



Youth at the United Nations

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February 2006

News from UN Headquarters

International Youth Day, 12 August 2006 Theme: Tackling Poverty Together

International Youth Day is annually celebrated on 12 August to acknowledge the positive role of young people in society and to highlight youth development challenges. The theme for International Youth Day 2006 is "Tackling Poverty Together". With this theme the United Nations refers to goal 1 of the Millennium Development Goals: to halve the number of people in extreme poverty, and to the importance of involving young people in achieving this goal. The theme also coincides with the United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, which ends in 2006. In due time, the website of the Programme on Youth will list various events taking place that day. To add your event, send an email to youth@un.org.

More info at:
<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/iyouthday.htm>

Commission for Social Development discusses youth employment

Youth employment is on the agenda of the 44th session of the Commission for Social Development, which is being held at United Nations Headquarters from 8 to 17 February 2006. A resolution on youth employment is being discussed among Member States. Outcomes will be made available via the website <http://www.un.org/youth>.



News from UN Agencies around the world

UNESCO: Sub-regional training workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation for Youth NGOs

From 16 to 21 Dec. 2005, UNESCO and the Indian Committee of Youth Organizations (ICYO) organized a sub-regional training in monitoring and evaluation, bringing together youth organizations and project implementing partners from Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan. The meeting was linked to a UNESCO pilot project aimed at empowering adolescent girls to become agents of social transformation in South Asia. The goal of the workshop was to refine the methodology and tools of the peer-group Monitoring and Evaluation approach applied in the framework of this project, to develop a basic set of indicators for measuring empowerment, and to define priorities and strategies for policy advocacy in favour of young people's active participation in all efforts to alleviate poverty. Based on the experience and lessons learnt, UNESCO and its project partners will develop policy

guidelines and a youth-specific toolkit on peer-group Monitoring and Evaluation in 2006. For more info, contact: j.groth@unesco.org.

UNESCO: Youth Development Report - Condition of Russian Youth

With the aim of contributing to the development and the efficient implementation of policies addressing young people's living conditions and participation in society, the UNESCO Office in Moscow in cooperation with the German Society for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) published a major study on youth development in Russia. The report contains a thorough analysis of the current situation of young people in Russia in relation to such critical areas as education, the labour market, health and participation in political and social life. To read more, please consult: www.unesco.org/youth (Publications). Please send any comments and suggestions on the report to: d.badarch@unesco.ru.

ILO: Global Employment Trends report - 50 per cent of global unemployed are youth

ILO published its annual Global Employment Trends report, highlighting that unemployment continues to grow and that youth now make up half of those out of

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work. Young people between 15 and 24 years old are more than three times as likely as adults to be out of work. The ILO called this figure "troublesome", given that youth make up only 25 per cent of the working-age population. For more information, see <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inf/pr/2006/1.htm>.

UN country team in Viet Nam: Viet Nam Law on Youth in effect on 1 July 2006

On 17 November 2005, the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam voted to approve the 'Law on Youth', due to take effect on 1 July 2006. Its purpose is to create a legal setting and enabling environment for promoting the training and development of young people aged 16 to 30.

The law includes provisions for the rights and obligations of youth - including to stand for election - responsibilities of the state, families and society towards youth (such as job creation) and a special section for youth between 16 and 18. The law is the result of a consultation process that has involved National Assembly deputies, legal specialists, policy-makers, youth cadres and the multi-UN agency Youth Task Force, led in particular by ILO and UNICEF. For further information, contact: hanoi@ilohn.org.vn

UNOWA: New report - Youth Unemployment and Regional Insecurity in West Africa

The United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) recently released a report that documents the region's youth employment challenges and proposes twenty-six recommendations, including infrastructure investments, involvement of the private sector, collaboration with development agencies in post-conflict situations, and gender equality. One of the recommendations specifically calls for the creation of a regional unit of the Youth Employment Network in West Africa. For more info, see: http://www.un.org/Depts/dpa/prev_dip/africa/office_f_or_srsg/unowa/studies/unemployment-insecurity.pdf

UNFPA: African Youth Network on Population and Development

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), as the convening agency for the UNAIDS Co-sponsors Interagency Task Team on HIV/AIDS and Young People, organized an Africa Regional Youth Forum in Lusaka, Zambia (19-21 Dec 2005). The 225 participants from 39 African countries - consisting of young people, UNAIDS co-sponsors, Government and NGO representatives - shared regional and in-country experiences on youth networking and inaugurated the African Youth Network on Population and Development. The Network will mainly focus on sexual and reproductive health & HIV prevention, and it will promote greater youth participation in Africa's development. The network's website will soon be

available at <http://www.unfpa.org/africa> - For more info on UNFPA's work in support of Adolescent and Youth Participation and Programming visit <http://www.unfpa.org/adolescents> or contact Mark Bryan Schreiner: schreiner@unfpa.org.

UNESCAP: Workshop on Community-based Treatment for Young Drug Users

Bangkok, Thailand. From 7 to 9 February 2006, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) organized a workshop on young drug users in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS). Young people in this region face many challenges associated with rapid socioeconomic changes. Unable to resist peer pressure and the temptation to experiment with drugs, many slip into drug abuse and delinquency, and are often at risk of acquiring HIV.

The UNESCAP project entitled "Reducing drug abuse and delinquency among youth in GMS" aims to build capacity for effective and culturally-appropriate community-based treatment and rehabilitation for young drug abusers. The Workshop, organized under the project, seek inputs from government, civil society and peer educators to develop a toolkit for use in community settings and residential treatment facilities. For more info, please contact: escap-healthdev@un.org or visit: <http://www.unescap.org/esid/hds>

UN-HABITAT: Dubai International Award of Best Practices for Improving the Living Environment

UN HABITAT and Dubai Municipality will biennially give an award to 12 outstanding and sustainable achievements in improving the living environment. One of the categories is 'Youth and Children', including areas such as health and nutrition, legislation/advocacy, youth at risk, and recreational/cultural programming.

The Best Practice Award winners will receive US\$ 30,000, a trophy and a commemorative certificate. The deadline for submissions is 31 March 2006. For more info, contact bestpractices@unhabitat.org, or visit: www.blpnet.org/awards/awards.htm.



Feature: Nothing about us, without us!

Youth participated in the discussions on the Convention on the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities

Nazma and Rubel come from Dhaka, Bangladesh. Together with four other young people they participated in the "7th Session of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities", held in New York from 16 January to 3 February 2006. Participants in the Ad Hoc Committee include representatives of UN Member States and non-governmental organizations, who discuss the text of a convention for the protection of the rights of people with disabilities. Nazma and Rubel, who are disabled themselves, participated in these discussions on the invitation of Save the Children.

Nazma Akter (15) lives in Zigatala, Dhaka, where she visits the Underprivileged Children's Educational Programme Technical School. Her mother is a domestic worker who works 13 hours a day. Every morning Nazma has to prepare and cook food for her family, after which she goes to school where she studies the sewing trade. During her free time she likes to read books from the school library. She has won a prize for story book reading. In ten years time, she hopes to start a business in sewing and have her own shop.

She is a member of the local Children's Council, where she works to raise awareness of children's rights, especially children with disabilities, who - she states clearly - should have the same rights as all children. She believes that their participation in the Ad-Hoc Committee was important as the discussions should not only focus on the rights of adults, but also on the rights of children and young people with disabilities.

Rubel Nazmul Huda (16) lives with his brother and two sisters in Mohammadpur, Dhaka. His mother is a domestic worker as well and his father is a shopkeeper. He goes to school, likes to play cricket with his friends and helps his family in the tea stall. In the future, he would like to become a computer engineer.

Rubel has worked voluntarily for Save the Children for the last three years through the Centre for Services and Information on Disability. He is also involved in advocacy activities through different media, including a children's media house called "Ichchey". He was very happy to participate in the work to draft the Convention: "I felt that the committee members had done a very good job for us. I met with other disabled persons/children. They are very well minded. All the people were very cordial. I enjoyed that convention."

On 18 January, the youth group from Save the Children addressed the Ad-Hoc Committee. They highlighted several issues affecting children and youth with disabilities, including domestic violence, the lack of consultation and participation, the absence of facilities in public spaces and of accessible education. They also organized a side event where they discussed some of their concerns in greater depth with the Committee members.

Rubel was disappointed that there were only six young people participating in the session of the Ad-Hoc Committee. "If there would be more disabled children from different countries then we could have been able to discuss more about problems and share and get more importance."



For more information about their work and participation in the Ad-Hoc Committee, visit the website of Save the Children: www.savethechildren.org.uk

See also the UN press release "Disabled youth plead for inclusion at UN meeting on disability rights treaty": <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=17201&Cr=disab&Cr1=#>

Calendar of Youth Events

NB: Some events are open for participation by invitation only

14-17 March 2006: Tackling Poverty Together, phase 2

Kampala, Uganda. The United Nations Programme on Youth and the National Council of Swedish Youth Organizations, with financial support of the Swedish International Development Agency, are working on a technical assistance project called "Tackling Poverty Together: The Role of Young People in Poverty Reduction Strategies". Youth from Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia are trained and guided to strengthen their role in poverty reduction strategies and develop and implement their own action plans. The first phase took place in October 2005 in Zambia, where they created concrete action plans.

In March, the participants will convene again in Kampala to discuss their achievements and plans for follow-up activities. For more info, visit: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/TPT.htm>.

28-30 March 2006: Experts meet to discuss development challenges for young Asians

Bangkok, Thailand. The Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD), UNDESA, will organize an Expert Group Meeting, hosted by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in Bangkok Thailand.

The meeting will bring together experts and representatives of United Nations Member States, United Nations Agencies and Programmes,

universities, and intergovernmental organizations, to identify and discuss major youth development challenges in Asia in preparation for the World Youth Report 2007. For more information, visit: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/workshops.htm>.

21 May 2006: Fight Hunger: Walk the World

World Food Programme. On 21 May people around the world will walk the streets to call for the end of child hunger. You can participate in a walk or organize one yourself! For more information and tools, visit <http://www.FightHunger.org>.

16-18 June 2006: Youth & Urban Forum

Vancouver, Canada. Leading up to UN-HABITAT's Third Session of the World Urban Forum a Youth Forum will be organized to showcase best practices and projects on youth-led development. Youth-Leaders from around the world will come together to share good examples of youth-led projects and programmes and to build networks. See also the next item. For more info, contact: The World Urban Forum & Youth: worldurbanforum2006@canada.com and <http://www.eya.ca/wuf> or contact UN-HABITAT: ngounit@unhabitat.org and <http://www.unhabitat.org/wuf/2006>

19-23 June 2006: World Urban Forum

Vancouver, Canada. The theme of the Third Session of UN-HABITAT's World Urban Forum is "Our Future: Sustainable Cities - Turning Ideas into Action". The World Urban Forum was established by the United Nations to respond to rapid urbanization and its impact on communities, cities, economies and policies. It gives the various stakeholders a common platform to discuss urban issues in formal and informal ways and come up with action-oriented proposals to create sustainable cities. More information: <http://www.unhabitat.org/wuf/2006>.

4-13 August 2006: Intergenerational Conference: Human Rights as a Tool for Social Change

UNESCO Chair & Institute of Comparative Human Rights, USA. The Intergenerational Conference seeks

to promote the empowerment of youth leaders to enable them to play a crucial and constructive role in ensuring the full enjoyment of human rights in their communities. The conference will provide tools and a platform for open debates about policies, programmes, activities and processes necessary for human rights leadership. Participants at the conference are individuals (ages 18-30) from all over the world who have been involved in some capacity in human rights work in their communities. Information about application (before 6 March), visit: <http://www.unescochair.uconn.edu> or email: unescochair@uconn.edu.

12 August 2006: International Youth Day

This year's theme will be: "Tackling Poverty Together - involving young people in the fight against poverty". Youth around the world are encouraged to organize activities celebrating their role in society and highlighting areas of concern. In due time, the website of the Programme on Youth will list various events taking place that day. To add your event, send an email to youth@un.org. More info on: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/iyouthday.htm>

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Tackling Poverty Together

On the Internet

Freedom of expression

On World Press Freedom Day, 3 May 2006, the organization Loesje is stimulating young people around the world to come together to write texts, columns and poetry connected to the theme "freedom of expression". At the end of the day they will have made a book together.

To read more, visit: <http://www.1-day.org>.

Contact information

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

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

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To subscribe/unsubscribe to the email information service, please send an email to: youth@un.org, with 'subscribe' or 'unsubscribe' as the subject line.

Visit our website at <http://www.un.org/youth>