solutions to the issues of urban poverty, environment, and infrastructure. Submissions are due by March 23, 2008! For more information and guidelines, please see <http://www.essaycompetition.org/>

Youth Employment Network West Africa (YEN-WA) Private Sector Initiative

In recognizing the importance of youth employment both as a factor of business growth and of wider development goals, the Private Sector Initiative (PSI) promotes and facilitates partnerships between the private sector and social organizations in the promotion of youth employment in West Africa. As part of the *Research and Knowledge Development Phase* of the Initiative, the "PSI Brochure" was developed to demonstrate to business the benefits of engaging with youth on issues related to employment. The best practice case studies contained within the brochure relied upon valuable input from private sector partners including Shell International, Vlisco Helmond B.V. and the World Cocoa Foundation, all of whom have launched youth employment projects in the region. For a copy of the brochure, please see <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/yen/download/yenwa-psi.pdf>.

CALENDAR OF YOUTH EVENTS

13-16 February: World Conference on the Development of Cities

Porto Alegre will be the venue for this Conference, sponsored by several UN agencies, local and national Government offices, and non-Governmental organizations. The main objective of the Conference is to gather the diversity of recent democratic innovation and initiatives for social change to make cities more inclusive. The four themes of the conference are: The Right to the City (Local Policies on the Citizens Rights and Responsibilities), Governance and Democracy in Cities (Innovative Management and Democratic Participation

Experiences), Local Development in Cities, and Sustainability and Network-City. The themes will also cover issues such as gender, poverty, youth, immigration, informal labor, environment and violence. The event is expected to draw public officials, community, business and social leaders, as well as academics and experts. For more information, please see <http://www.cmdc2008.com.br/novo/index.php?i=en> or http://portal.unesco.org/shs/en/ev.php-URL_ID=10670&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

13-15 February: Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking

The United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT) was conceived to join forces and coordinate the global fight on human trafficking. The Vienna Forum will bring together representatives from Member States, United Nations entities, non-governmental and international organizations, the business community, academia, the public sector and civil society. The aims of the Forum are specifically to raise awareness of all forms of trafficking, to facilitate cooperation and partnerships among participants, to take stock of progress made and to set the directions for follow-up measures to prevent and counter human trafficking. It also provides an opportunity for an assessment of the lessons learned regarding the dimensions of the issue and the current action taken in response to trafficking in persons. For more information, please see <http://www.ungift.org/>

8 March: International Women's Day

Celebrated on 8 March, International Women's Day (IWD) is the global day connecting all women around the world and inspiring them to achieve their full potential. IWD events occur all around the world and range from small random informal gatherings to large-scale highly organized events. All celebrate women's advancement and highlight the need for continued vigilance and action. For more information and to join or create events in your local area, please see <http://www.internationalwomensday.com>.

27-30 March: BIMUN Belgrade International Model UN

United Nations Association of Serbia is organizing the fifth Belgrade International Model UN (BIMUN) in Belgrade from 27 to 30 March 2008. Participants at the BIMUN are social science students from all over the world that learn more about current international issues and ways to resolve them within the UN system, and to apply basic diplomatic principles that further develop their personal life-skills. For more information, please see http://www.unaserbia.org.yu/Bimun/2008/ENG_sta_je_bimun.htm.

31 March-6 April: Act! Speak! Build! Week

Act! Speak! Build! Week is UN Habitat's international, student-initiated week of advocacy. The week empowers young people to educate themselves and their communities and move people to social action. Young people, ages 5 to 25, work in partnership with local affiliates to plan and host events focused on ending "poverty housing". For more information, please see <http://www.habitat.org/youthprograms/actspeakbuild>.

17 -20 April: EuroMUN 2008

The European Model United Nations is organised by students from the United Nations Student Association of the University of Maastricht. Between 300 and 500 students will participate in this event, either as a national delegate, NGO, journalist or a chairperson in committees that simulate the main organs of the United Nations and other system organizations. For more information, please visit <http://www.euromun.org/>

25-28 April: Global Youth Service Day

Global Youth Service Day is an annual global celebration of young volunteers from around the world who carry out community improvement projects. For more information, please see <http://www.gysd.org>

27-30 April: Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting

The 2008 Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting (CYMM) will be hosted by the Government of Sri Lanka. The theme for the CYMM will be on Youth and Peace. The CYMM brings together youth ministers to discuss emergent themes in global youth affairs and provides an opportunity for dialogue with young people from Commonwealth countries. For more information, please see <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/news/152865/174311/140108cymm08.htm>

31 May: World No Tobacco Day

Tobacco is the second major cause of death in the world. About 5 million people die each year of tobacco related causes – this accounts to the death of one in ten adults worldwide. To draw global attention to the tobacco epidemic and to the preventable death and disease it causes, the World Health Organization introduced World No Tobacco Day in 1987. For more information, please see <http://days.takingitglobal.org/13> or <http://www.who.int/tobacco/communications/events/wntd/2007/en/index.html>.

5 June: World Environment Day

The World Environment Day slogan for 2008 is “Kick the Habit! Towards a Low Carbon Economy”. Recognizing that climate change is becoming the defining issue of our era, UNEP is asking countries, companies and communities to focus on greenhouse gas emissions and how to reduce them. The World Environment Day will highlight resources and initiatives that promote low carbon economies and life-styles, such as improved energy efficiency, alternative energy sources, forest conservation and eco-friendly consumption. For more information, please see <http://www.unep.org/wed>.

17-21 June: Tunza International Children's Conference on the Environment

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in collaboration with the Young Agenda 21 Foundation of Norway will host the 2008 Tunza International Children's Conference on the Environment in Stavanger, Norway. For more information, please see http://www.unep.org/tunza/children/events/icc_2008.

15-21 July: European International Model United Nations

The general theme of this year's conference is “Striving for sustainable Globalization” that will take place in The Hague. Over 220 students from all over the world will participate in one of six councils and debate on key topics and tackle global issues. For more information, please see <http://www.teimun.org/>.

3-8 August: XVII International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2008)

The AIDS 2008 Conference will be held in México City, México and will be the first International AIDS Conference ever held in Latin America. Do you want to participate in AIDS 2008? Visit the Global Village, Skills Building, Youth or Cultural Programme pages of the conference website to learn how to submit a session or workshop proposal. For more information, please visit <http://www.aids2008.org>.

10-21 August: 4th World Youth Congress

Regeneration 2008 - Quebec City, the 4th World Youth Congress, designed to promote and celebrate youth-led development, will bring together 600 young people from over 100 countries to Québec City in August 2008. Find out more and be part of this worldwide Youth Action Event! For more information, please see <http://www.wyc2008.qc.ca>.

19-22 August: 3rd International Young Professionals Summit (IYPS)

The International Young Professionals Foundation will organize the summit in Manchester, UK. The aim of the Summit is to bring together young professionals for networking, capacity building and information sharing around core theme of "How young professionals can help to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals ", and include other specific topics such as governance, economy and education, women and gender equality, healthcare and HIV/AIDS, and environmental sustainability. For more information, please see <http://www.iyps.org/iyps08/index.htm>.

24-27 September: YES Azerbaijan 2008

The 4th global Youth Employment Summit would be hosted by the Republic of Azerbaijan through the Ministry of Youth and Sport in partnership with an Youth Employment Summit (YES) Campaign Inc. For more information, please see <http://www.yesweb.org/yes2008/index.htm>

31 March-2 April 2009: World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development

Organized by UNESCO and the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, in cooperation with the German Commission for UNESCO, "World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development: Moving into the Second Half of the UN Decade" will be held in Bonn, Germany and is expected to draw some 700 stakeholders from all over the world. Registration will begin in November 2008. For more information, please contact esddecade@unesco.org.

ON THE INTERNET

Young people's summary of the UN Human Development Report on Climate Change

Join the Task Force of young people to bring to life the key messages of the HDR with your own creative opinion pieces, reports, poems and stories, paintings, cartoons and photographs etc. Young people are also invited to create 30 to 90 second videos - infomercials on how climate change affects you and what you feel should be done about it. Sign up now for the Task Force by emailing publications@peacechild.org or for details, visit <http://www.takingitglobal.org/resources/financial/view.html?FinID=2691>.

Small Scale grants for Youth-led Projects

Peace Child International empowers young people to take responsibility for peace, human rights and the environment through education, leadership development and direct participation in the events that shape our world community.

Be the Change! Programme provides small scale grants for youth-led projects. The next application deadline for funding projects is 31 March 2008. For more information, please see <http://www.peacechild.org/www/pci/?id=121>.

e-GLO course on community development and digital storytelling

Apply to join the first-ever online e-GLO course. e-GLO is short for Earth Charter Global Learning Opportunity, a 4-month course from February to May, focused on community development and digital storytelling. The application process for e-GLO is competitive for the 20-30 slots available to 15-30 year-olds that meet the language and technical requirements indicated on the Form. The deadline for application submissions is 1 February 2008. For more information, please see http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/resources/2008/01/eglo_application_form.html.

Festival VidéEau

An international competition for video clips organized by the International Secretariat for Water (ISW) invites young people aged from 17 to 30, to submit 90 second or shorter video clips on the theme "Water, People and Sustainable Development". The winners of the competition will be announced at a prize-giving ceremony to be held during the World Youth Congress, taking place in Quebec, Canada, from 10 to 21 August 2008. The pre-selected clips will be submitted to an international jury of experts in water and film, who will choose three winners. Submission deadline: 15 June 2008. For more information, please see http://www.i-s-w.org/en/vidéeau_en.html.

WFP Hunger Bytes!

The World Food Programme calls on students, would-be filmmakers and others interested to put their creativity towards raising awareness about hunger through a unique, international competition - the best short video about 'biting' global hunger. For more information, please see <http://www.wfp.org/english/?ModuleID=137&Key=2698>

CONTACT INFORMATION

UN Youth Flash is prepared by the UN Programme on Youth, Division for Social Policy and Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs at the United Nations Secretariat in New York. Mailing address: 2 UN Plaza, DC2-1306, New York, NY 10017.

To subscribe or unsubscribe to the UN Youth Flash, please send an Email to: youth@un.org with "subscribe" or "unsubscribe" in the subject line.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.un.org/youth>.