

## **UN YOUTH FLASH**

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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>.

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### **FEATURE: Making the case for investing in youth-led development\***

By David Woolcombe, Director, Peacechild International

[Youth-Led Development (YLD) = Youth-led business start-ups and community improvement projects designed and implemented by young people under 25]

The 2007 World Development Report (WDR) concludes: “There has never been a better time to invest in youth...” I go further: I argue that Youth-led Development is the best investment anyone can make in development. Period.

There are several reasons why this is so. Demographics for one: with young people under the age of 25 forming 60-70% of least developed country's (LDCs) populations, logic dictates that they should have a central role. Logic, and years of research, has also proved that experiential education is far and away the most effective way for young people to learn. Information retention rates are double those achieved by cognitive classroom teaching. Training, mentoring and financing young people to start and run small businesses teaches young people most of the business skills that they need to be employable graduates. Doing a social or environmental programme teaches project management skills that are invaluable in any career. This is why I argue that YLD should form part of all Government education and training budgets: it's logical! There is a school in Paraguay where students are running 14 businesses from their classrooms – earning money for themselves and for their families. How cool is that?!

### **Other reasons abound:**

**YLD creates jobs:** Every body knows that youth unemployment is double-to-triple the general rate – with rates of up to 88% youth unemployed in some LDCs. Research done by the UK Prince's Trust has shown that one in five young people have the intuitive skills to start and run a small business, whatever their educational background. If Governments were to invest in that one in five, pretty soon, that “one” would employ the other four! So YLD is one of the best ways of tackling the youth unemployment problem.

**Security:** Young, unemployed restless people are likely to go for any job that offers them adventure and escape from tedium – so they are willing recruits for any rebel leader intent

on making trouble. Soaking up the expanding pools of unemployed youth is an obvious way to prevent future conflicts: if young people have a good job or a business to lose, they are not going to join the rebels! And those pools are expanding: with 1.1 billion youth coming on to the job market in the next decade, and only 300 million confirmed jobs awaiting them, that's a potential uprising with 800 million youth behind it. Governments should be concerned – deeply concerned!

**Creating opportunities for disadvantaged groups:** This is not me speaking: it is the youth of the developing world setting their priorities. They care about opportunities for women, persons with disabilities and others; they will fight discrimination and corruption, given a chance. And they don't want jobs in the informal sector, hawking mobile phone chargers and sunglasses on the street: they want proper, registered company jobs – decent work with decent wages and job security. And YLD can deliver that.

**Cost effectiveness:** Best of all – it delivers for a fraction of current development costs. Because young people are prepared to see YLD as training and take their wages in experience rather than hard cash, they deliver community improvements at a tenth of the current development costs. But young people hate it when I argue that YLD is development on the cheap because, for all the reasons outlined above, logic demonstrates that YLD would be immensely worth-while even if it were more expensive!

Growth, expanding the tax base, rooting out corruption and gender empowerment are other reasons why YLD is vital!

Sadly, the logic of YLD is one that has escaped most Government ODA ministries, Development NGOs and UN agencies. Some welcome exceptions are UN-HABITAT which has recently announced a YLD fund, and UNIDO which has a YLD initiative starting this year in West Africa. But because so little YLD has happened, data on it is mostly anecdotal: as larger, national and regional programmes get under way in the near future, we are intensely confident that youth will deliver and that YLD will become the “next big thing” in the development field.

[David Woollcombe is the founder and Director of Peacechild International, an organization that works to empower and enable young people around the world. Find out more about YLD from his publication "Youth-led Development: Harnessing the energy of youth to make poverty history" Schumacher Briefing No. 14, with a foreword by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan (<http://www.peacechild.org>).]

\* The views expressed above are solely the writer's and do not necessarily constitute an official endorsement by the United Nations.

## **HIGHLIGHTS FROM UN HEADQUARTERS**

### **46th session of the Commission for Social Development concludes**

The Commission for Social Development adopted by consensus all six outstanding resolutions after difficult negotiations at its resumed session. In its resolution “Promoting full employment and decent work for all” submitted to the Economic and Social Council for adoption, the Commission urges the development and implementation of integrated policies and strategies to promote productive employment and decent work opportunities for youth.

It calls for mainstreaming youth employment into national development strategies, the promotion of young people's entrepreneurship and access to new and quality jobs. It also stresses the importance of the Youth Employment Network as a peer exchange mechanism at the national, regional and international levels. For more information, on resolutions and documents of the 46<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission, please see

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/csd/csocd2008/resolutions.htm>. Youth representatives in Government delegations, young people and youth-led organizations participated actively in the deliberations. For more information, please visit <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/csocd46.htm>.

### **52nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women begins**

The Commission will hold its session at United Nations headquarters from 25 February to 7 March 2008. It will devote priority attention to Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women and will also evaluate progress in the implementation of the agreed conclusions on women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and resolution and in post-conflict peace building. It will also consider the emerging issue of gender perspectives on climate change. During the session, the Secretary-General will launch a global campaign to end violence against women

(<http://www.un.org/apps/sg/sgstats.asp?nid=3020>). For more information, please visit <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/52sess.htm>.

## **HIGHLIGHTS FROM UN AGENCIES AROUND THE WORLD**

### **UNEP – Supporting Entrepreneurs for Sustainable Development**

The SEED Initiative's SEED Awards for Entrepreneurship in Sustainable Development is an annual international competition, designed to support innovative, entrepreneurial partnerships in developing countries which have the potential to make real improvements in poverty eradication and environmental sustainability. Partners in the SEED Initiative are IUCN (the World Conservation Union); the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); and the Governments of the United States of America, Germany, the Netherlands, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. For more information and application forms, please visit the SEED Initiative website [www.seedinit.org](http://www.seedinit.org)

### **UNESCO – Launches the International Year of Languages**

The International Year of Languages was launched on 21 February with a warning that more than half the world's 6,700 spoken languages are threatened with extinction and that every two weeks on average, one language disappears somewhere around the world. 'Languages matter!' is the UNESCO slogan for the International Year. The agency held a series of events to mark the Day and highlight the Year, placing special emphasis on international instruments and standards that encourage multilingualism. The agency warned that when a language fades, so does a part of the world's cultural tapestry, adding that globalization is placing many languages under ever greater threat. Today, experts estimate that 96 per cent of the world's languages are spoken by only 4 per cent of the total population. For more information, please see [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=41781&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=41781&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html).

### **UNESCO - HIV and AIDS Myth Buster**

Engaging young people to prevent the spread of HIV is a pilot project supported by UNESCO and implemented by the NGO SPACE - Society for People's Awareness, Care and Empowerment. This project aims to enhance the knowledge and skills of young people to empower them to respond to the challenges posed by HIV/AIDS. The booklet HIV and Aids Myth Buster addresses common myths and misconceptions prevalent among college youth in India about HIV and AIDS and sex and sexuality. These myths came to light during focus group discussions conducted with peer leaders and educators in Delhi University. It provides practical and simple answers to the many questions about HIV/AIDS. To download a copy of the booklet, please visit <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001529/152975e.pdf>.

### **UNFPA - 2008 Staying Alive Awards are open for application**

The Staying Alive Foundation (SAF) is looking for young, inspiring individuals and projects to fund in this year's round of Staying Alive Awards, which will be given out in June 2008. SAF believes that young people can bring about positive social change around HIV prevention, if given the opportunity, and that young people can mobilize others to take action. Last year SAF gave away 33 grants in 19 countries. For more information and to apply before 7 April, please see <http://www.staying-alive.org/foundation>.

### **UN-HABITAT - Youth launch a peace campaign at UNHQ in Nairobi**

Following the violence that engulfed Kenya after its national elections in December last year, UN-HABITAT along with UNICEF and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime held a peace meeting at UNHQ in Nairobi on 4 February. The gathering called upon young Kenyans to be ambassadors for peace. UN-HABITAT is also a key promoter of the National Youth Violence Prevention Week, an activity of the "Safer Cities Kenya project" that is a collaborative effort of the Government of Kenya and the United Nations under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Kenya initiated in 2001. For more information, please see <http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?cid=5584&catid=5&typeid=6&subMenuId=0>.

### **UN-HABITAT launches Peace Building Training of Trainers programme**

The Training of Trainers programme was conducted by UN-HABITAT in collaboration with Peace Net Kenya, a national umbrella organization of NGOs, CBOs, religious organizations and individuals committed to encouraging collaboration, facilitation and mobilization of local initiatives for peace building, promotion of justice and conflict resolution. Over 250 young people benefited from a training programme held at the UN Offices in Nairobi, Kenya, earlier this month. The programme sees young people as agents of peace and focuses on long-term solutions and interventions with the ultimate goal to reach young people at the grass roots level. To read the statement by Dr. Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka, Executive Director, UN-HABITAT, on the occasion of the Youth Dialogue on "I am Kenya, I am Peace, Let's Talk", please see <http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?cid=5540&catid=14&typeid=8&subMenuId=0>.

### **UNICEF - Progress for Children: A World Fit for Children Statistical Review**

This UNICEF special edition review reports on how well the world is doing in meeting its commitments for the world's children. It analyzes progress towards the Millennium Development Goals in four priority areas for children: promoting healthy lives, providing a quality education, combating HIV and AIDS, and protecting against abuse, exploitation and

violence. To download a copy of the review, please visit <http://www.unicef.org/progressforchildren/2007n6/>.

### **UNICEF Voices of Youth - Reaching out: Rural Voices of Youth**

Oyebisi Oluseyi, a Voices of Youth member, is reaching out to rural young people in Nigeria who do not have internet access. Rural Voices of Youth is a project started by Oyebisi, who travels with volunteers to rural areas in Nigeria to have discussions with young people and record their thoughts and feelings on a given topic. Find out more and read the messages they brought back with them on the following pages, and join in the discussion at [http://www.unicef.org/voy/takeaction/takeaction\\_1115.html](http://www.unicef.org/voy/takeaction/takeaction_1115.html).

### **UN Works with MTV and VH1**

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon appeared on the 2007 VH1 Soul Vibe Awards to acknowledge Jay-Z's "Water for Life" campaign. The UN Works Programme collaborated with MTV to create the on-air and online campaign which educates young people about the global water issues and sanitation crisis. Jay-Z was chosen by online voters for the inaugural Vibe Props Award. "My man, Jay-Z, has been a wonderful partner to the UN and champions those in need around the world," said the Secretary-General. Free educational and advocacy resources created by UN Works and MTV are available online. Watch the documentary. Visit <http://www.un.org/works>. Stay online. UN Works is launching a new website in March 2008!

### **WFP - Campaign to combat hunger among school children**

The United Nations World Food Programme unveiled a new global fundraising and awareness campaign to benefit the nearly 60 million children around the world who go to school hungry. The new initiative "Fill the Cup" aims, literally, to fill a cup with food for hungry schoolchildren, increasing their chances for health, education and a better future. From Afghanistan to Somalia, some 20 million children benefit from WFP school meals at the cost of only US \$0.25 a day. Partnering with WFP in the campaign is FIFA World Player of the Year, Kaka, who is also the agency's Ambassador against Hunger. For more information, please see <http://www.wfp.org/english/?ModuleID=137&Key=2756>.

### **WHO - World Conference on Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion**

The World Health Organization will convene a Conference that will give special attention to the processes of globalization and their implications for injuries and violence. The WHO is urging governments to address the two main themes of Violence and Traffic Accidents. The conference will also emphasize the global patterns in Technological and Epidemiological Transitions, proposing international collaboration as a fundamental strategy for the design and promotion of policies for injury prevention and safety promotion. Prior to the Conference, the 2008 International Society for Child and Adolescent Injury Prevention (ISCAIP) meeting will be held on 14 March. For more information, please see <http://www.insp.mx/safety2008/ing/>.

### **World Bank - World Development Report 2008: Agriculture for Development**

The World Development Report 2008 calls for greater investment in agriculture in developing countries. The report says that the rural world is changing rapidly, and young people need to be prepared to rise to the new challenges and opportunities. Agriculture is also changing, with new technologies, products, markets, and business environments. To seize these opportunities, all will need skills that differ from those of their parents; however,

education and training systems are not ready to face the challenge. To download a copy of the Report, please visit <http://www.worldbank.org/wdr2008>.

## **CALENDAR OF YOUTH EVENTS**

### **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. For more information and to join or create events in your local area, please see <http://www.internationalwomensday.com>.

### **25-26 March: United Nations Meets Web 2.0**

The Global Alliance for ICT and Development (GAID) will organize this event, entitled "United Nations Meets Web 2.0 - New Media, New Entrepreneurs and New ICT Opportunities in Emerging Markets", the second in a series of interactive and action-oriented meetings with ICT leaders, who create new and innovative technologies. The event will consist of a series of policy dialogues and panel sessions, showcasing a variety of perspectives on key issues related to ICT and development. For more information, please see <http://www.un-gaid.org/fr/node/1347>.

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

Act! Speak! Build! Week is UN Habitat's international, student-initiated week of advocacy. The week is dedicated to empowering 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>.

### **2-5 April: XX IAVE World Conference**

The 20th International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE) Conference will be held in Panama. The theme of this year's Conference is "Volunteering for Human Development: More Solidarity, Less Poverty". The associated Youth Conference on Youth Volunteering for Solidarity & Equity will be held from 31 March-1 April. For more information, please visit <http://www.iave.org/>.

### **16-18 April: VIII Infopoverty World Conference**

"Low-cost smart technologies to fight poverty and save the planet", IWC2008, will be held simultaneously at the UN Headquarters in New York, at the Politecnico in Milan, and in other areas connected by videoconference. The Conference aims to advance the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and, in particular, supports programmes for alleviating poverty through information and communication technologies, as well as empowering women and indigenous people to take a more active role. For more information, please see <http://www.infopoverty.net/>

### **17 -20 April: EuroMUN 2008**

The European Model United Nations is organized by students from the United Nations Student Association of the University of Maastricht. For more information, please visit <http://www.euromun.org>. During the meeting, a **Special Session on Youth** will be convened at the invitation of the President of Maastricht University. The primary objectives of the



session related to youth delegates to the United Nations, promotion, institutionalization and capacity building of youth delegates. For more information, please see [http://www.euromun.org/index.php/euromun/un\\_youth\\_delegates](http://www.euromun.org/index.php/euromun/un_youth_delegates).

### **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 that accounts for the death of one in ten people 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>.

### **10-11 June: UNGA High-Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS**

The General Assembly high-level meeting (HLM) will undertake a comprehensive review of the progress achieved in realizing the 2001 Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the 2006 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS, as well as to promote the continued engagement of leaders in a comprehensive global response to AIDS. The high-level meeting will comprise plenary meetings, five thematic panel discussions and an informal interactive hearing with civil society. The outcome of the high-level meeting will be a Summary of the President of the General Assembly, reflecting the views expressed during the discussions. For more information, please see <http://www.un-ngls.org/un aids/en>.

### **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](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 that will take place in The Hague, is "Striving for Sustainable Globalization". 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 Mexico City, Mexico 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>. The Global Youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS (GYCA) is one of the main coordinating initiatives of the Mexico City YouthForce for AIDS2008. Visit their website to find out more: <http://www.youthaidscoalition.org/>.

**12 August: International Youth Day**

This year's theme focuses on youth action on climate change. The Day provides a great opportunity to rally support and get key actors involved - Governments, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, businesses, and young people - to act on climate change. Email us your plans so that we can showcase great ideas on how partnering with Governments, organizations and communities can lead to change. For information on previous International Youth Days, please see <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/iyouthday.htm>.

**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 120 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. For more information, please see <http://www.iyps.org/iyps08/index.htm>.

**3-5 September: 61st Annual DPI/NGO Conference**

For the past 60 years, the DPI/NGO Conference has been held at the UN Headquarters in New York, welcoming over 2000 participants. The 61st Annual DPI/NGO Conference will be held in Paris, France, and will commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Find out more about the Conference from the Information Bulletin at <http://www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/index.asp>.

**15-16 September: 2008 Global Youth Enterprise Conference**

Join 350 other experts from the international youth enterprise, employment and livelihood community for this conference in Washington, DC. Practitioners, funding organizations,



members of the private sector, academics and youth leaders from many countries and all sectors will share learning, innovations, and ideas for strengthening and expanding opportunities for young people around the world. For more information, please visit <http://www.youthenterpriseconference.org>.

#### **24-27 September: YES Azerbaijan 2008**

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

#### **12-16 November: People to People International Global Youth Forum**

The 2008 PTPI GYF will be held in Denver, Colorado, USA, for young people ages 13 - 18 from around the world to explore various perspectives and skills while also experiencing other diverse peoples and cultures. A variety of dynamic speakers, interactive workshops and rewarding activities highlight this unique youth conference. For more information, please visit <http://www.ptpi.org/programs/GYF.aspx>

#### **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 around 700 stakeholders from all over the world. Registration will begin in November 2008. For more information, please visit [http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=55176&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=55176&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html).

### **ON THE INTERNET**

#### **Girls Count: A Global Investment & Action Agenda**

The Center for Global Development published this report that describes why and how to effectively initiate investments that will give adolescent girls in developing countries a full and equal chance for rewarding lives and livelihoods. To download a copy of the publication, please visit <http://www.cgdev.org/content/publications/detail/15154>.

#### **Middle East Youth Initiative launches new publication**

"Inclusion: Meeting the 100 Million Youth Challenge" assesses the challenges and opportunities facing youth in the Middle East through country case studies and personal stories. Statistics and data analysis highlight current realities and underline the importance of two major themes: 1) translating the demographic bulge into a dividend to improve incomes per capita, bolster savings and investment, and improve social welfare; and 2) creating a new social contract that meets the expectations and aspirations of youth.

<http://www.shababinclusion.org/content/document/detail/623/1>.

#### **United Nations Data Access System (UN-data)**

UNDESA's Statistics Division has just launched a new internet based data service (UN-data) that will provide an integrated information resource with current, relevant and reliable statistics free of charge to the global community. Subsequent stages of the development of the UN data access system will extend to UN system data as well as to data of national

statistical offices - providing the user with a simple single-entry point to global statistics.  
Visit UN-data at <http://data.un.org>.

### **Youth connect to address Iraqi refugee crisis in Jordan**

Global Youth Connect, the Jordanian Community Development Center, and the Jordan Red Crescent have joined together to launch an Iraqi Refugee Solidarity Initiative. This joint initiative will bring together 30 youth (ages 18-30) from Iraq, Jordan and the U.S. with the goal of better understanding the root causes of the Iraqi refugee crisis in Jordan, placing it within a larger regional and global context, and identifying concrete ways in which they can take steps towards addressing the situation. To find out more details and deadlines for application, please see [www.globalyouthconnect.org/country\\_jordan](http://www.globalyouthconnect.org/country_jordan).

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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