

Chapter 3

Overcoming the barriers of poverty: challenges for **YOUTH** participation in sub-Saharan Africa



Young people in all regions of the world, experience some degree of difficulty or uncertainty as they make the transition into adulthood. However, the situation that youth in Africa face is one of the most difficult in many respects. Average life expectancy in the region is among the lowest in the world. Weak infrastructure and poor economic development have traditionally impeded youth development in the region; staying enrolled in school, finding decent and productive work, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle all present very real challenges to a large proportion of youth in the region.

The estimated 157 million young people living in sub-Saharan Africa today are by no means a homogenous group. They come from varied cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and they speak one or more of the estimated 800 languages spoken in the region. Many have qualifications that compare favourably with or exceed those of their colleagues in more developed parts of the world; however, many more fall far below global education averages. Youth in sub-Saharan Africa are adopting new techniques of learning, working and communicating with the outside world in their attempts to create meaningful lives for themselves. They are navigating the communications highway and exchanging text messages and electronic mail with colleagues, gradually overcoming social and cultural factors that previously limited their access to information. Nevertheless, poverty remains a major constraint to the achievement of the full potential of youth in the region.

The intense poverty that has long characterized the region is highly multidimensional and includes monetary and non-monetary aspects. Apart from an overall lack of material and financial resources, there are also chronic and sporadic deficiencies in the quantity and quality of basic social services, amenities and communal services. Chronic food insecurity in sub-Saharan Africa has increased substantially since 1970, with the number of malnourished people in the region soaring from 88 million to 200 million by 1999-2001; this is the only region in the world in which levels of hunger have been steadily increasing since 1990. More specifically, the number of hungry people in sub-Saharan Africa is estimated to have increased by 20 per cent between 1990 and 2005 (von Braun, 2005). Because of the extent to which poverty is entrenched in the region, the challenges of youth development cannot be adequately addressed without consideration of the poverty context and its impact on the formative years of young people. The political and social landscape of the region has also been characterized by successive changes in government and poor governance. In several countries in the region, violent conflicts have further complicated the prospects for youth development.

The chapter includes a review of these and other major constraints to national development over the past 25 years or so, as they have had an enormous impact on youth development in the region. The progress and challenges experienced by young people in sub-Saharan Africa are explored in the sections to come. The chapter begins with an overview of the demographic context, focusing on the unique status of the present youth cohort as a “bridge generation” between a past era of explosive growth in the region’s youth population and a nascent era of more restrained growth. The chapter then examines the role of the macroeconomic and social milieu that have shaped youth opportunities and the capacity of young people to participate in development. The next section reviews persistent obstacles to young people’s participation in economic, social and political life in the region and focuses on the constraints imposed by the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the environment of conflict in some countries, and the challenges of globalization. The final section pres-

ents an overview of areas in which the region is making progress in involving youth in development. It highlights, in particular, recent trends in youth voluntarism and regional initiatives to advance youth development.

YOUTH: A MAJOR RESOURCE IN A CHANGING DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

Young people aged 15-24 years accounted for 20.4 per cent of the total population of sub-Saharan Africa in 2005 (see table 3.1). This figure reflects the United Nations definition of youth; however, when the broader definition used by the African Union (encompassing all those aged 15 to 34 years) is considered, the proportion jumps to 34.3 per cent, or 1 in 3 people. The region's population aged 15-24 years totalled almost 157 million in 2005; another 100 million would be added under the broader definition of youth (see table 3.1). By 2015, the population aged 15-24 years in sub-Saharan Africa is expected to reach some 200 million, and the population aged 15-34 years is projected to be 343 million.

Table 3.1
Size and share of the youth population in sub-Saharan Africa, 1980-2015

Year	Population by age			Youth aged 15-24 years as percentage of total population	Youth aged 15-34 years as percentage of total population
	Youth aged 15-24 years*	Youth aged 15-34 years*	Total population		
1980	73 457	124 274	388 063	18.9	32.0
1985	85 260	144 690	449 349	19.0	32.2
1990	99 418	168 292	519 391	19.1	32.4
1995	116 356	212 674	596 402	19.5	35.7
2000	136 099	228 043	679 873	20.0	33.5
2005	156 899	263 753	769 348	20.4	34.3
2010	177 255	302 591	866 948	20.4	34.9
2015	197 878	343 410	971 522	20.4	35.3

Source: United Nations, World Population Prospects (New York: 2007); data accessed online at www.unpopulation.org (11 May 2007).

Note: *The table includes figures based on the United Nations definition of youth (aged 15-24 years) and that used by the African Union (15-34 years).

Youth make up a relatively large proportion of the total population in most countries of the region. Table 3.2 shows that between 2005 and 2015, the youth share in most sub-regions ranged between 18 and 20 per cent. The table also indicates, however, that in most subregions the growth in the size of the youth population is not as high as it used to be. This is especially true for Southern Africa, where the HIV/AIDS epidemic is taking a heavy toll on young lives. Even with the slowdown in growth in Southern Africa, the challenge of youth development in the region is immense.

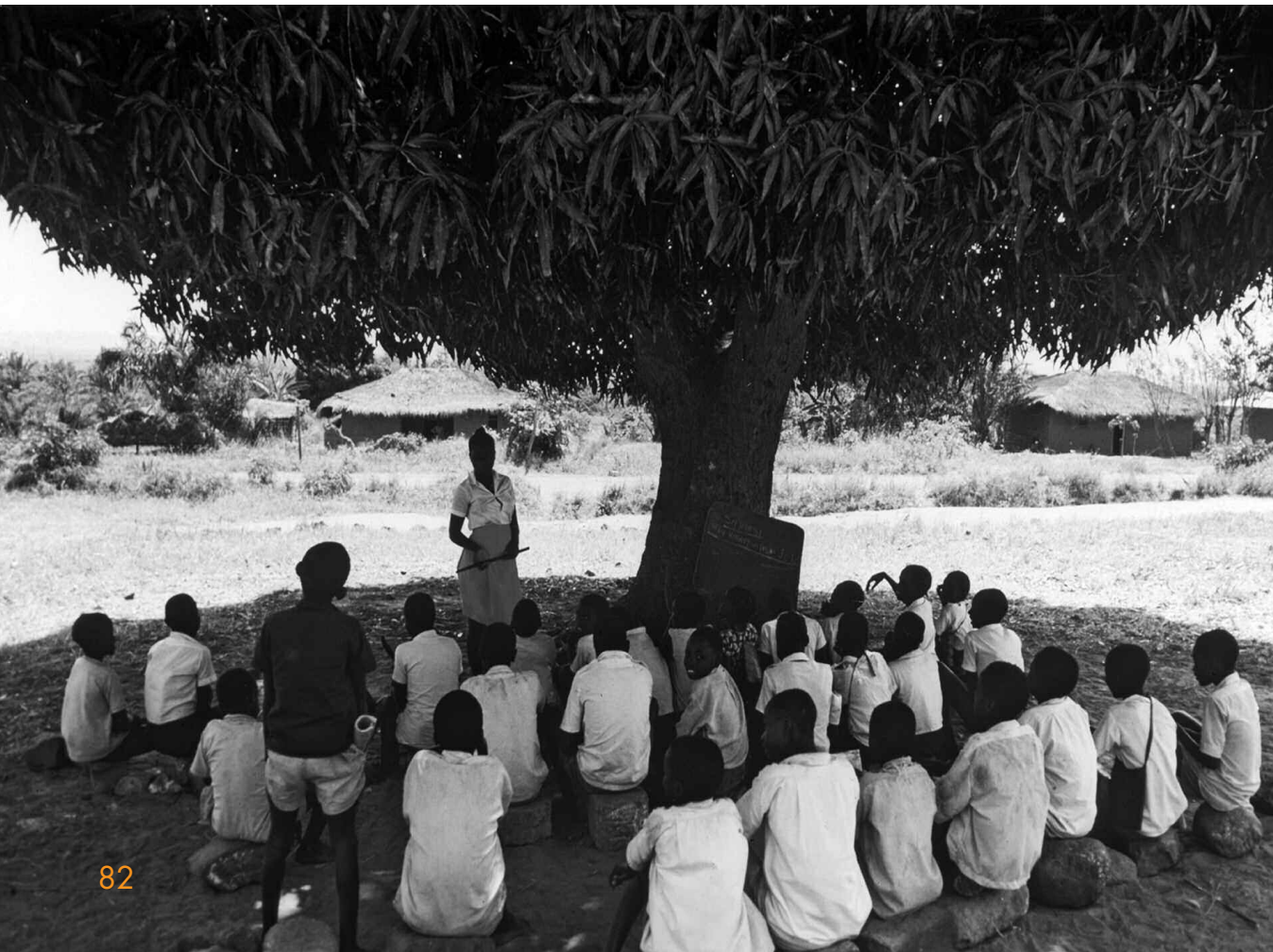
Table 3.2
Size and growth of the youth population in Africa and its subregions, 1980-2015

Region/ subregion	Year	Population aged 15-24 years (thousands)	Share of population aged 15-24 years (percentage)	Change in youth population (percentage)
Sub-Saharan Africa	1980	73 457	18.9	-
	1985	85 260	19.0	16.1
	1990	99 418	19.1	16.6
	1995	116 356	19.5	17.0
	2000	136 099	20.0	17.0
	2005	156 899	20.4	15.3
	2010	177 255	20.4	13.0
	2015	197 878	20.4	11.6
Eastern Africa	1980	27 890	19.1	-
	1985	32 579	19.2	16.8
	1990	38 172	19.4	17.2
	1995	44 299	19.8	16.1
	2000	52 159	20.3	17.7
	2005	60 586	20.7	16.2
	2010	68 597	20.7	13.2
	2015	76 815	20.5	12.0
Middle Africa	1980	10 139	18.5	-
	1985	11 833	18.7	16.7
	1990	13 897	18.9	17.4
	1995	16 729	19.3	20.4
	2000	19 373	19.8	15.8
	2005	22 499	20.0	16.1
	2010	25 848	19.9	14.9
	2015	29 361	19.8	13.6
Southern Africa	1980	6 466	19.6	-
	1985	7 402	19.8	14.5
	1990	8 487	20.3	14.7
	1995	9 698	20.5	14.3
	2000	10 633	20.5	9.6
	2005	11 185	20.4	5.2
	2010	11 528	20.4	3.1
	2015	11 743	20.3	1.9
Western Africa	1980	25 295	18.8	-
	1985	29 089	18.6	15.0
	1990	33 849	18.7	16.4
	1995	39 818	19.1	17.6
	2000	47 289	19.7	18.8
	2005	55 221	20.3	16.8
	2010	62 914	20.5	13.9
	2015	70 577	20.5	12.2

Source: United Nations, World Population Prospects (New York: 2007); data accessed online at www.unpopulation.org (11 May 2007).

Note: A hyphen (-) indicates that an item is not applicable.

Demographic realities complicate many aspects of social and economic development. For example, the provision of education for a large and growing cohort of young people has been difficult. More schools, teachers, books and other educational resources are needed every year to maintain the existing, and often inadequate, quality of instruction, and recurrent expenditures on facilities maintenance are likely to be higher because of the large sizes of youth cohorts.



Whether the African Union definition or the United Nations definition (which is the basis for analysis in the rest of the chapter) is used, the demographic picture makes it patently evident that engaging youth fully in sub-Saharan Africa's development is not a matter of choice, but rather an imperative for national development. Young people constitute a significant share of the African population and will continue to do so for many years to come. It should be recognized that despite the challenges associated with youth development in the region and inadequate access to education, the young people of today are, on average, better educated than their parents. They are better connected to the rest of the world than any of the earlier generations of youth in the region, and they are, as a result, more determined to find options to close the gap between their limited opportunities in the region and what they perceive to be possible in the global economy. Failure to provide opportunities for African youth to build their capacity to participate in development would be a missed opportunity to harness the huge potential in human capital, and this could have enormous economic, cultural, political and social consequences.

IMPLICATIONS OF A CHALLENGING ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Youth in Africa today are on the cusp of a transition to lower fertility and population growth rates in the region. They were born between the early 1980s and early 1990s, which was the beginning of a period of incipient decline in fertility rates and in annual population growth rates in the region. In many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, the first notable decline in fertility rates was registered in the early to mid-1980s, when many of today's youth were born. The young people of today have grown up in smaller families; their parents were among the first in the region to have improved access to modern methods of contraception, and the declines in fertility suggest that many used these opportunities to limit their fertility. This ostensibly opened up avenues for the children of that era, who are today's youth, to benefit from higher allocations of household resources.

However, economic difficulties arising from a combination of factors, including the global economic recession of the 1980s, domestic political and management difficulties, and prolonged droughts in many parts of the region, resulted in high levels of individual and national poverty. Therefore, between 1983 and 1992, when most of today's youth were born, the majority of sub-Saharan African countries experienced major social and economic setbacks. Investment in key areas of health and education suffered. Though fertility rates had begun to change in the 1980s, Governments still had to contend with the demands associated with the momentum and pressure created by the large birth cohorts of previous generations. These and other developments set the stage for major macroeconomic difficulties at the national level; the measures taken to promote recovery, including structural and sectoral adjustment policies that called for cost recovery in the social sectors, had equally devastating effects on young people and their families. Constraints to youth participation in African society are therefore not simply related to young people's lack of effort or disinterestedness, but to a complex interaction of household, national and global economic and social forces that impinge on their welfare.

Although the size of the youth population in sub-Saharan Africa presents major challenges to Governments in the region, the opportunity for countries to reap a dividend from the large numbers of people in the labour force cannot be overlooked. It has been emphasized in this connection that, to fully reap the demographic dividend, options must be provided for broadening opportunities to enable young people to develop skills and to use them productively; young people should be given the assistance they need to acquire the capabilities to make good decisions in pursuing those opportunities, and second chances should be offered to those who need to recover from decisions that have negatively affected their development (World Bank, 2006). There is little doubt that youth transitions in sub-Saharan Africa have been affected by the lack of capabilities and skills among young people. A majority of youth in Africa today have completed more years of schooling than their parents did but have limited opportunities in employment and other areas of development participation. Although developing capabilities and skills is undeniably important, it is also vital to address the socio-political and economic environments that have affected youth development in the region and to provide second chances to those who may have fallen through the cracks of the structural and sectoral policy shifts that defined the childhood of many of today's youth.

POVERTY: THE EFFECTS OF RECESSION, ADJUSTMENT AND LIBERALIZATION POLICIES OF THE 1980s AND 1990s

Many of today's youth in sub-Saharan Africa have suffered the consequences of severe poverty from birth. In this sense, they differ from their parents, who grew up at a time when many African countries were emerging from colonial administration, with its promise of a brighter, independent future. Unlike their parents' generation, which enjoyed many opportunities for free or State-subsidized education and health care, today's youth, from birth, have experienced the consequences of a serious global economic recession and of structural adjustment and liberalization policies that led to major retrenchment and job losses and the withdrawal of State subsidies for basic services. These changes resulted in increased poverty in the households in which young people grew up and diminished opportunities for their early development.

African countries were particularly vulnerable to the global recession of the early 1980s. This was because of a weak resource base at the time of independence, the dependence of almost all countries in the region on primary commodity production, a lack of non-aid financial capital, dependency on foreign aid and heavy indebtedness, and a lack of policy ownership resulting from many policies being imposed from outside the region by donors (Geda and Shimeles, 2007). This situation was exacerbated in a number of countries by war, civil strife and environmental disasters, as reflected in the general decline (and in some cases reversals) in major social indicators of progress. Coupled with the pressure of growing populations and worsening terms of trade for primary commodities in international markets, these factors resulted in a virtual collapse of the public sector.

Furthermore, in many countries, the cost of child-rearing rose, and the supply of many basic commodities and services was reduced. During the 1990s, malnutrition was a serious problem in Africa. Nowhere in the region was annual per capita consumption greater than US\$ 500, and all countries fell far short of universal primary enrolment. The conse-

quences of these difficulties and interventions were similar across the continent (Christiaensen, Demery and Paternostro, 2002). For most, if not all, countries, the effect on people's welfare was dramatic. In some areas, social indicators such as school enrolment ratios and trends in infant and under-five mortality, which had been improving throughout the 1960s and 1970s, reversed after 1985. Infant mortality rose during 1987 and 1991, and a higher percentage of children under the age of five were stunted or wasted in 1990 than in 1970 (McCulloch, Baulch and Chereh-Robson, 2001).

Many countries in this situation adopted structural adjustment programmes and trade liberalization policies under the leadership and guidance of the Bretton Woods institutions. Since the late 1980s, many African countries have liberalized their external regimes through a policy mix of foreign exchange allocation liberalization, realignment of exchange rates, and the removal of various tariffs. Many of these actions were associated with cut-backs in public sector investment and employment and the implementation of retrenchment and cost recovery policies, which affected the context in which the young people of today were growing up. Both the protracted and deep-rooted economic crisis that occurred before structural adjustment and the policies that were adopted to reverse those trends negatively affected the well-being of the majority of people. Real incomes and per capital social sector expenditures fell, with an adverse impact on the welfare of many (Ekouevi and Adepoju, 1995; Basu and Stewart, 1993). Structural adjustment and related retrenchments in the public sector exacerbated the situation and resulted in growing poverty and increasing inequalities in the distribution of income. Government funding for public education declined, leading to an increased focus on private education initiatives; however, these were affordable only to some, as family incomes were declining, and the share of the family budget available for education was limited (Reimers and Tiburcio, 1993). Many households experienced extreme difficulty in accessing basic goods and services, including those needed to support the education and health of their children—today's generation of youth.

Estimates of monetary poverty for sub-Saharan African youth that were presented in the World Youth Report 2003 (United Nations, 2004) have been revised for this report and are presented in the statistical annex. Table 3.3 shows an extract of those indicators for a selection of countries and provides estimates of the numbers of youth living below the minimum dietary requirements. Data are presented for a selection of countries, including some of the largest in the region.

Table 3.3**Estimates of youth living with monetary poverty and inadequate nutrition in selected countries of sub-Saharan Africa**

Country	Total youth population (thousands)	Year of poverty data	Percentage of youth living on less than US\$ 1 per day (PPP)	Estimate of youth living on less than US\$ 1 per day (thousands)	Percentage of youth living on less than US\$ 2 per day (PPP)	Estimate of youth living on less than US\$ 2 per day (thousands)	Percentage of youth consuming less than dietary minimum (2003)	Number of youth consuming less than dietary minimum (thousands)
Benin	1 839	2003	30.9	568.3	73.7	1 355.3	14	257.5
Burkina Faso	2 917	2003	27.2	793.4	71.8	2 094.4	17	495.9
Cameroon	3 662	2001	17.1	626.2	50.6	1 853.0	25	915.5
Côte d'Ivoire	4 141	2002	14.8	612.9	48.8	2 020.8	14	579.7
Ethiopia	16 675	2000	23.0	3 835.3	77.8	12 973.2	46	7 670.5
Madagascar	3 856	2001	61.0	2 352.2	85.1	3 281.5	38	1 465.3
Mauritania	617	2000	25.9	159.8	63.1	389.3	10	61.7
Nigeria	28 821	2003	70.8	20 405.3	92.4	26 630.6	9	2 593.9
Rwanda	2 236	2000	51.7	1 156.0	83.7	1 871.5	36	805.0
South Africa	9 747	2000	10.7	1 042.9	34.1	3 323.7
Tanzania	8 624	2000/01	57.8	4 984.7	89.9	7 753.0	44	3 794.6
Zambia	2 701	2002/03	75.8	2 047.4	94.1	2 541.6	47	1 269.5

Sources: Population data are drawn from United Nations, *World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision* (New York: 2007).

Percentages for those living below the poverty line are drawn from United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Indicators 2006* (available from <http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006/statistics/indicators/23.html>; accessed on 5 April 2007). Estimates of the numbers of youth living below the poverty line and on less than the minimum dietary requirements are calculations of the United Nations Programme on Youth.

Notes: Two dots (..) indicate that an item is not available. PPP = purchasing power parity

The estimates presented in table 3.3 suggest that the percentages of youth living in poverty are extremely high. It is estimated, for example, that over 90 per cent of the young people in Nigeria and Zambia live on less than US\$ 2 per day, and the same is true for almost 40 million youth in Ethiopia and Nigeria. These high levels of poverty persist despite poverty reduction strategies and some improvement in economic growth in the region. This suggests that recent policies adopted to revitalize the economy in Africa are not having much of an impact on youth poverty. Though the estimates presented in table 3.3 are extrapolations from the proportions of the total population living in poverty in the countries shown, they are likely to be accurate estimates of youth who live in poverty, as the situation of youth in many countries is often dependent on that of adults.

The use of income poverty measures alone does not suffice in estimating poverty in a population. Human poverty is more accurately defined as unmet basic human needs; important factors within this context include nutritional adequacy, access to health care (including maternal and reproductive health care), the availability of basic facilities and infrastructure, and any other variables that may improve prospects for survival and increased longevity. Table 3.3 provides estimates relating to hunger and malnutrition. The

table indicates that serious nutritional deprivation exists among youth in Ethiopia, where an estimated 7 million young people are consuming less than the dietary minimum. As with the distribution of monetary poverty across the household, it can be assumed that the availability of basic amenities is the same for all household members, including youth, who constitute about 20 per cent of the world's population.

Table 3.4 suggests that access to electricity, which is essential if youth are to benefit from modern information and communication technologies, is highly limited in the region. The data suggest that in only two countries, Gabon and Nigeria, are more than half of the households served by electricity. In almost all countries, more than 90 per cent of rural households have no electricity. In Uganda, Mozambique, Lesotho, Malawi, Rwanda and Chad, between 91 and 96 per cent of all households do not have access to electricity. Overall, access to water is much better than access to electricity. However, in this case as well, large differentials exist between urban and rural areas, and some countries are much worse off than others. If it is assumed that youth are distributed equally across households, then these data also reflect the situation of youth with respect to access to electricity and water, and they suggest a high level of deprivation.



Table 3.4

Percentage of households with no electricity and with no access to water within 15 minutes of the home, ranked in ascending order based on lack of access to electricity for all households

Country	Year	Percentage of households with no electricity			Percentage of households that have no water within 15 minutes of the home		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Gabon	2000	26.3	70.1	9.8	25.4	48.1	16.9
Nigeria	2003	47.7	66.0	15.0	43.7	48.6	35.1
Ghana	2003	51.6	75.8	23.1	38.2	53.5	20.2
Cameroon	2004	52.8	84.5	22.9	41.5	52.9	30.8
Senegal	2005	52.8	84.1	19.6	28.1	45.8	9.3
Namibia	2000	63.5	86.7	26.8	21.7	32.3	5.0
Congo (Brazzaville)	2005	66.2	85.1	49.2	45.3	65.6	26.9
Eritrea	2002	67.8	96.9	21.7	68.4	91.8	31.3
Mauritania	2000/01	77.4	96.9	50.1	46.2	52.9	36.8
Benin	2001	77.9	94.3	50.3	36.8	44.4	23.9
Guinea	2005	79.4	96.9	35.5	37.6	44.8	19.5
Madagascar	2003/04	79.6	89.1	47.3	33.3	35.0	27.5
Zambia	2001/02	82.6	97.0	54.9	40.3	50.1	21.6
Kenya	2003	83.9	95.2	49.8	46.8	56.9	16.2
Ethiopia	2005	85.9	98.0	14.3	66.1	73.1	24.5
Ethiopia	2000	87.3	99.6	23.8	73.7	78.8	47.3
Burkina Faso	2004	88.4	99.0	47.5	47.3	51.1	32.7
Tanzania	2004	88.4	98.2	61.0	60.2	70.4	31.9
Mali	2001	88.8	97.3	62.9	29.9	34.4	16.1
Uganda	2000/01	91.2	97.3	56.0	77.5	84.6	37.3
Mozambique	2003	91.8	98.8	74.9	64.3	75.0	38.4
Lesotho	2004	93.0	99.0	73.6	53.9	63.0	24.5
Malawi	2004	93.0	97.6	69.6	58.2	63.3	32.6
Rwanda	2000	93.7	99.0	61.1	74.6	79.9	42.3
Malawi	2000	95.0	98.8	71.2	66.6	71.7	34.6
Rwanda	2005	95.1	98.6	74.7	69.9	73.0	52.1
Chad	2004	96.2	99.5	83.3	55.4	62.7	26.1

Source: MEASURE DHS, STATcompiler (2007) (available from <http://www.measuredhs.com>; accessed on 15 May 2007).

The impact that lack of access to basic household facilities has on youth poverty cannot be overemphasized. Where water is unavailable in the household, young people, especially girls, may be responsible for fetching water not only for their own household, but also for others. Activities such as these detract from self-development and involve risks of exploitation. Access to electricity is essential for participation in an increasingly globalized world. Without it, there is no access to computers, which not only facilitate communication but may also offer distance-learning opportunities for young people.

EDUCATION: DESPITE PROGRESS, THERE IS MUCH YET TO BE DONE

Sub-Saharan Africa has perhaps made the greatest progress in recent years in providing access to education. Efforts towards achieving universal primary education by 2015, as called for in the Millennium Development Goals, have produced a higher number of primary education graduates in sub-Saharan Africa. Enrolment in primary education increased from 57 per cent in 1999 to 70 per cent in 2005 (United Nations, 2007). For a number of countries, household data on educational attainment also show gains over the years. Table 3.5 indicates that while many young people are not enrolled in school, the share of youth who are enrolled has generally increased over time. In Eritrea, for example, there was a 7-percentage-point increase in enrolment between 1995 and 2002. In Madagascar, the corresponding share rose from 14.6 per cent in 1992 to 21.4 per cent in 2003/04, and in Mozambique the percentage enrolled in school nearly doubled between 1997 and 2003. With regard to tertiary education, though progress has been more limited, there is also evidence of improvements in access. Successful tertiary institutions have found ways of improving their financial situation while also boosting the quality of their programmes, though often at the cost of price increases for students (Bollag, 2004).

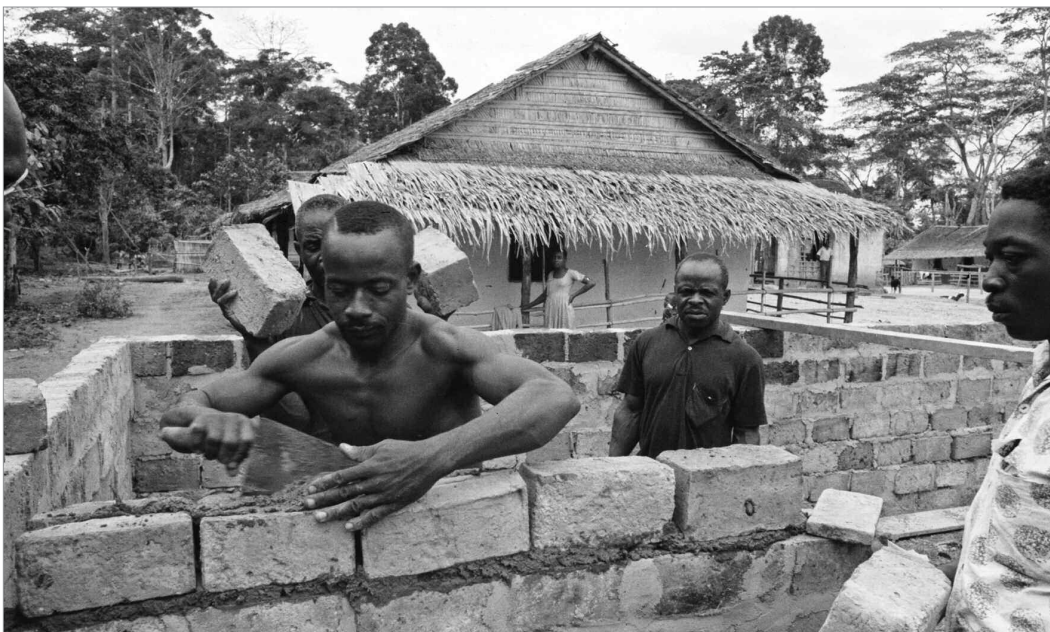


Table 3.5
Percentage of household members aged 16-20 years who are attending school,
by urban/rural residence and sex, selected countries in Africa

Country	Year of survey	Both sexes			Males			Females		
		Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total
Mauritania	2000/01	47.0	20.8	33.4	47.7	29.0	38.6	46.3	13.9	28.7
Mozambique	1997	35.3	15.2	21.1	45.0	27.3	33.4	23.3	6.0	10.3
	2003	54.9	29.3	41.2	61.2	43.5	52.2	47.6	16.0	29.9
Namibia	1992	53.2	64.2	60.9	61.8	69.0	67.1	46.5	59.2	55.1
	2000	50.7	60.4	57.3	53.0	63.1	59.9	48.4	57.6	54.6
Niger	1992	27.3	2.5	7.7	32.8	4.2	11.0	21.7	1.1	5.1
	1998	24.7	1.4	6.9	31.3	2.8	10.4	18.6	0.4	4.3
Nigeria	1990	34.9	24.3	27.2	39.4	31.8	33.9	30.4	16.8	20.5
	1999	49.7	37.2	41.0	58.3	44.7	49.1	41.1	30.9	33.9
	2003	51.3	40.6	44.2	61.7	50.9	54.8	41.1	31.9	34.9
Rwanda	1992	26.2	12.5	13.4	28.0	15.5	16.3	24.5	9.8	10.8
	2000	14.1	4.9	6.7	14.4	7.0	8.3	13.8	3.0	5.2
Senegal	1992/93	27.5	6.3	15.7	34.7	11.2	21.8	20.3	1.6	9.7
South Africa	1998	69.3	73.9	71.4	71.2	77.0	74.0	67.1	70.2	68.5
Tanzania	1992	21.4	17.0	18.1	29.3	23.7	25.1	14.6	10.5	11.6
	1996	23.7	24.3	24.1	31.1	31.1	31.1	17.6	17.8	17.8
	1999	18.7	17.2	17.6	19.8	18.9	19.1	17.8	15.8	16.4
	2004	28.7	20.8	23.0	36.2	29.0	30.9	22.2	13.2	15.8
Togo	1998	50.4	40.4	44.3	65.3	55.0	58.7	37.5	22.9	29.3
Uganda	1995	30.1	24.5	25.4	40.5	38.1	38.5	22.7	12.5	14.3
	2000/01	44.1	40.4	41.1	53.7	53.5	53.5	36.5	28.9	30.4
Zambia	1992	41.6	26.1	34.3	51.5	39.7	45.9	32.0	12.7	22.9
	1996	41.3	25.1	32.6	50.6	35.7	42.4	32.9	14.7	23.3
	2001/02	41.8	33.0	36.5	50.1	46.2	47.7	34.6	18.9	25.5
Zimbabwe	1994	31.9	37.1	35.6	40.9	45.4	44.2	25.0	27.5	26.6
	1999	35.7	39.7	38.3	42.1	47.0	45.4	30.5	31.4	31.0

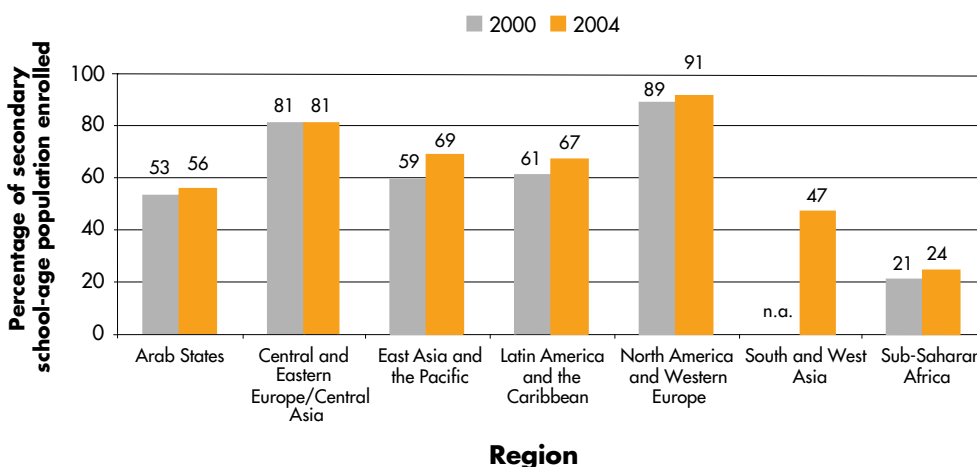
Source: MEASURE DHS, STATcompiler (2007) (available from <http://www.measuredhs.com>; accessed on 28 January (2007).

Despite these achievements, progress in providing education to Africa's youth has been somewhat uneven, and many obstacles remain. During the latter part of the 1970s and into the 1980s, around the time the present generation of youth were set to begin their basic education, government difficulties in meeting the growing educational needs of the population became overwhelming. Although many countries in the region had policies for providing free and compulsory primary schooling, education remained expensive for the average household because of non-tuition costs such as uniforms, books and transportation. As a result, many of Africa's current youth cohorts were unable to complete a basic primary education, which is considered the minimum level required to function in society. Data published by MEASURE DHS indicate that in countries such as Burkina Faso (2003), Mali (2001) and Niger (1998), more than 50 per cent of male youth aged 15-19 years at the time of the respective surveys had not obtained a primary education. Among youth aged 20-24 years, 58 per cent of males in Burkina Faso (2003), 31 per cent in Chad (2004), 33 per cent in Ethiopia (2005), and 59 per cent in Mali (2001) had no education. The data also show that the proportions of female youth without any education are much higher than the corresponding rates for males in many countries.

Rural areas lag behind urban areas with respect to school attendance, though a surprising departure from this pattern is apparent in Kenya, where school attendance seems to be higher in rural areas than in urban areas. Youth in francophone countries are at a particular disadvantage, and gender differentials are wide, with several countries in the region registering virtually no participation of rural girls in school.

Access to post-primary education remains limited in many contexts. In comparison with other world regions, secondary school enrolment rates in sub-Saharan Africa are still very low; figure 3.1 indicates very little change between 2000 and 2004. Young people between the ages of 16 and 20 should ordinarily be enrolled in post-primary education, but table 3.5 shows that in many sub-Saharan African countries the percentage of those not attending school is quite high. This failure to progress to post-primary levels relates to poor rates of completion at lower levels of education, which may derive, in part, from the poor quality of the education system. In Burkina Faso, out of 1,000 pupils entering the sixth year of schooling, only 580 reach the ninth year, and only 373 do so without repeating a grade. In 1995/96, more than 70 per cent of the 14,784 primary school teachers in Burkina Faso were assistant teachers (with no professional qualifications), and 40.7 per cent of teachers had received only basic training (Ilboudo and others, 2001).

Figure 3.1
Secondary school enrolment by world region, 2000 and 2004



Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Teachers and Educational Quality: Monitoring Global Needs for 2015* (Montreal: 2006) (available from <http://www.uis.unesco.org/TEMPLATE/pdf/Teachers2006/TeachersReport.pdf>; accessed on 5 October 2007).

In many ways, the situation with respect to tertiary access has been the most difficult for young people. Many Governments in sub-Saharan Africa were providing tertiary education at fully subsidized rates in the 1970s and 1980s, though access was frequently limited to a select group of privileged youth. By the 1990s it was becoming clear that these investments could not be sustained. As part of the adjustment programmes overseen by international lending institutions, Governments redirected funding from higher to primary education and, to make up for the shortfall, had students assume a share of the costs of their higher studies. These measures often resulted in major strikes and other forms of civil disobedience that, in turn, led to disruptions and the closure of a number of tertiary institutions across the region. In addition, lending for higher education relative to basic education dropped dramatically. In the period 1985-1989, only about 17 per cent of all education lending by the World Bank in the region was directly allocated to higher education, and this figure dropped to 7 per cent between 1995 and 1999. In contrast, for primary education, the corresponding shares for these periods were 29 and 49 per cent respectively (Bollag, 2004).

A reflection of the problems in financing quality tertiary education programmes is that tertiary graduation rates, though mixed, are relatively low throughout much of the region. Young people's prospects of entering tertiary education and remaining enrolled for a substantial period of time have not improved significantly since the early 1990s and remain remote. The lowest ratios (less than 1 per cent) are in countries such as Burundi, Chad, Madagascar, Mozambique, Niger and Tanzania, and the highest are in Mauritius, South Africa and Togo (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Institute for Statistics, 2006).

In addition to formal education, non-formal education is also important for the development of a young person's capabilities as an individual and as a responsible member of society. Non-formal education is at the heart of what many youth organizations have been doing for years. Youth organizations such as the World Scout Movement and the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) aim to educate young people through a non-formal system whose approach is to develop the body, mind and spirit. Many youth organizations offer volunteering programmes, peer education initiatives and community development programmes for women. These "learning by doing" approaches to education can not only help young people into work but at the same time help youth develop their leadership capacities, their life skills and draw them into civil engagement. The skills young people acquire from non-formal education can be used throughout their lives.

It is clear that to achieve the correct skill mix for poverty reduction and economic growth, all levels of education and training need to be supported so as to bring about the kinds of expected developmental outcomes associated with education (Palmer, 2006). The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2007) notes that to ensure equity and prevent exclusion, a high share of private funding at the tertiary level can potentially be offset by government subsidies in the form of student grants or loans. Inadequate public investment in tertiary education means that spaces available for the region's large youth cohorts will remain limited, and only those who can afford to enter the fast-growing private tertiary education institutions will have access to higher education. Without renewed attention to ensuring that tertiary education receives the attention it deserves in African countries, youth will continue to seek opportunities abroad, and the promise of better salaries and work opportunities outside their countries of origin may keep many from returning to contribute to their countries' development.

Difficulties in educational access for young women

As noted above, gender inequalities in access to schooling persist in sub-Saharan Africa. Though the gender gap has been reduced at lower levels of education, it remains prevalent at the tertiary level. Those young women who are pursuing tertiary studies are less likely to graduate with degrees in science or mathematics, which are especially relevant in today's global economy. Female youth do not even prevail in those areas traditionally dominated by women in other parts of the world; in sub-Saharan Africa (and in some East and South Asian countries), men dominate in health, welfare and education studies as well as in the traditionally male-dominated fields of specialization. Few women graduate with degrees in engineering, manufacturing, construction, science or agriculture (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Institute for Statistics, 2006).

Social and cultural factors probably account for the relative absence of young women from many fields of study. Young women tend to have little say in the career they pursue and may be directed towards fields of study that are considered appropriate for females. Data from many countries in the region suggest that women have limited decision-making power over even the most routine activities (see table 3.6). In most of the countries shown in the table, young women do not make independent or joint decisions on issues relating

to their health care, daily purchases, or visits to friends or family. It is possible that young women are similarly limited in their educational pursuits by societal expectations that they marry and raise a family. Whatever the cause, exclusion from the full benefits of a relevant education implies that young women in Africa are more likely than young men to face a difficult transition to the workplace and independent adulthood. This situation may further reinforce the existing tendency for young women to be excluded from decision-making.

Table 3.6
Distribution of young women with regard to their decision-making roles in households: selected countries in Africa

		Young women's participation in decision-making, by age group									
		Percentage who say they have independent or joint final say in specific decisions									
Country	Year of survey	Own health care	Making large purchases	Making daily purchases	Visits to relatives or friends	What food to cook daily	Own health care	Making large purchases	Making daily purchases	Visits to relatives or friends	What food to cook daily
		Young women aged 15-19 years					Young women aged 20-24 years				
Benin	2001	5.8	5.3	11.4	18.0	19.0	23.1	21.9	45.3	41.0	56.5
Burkina Faso	2003	7.7	7.9	11.9	16.5	24.2	16.9	18.0	29.7	28.1	56.7
Cameroon	2004	8.9	6.7	10.5	16.9	26.8	28.2	24.2	35.2	42.0	58.3
Eritrea	2002	68.3	19.6	25.4	28.8	41.6	86.9	46.5	54.6	61.2	70.7
Ghana	2003	18.1	8.8	9.4	11.5	13.1	44.7	32.8	38.4	41.4	42.3
Kenya	2003	20.8	5.5	8.5	15.7	17.3	47.2	20.1	36.1	44.3	59.3
Madagascar	2003/04	33.5	30.5	34.5	34.3	40.2	65.7	61.9	69.6	67.0	73.3
Malawi	2000	21.4	8.3	13.7	34.4	23.3	29.6	18.7	30.9	60.8	49.1
Mali	2001	9.9	9.9	12.8	19.9	26.6	12.0	13.2	19.3	26.4	47.5
Mozambique	2003	37.7	15.2	24.4	31.8	38.1	59.5	33.4	50.3	56.2	71.5
Nigeria	2003	9.7	6.3	8.3	16.1	15.5	19.7	13.3	21.0	27.1	31.2
Rwanda	2000	18.8	11.0	11.9	26.4	20.0	40.9	33.2	37.0	53.1	56.9
Tanzania	2004	32.5	10.0	14.1	21.1	23.5	52.5	27.3	37.0	42.9	62.6
Uganda	2000/01	24.9	8.4	10.7	20.3	30.4	56.6	27.5	33.9	48.2	76.8
Zambia	2001/02	26.8	11.6	..	23.2	..	41.6	28.7	..	39.8	..

Source: Demographic and Health Surveys ORC Macro, 2007.

Note: Two dots (..) indicate that data are not available or are not separately reported.

Poverty is foremost among the reasons for poor educational attainment among youth, especially young women. Table 3.7 shows that in Cameroon, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, more than 40 per cent of today's young women did not complete primary school because they were unable to pay education costs or needed to contribute to the household income. Financial reasons also figured largely in secondary school dropout rates. Interestingly, in many of the countries featured in table 3.7, pregnancy or mar-

riage, though important factors, were cited less often than financial insufficiency as the primary reason for leaving school. In reality, the two reasons are probably interrelated; some of the young women who marry at an early age may see it as an opportunity to “escape” from poverty.

Table 3.7

Percentage of young women aged 15-24 years who did not complete primary or secondary school because of marriage, pregnancy or the inability to pay, selected countries in Africa

		Level of education not completed and reason			
		Primary		Secondary	
Country	Year of survey	Could not pay or needed to earn money	Married or became pregnant	Could not pay or needed to earn money	Married or became pregnant
Benin	1996	16.0	1.5	6.9	19.0
Burkina Faso	1998/99	20.0	1.7	18.0	37.0
Cameroon	1998	46.7	14.9	28.0	46.0
Central African Republic	1994/95	21.2	8.5	40.4	18.2
Chad	1996/97	13.4	23.4	71.0	10.2
Comoros	1996	12.1	9.2	31.3	7.6
Côte d'Ivoire	1998/99	26.1	0.6	14.2	30.6
Eritrea	1995	12.3	48.5	38.1	11.3
Gabon	2000	22.9	33.3	28.5	38.8
Guinea	1999	11.9	8.6	30.0	8.3
Kenya	1998	48.6	22.7	39.2	49.0
Madagascar	1997	26.2	6.7	19.0	29.0
Mali	1995/96	5.7	8.4	38.0	5.0
Mauritania	2000/01	6.1	15.1	25.3	3.5
Mozambique	1997	26.0	24.9	36.3	28.4
Niger	1998	2.2	4.2	13.7	3.3
Nigeria	1999	33.9	31.8	32.3	34.7
South Africa	1998	32.3	34.8	43.2	22.3
Tanzania	1996	15.0	19.0	16.2	14.7
Togo	1998	26.1	7.1	16.7	27.9
Uganda	1995	75.7	9.3	33.8	59.4
Zambia	1996	44.7	9.9	29.3	16.3
Zimbabwe	1994	64.0	10.6	14.5	50.6

Source: MEASURE DHS, STATcompiler (2007) (available from <http://www.measuredhs.com>; accessed on 28 January 2007).

Without an adequate education, youth face a difficult transition to adulthood and independence, as they are likely to experience unemployment, poverty and social exclusion. The exclusion of young people from the education system, and consequently from other opportunities later in life, is likely to persist unless policies are adopted and implemented to ameliorate the situation. The limited opportunities for youth in Africa to obtain a relevant, high-quality education leave many with no choice but to migrate. Tertiary students from sub-Saharan Africa are the most mobile in the world; the region's outbound mobility ratio of 5.9 per cent is the highest in the world and almost three times the global average. UNESCO defines the outbound mobility ratio as the share of all tertiary students in a country or region that are studying or are likely to study abroad. Statistics indicate that one in every 16 students in sub-Saharan Africa are studying abroad (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Institute for Statistics, 2006).

While the outward flow of students contributes to the shortage of well-trained and skilled labour within the region, there are positive repercussions as well. Migration trends, which often begin with student mobility, are associated with the large-scale transfer of resources through remittances. Youth who migrate in search of an education and stay to work in their host countries often become contacts or financiers for others back home who have few opportunities. Although there are no estimates of the proportion of remittances sent by youth, there are data indicating that young male migrants who are married are likely to send money regularly. Young female migrants also tend to contribute regularly to their families, particularly if their children are left behind (United Nations Population Fund, 2006).

EMPLOYMENT: POOR EDUCATION AND LIMITED JOBS UNDERLIE YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Young people in Africa begin to do various forms of work and become skilled in domestic and income-generating activities at a very early age. Girls, in particular, often become adept at managing household duties and are able to assist their families with activities related to trade and various activities in the informal economy. The labour force participation rate in sub-Saharan Africa, estimated at 74 per cent in 2006, is one of the highest in the world; at the country level, the highest estimate in 2006 was 90.9 per cent for Burundi, which implies that hardly anyone of working age, male or female, was not participating in the economy (International Labour Office, 2007). It is important to note that large numbers of young people are seeking work because they are unable to continue their education for financial or other reasons. Many people in Africa, especially youth, remain unemployed or underemployed. The household and other skills acquired by young people at an early age are generally inadequate to prepare them for work in the modern economy or, more generally, for effective participation in a globalized world.

Because of limited vacancies in the job market, unemployment among youth in the region was a very high 19.5 per cent in 2005. Between 1995 and 2005, the number of unemployed youth in Africa rose by about 34 per cent. The youth to adult unemployment ratio of 3.0 in table 3.8 indicates that young people in the region are three times more likely than adults aged 25 years and above to be unemployed. Of even greater concern is that 27 per cent of youth are neither in school nor at work (International Labour Office, 2006), a situation that can lead to frustration, delinquency and social exclusion. As the fastest

growing labour force in the world, sub-Saharan Africa's young labour market participants will be increasingly difficult to accommodate in the future (Economic Commission for Africa, 2005).

Table 3.8
Indicators of youth participation in the labour force: sub-Saharan Africa

Indicator	1995	2005	Percentage change
Size of the youth labour force (thousands)	74 077	96 153	29.8
Youth share of total working-age population (percentage)	35.7	36.9	3.4
Number of employed youth (thousands)	61 105	78 739	28.9
Number of unemployed youth (thousands)	12 972	17 414	34.2
Youth labour force participation rate			
Males	76.1	73.7	-3.2
Females	60.2	57.3	-4.8
Total	68.2	65.5	-4.0
Employment to population ratio	56.2	53.7	-4.4
Ratio of youth to adult unemployment	3.3	3.0	-9.1

Source: Compiled from International Labour Office, *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2006* (Geneva: International Labour Organization, August 2006).

For the region as a whole, youth unemployment is much higher in urban areas than in rural areas. In Africa, as in other regions, unemployed rural youth often assume that work opportunities are better in big cities, and many flock to urban areas where their qualifications and experience may be inadequate to meet labour market needs. Under such circumstances, youth are more likely to accept harsh or exploitative working conditions, and many remain unemployed. An important consequence of unemployment in Africa, for adults and youth alike, is that those without work often do not receive any form of formal social security allowance or insurance. This means that being unemployed often leads to absolute poverty.

There are important gender dimensions of the labour market situation for youth in Africa. Table 3.8 shows that while labour force participation rates for females were lower than those for males in both 1995 and 2005, more than one half of the young women in the region wished to work. The 2005 labour force participation rate among young women in sub-Saharan Africa, at 57 per cent, was second only to that of East Asia, where the corresponding rate was 68 per cent. These labour force statistics underestimate female participation, as large numbers of young women work in the home but are not accounted for in national accounts because they do not earn an income.

Various factors contribute to the employment difficulties of youth in Africa, including the region's sluggish economic growth and the consequent lack of progress in job creation. However, there is also an apparent preference among employers for adult workers, who have more work experience than youth. According to the International Labour Office, this preference reflects the failure to acknowledge that, "whereas young people do lack job

skills and experience, they can often compensate for this with enhanced motivation and a potential for offering new ideas and insights" (2007, p. 10). Other factors that limit youth access to work include inadequate or irrelevant educational experience and limited work and career development experience during their school years. Unemployment may also be aggravated by young people's preference for certain types of jobs, especially office-based white collar work.

It has been argued that the most important reason behind the youth unemployment crisis in Africa is slow economic growth and the decline in formal sector employment. Any strategy to combat youth unemployment must include provisions for boosting labour demand on a sustainable basis through economic policies that improve the conditions for enterprises to do business and hire people. Where few decent jobs are available, young people are often compelled to accept work in which conditions are poor, hours are long, wages are low, and there are no expectations of job security, legal protection or social benefits (Kanyenze, Mhone and Sparreboom, 2000). In 2005, youth accounted for 65 per cent of the agricultural labour force. In this sector, there are few opportunities to earn a decent wage or acquire useful work experience (International Labour Office, 2007). Although agricultural workers are technically employed, many experience poverty. Sub-Saharan Africa is the only region that has registered a sharp increase in the total number of young working poor (those subsisting on less than US\$ 1 per day); between 1995 and 2005, the number of such individuals rose from 36 million to 45 million (International Labour Office, 2006). The poor conditions associated with employment in agriculture have fuelled an increase in rural-urban migration.

There is a tendency at the policy level to assume that the main cause of unemployment among youth in Africa is the absence of artisanal and vocational skills. Interventions to promote youth employment in Africa must be based on a careful assessment of job opportunities and skill requirements. The continuous expansion of training and supply in such areas as carpentry, auto mechanics and bricklaying can lead to unemployment because of market saturation. These skills, especially at the rudimentary levels, are becoming increasingly irrelevant in a fast-changing, technology-driven world. It is imperative that training programmes do not produce large numbers of young people with qualifications for sectors that offer few opportunities for decent work (Kanyenze, Mhone and Sparreboom, 2000).

HEALTH: VARIOUS DISEASES, INCLUDING HIV/AIDS, CONSTRAIN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Young people in sub-Saharan Africa face serious health concerns relating both to infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria and to non-communicable conditions such as injuries, mental illness and environmental risks. Large numbers of the current cohort of 15- to 24-year-olds in Africa have likely experienced malnutrition and/or were exposed to diseases such as pneumonia, malaria, diarrhoea or measles as children (Keith and Shackleton, 2006). According to health surveys for the period 1988-1999, between 30 and 40 per cent of the children in sub-Saharan Africa experienced stunting due to chronic undernutrition (World Health Organization, 2006). Without proactive health care, many of the children and youth in sub-Saharan Africa today will be susceptible to reduced longevity, lower educational achievement, weakened immune systems and, ultimately, the replication of these conditions in the next generation.

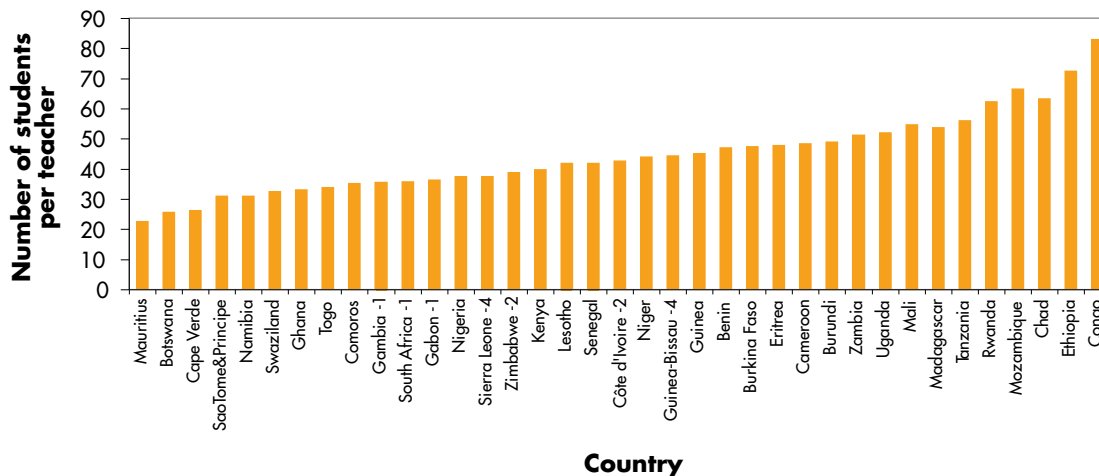
Although prevalence rates appear to have levelled off in many parts of the region, the number of new cases of HIV in Africa (especially among women) and the number of people with advanced HIV infection continue to grow and are rising faster than treatment services are being scaled up (United Nations, 2007). The region has historically had the world's highest incidence and prevalence rates. The AIDS Epidemic Update published in December 2006 indicates that almost two thirds of those living with HIV in the world today reside in sub-Saharan Africa (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and World Health Organization, 2006). Furthermore, the region's 2.1 million AIDS-related deaths represent 72 per cent of global deaths within this context. There is evidence that the epidemic may be slowing down in some parts of the region. In most countries, the situation has stabilized, with the number of new infections roughly equivalent to the number of deaths.

Data on the prevalence of HIV among youth aged 15-24 are limited and often come from samples of young women attending antenatal clinics. Survey data from other sources, however, provide a sense of the vulnerability of young people to HIV and AIDS within the region. According to these data, HIV prevalence among young people aged 15-24 years varies widely by sex. Surveys conducted in Burkina Faso (2003), Cameroon (2004), Ghana (2003), Kenya (2003), Mali (2001), Uganda (2004/05), and Zambia (2001/02) suggest the HIV prevalence rate for young women is at least twice as that for young men.

Young sex workers, the majority of whom are female, are at high risk of HIV infection. The results of studies undertaken in major urban areas of sub-Saharan Africa indicate that rates of HIV infection among female sex workers are as high as 73 per cent in Ethiopia, 68 per cent in Zambia, 50 per cent in Ghana and South Africa, and 40 per cent in Benin (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and World Health Organization, 2006). Many sex workers lack information about HIV and about services that might help protect them. A study carried out along major transport routes in Africa found that the average age of sex workers was 22.8 years, and the average level of educational attainment was upper primary school. Only 33 per cent knew that they were at risk if they had unprotected sex (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and World Health Organization, 2006). These data underscore the need to work with specific vulnerable groups on HIV prevention using a combination of strategies (Ross, Dick and Ferguson, 2006). At present, for example, the majority of HIV interventions in this area are aimed at the sex workers themselves, with insufficient attention paid to their clients or the contexts in which they work.

HIV and AIDS have also had a major impact on other age groups, with repercussions for youth. High rates of morbidity and mortality within the workforce have seriously affected the availability of qualified teachers, particularly in those countries most affected by the epidemic. Pupil-teacher ratios are already high in many countries (see figure 3.2). The continued loss of large numbers of teachers is likely to exacerbate this situation, gradually reducing the quality of education young people receive in the region.

Figure 3.2
Pupil-teacher ratios for primary school in sub-Saharan African countries, 2005



Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Institute for Statistics (data accessed from www.uis.unesco.org on October 5 2007).

Notes: -1 Data refer to 2004. -2 Data refers to 2003. -4 Data refer to 2001.

The severity of HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa is apparent in the high prevalence of orphanhood (mother and/or father deceased) among children under the age of 15. Recent survey data (MEASURE DHS, 2007) reveal that at least 11 per cent of children have been orphaned in Kenya (2003), Malawi (2000), Namibia (2000), Uganda (2000/01 and 2004/05), and Zambia (2001/02). In Rwanda, 26.5 per cent of those under 15 years of age are orphaned; this figure reflects the consequences of both the HIV/AIDS epidemic and the genocide that occurred in the country in the 1990s. Virtually all of the orphaned children in sub-Saharan Africa will be poorly positioned to make the transition to youth and later to adulthood.

The prospects for alleviating the epidemic's burden on youth are uncertain. Research undertaken during the period 2000-2005 indicated positive trends in young people's sexual behaviour (increased use of condoms, delayed first sexual experience, and fewer sexual partners) in 8 of 11 high-prevalence countries, including Botswana, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. However, for responses to keep pace with the epidemic, life-saving prevention efforts and HIV treatment programmes need to be intensified. In the 2006 five-year assessment of progress towards achieving the goals of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, not even one country was able to report that it had reached the target of ensuring that 90 per cent of youth aged 15-24 years were able to correctly identify ways of preventing HIV transmission and rejected major misconceptions about HIV transmission (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and World Health Organization, 2006).

Other causes of illness, disability and death

While HIV/AIDS has been devastating to Africa's youth, there are other causes for concern as well. Some of the leading causes of death for those aged 15-29 years in the region are tuberculosis, violence, lower respiratory infections, road traffic accidents, war, unsafe abortion and malaria (World Health Organization, 2006). There are an estimated 2.4 million new tuberculosis cases in Africa every year, and the incidence of this disease has increased in tandem with the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The World Health Organization notes that tuberculosis is increasingly occurring in younger, economically productive members of society, especially girls and women, closely resembling the trend in HIV prevalence. Africa also accounts for over 90 per cent of an estimated 300 million to 500 million clinical cases of malaria that occur in the world every year (World Health Organization, 2006).

Injury, especially that resulting from motor vehicle accidents, is a leading cause of death and disability in sub-Saharan Africa for those under 29 years of age. Road traffic deaths are 40 per cent higher in the countries of this region than in all other low- and middle-income countries. A study in Kenya showed that more than 75 per cent of road traffic casualties were economically active young adults, and that those most at risk of death were pedestrians and users of motorized two-wheelers. Alcohol is an important factor in causing crashes. A study in South Africa found that around 29 per cent of non-fatally injured drivers and over 47 per cent of fatally injured drivers had been drinking (World Health Organization, 2006). As the numbers of vehicles on the roads increase, more and more young people in Africa will be at greater risk of road traffic injury and death.

A growing threat to youth transitions in sub-Saharan Africa is the increase in the drug trade. In the *World Drug Report 2007*, published by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, it was found that drug traffickers were increasingly exploiting Africa as a transit point for drugs trafficked into Europe. Trafficking has greatly increased the availability of illegal drugs, and there are troubling signs pointing to the emergence of new markets for narcotics in a number of countries throughout Africa. Significant increases were reported in the use of cannabis, cocaine, heroin and various amphetamine-type stimulants. Among the youth population, cannabis was reported as the most widely used illicit drug, followed by amphetamine-type stimulants such as Ecstasy. Widespread unemployment and underemployment in the region make youth a prime target for traffickers. Apart from the threats to health posed by the use of these substances, the increased abuse of these drugs by youth, particularly in rapidly expanding urban areas, has raised concern over the links between drug abuse and criminal behaviour (United Nations, 2000). To prevent youth from turning to drugs, economic and healthy leisure opportunities must be provided.

ARMED CONFLICT: LINGERING EFFECTS ON YOUTH POVERTY AND WELFARE

Sub-Saharan Africa has been the site of numerous armed conflicts in which young people have been both victims and perpetrators of violence. It has been noted that the period 1990-2000 alone saw 19 major armed conflicts in Africa, ranging from civil wars to the 1998-2000 war between Eritrea and Ethiopia. Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique all experienced chaotic transitions from colonial rule (Addison, 2003).

Box 3.1

WHY DO THEY CHOOSE TO FIGHT?

While there is widespread condemnation of children fighting in conflict zones, a recent study by the International Labour Organization (ILO) found that two thirds of child soldiers served under their own initiative in armed forces. One reason for this is because older youths are more reactive to political ideologies, and are more likely to join armed groups. One former young combatant and current Ugandan activist, Okwir Rabwni, said "I joined as a volunteer. I had been exposed to politics and I was ready to join the struggle when I was 15. This is common in Africa. ... Young people are politically idealistic and ambitious, and attracted to quick solutions to their problems." Unrest in the Horn of Africa and State of Somalia has seen youths fighting on both sides of the conflict: the Ethiopian-backed Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC). Libya, Eritrea and Egypt have been used as training grounds for these young soldiers, who have been implicated in a number of assassinations and attacks against foreigners in Somalia, according to the International Crisis Group. The breakdown of normal social structures prevents young people from making the natural transition to adulthood with its accompanying identities. In times of conflict and poverty, young people are attracted to the military as it offers them an identity they are otherwise deprived of. Caught between childhood and adulthood, youths can be drawn into armed groups as it gives them a fast-track to adulthood. Adolescence and youth are a critical stage in a person's development. It is a time of rapid transformation which can see young people taking risks as they try on their new roles and responsibilities. This period is intensified during times of conflict when the social norms and means of support are removed, stopping young people from making a normal evolution to becoming an adult.

Source: Excerpt from Integrated Regional Information Networks, *IRIN In-Depth—Youth in Crisis: Coming of Age in the 21st Century* (special series, February 2007) (available from <http://newsite.irinnews.org/pdf/in-depth/Youth-in-crisis-IRIN-In-Depth.pdf>; accessed on 13 May 2007).

Children and youth are increasingly participating in armed conflicts as active soldiers. Various reasons account for their involvement (see box 3.1). Some are being forcibly recruited, coerced and induced to become combatants and are often manipulated by adults (United Nations, 1996). Many young people who engage in armed conflict do so because of poverty. In one study, crippling poverty and hopelessness were unanimously identified as key motivators for the 60 combatants interviewed (Human Rights Watch, 2005). Research has indicated that drug use is associated with crime and violence, and it has been alleged that cannabis is being produced to finance armed rebellions in West Africa. Many young people in urban areas are being recruited to sell these drugs in the cities (Wannenburg, 2005). Factors such as these make youth living in poverty especially vulnerable to the combined effects of illicit drug use and armed conflict.

It is becoming increasingly recognized that non-economic aspects of poverty, such as the absence or inadequacy of essential services, the lack of livelihood and educational opportunities, and the non-participation of youth in decision- and policy-making, are conditions that promote the involvement of young people in conflict. Quite often, these conditions are worse during and after conflicts, as there is a further breakdown in family, community and State mechanisms that would ordinarily be in place to protect and support young people (McIntyre, 2003). Conflict prevents children from obtaining a decent education and learning useful skills; lacking any real social capital, many feel excluded from mainstream society and seek to become part of an armed militia, where they feel accepted (Integrated Regional Information Networks, 2007).

There are direct and indirect health consequences associated with conflict, including the displacement of populations, the breakdown of health and social services, and the heightened risk of disease transmission. Young people are often among the victims of the violence and brutality that occurs in periods of conflict (see box 3.1). Even in countries that have not experienced armed conflict, there is a heavy toll from firearms injuries and other types of interpersonal violence that can lead to physical disability (World Health Organization, 2006).

Whatever the cause, conflict causes heavy losses in resources, deepening poverty. It is estimated that in Rwanda, owing to the genocide of 1994, the proportion of households below the poverty line rose from 53 per cent in 1993 to 70 per cent in 1997 (International Monetary Fund and World Bank, 1999). Combined with poverty, conflict deepens the alienation of young people from society and hampers their ability to participate fully in development even after the conflict is over. In a culture where youth often have no voice, and no opportunities to develop themselves, recruitment of young people into militias has been easy, especially when it comes with the promise or prospects of some meagre remuneration or power.

OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGES: YOUTH, GOVERNMENTS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS RESPOND WITH NEW DETERMINATION

After decades of major youth development challenges in sub-Saharan Africa, the tide has begun to turn. Governments are increasingly recognizing the importance of building youth capacities so that young people can contribute meaningfully to national development. More and more, young people are being viewed as having a major role to play, and Governments, in conjunction with youth-led organizations and other civil society institutions, are beginning to devise and implement new sets of youth development policies and strategies that, unlike those of the mid-twentieth century, reflect the perspectives and collaboration of adults and young people. Regional development and cooperation initiatives also include emphasis on youth development goals. Young people in sub-Saharan Africa are becoming increasingly involved in voluntary activities that promote the development of their own potential and that of their communities. Opportunities such as these give youth the chance to gain labour market skills while also contributing to national and community development.

At the regional level, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), with its vision of eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable growth and development on the continent, recognizes the key role that young people should play in socio-economic development and the promotion of peace and security (New Partnership for Africa's Development, 2004). Adopted as the economic programme of the African Union, NEPAD has become a tool for achieving good governance and a criterion for assessing the performance of African Governments within this context. NEPAD provides an advisor and a "youth desk" that offer direct entry points for young Africans wishing to participate in the new development framework for Africa. Young people are contributing to the peer review mechanism process designed to strengthen the implementation of NEPAD; the African Youth Parliament is working to ensure that youth are meaningfully involved in this process.

The African Union recognizes that “Africa’s future cannot be mapped out, and the African Union’s mission fulfilled, without effectively addressing youth development, empowerment and the preparation of young people for leadership and the fulfilment of their potential” (African Union, 2006). In July 2006, the Heads of Member States of the African Union adopted the African Youth Charter as a framework for Governments to create supportive policies and programmes for youth (see box 3.2).

Box 3.2

THE AFRICAN YOUTH CHARTER: A REGIONAL COMMITMENT TO YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING

Adopted in July 2006, the African Youth Charter provides a platform for youth to assert their rights and execute their responsibility to contribute to the development of the continent (African Union, 2006).

The Charter notes that “every young person shall have the right to participate in all spheres of society” and proposes the following measures to promote active youth participation in society:

- a. Guarantee the participation of youth in parliament and other decision-making bodies in accordance with the prescribed laws;
- b. Facilitate the creation or strengthening of platforms for youth participation in decision-making at local, national, regional, and continental levels of governance;
- c. Ensure equal access to young men and young women to participate in decision-making and in fulfilling civic duties;
- d. Give priority to policies and programmes including youth advocacy and peer-to-peer programmes for marginalised youth, such as out-of-school and out-of-work youth, to offer them the opportunity and motivation to re-integrate into mainstream society;
- e. Provide access to information such that young people become aware of their rights and of opportunities to participate in decision-making and civic life;
- f. Institute measures to professionalize youth work and introduce relevant training programmes in higher education and other such training institutions;
- g. Provide technical and financial support to build the institutional capacity of youth organisations;
- h. Institute policy and programmes of youth voluntarism at local, national, regional and international levels as an important form of youth participation and as a means of peer-to-peer training;
- i. Provide access to information and services that will empower youth to become aware of their rights and responsibilities;
- j. Include youth representatives as part of delegations to ordinary sessions and other relevant meetings to broaden channels of communication and enhance the discussion of youth-related issues.

The creation of the West African Youth Network (WAYN), a subregional youth network established in 2001 with membership in 12 West African countries, was an initiative developed in direct response to the rise in violent conflicts in West Africa. The network aims to serve as an umbrella group for youth organizations in West Africa to ensure participation of young people in local and regional decision-making bodies. The Network also provides technical support to youth organizations to empower them to address regional issues and become involved in efforts geared towards peace-building, the recognition and assertion of human rights, conflict resolution, promoting good governance, and HIV/AIDS prevention. The Network has proved effective in implementing several regional projects for young people, including the Mano River Union Youth Peace Initiative (West African Youth Network, 2005).

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Youth Movement, an extensive network for youth development encompassing the 14 SADC member countries, has been particularly effective in developing strategic partnerships with institutions and organizations working on similar objectives in the region. Both the WAYN and the SADC Youth Movement are working to create effective, youth-driven platforms from which greater participation in subregional and regional processes can take shape. In particular, these two regional youth networks and many other youth organizations are emphasizing the fact that democracy, human rights and good governance should be cornerstones of African strategies and programmes such as NEPAD.

Various activities are also taking place at the country level in recognition of the importance of youth contributions to development. National youth organizations are active across the continent, and young people are pushing the boundaries to be included in national and global decision-making. The National Association of Youth Organizations in Uganda (NAYOU) was established in 1999 and consists of 43 member organizations and a network connecting approximately 11,300 youth throughout the country. The main focus of NAYOU is to develop a strong and democratic youth institution that will link youth organizations throughout the country to leverage the sharing of information and skills. It also seeks to promote democracy and human rights and to contribute to poverty eradication.

Among the most significant developments in the region is the emergence of volunteerism as a way to overcome the barriers imposed by shrinking options in the labour market, but also as an option for youth who seek to help develop their communities. Youth volunteering for development is a strategy for engaging young men and women in a range of activities that can improve their participation and positively direct their energy, vigour and innovation towards the realization of national and global development goals. In this connection, the 2006 African Youth Charter makes a regional commitment to the development of policies and programmes for youth volunteerism at the local, national, regional and international levels through its provisions for developing an Africa Youth Corps as a component of the African Union Volunteers (AUV) programme established by the AU Executive Council Decision on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Youth Ambassadors for Peace, a subregional volunteer programme started in Guinea Bissau, Togo, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, is responding to some of these needs. The programme is part of the larger Peace and Development Programme (PADEP) of ECOWAS, which seeks to develop and consolidate peace-building in West Africa. The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is supporting the development of ECOWAS capacity to manage and sustain the Youth Ambassadors programme, which is aimed at strengthening the capacity of non-governmental organizations working in conflict prevention and peace-building in participating countries, as well as providing valuable professional experience for youth in the region.

The nurturing climate provided by the African Union and ECOWAS for volunteerism is also evident in a number of country-level initiatives. Increasingly, Governments in Africa are promoting youth participation in development by creating an enabling environment for youth volunteering and by establishing structured volunteer programmes. Examples of these initiatives include the Scout Volunteers against HIV/AIDS programme in Benin (see box 3.3); the Volunteers for Development programme in Burkina Faso (see box 3.4); *Férias Desenvolvendo o Distrito*, a volunteer-based initiative set up in Mozambique to attract youth into districts (see box 3.5); the Youth Engagement and Job Creation through Agriculture programme in Sierra Leone (see box 3.6); and the Partnership for Community-based Volunteering programme in Tanzania (see box 3.7).

Box 3.3

BENIN: SCOUT VOLUNTEERS AGAINST HIV/AIDS

The Ministry of Youth, Sports and Leisure of Benin has come up with an original and effective idea to help address the HIV/AIDS pandemic. It is tapping into an available pool of human resources through the Scout movement, an organization with the spirit of volunteering at its core.

The programme focuses on building the skills of Scout leaders and young Scouts in planning and organizing education and sensitization sessions on HIV/AIDS, using radio programmes, workshops, meetings, and consultations for advocacy on HIV/AIDS. Trained Scout leaders now constitute a permanent pool of resource people in communication and training for youth against HIV/AIDS and can begin to spread the word to their Scouts, who in turn can sensitize other youth.

The programme aims at:

- Sensitizing thousands of young people to the danger of HIV/AIDS and how to prevent it;
- Making local Scout structures a potential reference point in the HIV/AIDS eradication process;
- Making every Scout an HIV/AIDS fighter.

The programme is implemented by the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Leisure in partnership with the Ministry of Health, through the National Programme Against AIDS, and is supported by UNDP and UNV. The programme is making inroads into mobilizing youth volunteering through scouting and contributing to reducing stigmatization among HIV/AIDS victims.

Box 3.4

BURKINA FASO: VOLUNTEERS FOR DEVELOPMENT

How does a country get its youth to take voluntary action for development when the tradition of volunteering itself needs to be revitalized? This is a challenge that the Government of Burkina Faso is addressing in its efforts to eradicate poverty and improve governance.

In 2006, a programme was launched aimed at enabling young Burkinabe to become Volunteers for Development. During the first year, the following steps were taken to establish a legal and operational volunteer infrastructure:

- Legislation on national volunteering was drafted and is now being considered by Parliament;
- An independent committee (*Groupement d'Intérêt Public*) was set up to facilitate an innovative partnership between counterpart ministries, civil society organizations, the private sector and other stakeholders, for which proposed by-laws and a list of members were prepared;
- A country-level coordination mechanism was established for the National Volunteer Programme, which is to be integrated in the Ministry of Youth and Employment;
- A regional volunteer centre was set up in each of six pilot regions selected through a call for proposals from civil society organizations. They will promote volunteering and will support the "Volunteers for Development" who join the programme;
- The operational procedures and management tools were defined for the National Volunteer Programme.

The first wave of National Volunteer Corps activity will begin in 2008 with the assignment of 100 Volunteers for Development to institutions working in priority sectors such as health, education, environment, economic development, and local community capacity-building. Each volunteer will enter into a tripartite contract signed by the volunteer, the host institution and the National Volunteer Programme and will serve for a period of 12 to 24 months. The contract is intended to ensure adequate training, integration and monitoring of the volunteers.

The lessons learned from the first wave will shape the further development of the programme. The spirit of volunteerism is already being widely promoted through campaigns. An annual National Volunteer Day has been designated, volunteers are being given media exposure, and a logo and a website about volunteering have been created. This initiative will provide young people in Burkina Faso one channel among others through which they can contribute to the achievement of national development goals.

Box 3.5

MOZAMBIQUE: ATTRACTING YOUTH INTO DISTRICTS

One of the key development issues for Mozambique is the need for skilled people to live and work in rural areas. Like young people in many countries, the skilled youth in Mozambique are attracted to the towns and cities, where they hope to find interesting jobs and a comfortable lifestyle.

Through an initiative called *Férias Desenvolvendo o Distrito* (meaning “youth developing districts”), the National Youth Council and the University Students’ Association have devised a means of addressing this issue. Supported by the Ministry of Youth and Sports and various United Nations agencies, they are using volunteering as a means of building up the skills of graduates while opening up possible alternative employment paths for them. Graduate students have the opportunity to volunteer at district offices (where working conditions are normally deemed not to be good) through volunteer vacation programmes. The initiative helps the Government of Mozambique fill posts that have been vacant and works to improve the level of service provision for development at the district level.

The programme began in 2006 with the placement of 200 undergraduate and postgraduate students from all public universities in Maputo in 18 district offices that deal with issues such as agriculture, education, health, social action, fishing, public administration, decentralized planning, environment and justice. Before their placement, the volunteers were trained in community-based participation and public administration. The programme was repeated in 2007 and included participants from all over the country.

This programme has been successful in at least three ways: it has ensured that skills are brought to offices that are otherwise under-resourced; it has taken some steps towards addressing the major problem of youth unemployment in Mozambique by giving young people skills and practical experience and opening up opportunities they may not have previously considered; and it has helped change young people’s perceptions of working in district offices. Surveys indicate a significant decrease in the percentage of students expressing discontent with working and living conditions at the district level.

Box 3.6

SIERRA LEONE: YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND JOB CREATION THROUGH AGRICULTURE PROGRAMME

Food insecurity, skill deficiencies, and problems associated with population growth and increasing urbanization are all challenges faced by large numbers of youth in Sierra Leone. One volunteer programme addresses all of these issues in one go.

Through a programme called Youth Engagement and Job Creation through Agriculture, some 15,000 young men and women between the ages of 15 and 35 are involved in a major effort to improve food security. At the same time, they are improving their own skills and gaining access to resources, which in turn ensures sustainable livelihoods. The Ministry of Youth and Sports, with assistance from UNDP and UNV, is meeting three goals simultaneously:

- *Youth empowerment and employment.* Many subsistence farmers are young people; training and resources that have been passed on to the youth provide them with the means to sustain their businesses and livelihoods, which in turn contributes to their sense of empowerment;
- *Food security.* The programme has proved that young people can manage crops and animals effectively;
- *Rural-urban migration.* The programme demonstrates that there are viable livelihood alternatives outside the cities.

By supporting young people in farming activities, the community-based programme also empowers youth to organize themselves for microenterprise development; facilitates the process of youth empowerment by organizing and supporting various voluntary group projects; establishes networks between engaged youth groups for voluntary experience and best-practice sharing; and provides for self-employment for mixed groups of youth farmers in vegetable gardening, food-processing, other agricultural activities, and marketing, which will promote recognition of their volunteer actions in the districts.

The programme has been successful in proving that young people can be positively engaged in their own development as well as in the development of the nation.

Box 3.7

TANZANIA: PARTNERSHIP FOR COMMUNITY-BASED VOLUNTEERING

The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Youth Development of Tanzania has set up youth camps as a mechanism for mobilizing youth and engaging them in community activities. The camps are encouraging young people to get involved in volunteering within their community and are supporting the delivery of social services.

The programme began in June 2006 with 30 male and female volunteers in the Moshi district. The original plan, which provided for four camps, has been expanded to allow the establishment of ten camps in various districts by December 2007. The volunteers assist with “cleaning up” and preserving the environment, construction activities (schools, dispensaries, and road rehabilitation), and tree planting. The camps also provide spaces where community youth can meet the volunteers to discuss issues and to learn through seminars. Seminar topics include:

- The concept of development and volunteerism;
- The National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (MKUKUTA);
- HIV/AIDS education;
- The formation and registration of community-based and non-governmental organizations;
- The formation of Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOS);
- The National Youth Policy;
- Environment conservation.

A key lesson from this Tanzanian initiative is that a range of partners can contribute to the success of a youth volunteer programme. This programme draws strength through its partnership with the local government structure. This helps to ensure that community members are aware of the camps and are willing to participate in them. In addition, the youth department liaises with district youth offices to ensure that the programme is well supported through access to infrastructure and equipment. The programme has also aligned itself with the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (MKUKUTA) and receives international support from UNDP and UNV.

The youth camps in Tanzania have shown that if young people are given opportunities and adequate facilitation, they are often willing to participate actively in structured community activities that support local social services. The involvement of local citizens with youth in community activities has helped to revitalize the spirit of volunteering and self-help, breaking down the notion that development is to be delivered only by the Government.

These initiatives, along with others in the region, help to develop the capacities of Africa’s youth and equip them with skills they will use throughout their lives. They also enable youth to see themselves as active agents of development within their communities. In the process, youth are perceived not only as assets to their communities, but also as individuals who have acquired practical experience. Through their involvement in such programmes, young people are helping to broaden public awareness of volunteering, and helping to shape the direction of civic engagement policies and interventions. According to a consensus statement of the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Union, “since the heroic contributions of youth to the independence movements in Africa, young people’s enthusiasm has underpinned the most energetic and effective social movements. The

idealism and commitment of youth have the potential to enact far-reaching social change and to build up effective institutions for humanitarian action, social development and political change. It is essential, therefore, that African Governments, working with their development partners, foster the spirit of volunteerism among young people” (Economic Commission for Africa and African Union, 2006).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In spite of the many positive developments, the challenges to the development of the youth population in sub-Saharan Africa and to their participation in national development remain monumental. Young people in Africa today are at a crossroads. On the one hand, they have endured major health, economic, and social crises, which have left them in a weaker position in terms of participating fully in development. On the other hand, because they have survived these difficulties, they are perhaps more determined than any previous generation to overcome the challenges of youth and to make up for opportunities they lacked in their childhood in order to enjoy a poverty-free life.

Sub-Saharan youth do not lack determination; however, because they are starting out in a weaker position than most of their contemporaries around the world, they will need major institutional and social support to achieve their full potential in society. They will need Governments that are committed to overall development but that also recognize the unsustainability of development efforts that exclude a critical one fifth of their populations. For the current generation of young people, there is a pressing need to provide the second chances that are called for by the World Bank (2006), especially through efforts to overcome deficiencies in literacy, education, health, and preparedness for a competitive labour market. Governments must adopt policies and programmes specifically designed to meet the needs of today’s youth and to remove obstacles that stand in the way of their full development and participation. In an increasingly competitive world, youth need to obtain much more than a basic education to secure decent work. Both young men and young women require access to the full spectrum of health services, as health challenges are growing and becoming more complex with globalization.

Although relevant age-disaggregated data are scarce, there is no doubt that many young people in sub-Saharan Africa are poor. Poverty among youth can lead to exclusion not only from opportunities in the global economy but also from community relationships. Young people who feel excluded are often drawn to membership in armed militias and other antisocial groups that give them greater visibility and power. Traditional African societies are known for their elaborate extended family systems and for the tendency to include even the poorer members of the family in decision-making. However, most residents of the region are plainly aware of the exclusionary power of poverty, as evidenced by the popular African adage “poor-no-friend”. If poverty is associated with exclusion from one’s peer group or “circle of friends”, by implication it also strips individuals of the right to be listened to, to be heard, and to be seen. Young people, whose age alone often denies them many rights in African society, are much more likely to be completely alienated by poverty in all its aspects.

There are no quick-fix solutions to the youth development challenges in the region. Efforts to address the problem of poverty among youth in Africa will be most effective if carried out through partnerships with all stakeholders—especially young people themselves. Youth in general are dynamic and therefore need support policies and programmes that can harness their energy and innovative spirit. Their sheer numbers, as well as their ability to learn quickly and to adapt to new situations and developments, gives young African men and women the right to a place at the table and the right to contribute to their own development and that of their communities.

It should be emphasized that many of the region's development problems are systemic; they affect entire national populations and determine the welfare of the household in which youth spend their formative years. As the issues are deeply rooted in a combination of factors, including poor economic performance, low levels of education and skills mismatch, the inadequacy of health care for the large numbers of young people living with HIV/AIDS, and gender discrimination, a multi-pronged approach that mainstreams youth development policies in broader national growth strategies is required. In the absence of a comprehensive approach, youth will continue to be left behind, unable to build the capacities that will allow them to contribute meaningfully to national development. ■■■■■

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