YOUTH AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS:

Challenges and Opportunities for Implementation

**Interim Report of the
Ad Hoc Working Group for Youth and the MDGs**

FOR CONSULTATION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Young people ages 15 to 24 are 1.2 billion of the world's human capital. Many of them around the world are already making contributions to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and their work should be further acknowledged and strengthened. Increasingly, youth are recognized as key participants in decision-making and development, as reflected in the growing presence of non-governmental youth organizations and the upsurge of youth advisory boards and committees to international institutions and programmes. Yet building the capacity of and creating sustained partnerships with young people are crucial strategies to achieving the MDGs that have not been realized fully by the international community.

This paper aims to provide an overview of youth participation as it currently exists; to outline the ways in which youth are directly involved and affected by each Goal; to demonstrate the ways in which young people are contributing to the MDGs, and to provide 'Options for Action' that governments, the United Nations system, donors and other actors can harness, support, and scale-up in order to support young people in making significant contributions to achieving the MDGs.

Successful models of youth participation should be adapted and replicated to specific political and socio-economic realities, taking into consideration the challenges facing youth-led and youth-serving organizations. The existing mechanisms for youth engagement outlined in Part 1 are channels that governments and institutions can currently strengthen and use to mobilize young people as partners in achieving the MDGs.

Part II presents youth participation as it relates directly to the MDGs. Each goal is analyzed with respect to its effect on young peoples lives as well as how young people can play – and indeed are playing — a role in its implementation. Under each goal are a number of "Options for Action" that governments, the UN and multilateral organizations can use to fully harness the contributions that youth can make to achieving the MDGs.

Goal 1, <u>To Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger</u>, outlines the linkages between youth and poverty and raises concerns such as the lack of data on youth living in poverty and the need for increased youth engagement in Poverty Reduction Strategy Processes (PRSPs). It addresses youth poverty and rural development, as well as youth in urban slums, and finishes with a review of youth vigilance in combating corruption. Some of the options for action outlined are:

- To devote UNDP's 2006 Human Development Report and the 2006 or 2007 World Development Report of the World Bank to youth development, as a means of gathering information on youth and poverty that can be used in monitoring progress towards the MDGs.
- To request national governments to create mechanisms that ensure young people are involved in the development of PRSPs, through National Youth Councils where possible, or other youth organizations. This will ensure that youth perspectives are heard and that PRSPs are relevant to local concerns. It will also promote widespread participation in their implementation.
- Development policies must prioritize the growth of rural areas, where a high percentage of youth are unemployed and where there exists little public infrastructure. Young people should be engaged in creating the necessary services and infrastructure in rural communities, such that income and skills can be gained for young people involved in rural food production.
- There is a need to develop community-driven projects with urban youth living in poverty, as young people are already creatively working in entrepreneurial projects such as ecological waste management projects. UN-HABITAT's work in slum development must be strengthened and young people must be at the core of these efforts.
- Widespread support must be extended to the World Bank's Youth and Governance Program, particularly in countries most affected by ongoing corruption. Youth must be furthered trained in the eliminating all types of corruption and whistle-blowing strategies through country-specific youth driven anti-corruption projects.
- Young people must have better information on and access to anti-corruption commissions.

In Goal 2, <u>To Achieve Universal Primary Education</u>, a number of areas such as encouraging school participation and engaging young people as peer educators and teachers are addressed. In addition, a review of curriculum development and the growth of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) is undertaken. Options for action include:

- Strong policies to increase youth enrolment in primary and secondary education must be implemented, including the delivery of primary and secondary education free of charge.
- Programmes for education must include young people as peer educators and trainers.
- Opportunities for international exchanges and volunteerism across borders must be made accessible to youth worldwide. Young people involved in such programmes become assets in a labour market marked by globalization, as well as excellent sources of knowledge for teaching and peer education.
- Governments must work with communities to build more spaces where both formal and informal learning can take place.
- Projects where young people take initiative to enhance education and teach other young people should be acknowledged and promoted.
- Use youth expertise to create curriculums that are both relevant and interesting to other youth.
- Localize curriculums such that they include studies of poverty and ways in which local communities can respond.
- Re-enforce learning with ICTs, such that virtual learning centers can also provide safe spaces to go to after school and training in life skills.

The third goal, <u>To Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women,</u> is centered on supporting education for young women and girls, as well as empowering them to help themselves. The chapter looks at the promotion of gender equity in education and leadership development. Options for action are:

- Expand and strengthen support to various non-formal education activities provided by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that empower young women with life skills and build self-esteem.
- Consult with civil society to localize gender equality targets to national and local circumstances.
- Create policy frameworks that provide access to resources for young women to secure decent livelihoods and entrepreneurial skill development, including financing programs and community-based training centers for women.
- Prioritize young women's participation and leadership in programs at UN agencies, governments, NGO's and other organizations.
- Incorporate the social and economic needs of young women into formal educational programs including offering technical training, social skills, work experience and health information at times and locations accessible to women.
- Adopt gender equity policies that make gender awareness training for educators and development workers mandatory. With such training, undertake a thorough review and evaluation of all curriculums for gender bias.

Goal 4, <u>To Reduce Child Mortality,</u> discusses education and youth training youth in the context of improving child mortality rates. In addition, a number of successful examples of youth actions for clean water and sanitation to promote public health are given. The options for action which arise are:

- Include sexual and reproductive health education in all secondary school curriculums.
- In areas where a low percentage of young females attend secondary school, expand urban and rural health programs to include information sessions on sexual and reproductive health and rights, targeting 15 to 24 year olds.
- Taking into account community needs, create teen clinics and offer peer-to-peer education on sexual and reproductive health.
- Train unemployed youth in community-based health services, prenatal care, emergency obstetric care and family planning and expand these services in a strategic manner in developing countries.
- Raise awareness among youth that access to clean water and sanitation is a public health issue and enable youth to address local public health problems.

While related to Goal 4, Goal 5, <u>To Improve Maternal Health,</u> looks at the role of young people in education and training in the health sector as well as particular reference to the education of young women. A number of examples for the sharing of best practices are outlined. Options for action include:

- Include sexual and reproductive health education in secondary school curriculums.
- Young people are the key to solving the troubling lack of human resources in the health sector. Youth need to be given financial support and other incentives to be trained as health professionals.
- Support the networking of governments, NGOs, and youth organizations at national, regional, and international levels to promote the sharing of best practices for providing adequate health services to large populations.

Goal 6, <u>To Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases,</u> examines the devastating effects of these diseases on young people and investigates youth as peer educators and agents of change. The chapter details youth tackling HIV/AIDS through advocacy and networking and discusses how to engage HIV positive youth for better policy formulation. It includes some of the ideas of youth who have gathered at international conferences about AIDS and discusses how to increase the number of youth trained in providing HIV/AIDS treatment and care. The options for action are:

- To include education on sexual and reproductive health and rights in all secondary schools.
- To use youth expertise to create innovative and effective strategies for the prevention of all diseases.
- To provide incentives and support for young people to use community meeting places, including government spaces, to strategize ways in which they can reduce the AIDS virus.
- To create, mobilize and strengthen teams of young peer educators to visit all schools.
- To resource existing youth structures and conferences as contact points to incorporate youth in national strategies, to advise on government health policies, and to distribute resources.
- To create an "Eminent Panel" of HIV-positive youth to draw attention to the issue, to document the voices of young people living with AIDS, and to encourage youth to speak out against the disease.
- People Living With AIDS (PLWA) associations and other efforts to support those affected by the disease should provide channels for youth-focused services and participation.
- Use youth employment programs to distribute AIDS medicine delivery, link youth employment networks to AIDS clinics and distribution centers.

Goal 7, <u>To Ensure Environmental Sustainability</u> discusses the success of the United Nations system in engaging young people on environment issues and discusses the issue of young people as leaders of social and environmental entrepreneurship. It provides the following options for action:

- Young People should continue to be engaged in UN environmental processes and funding should be made available so that youth from developing countries can properly attend and participate in these processes.
- International institutions, the UN and its agencies should increase collaboration with youth organizations and existing structures such as the Commission on Sustainable Development Youth Caucus (UN-CSD) and various youth advisory councils to the UN.
- Increase support for regional youth networks in order to facilitate global cooperation.
- Build and support global networks amongst student-based organizations promoting sustainable development.
- Countries should build the capacity of and open up opportunities for young people to be social and environmental micro-entrepreneurs in their own communities, while engaging them in decision-making processes so that their efforts can be linked effectively to policy development.
- Increase the capacity of youth-led efforts to address needs on a local level

Goal 8, <u>To develop a Global Partnership for Development</u> discusses the important issues of fairer trade, youth employment, and young people and ICTs. It outlines the need to:

- Harness North-South and South-South partnerships between young people and the consumption habits of youth in developed countries to achieve fairer trade and more ethical consumption.
- Address the issue of youth employment as a fundamental block to poverty reduction and fully support the work of the Youth Employment Network to create decent employment for all youth.
- Use micro-finance and skills development initiatives to reduce barriers for youth entrepreneurship.
- Empower youth as learners, developers, contributors, entrepreneurs and decision-makers in the area of ICTs.

Finally, Part III of the report elaborates on cross-cutting recommendations on how to work with youth in processes to achieve the MDGs, looking at issues of advocacy, research requirements, policy formulation, action, and networking and collaboration.

Overall, the report demonstrates that investing in youth will provide the longest and most effective dividend towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by building the social capital needed to foster pragmatic development. Indeed, without the involvement of young people, a demographic that comprises one fifth of the world's total population, the full achievement of the MDGs will remain elusive and their long-term sustainability will be compromised. Youth participation is currently quite varied, ranging from effective, to sometimes tokenistic, to often non-existent. There are specific ways in which youth and youth organizations can contribute to the design and implementation of MDG-based strategies, some of which are outlined in this document. Many projects are already happening, but there is much work left still to be done.

INTRODUCTION

At the 12th session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) in 2004, Jeffrey Sachs[1] reported on the progress of the Millennium Development Goals,[2] stressing the need for strong political commitment by governments and concrete strategies for action. He said that achieving the goals in 2015 is still possible, but only if we drastically increase our efforts immediately. After delivering his report, the chairwoman of the Youth Caucus to the CSD asked him how the Millennium Project[3] was going to involve young people as partners. He replied, "You tell us."

This report is part of our answer. It has been formulated by an international team of young leaders from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and incorporates the dialogue of a 3-week online consultation with over 350 youth from around the world.[4] The paper outlines how young people can be included and empowered as part of the strategies that Member States and the United Nations system are creating for the achievement of the MDGs. It can be used as a lobby tool and guide for programmatic action, but ultimately, it is a call to all Member States, UN specialized agencies, and civil society to create mechanisms for youth to participate in the implementation of the MDGs. Of course, it is impossible to incorporate all youth views and opinions into this report and in this regard, we hope the paper catalyzes further dialogue, collaboration and action among all stakeholders in the direction of youth inclusion in the realization of the MDGs.

This paper aims to show that investing in youth will provide the longest and most effective dividend towards meeting the MDGs by building social capacity for long-term development.

Today, 1.7 billion people — more than one-fourth of the world's six billion people — are between the ages of 10 and 24, making this group of young people the largest ever to be entering adulthood and the largest under-represented segment of the world's population.[5]

Globally, the situation of young people today is characterized by extreme disparities in terms of economic, technological, social and cultural resources, which vary enormously across regions, countries, localities and population groups. Eighty-six percent of 10-to-24-year-olds live in less developed countries. And despite rapid urbanization, the majority of youth still live in rural areas, primarily in developing countries. Young men outnumber young women (525 million versus 500 million), and 57 million young men and 96 million young women remain illiterate. [6] In addition to inadequate education, youth face increasing insecurity in the labor market. Sixty-six million young people throughout the world are unemployed; nearly 40% of global unemployment. Hundreds of millions more work fewer hours than they would like, while still others work long hours with little gain and no social protection. [7]

Overall, current avenues for political participation are insufficient and consequently youth in many places are perceived as apathetic or disengaged. In most of the world, the reform of political structures is necessary so that democracies may truly engage and utilize the populous. Meanwhile, many young people are organizing via the internet and informal youth volunteerism is at record levels. This means that young people are breaking through the mold of traditional political avenues and moving beyond voting as their sole civic responsibility.

Faced with the challenges of the 21st century, young people are acknowledging that their local, national and international systems of decision-making lack concrete avenues for sufficient participation. If traditional political systems continue to fail in offering representation and successful solutions, young people will remain trapped in a cycle of poverty, violence and missed opportunity.

The MDGs are an opportunity to move from marginalization to mobilization

The world is not on track in meeting the MDGs by 2015. Current research by the Millennium Project asserts that if governments were to increase their Official Development Assistance (ODA) to .7%, as was agreed in Monterrey from current levels of .25%, total funds would be sufficient to achieve the MDGs in ten years. To do this, investments must be made in infrastructure, human capital and the private sector. However, the

achievement of the MDGs relies on more than supply-side resources; development is a long complex process that can only be achieved by capitalizing on all resources in society, including the involvement and commitment of all stakeholders. [8]

In a worldwide, on-line consultation with more than 350 youth about the MDGs in June 2004,[9] most of the respondents said that they knew little or nothing about the MDGs. They also stressed that they do not have access to tools for implementation. The major challenge facing governments, UN agencies and civil society is to provide these tools in creative and thoughtful ways that engage youth to work collaboratively in improving their communities. According to the e-consultation, young people ask for: tools such as internet access, meeting spaces, adult mentors and allies, opportunities for volunteerism, access and training to information communication technologies (ICTs), business training, civic education, access to political leaders, information sharing, education, and general support and encouragement from government and institutions, including resources and funding.

As this paper will detail, youth have a lot to contribute to each goal. Young people are also already participating in decision-making to formulate better policies and programmes in many government and institutional structures. As Part I of this paper will explain, this participation is quite varied, ranging from effective, to sometimes token, to often non-existent. Successful models of participation should be replicated or adapted to specific political and socio-economic realities, taking in consideration the challenges facing youth organizations and other development actors. Nevertheless, the existing mechanisms for youth engagement and effective participation are channels that governments and institutions can currently use to mobilize young people as partners in achieving the MDGS.

Part II outlines youth engagement in achieving the MDGs. Each goal is analyzed in respect to its effect on young peoples lives as well as how young people can play – and indeed are playing — a role in implementation. Each goal also contains "Options for Action" that governments, civil society, UN agencies and multilateral institutions can use to enable youth to fully contribute in achieving the MDGs.

In addition to a number of "options for action" detailed after every goal, Part III of the paper elaborates on cross-cutting recommendations on how to work with youth in MDG processes.

PART I: EXISTING YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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Young leaders represent our hope for the future, and have the greatest potential to push for realization of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for 2015, established by the United Nations.
                                        Prime Minister of Thailand His Excellency Thaksin Shinawatra[10]

The contributions that young people are making to their communities and nations are not entirely understood or utilized. Young people are making a difference as activists, as leaders in community development, and by their record levels of volunteerism. Young people in many parts of the world may be perceived as apathetic or disengaged, but this is largely inaccurate. All over the world, youth are surpassing the avenues of traditional political participation (i.e. voting) through their activism and volunteerism. However, the global youth movement is characterized by fragmentation resulting in isolated actions that do not reach their full potential due to lack of resources, access to knowledge and information, and institutional barriers. Without the guidance, understanding, support, and recognition of government leaders and other decision-makers, young leaders are often unequipped to fully participate in the decisions that are affecting their lives.

A. YOUTH AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

Youth Policy

Over the past several decades, several countries have initiated processes of designing and implementing national policies and strategies focused on youth. However, most countries do not have specific structures in place for youth, nor have they successfully managed to mainstream youth concerns, as the issues relating to young people fall across thematic public policy areas such as education, health or juvenile delinquency. Despite youth being upwards of 50% of the population in some countries, governments rarely consult young people on matters affecting their lives, such as poverty reduction Strategy efforts. Even governments which have developed legislation on youth issues often lack comprehensive and holistic approaches to the challenges faced by the younger generation. A progressive national youth policy obliges traditional decision-makers to not only work for young people, but with them in order to let their experiences inform the development of appropriate interventions and services.[11]

Each country is urged to develop a long-term, consensus-based, integrated and cross-sector youth policy, but because this is a relatively unknown and underdeveloped field, there is a great need to share experience in this specific field of public policy and to produce tools to assist national governments in addressing youth issues systematically.[12] There is a high potential for cooperation, particularly through networking of both governmental and non-governmental youth organizations on a regional and international scale. Furthermore, various international agencies assist with the formulation of national youth policies and action plans.[13]

Extensive experience has shown that good practice in youth participation provides choices, is enjoyable, challenging and fun; relates to issues perceived as relevant by young people; raises young people's awareness of social, political, economic, cultural and personal issues affecting them; involves training and skills development; ensures that young people are given ongoing support in their role; provides them with a sense of belonging and ownership in relation to decision-making; makes them feel that their participation is valued; involves adequate resource allocation (including time, space, funding and information); acknowledges their contribution; acknowledges that young people often experience financial and transport constraints (getting to meetings for example); secures support at this level is based on a careful recruitment and selection process; gives them a sense of ownership and belonging, and involves a review process for both young people and adults. [14]

Given the wide diversity of political cultures and political systems, countries need to establish their own priorities and mechanisms in order to create a youth policy that is authentic and relevant. The formulation of a national youth policy should not be a top-down process. The development of a sound youth policy requires that a wide variety of social actors are involved, a large-scale cross-sector consultation takes place and a close

link with civil society is retained. Rather than taking a "go-alone" attitude, governments should make use of the expertise and energy available in NGOs and other civil society organizations and make every effort to develop active partnerships with these groups. But, above all, young people themselves must be considered as the primary actors with whom to develop such partnerships. Any viable youth policy is one in which young people are not just spectators or advisers, but are truly involved in decision-making processes.[15]

B. YOUTH COUNCILS, PARLIAMENTS AND REGIONAL PLATFORMS

Effective youth policy fairly represents and impacts its constituency, usually by utilizing an ongoing consultation and evaluation process through a national representative body such as a youth council or parliament. In countries where national youth councils or similar structures do not exist, it is important to look at current youth involvement in civil society, and enhance such engagement by inviting youth to further participate in governmental and development processes with a focus on involving more youth and creating representative mechanisms whenever possible.

National Youth Councils are umbrella organizations that bring together youth organizations in a given nation-state. They are the highest level of decision-making bodies for youth in that country. Not only can they facilitate youth participation in national policy processes, but they can also assist youth wishing to be part of international policy processes (for example, official youth delegates at the UN General Assembly).[16] Some national youth councils work together across regions to form "Regional Youth Platforms", such as the European Youth Forum and the Latin American Youth Forum.

Many national youth councils and regional platforms already exist. Some of their functions include:
- Act as a platform and umbrella for other youth organizations
- Link to local elections
- Link to local officials
- Share information among members and member organizations
- Organize local/national gatherings of young people
- Link regional Centers
- Host workshops for local youth
- Work on specific issues like habitat or the environment

C. YOUTH AND THE UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations, since its inception, has continuously called for the increased participation of youth. Historically, youth participation has been very limited, but recently it has gained momentum and youth are now seen and heard at various levels of the UN.

Youth Delegates to the General Assembly
By mandate, member states have been invited to include youth in their delegations to the General Assembly (GA), which has traditionally been the highest level of youth participation to the UN.[17] Youth representatives typically participate at General Assembly meetings in New York for at least two weeks in the fall. In 2005, governments need to include youth representatives as part of their delegation because it will be the ten-year review of the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY). This is a key opportunity for youth to advocate for the MDGs though the General Assembly, as many of the priority areas in the WPAY relate to the MDGs.

The role of a youth representative varies depending on priorities of Member State delegations. Many youth representatives are responsible for delivering a statement to the Third Committee of the General Assembly, which deals with social, humanitarian and cultural issues.[18] Traditionally only a handful of countries have made this a commitment, with only Australia, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Finland and Sweden sending regular youth delegates. Governments, particularly in developing countries, often do not have the

resources, time or political will to invest in sending youth delegates to the United Nations. The number of youth delegates varies from year to year, with other countries randomly bringing in youth representatives. However, the number of youth delegates has lately increased, with 14 delegates from 11 countries in 2004. While a youth delegate is generally a sign of progress for youth representation, it is always important to consider who they are truly representing and the transparency of their selection process. Youth delegates are expected to somehow represent their country by being an elected leader in their national youth council, or sometimes they are selected because they are a leader of a youth organization.[19] Usually, when the youth delegate returns home from the UN, they are expected to report back to their national youth about what their work at the UN.

The UN Programme on Youth of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) works to support the work of the youth delegates to the General Assembly and are also responsible for the review and monitoring of the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY).

Youth delegates to UN Commissions
Even less frequent than youth on GA delegations are youth on government delegations to the UN Commissions. In particular, the Commission on Social Development, Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Sustainable Development, which will be detailed later, may all have youth in their agendas, and youth only occasionally join the government delegations. However, youth frequently participate in Commissions as part of NGO delegations. Youth benefit from coming to these processes by having opportunities to meet with their country's UN representatives, networking and forming coalitions, working together in caucuses to name international youth priorities, sharing success stories and challenges, learning from UN processes and trainings during side events, and becoming aware of how they can participate in the future work of UN member states and agencies. Even more importantly, many of them initiate local action for UN goals and programmes upon their return.

Youth and UN Agencies
Apart from the (sometimes) more symbolic presence of youth on delegations, UN agencies are realizing the need to involve youth in the UN's programmatic work. Diverse youth advisory boards and consultations are becoming more and more frequent at the UN, yet moving from dialogues to real partnership and empowerment with youth and youth organizations remains a challenge.[20] UN agencies often engage with youth organizations and coalitions on a one-on-one basis. An endorsement of a UN agency to the work of youth organizations strengthens their work and typically provides growth opportunities, because it provides them with legitimacy, some level of institutional support, and often helps them to further publicize their work. Youth find out that they can work with UN agencies through networking at international meetings and local UN offices. Ironically, many youth organizations look to different UN agencies for guidance and support rather than their own national ministries.

Although not an agency or programme, the Programme on Youth is part of the UN Secretariat and works to support the mandate of the UN by increasing channels of communication between youth, youth organizations and the UN system. The UN Youth Programme also provides avenues through which youth can participate in the UN system. Through their website, the UN Youth Programme shares information about upcoming events, country data on youth and information on various national youth policies.[21] Though the UN Youth Programme is frequently an ally, it is not appropriate or possible for all youth organizations around the world to engage with them. Similarly, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Youth Coordination Unit organizes UNESCO's action with and for youth, communicates directly with young people through a wide network of youth associations and NGO's through their National Commissions, and hosts a youth forum every two years.[22]

Though UNESCO and the UN Youth Programme can serve as great allies or facilitators to youth participation at the international level, youth participation with national and regional UN agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is particularly valuable because these agencies are closer to youth on the community level. Examples such as the Human Development Report focusing on youth done by UNDP

in Croatia, listed as a case study in Goal 1, as well as other existing examples of these relationships, should be publicized so that the strengthening of youth local engagement can be pursued. Local UNDP offices should also periodically evaluate how they engage youth in their work.

The United Nations currently has youth advisory boards, or other means for youth engagement in the: United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), United Nations Programme for Human Settlements (UN HABITAT), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UN Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (UNDCP), UN Space Program (UNISPACE), as well as through agencies for children, like the United Nations Fund for Children (UNICEF) and the Office of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict. Multiple case studies about the UN's work with youth and youth councils are listed throughout the paper under each goal.

Youth and Sustainable Development
Youth and sustainable development is highlighted in particular because it is currently one of the most active areas of youth engagement with the United Nations.[23] Representing grassroots activities and concern for the future of the environment, youth have been engaged since the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, held in 1992. The Earth Summit set an important precedent in its final declaration Agenda 21, by asking governments to "support the promotion and creation of mechanisms to involve youth representation in all United Nations processes in order to influence those processes."[24] This mandate, coupled with rising youth activism and the availability of information on the internet, resulted in more youth participating in the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg 2002) than any other UN summit in history. In Johannesburg, youth were able to participate as one of nine "Major Groups" officially recognized by the UN to the Summit, and therefore were able to make interventions throughout the Summit deliberations, challenging governments and all stakeholders to abide by their commitments.

In the outcome of WSSD, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), youth were mentioned in relation to poverty reduction, consumption and life style, education and the implementation of sustainable development programs. Paragraph 153 of JPOI commits governments to: "Promote and support youth participation in programs and activities relating to sustainable development through, for example, supporting local youth councils or their equivalent, and by encouraging their establishment where they do not exist."[25]

To follow up on the status of commitments made in Rio and Johannesburg, and continue to provide forums to evaluate the status of the world's environment, the UN meets every year at the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Youth Major Group continues to have a seat on the floor with the delegates and makes interventions throughout the annual Commission where they share the activities and priorities of youth working at the grassroots level. This serves as one of the most functional ways youth participate in the UN system. The members of the Major Group of Youth increasingly have strong networks and background in local and international policies and mechanisms. At the Commission, and online throughout the year, youth share information, form coalitions, facilitate other forms of engagement with UN agencies, and build capacity themselves and their organizations through trainings. Youth involved in the CSD also meet directly with their governments to ask how their countries sustainable development commitments are being fulfilled and to lobby for increased ways for youth to nationally implement sustainable development. Providing mechanisms to strengthen their participation and capacity once they return home to their constituencies would strengthen the work of these youth on the ground and further the implementation of the agenda of the Commission. The continued and growing youth participation at CSD shows that youth want to help their governments follow through with their commitments, as well as the professional level at which youth can participate in decision-making processes.

D. YOUTH AND MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS

Young people also have a role to play with multilateral institutions. For example, recognizing the importance of youth involvement, initial consultations were held with the World Bank in 2003, which led to the shaping of the Bank's Children and Youth Framework. [26]

The Bank's first Global Youth Conference: "Youth Development and Peace" in Sept. 2003 (YDP 2003) was followed in Sept. 2004 by a second conference (YDP 2004) in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, where President Wolfensohn and youth organizations reviewed the Bank's current commitments and achievements with you. The following steps point the way forward: [27]

- To establish a loose and informal network of dialogue and regular interaction to disseminate information and knowledge-sharing; facilitate joint work on the following issues: conflict prevention and resolution, education, HIV/AIDS and risky behaviors and Youth employment, empower and strengthen youth organizations and ensure inclusiveness
- To agree on a process to establish the proper institutional arrangements for such a network
- To find ways to engage other institutional partners
- Be sensitive to local and global tensions
- To set up a system to monitor progress on the Sarajevo commitments
- Investing in education: take into consideration the holistic approach to education
- Find solutions to operate at a national and local level[28]

E. YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS

Youth organizations are unique in that they are primarily focused on reflecting the views and serving the needs of young people. Whether these are structured organizations or informal groups, they provide a space where young people can organize for action to meet community needs and experience group processes. Support to youth organizations and their structures on a national level through National Youth Councils or Youth Committees in many countries is the basic strategy to involve young people. This also involves the right and the support to establish youth organizations.[29]

Many youth organizations do exist, and often face the same obstacles, primarily lack or instability of resources and discontinuity in leadership. Youth organizations may form to address community problems through projects with a set life cycle, while they may also continuously work through a faith-based, university, or community structure. They may be issue-based or work to promote youth participation generally.

In a research report conducted by the Conference of NGOs (CONGO) in consultative status with the UN, it was discovered that the limited number of youth NGOs working within the UN is due to (1) stringent UN access and accreditation rules and (2) lack or resources and knowledge of how to apply for ECOSOC status.[30] The report recommends that the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) NGO Section develop a working definition for a "youth NGO" and to improve their measurement tools of youth NGOs, as well as create a coordinated outreach plan so these groups can enhance their awareness and understanding of ECOSOC consultative status.

Youth organizations may be staff-led or have a constituency that elects their officers and it is important to identify the differences and strengths displayed by both project-based and politically-oriented youth organizations. The first one focuses on operational results, while the second one relies on political process and representative legitimacy. Both types are valuable in the development of the youth movement and should be recognized as partners by governments and multilateral agencies alike when defining strategies to implement the MDGs.

It is important to recognize, as showcased in Part II of this paper, that youth organizations are already working towards implementing the MDGs. They represent a primarily untapped resource for the development of concrete action plans by governments and display several comparative advantages over other sectors. Youth organizations are dynamic and cost-effective; they have the know-how on designing and implementing youth-friendly strategies; and have a vested interest in implementing the MDGs as future inhabitants of the planet.

F. YOUTH AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Many large NGOs, such as Amnesty International or the International Planned Parenthood Foundation, continuously seek the input of young people in their work. They do so by having youth on their boards and youth advisory councils, or consciously seek youth expertise and participation in other ways, by working with youth on the ground, having internship or mentoring programmes in their offices, etc. Most young people chose to volunteer for or be members of NGOs because they have an interest in certain issues, or they identify themselves as part of a particular group. Many other young people, especially in developing countries and those in conflict, would be considered civil society leaders, but may not associate themselves as "youth" since the majority of their populations may be younger than 25. NGO alliances with youth are invaluable, and there is a lot to be learned by exploring the models some use to engage youth. As NGOs turn their focus to achieving the MDGs, they too must take up the challenge of not only building capacity of youth, but ensuring the participation of youth in their work.

PART II. YOUTH AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

GOAL 1: ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER

Target 1: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day
Target 2: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

"Youths in Nigeria have played no significant role in poverty alleviation because most young people are already under poverty and the burden of poverty can be very heavy. Poverty alleviation programs are carried out by government in a very politicized way making the gain impossible to reach the beneficiaries."

- Chijike Ndukwu (Nigeria) 32 years-old[31]

"The main goals with youth work in Brazil are: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger - there are a lot of projects, especially with children in the rural area. There is the Pastoral da Juventude that developed a powder mixture that is added to the children's food in order for them to grow healthy even without many resources. They also teach the mothers and other members of the family on how to use all parts of the fruits and vegetables (like seeds)."

-Camila Argôlo Godinho (Brazil) 24 years-old[32]

Introduction

Poverty for youth means many things. Extreme poverty means a girl does not attend school because she has to fetch water for her family. It means that a family of six does not have the US$5 per month to pay for their four children's school fees, and even if they did, their children may only have the option of reaching the fifth grade. Also difficult to quantify and resolve is the poverty of opportunity, where a young person may grow up in a strong family support system with enough food to eat, but then grows up to find no local employment. The effects of poverty are felt in access, especially to health, education, housing, power dynamics and safety. Poverty wastes human excellence on the need to survive and threatens social stability to the point of war. Increasing youth employment is one major poverty reduction strategy; this is discussed at length in Goal 8, since youth employment is target 16 of the Millennium Development Goals.

Increasing the Availability of Data on Youth and Poverty

Option for Action: *To devote UNDP's 2006 Human Development Report and, on a global scale, the 2006 or 2007 World Development Report of the World Bank to youth development.*

As governments make their MDG reports on "Goal 1," they often report data at only a national level, which omits the contrasts of rural and urban living, and the different obstacles and circumstances that correspond with age or gender. Still, little data is available on some of the poorest regions where the largest numbers of youth live.

The UN *World Youth Report 2003* attempts to provide quantitative estimates of young people in extreme poverty around the world. The lowest estimate of young people in extreme poverty ranges from 38 million to 110 million; the middle-range estimates of youth poverty is 238 million surviving on less than a $1 a day. High-end estimates of the number of young people aged 15-24 years-old in extreme poverty in 2000 are 462 million, based on those surviving on less than $2 a day, and 497 million, based on the number of children who are underweight applied to the youth population.[33]

This can also be undertaken at the regional level. The sixth edition of the Croatian Human Development Report[34] is entirely devoted to youth development. It came about when a meeting of donors wanted to know what the priority problems of Croatian youth were, and a youth present at the meeting argued that there is no comprehensive report available on the situation of young people that explicitly draws conclusions and prioritizes problems. To write this report, the UNDP office in Croatia hired an external manager to coordinate three national youth NGOs working in the field, as well as a team youth authors and working groups. Six

other local youth NGOs supported the report by organizing focus groups in different regions around Croatia. Since the Croatian national government is still in the restructuring process, there is currently no governmental body which has capacity for the implementation of the national youth policy. The report subsequently pinpoints that problem in the chapter on the relationship between youth and government, which includes interviews with governmental officials responsible for youth programs.

Case Study 1: Philippine's National Youth Commission identifies youth characteristics[35]

The National Youth Commission (NYC) is currently formulating the Medium Term Youth Development Plan (MTYDP) 2005-2010, which will serve as the master plan and national framework for all youth development efforts.

Experts from academia are helping out the NYC in crafting the Plan, which will be based on a study of the Situation of Youth in the Philippines made by a series of consultations in regions throughout the country. Previously, youth service providers address the problems considering the four youth sub-sectors namely: the in-school youth, out-of-school youth, working youth and the youth with special needs. Now, the team of experts and the NYC felt the need to address the issues by primarily identifying the distinct characteristics of the youth based on the following age groups: 15-17, 18-24 and 25-30. Among the clusters of youth issues identified in the study are education, employment, health, values and participation. The series of focused group discussions among youth leaders, youth-serving institutions, programs partners and other stakeholders will be piloted in Manila and expanded nation-wide.

Youth Engagement in Poverty Reduction Strategy Processes (PRSPs)

Option for Action: *National governments to create mechanisms that ensure young people are involved in the development of PRSPs, through National Youth Councils where possible, or other youth organizations. This will ensure that youth perspectives are heard and that PRSPs are relevant to local concerns. It will also promote widespread participation in their implementation.*

Starting in 1999, poverty alleviation strategies and action plans have been widely consulted among stakeholders in a participatory process leading to what are called Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). PRSPs mostly refer to poverty-stricken African, Asian and Latin American countries. For some nations, poverty reduction strategies are formulated by the World Bank in a participatory process leading to what are known as Country Assistance Strategies (CAS).[36] These papers consist of a number of core components: an analysis of the poverty situation in the country; a strategy for poverty reduction, based on this analysis; the commitment of budgetary resources to implement the strategy; a monitoring framework to assess the achievement of strategic goals; and consultations at every stage with primary and secondary stakeholders to ensure broad-based national ownership of the strategies.[37]

Governments and the international development community must provide young people with broader opportunities to contribute to the PRSP and CAS processes and their engagement in implementation activities. In this regard, National Youth Councils and their local counterparts, with the aid of local governments and civil society organizations, can take the lead in organizing grassroots-level poverty reduction consultations with young people. These entities can then be the sounding board of youth perspectives in national-level PRSP and CAS discussions.

A recent independent review of the World Bank's Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) Initiative recommended that the Bank i) encourage greater emphasis on improving domestic planning, implementing, and monitoring processes, and less on completion of documents; ii) ensure country ownership of the strategies; iii) help

countries identify actions with the greatest poverty pay-off; and iv) make sure its own programmes are anchored in the country's strategy in coordination with other external partners.[38]

In terms of these recommendations, youth can play a key role in "ensuring country ownership" of PRSPs. By investing in the engagement of youth, the poverty reduction strategy will not only make youth more apt as citizens to give back to their societies for the rest of their lives, but also by default link the entire families of these young people and their communities into the work. By looking at the needs of youth, key needs with terms of long range and "greatest poverty-payoff" are likely to be quickly identified.

In another recent study reviewing PRSPs, it was found out that "little systematic attention is paid to social protection issues" with are vital to the livelihoods and welfare of poor and vulnerable groups, such as young people. A growing number of PRSPs are making reference to young people yet targeted interventions are not based on integrated approaches and action plans are often done on a piecemeal basis. One of the key recommendations of the participants of the Youth Roundtable of the Expert Group Meeting on *Creating Strategies for Youth Employment in African Cities* held in Nairobi, Kenya on 21-25 June 2004 is the engagement of youth "in the creation and implementation of all development agendas, such as NEPAD, PRSP process and MDGs, particularly in identifying their role in these international development agendas". The participants further pointed out, that "PRSPs must be localized to engage youth involvement in their translation into concrete programmes of action at the local level."[39]

According to the UN World Youth Report 2003, 58.8% of youth surveyed said they were consulted on the Poverty Reduction Strategy while 41.2% said "no" and for the remainder there was no available data. In only 11.8% of cases youth were identified as specific groups in the PRSP and in 88.2% youth were included in a minor way. In 47.1% of PRSPs youth were identified as target group in the action plan while in 52.9% were included as a minor target or not included. The foregoing analysis of the information provided by government and other stakeholders suggests that, although young people are sometimes recognized, they are in most cases not regarded as a traditionally marginalized group in poverty. [40]

To this end, young people, by their sheer number and vulnerability to poverty impacts, are key clients in the PRSPs process given their huge potential to contribute in poverty reduction efforts, especially at the grassroots level.

Case Study 2: Youth participation in the consultation process of poverty reduction strategies [41]

Pursuant to the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 8425: The Social Reform and Poverty Alleviation Act, the National Anti-Poverty Commission of the Philippines, the lead government agency tasked to craft strategies and implement projects on poverty alleviation, is now in the process of reconstituting the membership of the NAPC Youth and Student Sector through the 2nd Sectoral Assembly scheduled for late 2005.

The Sectoral Assembly is currently being organized to facilitate the formation of the Sectoral Council composed of 15 to 25 sectoral leaders for the term 2005-2008 and will be responsible for coming up with a consensus on anti-poverty programmes and policies affecting the Youth and Student Sector. This process seeks to achieve the broadest representation and participation of the Youth and Student Sector in the government's anti-poverty efforts.

Youth organizations eligible for membership in the Sectoral Assembly must be operating either at the national, regional, provincial, city or municipal level, or be community and school-based organizations involved in poverty related programmes and projects and have an active participation in advocating and lobbying for the legislative/executive and/or programme agenda of the Youth and Student Sector with concrete achievement in terms of sectoral gains.

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Youth and rural development

Option for Action: *Development policies must prioritize the growth of rural areas, where a high percentage of youth are unemployed and where there exists little public infrastructure. Young people should be engaged in creating the necessary services and infrastructure in rural communities, such that income and skills can be gained for youth involved in food production and rural life.*

In most agricultural countries of Latin America and Asia, poverty incidence is much higher in rural, geographically secluded communities. These areas are often characterized by poverty of opportunity for stable employment, quality education, a scarcity of public infrastructures (i.e. farm-to-market roads, post-harvest facilities, irrigation systems) and social safety nets with the influx of foreign agricultural products due to economic liberalization.

Rural youth, who often lack skills needed in a highly competitive urban environment, are left to tend their family's agricultural land. Their potential capacity to spark increased agricultural production through innovative, eco-friendly planting practices and post-harvest methods is widely unrecognized and thus remains untapped. With adequate support infrastructure, incentives and land reform, young people in rural areas can fuel economic growth in these agricultural regions.

Local governments and the private sector can likewise tap young people in erecting agricultural infrastructures, such as irrigation systems and rural road networks. This experience would provide rural unemployed youth with valuable, practical skills in rural infrastructure that could then be transferred to other employment situations while also improving rural infrastructure for the general population and thereby increasing economic opportunity.

Youth in urban slums

Option for Action: *There is a need to develop community-driven projects with urban youth living in poverty, as young people are already creatively working in entrepreneurial projects such as ecological waste management projects. UN-HABITAT's work in slum development must be strengthened and young people must be at the core of these efforts.*

According to a recent World Bank report[42], the world's population would balloon to 9 billion by 2050 from 6 billion today, and most of that increase will be in the cities, towns and urban areas of developing countries. Urban poor youth should be given wider opportunities for engagement in the consultation process of PRSPs/CAS and a broader membership of youth from developing countries should be included in UN HABITAT's planned Youth Advisory Council.

In May 2003, the Governing Council of UN-HABITAT adopted a resolution (GC19/13) on the engagement of youth in the work of programme. The resolution requests the Executive Director to develop a strategy on enhancing the engagement of youth and youth organizations in the work of UN-HABITAT, to be submitted to the Council at its 2005 session. GC19/13 also requests the Agency to enhance engagement of youth in urban governance and in addressing the problem of youth at risk, to focus on capacity-building and poverty alleviation and on participation of UN-HABITAT in the Secretary General's initiative on youth employment, to develop a Global Partnership Initiative on Urban Youth Development in Africa and to establish an interim youth consultative mechanism. All of these elements must therefore be taken into consideration in the proposed youth strategy.

In view of this mandate, and in order to work towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, UN-HABITAT is committed to developing, supporting and promoting initiatives, which positively contribute to:

- Mainstreaming youth as a cross-cutting issue in the implementation of UN-HABITAT programs
- Initiating and fostering inter-agency collaboration, as well as partnerships with youth organizations, as a vehicle for outreach and youth participation,
- Engaging youth concerns at an international level to help formulate an international understanding of pressing youth issues,
- Enhancing the participation of youth in UN-HABITAT's work so that young people's views and contributions are valued,
- Recognizing the diversities among young people and taking their views into account,
- Providing youth with the best-available information resources and facilities pertaining to employment, health, crime prevention, governance and youth rights and responsibilities.

Youth vigilance in combating corruption

Option for Action: *Widespread support must be extended to the World Bank's Youth and Governance Program, particularly in countries most affected by ongoing corruption. Youth must be furthered trained in the eliminating all types of corruption and whistle-blowing strategies through country-specific youth driven anti-corruption projects.*
Option for Action: *Young people must have better information on and access to anti-corruption commissions.*

According to the World Bank Institute, the total cost of corruption is more than $1 trillion dollars (US$1,000 billion) each year. It further reports that "countries that tackle corruption and improve their rule of law can increase their national incomes by as much as four times in the long-term, and child mortality can fall as much as 75 percent." In the poverty-stricken countries Africa and Asia, corruption, both at the government and private sector, is a chronic problem that is crippling the economic stability of markets and eroding the moral fibers of society. Last June 2004, under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General, the UN Global Compact Summit participants adopted a tenth Global Compact principle "against corruption in all its forms, including bribery" in addition to promoting good corporate practices in human rights, decent labor and environmental sustainability. The advancement of information technologies and the repeated calls for transparent procurement systems are putting pressures for governments to institute reforms in its management of public funds.[43]

Central to solving the dilemma of corruption is the existence of effective participatory mechanisms, transparent public systems and information disclosure laws within the broad context of good governance. It is in these areas that young people are helping societies curb corruption. The idealism and high ethical standards of youth are potential ingredients in fighting wide-scale corruption and promoting good governance. Also, corruption breeds corruption and as such, if youth have no opportunity to exercise their idealism and ethical standards and the only example presented is corruption; youth are at great risk of falling into the cycle of corruption. Clearly, the challenge is to harness the enthusiasm and idealism of youth and to empower them to use it as opposed to giving them no other option. The World Bank's Youth and Governance program acknowledges the significance of young people in the struggle towards a corruption-free society by, among others, refusing to pay bribes, leading information drives or media campaign about anti-corruption, organizing youth clubs on good governance and reporting fraudulent transactions of government officials.[44]

Case Study 3: Building mechanisms for youth engagement to eradicate corruption in Zambia[45]

Zambia's youth are finding ways to fight corruption in their country with the help of the World Bank. Youth engagement in corruption allows young people to tackle a political problem that has many consequences in their lives. Since youth compromise the majority of the population in Zambia, it is incredibly important for them to fight corruption, a social ill that will directly affect their lives in the future. The World Bank organized a workshop for Zambian high school and college students where they provided practical solutions to

this serious problem. The students also used the World Bank's course to reflect on corruption and how they can save their country from its grip.

The participants gave recommendations to disseminate news on youth activity against corruption. An interesting suggestion was to provide access to government publications from police agencies, which would allow for the creation of an anti-corruption commission. This gives young people a chance to participate in the decision-making process of policy making.   The role of the media is an important way to spread the information that youth gather on corruption. Youth should document what they know, see or hear about corruption as soon as it happens, thereby disseminating updates. Additionally, the use of radio and television to present programs would inform a wider group of people about these issues.

Conclusion

As can be seen, young people are integral to addressing the issues of extreme poverty and hunger. They can assist with rural development, combating corruption and developing social and environmental entrepreneurship. In order to utilize this potential, young people should be fully engaged in processes such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Processes and other rural and urban development initiatives.

GOAL 2: ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

Target 3: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

Education and cooperation are very important to achieve the MDGs. Education is necessary in every field, in health, employment, awareness all needs good education to do good work.
- Nour Mosawy (Iraq) 20 years-old.[46]

One big thing is that students at my university (Rhodes University in South Africa) are using Open Source free computer software to provide free Internet connectivity to disadvantaged schools. We raise money to buy second hand computer hardware and software which we donate to the schools in our area.
- Haru Mutasa (South Africa) 24 years-old.[47]

Introduction

The World Declaration on Education for All, Article 1, paragraph 1 states "Every person - child, youth and adult - shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs. These needs comprise both essential learning tools[48] and the basic learning content[49], required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning."[50]

Ensuring primary education for all people is the key to unlocking the potential of all societies. It enables people to take care of themselves and their families; to take control of their futures; and most importantly, to raise themselves out of poverty. Furthermore, ensuring education for all people will benefit all MDGs: it will help fight poverty, promote gender equality; it will create awareness in matters of HIV/AIDS and maternal health, and promote environmental sustainability.

Encouraging School Participation

Option for Action: *There is a need for strong policies to increase youth enrolment in primary and secondary education. The delivery of primary and secondary education must be free of charge.*

More than 113 million children are denied access to primary education and more than 150 million people have never completed it. Girls are particularly excluded from primary education. In addition, approximately 250 million children from ages 5-14 in the developing world cannot go to school because they are subject to child labour.[51] Despite several declarations, such as the World Declaration on Education for All and the Dakar Framework for Action adopted by the World Education Forum, primary education for all children is still not the norm in many countries.[52]

According to a World Bank study, only 37 of 155 developing countries analyzed have successfully achieved universal primary education. Based on trends of the 1990s, another 32 are likely to achieve that goal, but 70 countries are at risk of not reaching the goal unless progress is significantly accelerated. In several countries, completion rates have stagnated or even fallen in recent years.[53] This is a bleak representation of the priorities that are given to children and primary education.

Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia are extremely challenged areas in the world where progress in education has been very difficult. Sub-Saharan Africa lags farthest behind, with little progress since 1990. South Asia is the other region with chronically low enrollment and completion rates.[54] The root-cause of this is a lack of resources, particularly in rural areas. It is important to underline that the lack of resources exists because national governments do not make primary education top priority in their budgets.[55] In order to allow all

people to benefit from primary education, all governments must guarantee that it is free of charge, compulsory and accessible to all people.[56]

Option for Action: *Programmes for education must include young people as peer educators and trainers.*

National policies should be geared towards involving youth in ensuring primary education. National youth policies relating to educational issues should:
- Foster equal access for all to the formal education system, especially in order to combat illiteracy, which continues to be an enormous problem for many young people in the world.
- Not be limited to the skills on which the labor market is focused. Education contributes, from an early age, to the socialization, integration and empowerment of individuals.
- Consider the importance and mobilize the potential of non-formal learning schemes next to the formal educational systems. Non-formal learning is often considered by young people as the most positive, efficient and attractive counterpart to a largely inefficient and unattractive system of formal education.
- Place renewed emphasis on life-long learning schemes to provide culturally, socially and economically appropriate education. Life-long learning schemes can provide various benefits, especially for people in countries lacking access to universal education.

Case Study 4: Youth Working to Eradicate Illiteracy in India

Eradication of Illiteracy Project under the aegis of Tara Educare Academy**[57]** was the a brainchild of a 17 year old child **-** Ram Gopalakrishnan, living in Noida - a township on the outskirts of Delhi, India. In order to do something about the problem of illiteracy in the neighborhood, he formed a group called EDU-KIDS in February 2000, and started the Eradication of Illiteracy Project. The project entailed starting a school that is free of charge for all the children in the neighborhood. The school began with only 3 students in the school run in a volunteered car garage and after three years had 30 students. The school now has plans to divide the group in two separate groups, so that one group consists of older children who have learnt the basics and the other consist of the younger lot.

Two teachers take turn teaching and the members of EDU-KIDS help with the facilitation of the school. The students are taught to read and write the national language of India (Hindi), as well as arithmetic, moral values, environmental studies, art, crafts and music. Most importantly, this project stresses on educating girls. Efforts are underway to mainstream the children into the school system. Recognizing this genuine effort of youth to ensure primary education, SMILE Foundation India came forward to support this project and institutionalize the initiative. Also, Ram received the Global Youth in Action Award in 2001.

Young People as Students and Teachers

Option for Action: *Opportunities for international exchanges and volunteerism across borders must be made accessible to youth worldwide. Young people involved in such programmes become assets in a labour market marked by globalization, as well as excellent sources of knowledge for teaching and peer education.*
Option for Action: *Governments must work with communities to build more spaces where both formal and informal learning can take place.*
Option for Action: *Projects where young people take initiative to enhance education and teach other young people should be acknowledged and promoted.*

Young people are extremely effective teachers, because they can interest and motivate each other when teachers and parents cannot. Young people have proven to be good mentors for younger students in school, helping them with their studies and counseling them in other areas.[58] In addition, youth are a valuable source to identify problems involving education and implementing appropriate projects. Adopting policies to stimulate

young people in contributing to the assurance of universal primary education can therefore significantly speed up achieving goal 2 of the MDGs.

An example of this is the Vivekananda Child Development Club, which was launched by a group of young people in September 1999 to help further the development of the Nasivanthuvu community in Eastern Sri Lanka. Recently affected by armed conflict, the region suffered from poor educational opportunities, health hazards and many other problems. There are 26 members of the club and another 85 children in small groups.

Working with the help of the Eastern Self-Reliant Community Awakening Organization, the Vivekananda Child Development Club set out to expanding and upgrading the local primary school. Funds were secured from Save the Children Norway, and labour was donated by the parents of the students. Within a period of ten months, the school was expanded up to the 9th grade. In October 2000, the building was officially presented to the Eastern Province Education Department and the Director of Education immediately allocated three more teachers. This allowed the school to expand up to the 10th grade, which allowed for 420 additional students to be served by the school.

Another example lies in Peru, where school councils now exist in almost 6,000 schools. These councils are run by democratically elected representatives and are recognized by local institutions such as the police, health centers and religious bodies. The school councils run seminars on young people's rights, are active in promoting youth participation and have now been made mandatory in all schools by the Ministry of Education.

Case Study 5: Youth Engaging Youth in Educational Opportunities

Free The Children[59] is an international network of children helping children at a local, national and international level through representation, leadership and action. The organization was founded by Craig Kielburger in 1995, at the time a twelve year old Canadian. In the past seven years, Free the Children has spread to more than 35 countries and more than 1 million people have participated in its projects and campaigns. The organization is currently working on many issues concerning the protection of children's rights, and Youth Representatives from Free the Children have become international spokespersons for children's rights and ensuring primary education for all children.

One of Free the Children's projects is 'School Building'. The organization has built and outfitted more than 375 schools around the world providing education to more than 30,000 children in 23 developing countries. School building projects are supported and enhanced by alternative income programs, medical centers and clean water programs. Another project the organization has taken on is providing 'School and Health Kits', it has shipped more than 175,000 school and health kits to children in nearly 40 developing countries, providing them with the necessary supplies to go to school and remain healthy. Free the Children owe their success to the formula: 'young people for young people'.

Curriculum

Option for Action: *Use youth expertise to create curriculums that are both relevant and interesting to youth.*
Option for Action: *Localize curriculums such that they include studies of poverty and ways in which local communities can respond.*
Option for Action: *Include education for sustainable development in overall curriculum.*

Case Study 6: Youth Leadership in Education in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) [60]

The YouthLearn Initiative offers youth development professionals and educators comprehensive services and resources for using technology to create exciting learning environments. YouthLearn, created by the Morino

Institute and now led by Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC), provides the tools needed to start or strengthen both after-school and in-school programs. Currently, the YouthLearn Initiative provides after-school instructors and classroom teachers with relevant, creative materials that help them to make good use of new technology and to turn good learning programs into great ones. To meet this need, the YouthLearn Initiative consists of a comprehensive website, a growing online community, a free electronic newsletter, and an extensive manual called The YouthLearn Guide. Ultimately, EDC seeks to establish a national center of excellence on youth, learning, and technology anchored around YouthLearn's approach.

In the DRC, YouthLearn assists in the development of a series of modules that will combine basic literacy and digital literacy skills. YouthLearn plans to develop a series of modules and then provide intensive training at the resource center for a small group of teachers and youth representatives, who will eventually train others. A preliminary module might focus on a distinct skill-such as searching the Internet, while also producing resources and information that will be useful for the village. This includes for example a science experiment to catalogue all the species of local plants and trees. This kind of activity focuses on content that's important to the village, creates a resource for use in the classroom and the community, and teaches skills of finding and evaluating information on the Internet.

Education and Information Communication Technologies (ICTs)

Option for Action: *Re-enforce learning with ICTs, such that virtual learning centers can also provide safe spaces to go to after school and training in life skills.*

Our formal education system is changing from being teacher driven to student driven. With more information easily accessible through a simple Internet search than could ever be imparted by a teacher, providing context that allows students to decipher relevance and meaning from any media or medium – helping students turn information into knowledge – must become a key goal of the formal education system.

Though ICTs are typically used beyond primary education, it is never too early to begin using them in the classroom, and all young people should be exposed early on to the world of information they provide. Technology is changing the way classrooms operate, through integrating multimedia textbooks, online research, and student presentations with the assistance of ICTs, making learning more interactive and participatory. The success of these programs is partly due to innovative design, and partly due to the fact that students find it natural using technology in day-to-day situations. There is a need to match the integration of technology into the curriculum with more rigorous professional development. Youth should be encouraged to share their ICT knowledge through peer-to-peer learning, and contribute to the creation of meaningful curricula.

Students and not only teachers can be a gateway to the information society. In school youth are often overlooked as a source of technological expertise. One opportunity is for students to help train their teachers in ICT matters – not only does this tap a resource existing within schools, but it builds student confidence and creates a learning community, where everyone has something to share.

Case Study 7: Providing Disadvantaged Youth with Access to Internet

The Highway Africa News Agency is an organization that has been established to provide African news organizations with an African perspective of the World Summit on the Information Society. Their mission is to have a vibrant and growing network of African journalists empowered to advance democracy and development through their understanding and use of appropriate technologies. As a result, the agency has conducted an educational project, the 'Grahamstown Schools Internet Project', with the goal of providing free internet access to disadvantaged primary and secondary schools. There are approximately 100 youth participants, of which the average age is 24 years-old. To date, the project has connected four schools to the internet. Through

the project, students have created their own webpage and learned how to access the internet. Some students out of this programme are now attending top universities in South Africa. The Project now aims to connect 96 schools to the internet and get them networking with one another.

This project has encountered several difficulties along the way, including access to equipment and restraints from computer firms about donating money and equipment. The computers they use are quite old, and affordable or donated software is hard to come by. Another difficulty is that some schools have no electricity, and there are teachers that have never seen or used a computer before. Despite this, this project aims to advance education of those in South Africa with minimal funds raised through donations. It strives to enhance development and increased standards of living through education.

Conclusion

Young people and youth organizations are key resources in ensuring primary education for all people, as they are directly affected by its existence, or lack thereof. Young people are extremely effective teachers, because they can interest and motivate each other when teachers and parents cannot. Young people have proven to be good mentors for younger students in school, helping them with their studies and counseling them in other areas.[61] In addition, youth are a valuable source to identify problems involving education and implementing appropriate projects. Adopting policies to stimulate young people in contributing to the assurance of universal primary education can therefore significantly speed up achieving goal 2 of the MDGs.

GOAL 3: PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN

Target 4:   Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and to all levels of education no later than 2015

Gender inequality isn't considered as an issue by many governmental officials.
- Tatiana Poladko (Ukraine) 20 years-old.[62]

Poverty characterizes life in the rural villages of Moi's Bridge in Uasin Gishu District, Kenya. Adolescent girls are forced to the streets to exchange sexual favors with money to assist their families meet basic needs. By empowering street girls with life skills, my organization, KidRights, has managed to offer the girls with fundamental income-generating knowledge to enable them establish their own small-scale businesses and hence fulfill their families' needs. We also managed to strengthen their ability to understand their sexuality.
- Esther Mburu (Kenya) 21 years-old[63]

Introduction

Despite progress towards achieving gender equality, women are still treated as inferior to men and denied opportunities for employment and education. Traditional practices, attitudes, and roles, in addition to religious and economic beliefs, result in gender inequality, which may not be recognized as discrimination. Poverty is the biggest impediment to gender equality. In developing countries girls are often expected to remain at home to care for younger siblings and the household. Additionally, many families in poverty are often faced with having to choose between sending a boy or a girl to school. Often it is the boys who go to school as it is assumed that they can earn more money. Thus, girls are unable to secure the human right to education. Beyond education, gender disparities and discriminations should also be addressed in wage disparities, protection and rights under the law, and other arenas.

At the World Conference on Women in 1995, governments agreed in the Beijing Platform for Action that

> "Special measures must be taken to ensure that young women have the life skills necessary for active and effective participation in all levels of social, cultural, political and economic leadership. It will be critical for the international community to demonstrate a new commitment to the future - a commitment to inspiring a new generation of women and men to work together for a more just society. This new generation of leaders must accept and promote a world in which every child is free from injustice, oppression and inequality and free to develop her/his own potential. The principle of equality of women and men must therefore be integral to the socialization process."[64]

The ability of the global community to reach the benchmark of 2005 for eliminating primary and secondary education is clearly in jeopardy. As previously noted, of the 121 million children not receiving an education, the majority are girls. Those uneducated women who seek work outside of the home are at greater risk of being overworked, underpaid, and physically abused, or making a living in prostitution[65]. In addition, an educated or literate woman is less likely to die in childbirth, likely to have fewer and healthier children, and it is more likely that her children will be educated.

Expanding and supporting the education of young women and girls

Option for Action: *Expand and strengthen support to various non-formal education activities provided by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that empower young women with life skills and build self-esteem.*
Option for Action: *Consult with civil society to localize gender equality targets to national and local circumstances.*

Particularly in developing countries, governments have largely failed to be a reliable agent for ameliorating the gender disparity. However, the NGOs worldwide have had some success at bringing more attention to the plight of the girl child in advocacy efforts at all levels. On the ground, many NGOs focus entirely on working with women, and often their grassroots methodology is more sensitive than those who are not directly familiar with the communities to the cultural environment in which these programmes are implemented.

For example, the goal of the Bangladesh Adolescent Development Programme is to equip the adolescent girls for a better future. For a long time the YWCAs in Bangladesh were running education programs for children as well as adults. Recently the YWCA of Bangladesh identified that there are many adolescent girls who have either never attended school or were drop-outs. These girls without having an education, life skills or occupational skills enter into married life and suffer the most. Therefore, in 1998, Adolescent Development Program was started by local YWCAs. The program includes: literacy, skill training, awareness raising, preparation for married life. In eight local YWCAs young girls are receiving the Adolescence Development Training on a regular basis. Fifteen to twenty young girls are usually enrolled in each group for an 18 month course. From July 2001 to March 2002 a total number of 67 girls in 4 groups have successfully completed one year and six months of training. Some of them have been admitted in formal schools after completion of the course. ADP aims to reach girls ages 13-19 on the grass roots level.

Like in any development program, young people themselves need to be involved in the design of the programme that serves them. The local priorities of women, such as literacy, public health, earning power and employment opportunities, access to skills training etc., should be the founding base for all programme development. Also, the interest of those whom the project is serving should be the starting point for the creation of the project.

Case Study 8: YWCA of Belize Closing Gender Gap in Secondary Education[66]

HELP gives girls ages 13-18 a second chance at either a secondary education by preparing them for the entrance exam or helping them to acquire a skill so they can function positively in the community. The program is geared towards helping young women develop positive self-esteem through our counseling program. They are also given the opportunity to re-sit the Primary School Examination or get basic skills in hospitality, sewing, and cosmetology. Young women between 13-18 years of age are the main target group and the young women are involved in the program. The program is funded through participatory fees, volunteer teachers, UNICEF, and minimal government funding. Donors are UNICEF, Government of Belize, and the community. At present there are 45 participants. This program has a positive influence in the community. The graduates are currently enrolled in most of the high schools in Belize City and at the junior college. The present Head Girl at Weslet College is a graduate of the program. Also a graduate from the University of Belize Hospitality Service Department was a HELP graduate. Students who have graduated have successfully found employment or have used their new found skills to start their own business. There are two grave challenges: lack of funding and lack of space which is creating a negative impact on the growth of the program. Future plans are to accommodate more girls and to allow the curriculum to become versatile so that it will develop and grow along with the ever changing needs and problems that young women face.

Empowering young women to help themselves

Option for Action: *Create policy frameworks that provide access to resources for young women to secure decent livelihoods and entrepreneurial skill development, including financing programs and community-based training centers for women.*
Option for Action: *Prioritize young women's participation and leadership in programs at UN agencies, governments, NGO's and other organizations.*

Youth organizations, though it varies by region, face challenges specifically in promoting the leadership of young women. While struggling to promote youth participation, they may overlook their country's and their organization's gender inequity. While a variety of inspiring youth programs have been implemented worldwide, the impact of this has hardly been felt in the world's poorest areas. The youth population is a valuable source to identifying community priorities and how to implement appropriate programs. The complexity of gender equality, given cultural differences worldwide, demands both sensitivity and persistence.

Leadership programs should be established, particularly aimed at including women in political processes and training women to run for political office. For countries in transition and post-conflict, special efforts should be made to include young women in rebuilding processes.

Case Study 9: Young Women in Africa Mobilizing Around the HIV/AIDS Pandemic [67]

From June 30th to July 4th 2003, a group of 35 young women participated in the Association for Women in Development (AWID) Young Women and Leadership program's first-ever regional institute on 'Tackling HIV/AIDS and poverty in Africa'. Young women from all over the African continent as well as from Australia, India, Uzbekistan and Barbados came together to analyze, strategize and mobilize around the HIV/AIDS pandemic while examining the intersections of the pandemic with local, national and global economics, human rights and a leadership crises.

The central question of the session was: what kind of leadership is needed in the context of HIV/AIDS and globalization? They recognized that challenges such as the rise of fundamentalisms- whether they be economic or religious- and conservative responses to HIV/AIDS and poverty, clearly indicate the need for an innovative and clear agenda for young women's leadership in these areas.

The session concluded with the young women identifying a need for the creation of a young woman's network within Africa to allow for ongoing communication and strategizing. They also identified the importance of young women's demands and priorities to be represented at all meetings and decision- making processes that will affect their lives. By ensuring ongoing communication and strategizing amongst themselves, as well as other interested young women in Africa, the participants have created a mechanism to maintain the momentum gained from the institute to ensure strategic advocacy and activism at all levels.

Promotion of Gender Equity in Education

Option for Action: *Incorporate the social and economic needs of young women into formal educational programs including offering technical training, social skills, work experience and health information at times and locations accessible to women.*

For example, night school programs for youth have been implemented in countries such as India to target young women. Efforts like this should be increased. Several case studies represent the quality of aid certain NGO's have been able to provide through grassroots, regionally-specific programs and movements.

Case Study 10: Increasing the Access to Education for Girls in Afghanistan

The Afghan Institute of Learning (AIL)[68] was founded in 1995 to help address the problem of a lack of educational access for women and girls, their subsequent inability to support their lives, and the impact of this lack of education on society and culture. AIL is an organization, founded and run by women, that aims to

play a major part in reconstructing an educational system capable of reaching the women and children of Afghanistan-whether in refugee camps or still in their homes.

Through a variety of projects and activities in Afghanistan and Pakistan, AIL is providing education, training and health services to more than 25,000 Afghan women and children monthly. In addition, using the skills and technical assistance provided by Creating Hope International, AIL staff are constantly developing new teacher training seminars and workshops, human rights workshops and translating materials for use in the pre-schools. Members of the teacher training staff also participate in the UNICEF Curriculum Development effort for grades 1-6 and attend workshops to upgrade their own skills.

Option for Action: *Adopt gender equity policies that make gender awareness training for educators and development workers mandatory. With such training, undertake a thorough review and evaluation of all curriculums for gender bias.*

These policies would ensure that all children and youth, regardless of their gender, will:
- develop to their full potential;
- be treated in the same manner;
- have access to the same equipment;
- present positive experiences for all;
- use non stereotyped materials, such as non sexist textbooks; and
- ensure gender equity in the workplace by hiring staff of both sexes.[69]

Conclusion

Addressing the issue of gender is vital to the successful implementation of the Millennium Development Goals from education and employment to health. The needs of young women should be placed at the center of this gender debate.

GOAL 4: REDUCE CHILD MORTALITY

Target 5:   Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate

I think the Government doesn't really know the most effective ways of involving youth to such issues as child mortality and maternal health (only on the level of trainings on reproductive health) as well as poverty.

- *Tatiana Poladko (Ukraine) 20 years-old[70]*

Introduction

Just as child deaths are the result of many causes, reducing child mortality will require multiple, complementary interventions. An overall increase on public spending on health is urgently needed so that immunizations are available to all and preventable diseases can be recognized and treated in their early stages. The major cause of child mortality in developing countries is poor water quality and sanitation-related diseases.

For every child that dies under 5 years of age, there is one less son or daughter, one less brother or sister, one less infant, one less 10 year old, one less adolescent, one less young professional, one less potential community or national leader. Every year, eleven million children die before the age of five, 70% of the causes of these deaths are either due to diseases or malnutrition which could be prevented with appropriate medical attention.[71] Youth can be active partners in decreasing the rate of child mortality. UNICEF has created partnerships with youth groups to construct and maintain water and sanitation services in some countries.[72]

As outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action, in a number of countries, the practice of prenatal sex selection, higher rates of mortality among very young girls and lower rates of school enrolment for girls as compared with boys suggest that son preference is curtailing the access of girl children to food, education and health care and even life itself. Discrimination against women begins at the earliest stages of life and must therefore be addressed from then onwards.[73]

Education

Option for Action: *Include sexual and reproductive health education in secondary school curriculums.*
Option for Action: *In areas where a low percentage of young females attend secondary school, expand urban and rural health programs to include information sessions on sexual and reproductive health and rights, targeting 15 to 24 year olds.*

Another considerable cause of child mortality rates in the world result from poor health care to pregnant women and lack of education on family planning. Approximately 15 million girls ages 15-19 years give birth each year[74] in the developing world, and 10% of these children and many mothers die in childbirth. These deaths are preventable. Educating youth on family planning and sexual and reproductive health and rights will lead to a decreased rate of child mortality. With education, young women are able to prevent, plan and space pregnancies.

Case Study 11: Youth Initiative on the Prevention of Adolescence Pregnancy

The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGS)[75] and the World Health Organization believe that education, including non-formal education, is the real key to preventing adolescent pregnancy. The two organizations are calling on communities, parents, governments, schools and health services to provide opportunities for young women to contribute to society and to provide appropriate education, information,

skills and access to health services to enable girls and young women to make informed and responsible choices.

In December 2001, WAGGGS launched a campaign on the prevention of early adolescent pregnancy. Focusing on young women under the age of 15, the campaign promoted awareness about adolescent pregnancy as a global issue and provided ways for actively addressing the problem. WAGGGS urges Member Organizations and visitors to the website to raise awareness about the high occurrence of pregnant teenagers and to raise support for youth organizations like WAGGGS which provide invaluable non-formal education programs and support for the social, personal and physical development of young people.

Youth Training Youth

Option for Action: *Taking into account community needs, create teen clinics and offer peer-to-peer education on sexual and reproductive health.*
Option for Action: *Train unemployed youth in community-based health services, prenatal care, emergency obstetric care and family planning and expand these services in a strategic manner in developing countries.*

Public spending on health care is necessary to expand and improve public health care where it does exist and create health services in areas where none are currently available. Globally the health sector is in crisis with a desperate shortage of community health workers, trained midwives, nurses, health workers, doctors and obstetricians. As recognized in the interim report of the UN Millennium Project Taskforce on Goal 4, a staged strategy recognizing that a substantial proportion of newborn deaths can be averted by actions that can safely and effectively be performed by community-based health workers is necessary to reduce child mortality.[76] In addition, globally in 2003 there are over 88 million unemployed youth, representing more than half the world's jobless, with many more under-employed young people.[77] Training youth in community based health-work would not only reduce incidence of child mortality through the increased number of health-workers and skilled birth attendants available, it would also provide youth with decent employment.

Case Study 12: Female Youth Contribute to the Prevention of Teen Pregnancy in Chile [78]

A programme was developed by the YWCA in Chile to contribute to the prevention of teenage pregnancy and transmission of HIV/AIDS through training for young women from middle and low economic sectors in Valparaiso. The project aims to train 25 young women with the objective of forming a leader's group in the area of sexual and reproductive health, especially to prevent teenage pregnancy and the transmission of HIV/AIDS. The young women will be from 5 sectors of the city of Valparaiso. The training will be done in Valparaiso. All the young women will be trained during four months, in two weekly sessions, with a total of 32 sessions. These sessions will include issues linked to the prevention of unwanted pregnancy and the prevention of transmission of HIV/AIDS. The sessions will provide contents related particularly to sexual and reproductive health.

After the training, participants are encouraged to facilitate an activity of awareness-raising in their own community. They will be supported and supervised by the social worker coordinator of the programme. One of the objectives of this project is to replicate the training to other young women in different sectors of the Valparaiso city through the training of trainers. The creation of a leaders group is oriented to promote the formation of a permanent group of 15 young women leaders within the YWCA on the issue of sexual and reproductive health, who will organize actions and activities in the area of prevention in the different sectors of Valparaiso and within the lycées of the city.[79].

Youth actions for clean water and sanitation to promote public health

Option for Action: *Raise awareness among youth that access to clean water and sanitation is a public health issue and enable youth to address local public health problems.*

Case Study 13: Youth Addressing Local Health Problems in Bhutan[80]

Established in 1989 by a group of undergraduate students in Bhutan, the Sherubtse Nature Club does things like drinking water source monitoring, tank cleaning and monitoring, cleaning the surroundings of water sources on a local level.

In 2002, the Club cleaned the water tanks supplying their college community and the local area with water. There had been a typhoid outbreak every year. As a result of the group's project, the monitoring of water sources has substantially decreased the number of typhoid cases in the community.

Another important activity was cleaning a pond that attracted a lot of campers and people taking picnics in the pond's vicinity. Approximately 50 kilograms of waste including plastics, bottles and papers were collected from within the ponds well as the surrounding. A pit was dug up to serve as a spot for people to throw their trash away. This has made a positive impact on the area that was once used as a garbage disposal.

Case Study 14: Youth Service Day in Tbilisi on April 18, 2004[81]

Youth organizations and other NGOs participated in the Global Youth Service Day in Georgia by cleaning the Heroes Square Underground Complex, which has been abandoned for years. The main health risk imposed by the area was its poor sanitation that was causing illnesses for the community. Referred to as "a public toilet" or the "Circle of Death", the area was too dangerous to pass due to health risks and crime. Over 100 young volunteers refurbished the Complex and made the underground passageway usable for the first time in years. The US Embassy writes that:

> "The project was initiated by the young people participating in Youth Service Day, who felt that this project would most benefit the citizens of Tbilisi. Due to their efforts, the complex has been cleaned and refurbished, and pedestrians can use it again to safely cross a very dangerous intersection. The embassy arranged the donation of brooms, brushes, garbage bags, and gloves for the project."[82]

Now that the sewage system in the underground passageway has been cleaned and the location has been redone by the youth groups, pedestrians are using the location again. The event marked civic responsibility and the positive role youth can play to affect public health.

Conclusion

Access to safe water, better sanitation facilities, and improvements in education, especially for girls and mothers, are closely linked to reduced mortality[83]. Many children who live in unsanitary conditions suffer from cholera, diarrhea and malaria[84]. Child mortality is a cross-sector issue and one that heavily affects young people across the globe.

GOAL 5: IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH

Target 6:   Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio

I reckon that if young people take ownership of their ideas, information, and knowledge, then we will see change being effected worldwide and a new generation will be born that has lower rates of infant mortality, better health, and overall less poverty - and this goes for everyone.

-Susanna Coyle (New Zealand) 22 years-old[85]

Introduction

For both biological and social reasons, adolescents, and particularly adolescent girls, are a vulnerable group. In many areas of the world, especially in West Africa and South Asia, East and Central Africa, a large percentage of girls are already married by their mid- to late- teenage years and have given birth at least once by the age of 18.[86]

Early marriage reduces girls' educational opportunities, starts them on a path toward early childbearing, with resulting health risks (including mortality), and often locks them into unequal relationships with much older men.[87] Adolescents in highly dependant circumstances are subject to higher rates of abuse, including sexual abuse. Maternal health is a youth issue given that 15 million girls, ages 15-19, give birth every year and an additional five million pregnancies end in abortion.[88] Additionally, pregnancy is the leading cause of death for girls age 15-19 in the developing world.[89]

The reproductive and sexual health needs of youth have long been ignored and their views have been silenced by the decision-makers that influence health and education policy and programs[90]. Young people are rarely consulted about policy that concerns them and are generally ignored in favor of 'adult youth specialists'. The specific challenges facing adolescents must be acknowledged and adolescents should be considered during policy formulation.

According to the Commission on Population and Development, youth should be actively involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of development activities that have a direct impact on their daily lives. This is especially important with respect to information, education and communication activities and services concerning reproductive and sexual health, including the prevention of early pregnancies, sex education and the prevention if HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.[91]

Education

Option for Action: *Include sexual and reproductive health education in secondary school curriculums.*

As the UN Millennium Project Taskforce on Goal 4 articulated in their interim report, we have the technology and the specific health interventions to prevent the majority of conditions that kill women of reproductive age and to enable all people to protect and promote their health. [92]   Therefore, we can meet the MDGs. In that sense, the challenge is not a question of medical technology. Instead, for the health sector, the central challenge is to tackle the problems of implementation, of ensuring access to these interventions by means that simultaneously promote the fundamental aims of development. That challenge is social, economic, cultural and unavoidably political, in the sense that it relates to the distribution of power and resources within and between countries.[93]

Adolescents struggle to make choices and, all too often, confront violence, coercion and discrimination. Health services for adolescents must be tailored effectively to address their unique needs and circumstances.[94] Adolescents require education, knowledge, access to health services, family planning and information on

sexually transmitted infections including HIV, so that they can adequately equip themselves to make choices for their own futures.

For example, to improve the reproductive health and the economic situation of young girls, a pilot project in Gitarama will train 70 young people from 2 YWCA groups in family planning and HIV/AIDS prevention. Using dance, theatre and singing the YWCA will lead an information campaign in the general population, especially the youth. The programme will also include micro credit for income generation and some skills training

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Case Study 15: Improving Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health in Bosnia and Herzegovina

This project seeks to establish and maintain a linked set of services and initiatives:
- Opening and operating the first youth-friendly SRH advice and support centers in BiH in three selected community focal points across BiH;
- Producing a wider youth-focused portfolio of information and education resources on SRH issues, linked to public awareness-raising events, work with the media, and advocacy;
- Providing ready access to contraceptives through the above SRH advice and support centers and peer educators;
- Further capacity-building of the peer educators' network, and its co-ordination with other existing resources, to build reach and sustainability.

Advocacy directed at government, in order to foster change in the educational curriculum to address SRH issues, promote knowledge of and adherence to international commitments, highlight the importance of accessible SRH services, and raise awareness of youth rights and needs.

The project has opened 8 youth-friendly centers for information and counseling. It also organizes peer presentations in primary and high schools, conducts outreach activities, especially in distant communities, and disseminates a wide range of information materials on puberty, contraception, STDs and HIV/AIDS.

Training Young People in the Health Sector

Option for Action: Young people are the key to solving the troubling lack of human resources in the health sector. Youth need to be given financial support and other incentives to be trained as health professionals.

Human resources for health are in crisis. Solutions must be conceptualized globally as well as locally, with the cooperation of multiple sectors within and across countries. For maternal mortality reduction, certain key functions can be delegated to appropriately trained nurses, midwives, surgical assistants, and general physicians and not be restricted to specialist physicians. At the same time that there is a desperate need for human resources in the health sector. There are approximately 66 million young people around the world without employment. This parallel provides a great opportunity to build capacity in youth around the world.

Case Study 16: Primary Care Specifically for Youth

The Adolescent Health Center AHC of the Mount Sinai Medial Center[95] was established in 1968 as the first primary care program in New York specifically designed for the health needs of adolescents. The Adolescent Health Center provides confidential comprehensive medical, mental health, family planning, and health education services to young people between the ages of 10-21.

The mission of the Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center is to help each adolescent grow up happy, healthy, and well-educated -- with hopes and opportunities for the future -- by preventing disease and promoting health.

AHC provides reproductive health care which includes routine gynecological care, family planning, birth control education and provision, pregnancy testing, pregnancy options counseling, STD testing and treatment, HIV/STD risk reduction counseling, and HIV testing and counseling. AHC provides on-site evaluation and treatment and is a major New York City referral center for the diagnosis and treatment of abnormal pap smears in the adolescent population.

Services include: Family planning; Pregnancy prevention project; Pregnancy testing; Birth control advice and information; Sexually transmitted diseases treatment; Condom distribution; Colposcopy (dysplasia) services. AHC's holistic approach to adolescent health has enabled it to successfully implement programs such as its reproductive health program, thereby encouraging teens to make thoughtful decisions.

Sharing Best Practice

Option for Action: *Support the networking of governments, NGOs, and youth organizations at national, regional, and international levels to promote the sharing of best practices for providing adequate health services to large populations.*

This would include creating, updating and translating youth-serving NGO directories**, f**orming youth-serving NGO pressure groups against abuse/violations of rights and promoting partnerships from our homes and our families. Youth-serving NGOs should form a coalition for advocacy on youth concerns as well as educate youth on their political, civil and socio-economic rights and responsibilities.

Conclusion

To achieve Goal 5, adolescents must become more educated and active members of society, equipped to make the right sexual, reproductive, and family-planning choices for their future.

Factors that influence the health of young people are numerous and interrelated, therefore successful health policies for young people should be interdisciplinary and cross-sector (addressing personal, social and mental development), promote life skills and provide practical information on health issues of concern to young people and address young people's sexual and reproductive health from a preventive, rights-based, gender-responsive and empowering perspective.

GOAL 6: COMBAT HIV/AIDS, MALARIA AND OTHER DISEASES

Target 7:   Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS
Target 8:   Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

Nigerian youth have been left out for so long, but since last year we have all decided to be involved by force, we are trying, we were able to gather for the national HIV/Aids conference in Abuja to help in combating HIV/AIDs. We held consultative sessions for the 6 geopolitical regions in Nigeria developed a communiqué in each region, which led to the Nigeria declaration on HIV/AIDS.

- Onyinye Ndubuisi (Nigeria) 22 years-old[96]

Introduction

The HIV/AIDS epidemic is, in terms of its devastating effects on the lives of young people, perhaps the most pressing issue in regards to a youth policy. It is estimated that in 2001, 7.3 million young women and 4.5 million young men were living with HIV/AIDS, and that every day 6,000 young people become infected with the virus. In South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe 75% of HIV positive youth aged 15-24 are female.[97]

As outlined in the five-year review of the International Conference for Population and Development, governments, with assistance from UNAIDS and donors,

> Should by 2005 ensure that at least 90 per cent, and by 2010 at least 95 per cent, of young men and women aged 15 to 24 have access to the information, education and services necessary to develop the life skills required to reduce their vulnerability to HIV infection. Services should include access to preventive methods such as female and male condoms, voluntary testing, counseling and follow-up. Governments should use, as a benchmark indicator, HIV infection rates in persons 15 to 24 years of age, with the goal of ensuring that by 2005 prevalence in this age group is reduced globally, and by 25 per cent in the most affected countries, and that by 2010 prevalence in this age group is reduced globally by 25 per cent.[98]

Education on sexual and reproductive health and rights

Option for Action: *Include education on sexual and reproductive health and rights in all secondary schools.*
Options for Action: *Use youth expertise to create innovative and effective strategies for the prevention of all diseases.*

In many countries, especially Southern Africa, the Abstain, Be Faithful, and use a Condom (ABC) campaigns miss youth and much of society because many youth do not have the luxury of choosing the ABC's, due to the prevalence –and even social acceptance- of domestic violence and rape.[99] Poverty drives girls to exchange their bodies for food, school fees, bus fare, or gifts. To be less susceptible to HIV/AIDS, girls especially need a culture that allows them to negotiate sex, to say no, or to ask for protection. Many youth are driven to the sex trade in order to feed their families, and these youth need social support systems so this is not a necessity, and alternative means of employment. Governments, schools, communities and parents need to work together to make schools safe places for girls from harassment and forced sex.[100]

Furthermore, HIV positive youth need knowledge on how to care for their health, on how to have safe sex, on how to protect their children if they are pregnant[101] and this information should be included in sexual and reproductive health education programs.

Case Study 17: Helping Youth in Zambia Adopt Safer Sexual Behaviors through Media [102]

Trendsetters was started to spread information and provide access to information on life skills to young people aged 15-25 in Zambia in order to help them adopt safer sexual behaviour to lower the incidences of unwanted pregnancies, STD's and HIV/AIDS.

Trendsetters Magazine began as a four page, two colour publication at 5,000 copies a month and grew to become an eight-page publication with a full colour cover and a black and white inside. To date, Trendsetters is celebrating their seventh Birthday and is now a 48-page full colour magazine that contains newer and more exciting content. It currently prints 10,000 copies of the magazine a month which sell in over 100 outlets nationwide. Trendsetters hope to increase its print run to 20,000 copies a month in the next 6 months and also hopes to take the paper regional.

Trendsetters School was implemented in 2001 by Youth Media to serve the reproductive and HIV/AIDS needs of young people in school. It is a four-page, two colour monthly newspaper that is distributed for free to over 1,000 schools in Lusaka and the Copperbelt to pupils. Currently 50,000 copies of the paper are printed and distributed though it is the intention that the print run be increased to 500,000 copies per month to enable the majority of secondary school pupils nationwide to receive a single free copy.

Trendsetters Radio is a bi-weekly radio magazine programme based on the themes and content of the Trendsetters monthly newspaper. The programmes airs once during the week on Wednesday as a 30-minute promotional show, and once on the weekend as a two-hour magazine programme. Targeted at youth between the ages of 18–25 the programme is focused on health, education, culture and social development (including politics and economics). It will be an infotainment programme using entertainment-based content to attract mass appeal for the core content focus.

Youth as peer educators and motivators

Option for Action: *To provide incentives and support for young people to use community meeting places, including government spaces, to strategize ways in which they can reduce the AIDS virus.*

Option for Action: *To create, mobilize and strengthen teams of young peer educators to visit all schools.*

Youth activists are quickly organizing in their schools, their communities, on the internet and through international meetings. While they connect and share information, they need reference points for support so their projects can grow. When faced with HIV and AIDS, young people are quick to speak clearly and directly about the virus. In many surveys of youth worldwide, youth stress need for openness in discussion, and since youth know best how to communicate with each other, youth training youth programs, the right to protection and access to means of protection.[103]

Due to cultural implications and barriers, adolescents are forbidden from discussing HIV/AIDS issues. Youth receive wrong information on HIV and reproductive matters from their peers and pornographic material.[104]

Case Study 18: Youth Providing Comprehensive Reproductive and HIV/AIDS Services

Since November 2002, our rural/tribal NGO in India has worked with 6 post-primary rural/tribal schools. Our goal was to devise newer strategies for HIV/AIDS and sexuality information and knowledge dissemination in youth. We started with slogan "Sex with one partner in many positions is safer than sex with many partners in one position". We formed 14 groups of youths aged between 9 to 14 years. Each group consisted of 50 peers. Our NGO trained these 700 adolescent peers on sexuality and HIV/AIDS over nineteen sessions. The project is

being conducted in 8 rural secondary schools in this tribal region through community programs religious programs and youth festivals. Over next phase, we intend to involve teachers and youth leaders from another 11 schools in next seven months for better impact of our project policy.

Peer educators helped in disseminating knowledge and preventive strategies to a target population. We noted 70% improvement in level of peer knowledge of sexuality and safer sex practices. This approach also increased leadership quality, general well being and self assertiveness of most of youth involved. To date we have invested 560 hours in this project-model. We need to encourage use of this peer-educators model for other health issues. This model is very cost-effective for youth oriented in HIV prevention in poor developing nations." [105]

Youth Tackling HIV/AIDs through advocacy and networking

Option for Action: *Resource conferences and existing youth structures as contact points to incorporate youth in national strategies, advise on government policies, and distribute resources*

Four hundred youth leaders recently attended the XV International Conference on AIDS in Bangkok, Thailand. They faced obstacles in acquiring visas, paying high entrance fees, and having no paid staff to coordinate them. In the opening addresses to the Conference, none of the high level speakers mentioned their important role or the virus's extreme affect on their demographic. The youth at the conference noticed that many of their HIV positive sisters and brothers were not in attendance and that youth from the global South were underrepresented.

However, youth advocacy is increasingly well-organized and is creating more and more positive outcomes. Youth at Bangkok were panelists and presenters of papers at various conference sessions. They met with high-level functionaries and successfully lobbied for a paid youth coordinator for the next Global AIDS conference in 2006. Peter Piot, Executive Director of UNAIDS responded to their efforts by saying, "youth are on the agenda of the UNAIDS, we want to ensure that youth participate at the national level, and also at the international level. What is required now is for the youth to give us a framework through which we can do this." [106] Now it is up to youth themselves to create the frame for their involvement.

Case Study 19: Harnessing the Power of Students as Advocates, Student Global AIDS Campaign

Global Justice [107] was founded in February, 2001 to harness the power of students and young people as advocates for political and social change on global issues. In less than three years Global Justice (GJ) has developed an extensive student constituency engaging over 200 colleges and high schools in global campaigning around child health, trade, debt cancellation, and the crisis of HIV/AIDS.

Through launching and supporting student-driven, grassroots campaigns, GJ is committed to building a deep, life-term commitment among young people in promoting human rights, social justice and democracy. As the first campaign of Global Justice, the Student Global AIDS Campaign (SGAC) was founded in 2001 with the goal of mobilizing a more effective and coordinated global response to the crisis of HIV/AIDS. In just three years the SGAC has established campus chapters on over 75 campuses across the U.S. and contacts at hundreds more, making it the largest grassroots student constituency working to end the global HIV/AIDS crisis.

The campaign has been a leading force in the almost 10 fold increase in US funding for global HIV/AIDS programs over the past five years. Working in partnership with youth around the world, the campaign fights for increased funding for comprehensive HIV/AIDS programs, access to medicines, debt cancellation, and other issues that are crucial in ending the AIDS pandemic. In 2003 the organization opened its first international office in Lusaka, Zambia. John Phiri, a former UNDP and Global Justice intern heads the office,

working to train, educate, and mobilize Zambian youth around the dual crises of AIDS and debt. To date GJ Zambia has successfully organized four trainings with college students and out of school youth and a rally that raised attention around the failures of the current HIPC debt cancellation initiative. In 2000 John led a campaign with a network of youth leaders working in reproductive health issues called the Youth Forum to secure a youth seat on the newly formed Zambian National AIDS Council. After two months of public education and pressure Zambian youth successfully gained a seat on the Council.

Engage HIV Positive Youth in decision-making processes

Option for Action: *To resource existing youth structures and conferences as contact points to incorporate youth in national strategies, to advise on government health policies, and to distribute resources.*
Option for Action: *To create an "Eminent Panel" of HIV-positive youth to draw attention to the issue, to document the voices of young people living with AIDS, and to encourage youth to speak out against the disease.*

Case Study 20: UNFPA Youth Advisory Committee

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) created a youth advisory committee in April 2004 to advise UNFPA[108] on the best ways to recognize and promote the rights and needs of youth within national development plans. The group aims to ensure that UNFPAs global initiatives are youth-friendly and adequately address young peoples concerns, particularly regarding their sexual and reproductive lives, HIV/AIDS and gender issues and their link with issues of livelihood. The forum provides a space for UNFPA to exchange ideas with young people and groups serving them and receive advice on how to better address their needs. The advisory group serves to identify emerging trends in young people's reproductive health and rights, as well as allowing them to participate in decisions affecting programmes that address their issues.

The Youth Advisory Committee was formulated during a two-day meeting in New York, where more than 20 representatives of national, regional and international youth networks voiced their opinions on how to better integrate adolescents and youth in UNFPA's programmes and initiatives. The selection of the Committee members, who will be invited to serve for a maximum of two years, is based on their commitment to the principles of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, especially to young people's reproductive health and rights. While the Committee will meet annually, its members will maintain constant communications among themselves through an e-forum.

Lifting up Youth Voices

Option for Action: *People Living With AIDS (PLWA) associations and other efforts to support those affected by the disease should provide channels for youth-focused services and participation.*

Young people are some of the best educators and advocates for other young people about HIV and AIDS. The following excerpts on youth-led programmes were taken from an e-consultation in February 2004 with more than 300 youth from around the world on the gender dimensions of AIDS.[109]

"People Living with AIDS (PLWA) Victoria…started an outreach program to educate high school students about HIV/AIDS. One of their strategies is introducing an HIV+ women and her partner to talk to the students. This is done to break down the stereotype that only gay boys have AIDS and HIV/AIDS is a gay disease. By

hearing stories from HIV+ women, young men are being educated about the risk involved in unprotected sex and how it changed someone's life." (Budi, 24-years-old, Australia)

"I have an international youth helping with the Kijana Project. The members of the project are all youths from around the world. Most members are in middle or high school. We assist children in Africa who have lost their parents to AIDS and we educate youth around the world about HIV. We write for local publications, mainly youth publications, attend conferences, go to schools, etc and talk about HIV. We have not raised millions of dollars or anything like that, but we have made a difference in the lives of some youths, and that is what is important. The more youths who get involved, the more youths that get help." (Alexandra, 16-years-old, Zimbabwe)

"Last year, I coordinated a nation-wide campaign for WISE-Ghana, on Domestic Violence and sexual assault with a specific focus on AIDS. The theme and slogan of the campaign was "I have a role." Making people recognize their role is a powerful tool for our struggle. With this recognition, I want to urge us to continue to collaborate at all levels. We can't succeed without that strong partnership and collaboration. So I suggest that those working within the same localities should combine their strength and link those community partnerships with national and regional partnership for a strong international partnership. With these levels of partnership, we can continue to share such experiences and ideas. I therefore propose that an organization offers to establish and monitor [an online youth] discussion system like this that we can use to further explore and share strategies. Country specific issues can be raised for global perspectives on such a platform." (Mawuli, 25-years-old, Ghana)

Youth trained in HIV/AIDs treatment

Option for Action: *Use youth employment programs to distribute AIDS medicine delivery, link youth employment networks to AIDS clinics and distribution centers.*

Finally, it is possible to create jobs as part of donor money for youth to treat people and educate each other**.** Young people can be trained in drug distribution and HIV/AIDS treatment and care. This both builds social capacity to address the epidemic and creates sustainable livelihoods for youth.

Conclusion

Since the risk of HIV infection is tied directly to individual behaviour, it is essential that young people receive information and preventive education in order to decrease the risk of infection. If youth are not directly infected, they are still affected. Young people are losing their friends, teachers, parents, and community structures. Youth must be given the resources to mobilize themselves immediately - they can teach each other and they can reach each other.

GOAL 7: ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Target 9:   Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources

Target 10:   Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water

Target 11:   By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers

We dream of living in an environment that brings us joy, not anxiety.
We dream of having clean, fresh drinking water and not turning our rivers into sewers.
Above all, we dream of living - not existing.
Teach us, involve us, and use us"

Young Presentation to UNEP Governing Council Meeting 2000

Youths in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria for many years have fought multinationals exploring oil in their communities over issues pollution and degradation of their land and other resources. Ironically these efforts are not supported or encouraged, rather the face stiff opposition and challenges in government policies and intervention.

- Unaji Adams (Nigeria) 32- years-old[110]

Introduction

Historically, rapid economic development has resulted in extreme environmental consequences. To achieve the other seven Goals, national and regional development planning must adhere to the principles of sustainable ecosystem management. Without the earth's terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems there would be no food and no life. As freshwater becomes scarce and air quality deteriorates, natural resources become a source of conflict. While biological systems continue to decline young people face an uncertain future.

As declared in Chapter 25 of Agenda 21, adopted at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, young people have an important role in attaining environmental sustainability:

> It is imperative that youth from all parts of the world participate actively in all relevant levels of decision-making processes because it affects their lives today and has implications for their futures. In addition to their intellectual contribution and their ability to mobilize support, they bring unique perspectives that need to be taken into account…
>
> Each country should, in consultation with its youth communities, establish a process to promote dialogue between the youth community and Government at all levels and to establish mechanisms that permit youth access to information and provide them with the opportunity to present their perspectives on government decisions, including the implementation of Agenda 21.[111]

The important contribution of youth was again outlined in the Johannesburg Platform for Implementation adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD 2002). Paragraph 153 of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) requests that governments and other actors "promote and support youth participation in programmes and activities relating to sustainable development through, for example, supporting local youth councils or their equivalent, and by encouraging their establishment where they do not exist."[112]

In order to realize the declarations of Agenda 21 and the JPOI, youth participation should be supported on all levels. A comprehensive approach to building the awareness and knowledge of youth on the challenges in the area of water, sanitation and human settlements is also necessary. This can be accomplished through a strengthening of education through both formal and non-formal means. According to the UN World Youth Report, more information on environmental issues is obtained by youth through media rather than formal education.[113] As such, media and technology should be recognized as crucial methods through which to educate young people.

As detailed in Part 1, youth participate more effectively in United Nations deliberations on Sustainable Development than in any other UN issue. However, youth participation and leadership on the grassroots level has contributed significantly to environmental improvement. The following case studies are divided into two parts: youth and policy processes, and youth working at the grassroots level.

Youth and International Sustainable Development Processes

Option for Action: *Young People should continue to be engaged in UN environmental processes and funding should be made available so that youth from developing countries can properly attend and participate in these processes.*
Option for Action: *International institutions, the UN and its agencies should increase collaboration with youth organizations and existing structures such as the Commission on Sustainable Development Youth Caucus (UN-CSD) and various youth advisory councils to the UN.*

Agenda 21 recognises that broad public participation in implementation was a fundamental principle for sustainable development. To ensure this participation, Agenda 21 recognises the specific roles and responsibilities of nine civil society major groups, one of which is "Youth".[114] Agenda 21 also emphasises that new forms of civil society participation are necessary for sustainable development, and details that civil society should be involved in identifying problems, designing and applying solutions, monitoring results, as well as have access to information on all types of sustainable development issues and activities. [115]

Young people continue to take up this charge by working together as a Major Group or "youth caucus". At the Commission on Sustainable Development, the youth caucus has a seat on the floor with the delegates and makes interventions where they share the activities and priorities of youth working at the grassroots level. The Commission also provides the opportunity for youth to share information, form coalitions, initiate other forms of engagement with UN agencies, and build capacity themselves and their organizations through training. Youth at CSD also meet directly with their governments to ask how their countries sustainable development commitments are being fulfilled, and lobby for increased ways and methods for youth to nationally implement sustainable development. Providing mechanisms to strengthen their participation and capacity once they return home to their constituencies would strengthen the work of these youth on the ground, and further the implementation of the agenda of the Commission.

Besides the more ad hoc and evolving form of the youth caucus, youth advisory groups are a more formal example of youth working with UN agencies. The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) Youth Advisory Council consists of 12 youth leaders (2 per region) elected biannually at UNEP's Global Youth Retreat. The Council works closely with UNEP on environmental issues, UNEP decision-making processes, and UNEP program development. The council members support UNEP in enhancing environmental awareness and act as ambassadors for the environmental conscience of young people world wide.[116]

The group aims to: increase youth participation in UNEP through developing environmental policy; advising UNEP on ways to involve youth in UNEP's areas of concentration; advising UNEP on the development of regional initiatives and the UNEP Children and Youth Program. [117]

The UNEP Youth Advisory Committee also promotes youth involvement by opening communication and networking among youth NGOs working on environmental sustainability by highlighting events, using web sites, and producing publications which increases the international credibility for youth NGOs that would otherwise go unnoticed. As a result these groups have the opportunity to participate in international environmental negotiations conferences. The UNEP Youth Advisory Committee provides young people with a chance to be represented and heard at international events concerning the environment at every level of participation (local, national, regional and international).

Option for Action: *Increase support for regional youth networks in order to facilitate global cooperation.*

Case Study 21: Asia & Pacific Youth Program

The youth programme for Asia and the Pacific region serves as an extended arm of UNEP/CPI to reach out to youth groups of countries in the respective region, and to closely sensitize and support the youth activities and their networking mechanism. Its aim is to achieve broader youth involvement in environmental decision-making. Examples of some of the activities that have been organized and are currently being planned for and by youth in Asia and the Pacific region are: a web site that was launched by UNEP Asia-Pacific Youth Advisors on World Environment Day at www.unepapac.org, and which also provides environmental information for Youth; the Regional Youth Forum for Asia-Pacific, organized by UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, and the National Youth Achievement Awards Council (NYAA) of Singapore; internship and work-cum-training at UNEP/EAP-AP and UNEP/ROAP offices for youth leaders in the region; educational trips hosted by institutions such as the University of Wollongong, Australia; and training programs such as the Asia-Pacific Youth Environmental Management Seminar.

The most notable activity undertaken by the Asia & Pacific Youth Program is their publication of the first youth version of the Global Environment Outlook (GEO) Report in the Asia and Pacific region, which was launched in October 1999 and is now available. UNEP currently plans to implement a sub-regional State of Environment for Youth.

At the UNEP Millennium Youth Forum[118] in Singapore, December 1999, 5 sub-regional Youth Environment Strategies were produced identifying key environmental issues. In addition, a declaration and a Regional Youth Action Plan was compiled and agreed upon by the delegates representing 23 countries in the Asia and Pacific region. By being the first advisory process like this, the 5 Sub-regional Youth Environment Strategies, the Singapore Declaration and the Regional Youth Action Plan set a precedent for all environment and youth related activities in the region.

Options for Action: *Build and support global networks amongst student-based organizations promoting sustainable development.*
Countries should build the capacity of and open up opportunities for young people to be social and environmental micro-entrepreneurs in their own communities, while engaging them in decision-making processes so that their efforts can be linked effectively to policy development.

Case Study 22: Youth Networking for Sustainable Development

Since its foundation by 9 university students in 1946, *Association Internationale des Etudiants en Sciences Commerciales et Economiques* (AIESEC), spans the world engaging over 83 counties, and more than 800 universities worldwide.[119] AISEC, still a youth-led NGO, promotes a more viable lifestyle that allows for economic development while protecting the environment. AIESEC has created over 35 projects addressing Sustainable Development in collaboration with its partners and other organizations. One of the main goals of this organization is to promote youth leadership and guaranteeing that all debates and actions on the question of Sustainable Development are universally respectable and applicable. From the start, AIESEC has been committed to educating, creating awareness, and demonstrating the role of youth in Sustainable Development. The projects by AIESEC seek to involve as many young people while making sure that all areas of involvement are reached, making its goal youth participation at the grassroots, local, national and international level. AIESEC participated in the preparations for the Rio Summit in 1992, both nationally in various countries as well as internationally. Finally, AIESEC has been demonstrating the powerful role the youth can play and empowering them to speak their voice.

Case study 23: Asian and European Youth Promote Youth Involvement in Sustainable Development

Sixteen youth organizations from Spain, Denmark, The Netherlands, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia, Brunei and Vietnam attended a Strategic Planning Workshop in September of 2004 in Tagaytay City, The Philippines.

A draft concept paper of the proposed inter-regional network was agreed upon during the workshop, and in the 3-6 months following, the involved youth organizations will consult with their constituencies about it. Another gathering is planned for the midyear of 2005 to formalize the commitments of everyone in this partnership, which will be a joint partnership between the Brunei Youth Council and YSDA-Philipinas Inc. In the meantime, efforts will be coordinated within the partnership to implement the following initiatives:

- Youth-to-youth exchanges and study tours among European and Asian groups on sustainable development implementation.
- Online E-Forum to further discuss the common issues of youth involvement in sustainable development along key thematic issues.
- A web portal that will facilitate regular information sharing among the youth groups in Asia & Europe working on sustainable development (this will include a website, an email group, web discussion board & others).
- A project to assess and support youth involvement in National Councils for Sustainable Development (NCSDs) or other similar bodies in their respective countries.
- A project to support youth involvement in monitoring relevant sustainable development indicators that have direct bearing on youth concerns in countries where such indicator systems exist and share the information from these engagements with other youth groups in countries where these indicators still do not exist.
- Consolidate and share relevant information and opportunities about the UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development across all contacts and linkages of the partnership.

Young people working for clean water

Option for Action: *Resource youth conferences for follow-up to their initiatives by ensuring staff to coordinate follow-up efforts.*
Option for Action: *Empower youth to work for clean water in their community by proving resources to community and student groups focused on water-related issues.*

Case Study 24: Youth Working Together at Global and Local Levels on Water Action Teams

The Youth Water Action Team (YWAT)[120] is a youth initiated non-governmental organization of young professionals and students working together to support youth-initiated water projects, raise awareness on water related issues through its database, and affect decision-making by national governments and global governments on water issues

The YWAT was created in 2001 after the Youth World Water Forum held in Vlissingen, The Netherlands, which brought together more than 200 young water professionals and students from over 40 countries.

At the forum, an action team of 34 members was selected to equally represent all regions of the world. YWAT's main strategy is to find new members in countries and create a team of 10-15 young people to support local missions.

YWAT's main current projects include initiating local chapters in Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Mexico, Nepal, Netherlands and North America that develop action plans to improve water quality in these countries. Many of the projects are started up by groups indigenous to the country. They are not homogenous programs but plans that are tailored to meet the cultural and environmental philosophies of the community. Nevertheless, the primary goal of these YWAT action plans is to clean the water source. YWAT is currently working with UNESCO in creating a compilation of artistic work relating to water in order to spread awareness about water on a global level.

Young people as leaders of social and environmental entrepreneurship

Option for Action: Countries should build capacity of and open up opportunities for young people to be social and environmental micro-entrepreneurs in their own communities, while engaging them in decision-making processes.

Each country should, in consultation with its youth, establish a process to promote dialogue between the youth community and Government at all levels. Additionally, each country should establish mechanisms that permit youth access to information and provide them with the opportunity to present their perspectives on government decisions, including the implementation of Agenda 21.[121]

As an example, in urban poor communities where solid waste collection is deficient and sanitation facilities are perennially lacking, young people can be taught about basic environmental protection and sanitation in school and can be given an option to earn income by working in environmental and sanitation projects in their very own communities. By providing youth with minimal seed capital and business support to start up social and environmental enterprises, they can positively contribute to community poverty reduction efforts and environmental sustainability.

Poverty analysis conducted at the provincial and community level should identify the most serious factors contributing to, or arising from, poverty in the area. Teaching on these issues and on ways of contributing to solving them should then be included in school curriculums and training provided to youth interested in initiating community-based projects in these areas.

Option for Action: *Increase the capacity of youth led efforts to address needs on a local level.*

Recently soil management and conservation efforts have been moving toward a more participatory approach. Farmers who participate on a large scale in learning activities will yield significant benefits quickly, in return for their investment of time, effort and other inputs. Similarly, government agencies will only be supportive of such participatory learning activities if they recognize significant benefits to local communities and to the national economy, achieved at a lower cost. There are numerous examples of the use of this participatory approach with young farmers and this positive method of promoting sustainable use of resources can be implemented in other areas worldwide.

Case study 25: Integrated Soil Management through Young Farmer Field School[122]

Young Farmer Field School (YFFS) is a tool to build capacities of young farmer groups and youth club staff in managing crop and soil nutrient management to make them better decision-makers in promoting sustainable use of resources at the cropping, farming and watershed systems levels. YFFS is a participatory approach, wherein training is imparted on the basis of young farmer's needs. Training is provided in the young farmer's field itself, which enables better understanding of the field problems, their management and control. Training helps young farmers to make their own decisions, to organize themselves and their communities, and to create a strong working network with other young farmers, extension workers and researchers.

The YFFS uses "non-formal adult education" methods, particularly experiential learning techniques. Typically a group of 20 to 25 neighboring farmers meets regularly no less than once a month for a morning or an afternoon during an entire cropping season or cycle on one of the farmers' fields. The topics of each meeting are related to the development stage of the crop at that particular time. During the YFFS farmers will identify the underlying causes of their soil management problems and test possible solutions that fit their particular physical and socio-economic situation. The school is not meant to teach farmers new technologies developed outside their environment, but to provide them with tools that will enable them to analyze their own production practices and identify possible solutions.

Case study 26: Klampun Conservation Corps in Papa New Guinea[123]

The Klampun Conservation Corps is a youth-led organization established in Papa New Guinea. The groups' main goal is to preserve the environment of rural villages in East New Britain Province of Papa New Guinea. What started as a community-wide grassroots program has evolved into an internationally recognized youth program. Klampun Conservation Corps created a local pond fish, a soap-making project, and a rice milling plant. These programs reflect a youth organization's capacity to promote agricultural activity while conserving the natural resources that will secure a sustainable livelihood in the future for the inhabitants of rural villages in Papa New Guinea. The organization is a YouthActionNet award winner, which is a World Bank award that recognizes outstanding youth and their contributions to creating positive change. Patrick Kaupun the founder of Klampun Conservation Corps had the idea of starting his own NGO after seeing another local NGO, ENSBEK, working to promote community self-reliance. Kaupun felt that his community would be sufficient in achieving his goals to preserve the environment in East New Britain Province, ENSBEK that worked with no outside funding or resource allocation.

Conclusion

Protecting the integrity of our environment is among the most important of the MDGs, particularly for youth. To date youth participation as exemplified by the initiatives of young leaders worldwide has been strong. In order to achieve Goal 7 existing networks and initiatives must be support and expanded. Additionally, education, both formal and in-formal, plays an important role in the promotion of environmental awareness amongst youth. By increasing environmental education and collaborating with youth, governments and international organizations will find valuable partners in advancing sustainable development.

GOAL 8: DEVELOP A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

Target 12: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system
Target 13: Address the Special Needs of the Least Developed Countries
Target 14: Address the Special Needs of landlocked countries and small island developing States
Target 15: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term
Target 16: In co-operation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth
Target 17: In co-operation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries
Target 18: In co-operation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications

Recently, local government, with financial support from the government of an industrialized country, replaced the fish market with a modern structure that will house the vendors and some local services. However, due to a lack of consultation in the planning phase and the resulting misunderstanding of the informal aspects of the present fish market, many of these poor youths, as well as other very poor market workers, found themselves excluded from the market reforms and lost their livelihoods.

ATD Fourth World [124]

Youth efforts probably have strong effect; for example for first phase of the WSIS, the national government did nothing to raise awareness about the Information Society and how ICT can help the struggle against poverty and education needed for development countries. [Instead] the Center for Assistance of IT Initiatives-CAITI, an organization in the civil society headed by youth, [raised awareness], and sent their contribution of Haitian youth to the WSIS.

Guyverson Vernous (Haiti) 29 years- old [125]

Introduction

Goal 8 is foreseeably the most important goal because it aims to expand the global economy that currently alienates the majority of today's youth. This chapter will focus on fair trade, youth employment and Information Communication Technology (ICTs).

Target 16 of Goal 8 is the only specific mention of "youth" in the MDGs. This issue seems to not have been given the attention it demands, with the report of the Millennium Project Task Force 1 relegating 'youth employment' to Annex 2, which merely quotes UN Reports and Resolutions. [126]

Youth employment can serve as the dominant means of community participation, active citizenship, autonomy, and independence. Finding the means, the will and the know-how to create a billion jobs over the next ten to fifteen years that not only deliver economic benefits to young people, but also maintain (and even build) the environmental and social wealth, is indeed a great and significant challenge. It is perhaps one of the most important targets in achieving the MDGs and in maintaining our achievements throughout the next century and beyond.

The trade justice and fair trade movements are vital components in creating the global trading system envisaged by Target 12. Young people in the developed world are at the forefront of these movements. Their experiences demonstrate what can be achieved through global North-South partnerships between young people in support of a development agenda.

ICTs provide new opportunities for job creation and youth themselves are currently providing entrepreneurial leadership in ICT industries, creating jobs for themselves and for others. Fostering entrepreneurship is vital in every part of the world and should be considered a key mechanism for development. Supporting young

entrepreneurs in the developing world with education, financing, mentorship and encouragement is a critical pathway to bridging the digital divide and fostering the creation of sustainable livelihoods.

Youth at the Forefront of Fair Trade

Option for Action: *Build upon the youth trade movement to develop further an open trading and financial system that is rules-based, predictable and non-discriminatory.*

The trade justice and fair trade movements are vital components in creating the global trading system envisaged by Target 12. Young people in the developed world are at the forefront of these movements. Their experiences demonstrate what can be achieved through global North-South partnerships between young people in support of a development agenda.

Young people in developed countries, and particularly in Europe and the US, are at the forefront of trade justice and fair trade movements seeking solutions of global trade for poorer developing country producers. Oxfam's Make Trade Fair Campaign, and campaigns by various actors on child labor, sweat shop labor, and other labour issues, have proved very successful in recent years in raising awareness amongst consumers and citizens in developed countries and mobilizing them to change purchasing behavior, ask more of product supply chains, and bring about consumer led change to the activities of multinationals towards practices more in line with social justice and sustainable development.

Young people in the developed world are significant consumers and, through their purchasing power, access to resources, good education, etc., have significant potential to be harnessed in support of pro-development trade and consumption. The growth in the number of social and environmental labels, and growth in markets such as Fairtrade in the UK, US and Europe, suggests that much can be achieved through fostering stronger partnerships between young people in the North and South. As these movements grow, and continue to gain market share, the practices of large corporations and the trade rules that regulate global trade will be under increasing pressure to change in response to consumer demands.

Case Study 27: United Students for Fair Trade [127]

United Students for Fair Trade is a collaboration of students in the United States working toward economic justice through the promotion of Fair Trade products, principles, and policies. They focus on building leaders for the global justice movement, mobilizing communities to support Fair Trade, building relationships across the North-South divide, and equipping organizers with resources. USFT recognizes that universities are a common arena for raising awareness of the inequities in the current exploitive model of global trade. However, the academic curriculum usually stops short of suggesting viable alternatives. USFT believes that reflection and study must be matched by commitment and action. USFT provides a coherent national voice for the student movement, and they undertake a range of initiatives to achieve their vision: "Students inspiring citizens and consumers to shape a global economy based on human relationships that are just and which nurture communities both locally and globally."

Youth Employment
Address the issue of youth employment as a fundamental block to poverty reduction and explore new and innovative partnerships through the work of the Youth Employment Network.

The importance of the youth employment has been highlighted by many reports and initiatives over the last 5 years. Youth employment emerged on the international agenda the same time as the formation of the MDGs, with two key international initiatives commencing in the governmental forum with the Youth Employment

Network[128] (a partnership between the World Bank, the ILO and the UN) and the civil society initiative, with the Youth Employment Summit[129]. [130]

In August 2004, the International Labour Organization (ILO), as part of its commitment to the Youth Employment Network, released a new global report on youth unemployment. The report found that youth unemployment is at an all time high and half the world's jobless is between 15 and 24 years of age. [131] This represents 88 million young people without work in 2003.

The head of the ILO, Juan Somavia, said when releasing the new ILO report: "We are wasting an important part of the energy and talent of the most educated youth generation the world has ever had. Enlarging the chances of young people to find and keep decent work is absolutely critical to achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals." [132]

Options for young people to take action on youth employment need to ensure that they address three key areas:

1. Creating flexible employment opportunities for youth, especially those at-risk;
2. Working to secure decent working conditions for all young people (labor rights);
3. When creating employment and revising current employment policies, ensure that jobs are meaningful, contribute to creation of more just and sustainable communities and reinforce self esteem and self worth of young people.

Action on youth employment needs to be integrated as a central platform for achieving MDG 1 on poverty reduction. Strategies for achieving poverty reduction through youth employment should especially focus on young women, indigenous populations, and rural youth as those most marginalized within the current economic system. Addressing the needs of young women and rural youth will also help to achieve MDGs 3 and address pressures and problems arising from mass rural to urban migration (as discussed in relation to MDG7, Target 11). Many microfinance programs, such as those implemented by the Grameen Bank and the Commonwealth Youth Program have targeted investment to young women with great success (see for example case study 26 on the Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative). As such, the final report from the Millennium Project's Task Force 1 on Poverty and Economic Development should include significant and achievable recommendations regarding youth employment as a central platform for realizing the MDGs.

The keys to moving forward on creating a global partnership for youth employment are to build on what already exists and galvanize governments, businesses and young people themselves to focus on this issue. YES and YEN have developed extensive networks and compiled long lists of best practices, and provided both civil society and government frameworks for dealing with the youth unemployment crisis.[133] These efforts now need to be scaled up and replicated in more countries and communities. This will require considerably more resources – both financial and technical – and enhanced commitments and participation from all stakeholders. Cooperation between initiatives is vital, collaboration between government, business, and NGO sectors necessary, and renewed focus on using tools that have already been developed and fulfilling existing commitments imperative. At all stages, youth must be seen as equal partners in developing and implementing initiatives – they must be given the spaces and opportunities to be part of the solution. Initiatives such as the Youth Employment Summit and its Country Networks demonstrate that young people are keen an able to play important and pivotal roles in facilitating the social, economic and environmental development necessary to address the youth employment crisis, if and when appropriate support and opportunity is provided.

Since projects are so diverse and often local-specific, it is important to look for recommendations such as those outlined in the list of Effective Practices section on the YES website.[134] Facilitating the macroeconomic conditions and microeconomic policy and programs to address the youth employment crisis requires new ways to look at old problems, sufficient investment in effective education and training, financing and nurturing youth entrepreneurship, and creating jobs themselves that are sustainable for the environment, and the youth involved.

Information and Communication Technologies also provide new opportunities for job creation - youth themselves are providing entrepreneurial leadership in ICT industries, creating jobs for themselves, and for others. Fostering entrepreneurship is vital in every part of the world and should be considered a key mechanism for development. Supporting young entrepreneurs in the developing world with education, financing, mentorship and encouragement is a critical pathway to bridging the digital divide and fostering the creation of sustainable livelihoods. Without more effort, the huge challenge posed by the "brain drain" will also continue to worsen, as those with skills leave for "refuge" in greener pastures where their skills are valued can be utilized and employment is more plentiful.

As an example, Digital Divide Data, a Cambodian-based US company whose operations are entirely based on ICTs, provides data entry services to companies and institutions in the US and Cambodia. Inputs received as digital images are processed according to client specifications and sent back by DDD's staff - all of whom are under 25 and are orphans, physically disabled or trafficked women. [135]

Youth can be empowered and involved in achieving a Global Partnership for development. An example of this is the Youth Employment Network[136], which is seeking to address the youth employment problem by assisting 10 'lead countries' (Azerbaijan, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Mali, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal and Sri Lanka) to develop National Action Plans on youth employment, and innovative new programs, as examples for other governments. Mobilizing political will and government initiative is central for addressing the youth employment situation. The National Action Plan process holds governments accountable for their commitment to the Millennium Declaration, and provides a framework to analyze their local situation and take stock of their programs to facilitate youth employment.

Case study 28: Youth led civil society mechanisms for addressing youth employment [137]

The YES Campaign was launched by 1,600 delegates from 120 countries at the Alexandria Youth Employment Summit, in Egypt on September 11, 2002. The YES Campaign is working to ensure two primary goals: to build the capacity of young people to create sustainable livelihoods and to establish an entrepreneurial culture where young people will work towards self employment. The YES Campaign was developed in response to the enormous challenge of youth unemployment facing most countries and affecting millions of young people around the world. In 60 countries, YES is bringing together diverse stakeholders through the YES Country Networks to work collaboratively in taking actions that result in productive and sustainable employment for youth.

The YES Country Networks bring youth organizations together with governments, NGOs, the private sector, and academic and training institutions to develop programs and policies to provide youth with opportunities for creating livelihoods. YES Country Networks are youth-led, national-level coalitions focused on promoting youth employment in their countries. Their primary aim is to work with diverse stakeholders to develop programs and projects for youth employment in their countries. YES Networks include government officials, development agencies, business groups, and youth-serving civil society organizations. Activities of YES Country Networks include:

- Engaging diverse stakeholders in their countries to join the YES Country Networks and to promote youth employment through their programs and already existing activities/initiatives;
- Hosting national consultations on youth employment to reach out to a wider audience and incorporate new ideas;
- Designing National Action Plans for Youth Employment;
- Developing concrete youth employment projects and initiatives over the coming three years;
- Identifying effective youth employment programs and policies to share with the Global Alliance;

- Developing youth employment Country Reports outlining the state of youth employment in each country;
- Preparing progress reports on each YES Network and activities undertaken since the Alexandria Summit.

Option for Action: *Use micro-finance and skills development initiatives to reduce barriers for youth entrepreneurship.*

A viable strategy to eradicating poverty is through the provision of self-employment opportunities to transform job-seekers to job-makers or entrepreneurs. Yet, oftentimes, young people lack sufficient business management skills and start-up capital. Micro-financial institutions (MFIs), especially in rural areas and urban poor settlements, are then important in this process. One such example of a youth-led micro-credit agency catering to young people wanting to venture into small-scale businesses is The Nations Trust in South Africa.[138]

The Nations Trust, an affiliate of Youth Business International, was established in 1995 as a youth empowerment trust to provide both finance and business support to young entrepreneurs. Since then, it has assisted over 1,000 South African youth, by offering small business loans to those turned away by commercial banks, to realize their entrepreneurial potential and create sustainable businesses. These micro-enterprises have created more than 1,500 stable jobs thus ensuring a brighter future for young South Africans. In 2010, The Nations Trust envisions to provide support in starting up 10,000 youth businesses as its contribution to poverty eradication and youth empowerment in South Africa. Micro-credit schemes have been shown to be very effective in assist young people in creating sustainable livelihoods for themselves. The estimated success rate of businesses in some of these schemes is 80%, compared with a 10% for normal businesses in developing Commonwealth countries.

Case Study 29: Providing Credit for Young Entrepreneurs

The Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative (CYCI)[139] is a small enterprise scheme for young people involving "micro-credit" (small-scale lending), training and enterprise development. The idea is to provide low-cost, easily accessible credit and training to underprivileged young people to bring economic self-sufficiency. CYCI provides these services using the following methods:

- low interest rates
- low training costs
- partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
- A support network of young people to encourage saving and the paying back of loans
- ongoing training and monitoring of enterprises

By March 2000, the Asian project provided over 1,000 loans, with a recovery rate of over 85%. Over 800 enterprises had been set up, half of which were started by women. The success of the project can be attributed to the experience and expertise of the partner NGO of the project, the International Center for Career and Entrepreneurship Development, which ran training programmes and delivered loans to young people in urban, rural and tribal areas.

The success of this model proves that young people can be trusted with enterprise credit. The experience of CYCI has contributed to greater interest in micro-credit and sustainable livelihoods for young people. Agencies as UNICEF, CIDA/IDRC and others have adopted CYP's approach. CYP is attempting to build on the Youth Credit Initiative with the Micro-Credit Management System, a project to help governments ensure the success of NGO-based enterprise schemes.

Option for Action: *Strengthen youth entrepreneurship networks.*

Youth networks are a forum for exchange of ideas in common problems and issues facing youth. They also help young people learn what other young people are doing elsewhere and to see in which ways such projects can be implemented elsewhere.

Case Study 30: Enterprising Youth Around the World

Blueprint [140] is a workshop and case study project about and for enterprising young people around the world. It was created by two youth led organizations – the International Young Professionals Foundation and Youth 2 Youth – within the framework of the YES Country Network in Australia. The goals of the *Blueprint* Project are to

- Recognize and promote enterprising young people in local communities
- Develop, catalyze and enhance enterprise skills and support networks amongst young people to assist them in turning ideas in to actions
- Produce case studies of successful young social, environmental and business entrepreneurs

Due to the successful implementation in Australia in 2003, *Blueprint* will run again in 2004 in Australia, and it will be modified for implementation in other countries through the Youth Employment Summit network.

The Youth Employment Spark* (YES) project, a multi-country youth employment-entrepreneurship partnership lead by the Dutch National Youth Council, aims to raise awareness and increase understanding of international youth unemployment issues among young people in a positive and entertaining way. Five young entrepreneurs, aged 18 to 26, in Guyana, the Netherlands, the Philippines, South Africa and Turkey, after having been selected in a business plan competition, will simultaneously start their own businesses under the guidance of a youth organization and a mentor from the business community. Their experiences will be followed and presented to a youthful audience through an interactive website, national and international youth networks and media channels, and potentially a TV program or documentary. Through raising awareness and international cooperation, YES endeavors to spark new youth employment- entrepreneurship projects, partnerships, and funding opportunities.

Youth and Information Communication Technologies (ICTs)

Option for Action: *Youth must be empowered as learners, developers, contributors, entrepreneurs and decision-makers in the issue of Information and Communication Technologies.*

If there were ever an area where young people were the leaders not only of the future, but also of today, it is the emerging information society. From web development to information access, we are growing up with the latest technologies – and extending them, providing innovative solutions to global challenges. Recognizing this, in December 2003, more than 175 countries at the World Summit of Information Society (WSIS) declared:[141]

> We are committed to realizing our common vision of the Information Society for ourselves and for future generations**.** We recognize that young people are the future workforce and leading creators and earliest adopters of ICTs. We must focus especially on young people who have not yet been able to benefit fully from the opportunities provided by ICTs. We are also committed to ensuring that the

development of ICT applications and operation of services respects the rights of children as well as their protection and well-being.

There are a number of areas where young people can use Information and Communication Technologies for development:

- Young people see great potential for improving development efforts and providing meaningful livelihood opportunities through the establishment of telecenters in both rural and urban areas. These telecenters provide livelihood opportunities for many young people.
- Young people use ICTs to seek information about education and livelihood opportunities available to them.
- Young people appreciate the increased consultations on information technology policy and priorities.
- Young people play a critical role in the development of locally appropriate content. Many work to repackage information between old and new media types and to interpret it for local, national, and international audiences.
- ICTs enable young people to explore and define their cultures within the context of rapid globalization.
- ICT training provides a context for skill development, socialization, and community building for out-of-school or otherwise marginalized youth.
- Local e-commerce may open more significant livelihood opportunities for young people than international e-commerce. Smaller scale e-commerce networks and ICT enabled small and medium enterprises provide young people with the opportunity to develop professionally without having to relocate large distances from their families and support networks.

Worldwide ICT-expansion has been possible due, in part, to the volunteer efforts and internship work of young professionals. Many have postponed or foregone potentially lucrative private sector jobs to train others in ICT use. These opportunities have further strengthened the skills of the young people as well as their commitment to socially-conscious uses of ICTs.

However, youth are a large untapped resource for creating digital opportunities. Many youth are already using technology for innovative social causes, often expanding access to information beyond those with personal access to technology. Yet, youth actions to bridge the digital divide often suffer from critical deficiencies, such as:

- Lack of mainstream support: youth-led ICT programs are rarely afforded the funding or recognition required to implement or replicate in a substantial or sustained manner.
- Lack of participation in decision-making: youth are rarely involved in national, regional and international ICT policy development, meaning youth lack the framework, support and legitimacy required for sustained action, and policy implementation lacks buy-in from this key grassroots constituency.
- Lack of communication: youth effort on ICTs is fragmented, often uninformed by others practice, unconnected to a bigger picture, unable to leverage resources, and find moral and inspirational support.

The WSIS Youth Caucus, formed on the occasion of the 1st WSIS Preparatory Committee Meeting in July 2002, continues to act as an umbrella for all young people and youth non-government organizations interested and/or involved in the WSIS process and ICT policy-formulation. The WSIS Youth Caucus aims to mainstream youth perspectives into civil society, the private sector and government inputs throughout the WSIS process.

Youth were also one of the most organized and successful stakeholder groupings in the first phase of the WSIS process – participating and speaking at meetings, publishing a regular newsletter, running an award program,

conducting significant national-level outreach, and much more. Clearly, if it is to achieve its ambitious goals, the WSIS now must continue to engage young people who are the path-breakers of the ICT revolution.

Case Study 31: The Global Knowledge Partnership

The Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP) has played a pivotal role in this movement to engage young people in efforts around digital inclusion. For GK II in Malaysia in 2000, young people's issues were considered a major cross-cutting theme. Prior to that conference, the GKP convened a Youth Advisory Council to facilitate the "Youth: Building Knowledge Societies" (YBKS) e-conference. This event sought to determine youth priorities for action on ICTs for development as a critical input to the GKP Action Plan. More than 350 young people from 57 countries came together to explore how youth are using ICTs to produce, disseminate and use knowledge for sustainable development. At GK II itself, a major Youth Forum was held concurrently with the Global Knowledge Forum with more than 30 young ICT visionaries in attendance from around the world. In 2001, the GKP again played a key role facilitating youth involvement in international ICT policy, reconvening the Youth Advisory Council online to update and repurpose the inputs of YBKS into formal input to the G8 DOTforce.

GKP's advocacy with and for young people has been supported by active participation from its members, many of which have strong youth-related programs. First among these has been the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), which played a coordinating role for both YBKS and the DOTforce update. In 2002, the GKP invited IISD to develop a more comprehensive and 'action oriented' Youth Strategy. IISD in turn, invited the young coordinators of TakingITGlobal (an international youth-led organization with existing GKP connections) to co-author the strategy which became known as Youth Creating Digital Opportunities.

The Youth Creating Digital Opportunities (YCDO) Coalition aimed to provide a collaborative roadmap to coordinate efforts around Youth and ICTS for Development, closing gaps and reducing duplication of effort, with four key goals:[142]

- To develop youth input to & influence policies at national and international levels related to the Information Society.
- To building capacity for action and develop appropriate funding mechanisms to support youth creating digital opportunities.
- To showcase and celebrate projects run by young people that harness information and communications technologies for development.
- To provide relevant and vibrant learning and sharing experiences for youth and other stakeholders on areas of specific concern for youth in the information society.

Conclusion

Lack of access to ICTs, fair trade conditions and meaningful and productive work all curtail young people's abilities to contribute to achieving the MDGs. This can be resolved by giving young people means to truly engage in developing mechanisms to implement the MDGs at national and international levels and by offering tools for concrete and meaningful actions that will benefit generations to come.

PART III: CROSSCUTTING RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE STEPS

PART III: CROSSCUTTING RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE STEPS

The successful implementation of the MDGs lies on technical and pragmatic solutions in the context of holistic people-centered development strategies. Some of the concrete recommendations for youth-driven action have been listed in Part II of this report, as they specifically relate to goal-oriented solutions. The following recommendations will concentrate on cross-cutting issues that permeate across all 8 MDGs and that affect youth engagement in implementing all Goals.

A. ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS: YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE MILLENNIUM CAMPAIGN

a) **MDG Youth Report:** A comprehensive report on young people and the Millennium Development Goals should be produced by a coalition of UN agencies, NGOs and young people. The report should build upon this present contribution to the Millennium Project and be launched at the Millennium Summit+5.

b) **MDG Youth Campaigns:** A series of nationally-focused youth campaigns should be catalyzed around the world, led largely by young people themselves. The objectives of these campaigns would be raise awareness about the MDGs, provide space for youth to express their views and share experiences related to MDG issues, enable young people to interact with their national leaders, and facilitate networking between youth groups to crystallize new projects. The campaigns would include several elements including school-based outreach, national conferences, local workshops, media activities including phone-in radio programs and televised debates, essay and expression contests, and service days. The campaigns should be coordinated globally, to enable cross-pollination of ideas and activities, as well as strong communication of their results to regional and international audiences.

c) **Youth at the Millennium +5 Meeting in 2005:** There should be meaningful participation of young people at the planned Millennium+5 Review Summit in mid-2005. Meaningful participation means mainstreaming young people within the Summit's program, providing space for young speakers in plenary and panel discussions, and travel scholarships to assist the participation of young people from the developing world. It is also suggested that a Workshop for a selected number of Youth Development Leaders focused on practical skills training, using a Peer-Assist and Open Space Model would be valuable, as would an exhibition of youth-led projects, and opportunities for young people to connect directly with world leaders. This should also be linked to the 5-year review of the World Programme of Action for Youth for the year 2000 and beyond.

d) **Global Attention to Youth Employment:** The importance of youth employment is underlined by the fact that of all the issues to which youth are central, yet it is the only place in the MDGs (Goal 8) where youth are specifically referenced. The international community should significantly step up support for and collaboration between major global efforts such as the Youth Employment Network and the Youth Employment Summit Campaign. In development of major youth employment initiatives the emphasis should be less ownership by the UN and adults, and more ownership by local youth and their grassroots networks, as well as local and national level stakeholders. Special attention should be placed on skills training programs for out of school youth, especially in the developing world, including street children, orphans, war-affected children and other marginalized young people.

e) **Youth and Conflict:** Youth-engagement in MDGs is limited by the adversity of conflict around the world. The need for youth-led and/or youth-driven initiatives to resolve armed conflicts around the world is stressed by the fact that young people are affected as soldiers, civilians, family members and students by wars. Investing in the reintegration of youth combatants and the creation of livelihoods for youth in post-conflict areas is especially crucial to prevent the reoccurrence of war. An important investment is people-centered development will succeed when national policies address conflict as a vital and cross-cutting issue, and devote resources for open dialogue among those afflicted, especially youth and women.

f) **Sustainable Development:** Education around sustainable development should start in local communities, with in-school activities in which students learn about their own area and its environmental challenges, and then make connections with global problems. Engaging students in identifying and implementing ways to make their own schools and homes more sustainable through all forms of education (formal, non-formal and informal) helps instill sustainable development values for life.

g) **Young people as peer educators:** Young people are peer oriented and youth learn much from their friends, especially around issues that adults know little about (such as new technologies), are reluctant to talk about (HIV/AIDS or sex education), or deem to be too political (such as peace education). Peer education should be fostered, with practical skills based workshops established upon a train-the-trainers model. Peer education can also help overcome temporary skilled teacher shortages, or complement regular staff, especially in areas like Information and Communications Technologies, where some students routinely have much more experience than their teachers.

B. POLICIES: YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE MDG BUSINESS PLAN

a) **National Youth Policies:** Every government should have an up-to-date National Youth Policy or Strategy in place. To assist with the creation and evaluation of such strategies, international benchmarking tools such as a Global Youth Development (or Youth Participation) Index should be developed, showcasing best-practices to empower young people in society. A global consortium of donors and consulting companies might provide specific support to countries, while the involvement of young people should be considered key to their development and implementation of such strategies.

b) **Partnerships with cities and local authorities:** Special emphasis should be placed on the involvement of cities and local government authorities in engaging and supporting young people to achieve the MDGs at the local level. Priorities for Local Authorities should include the creation of local youth councils to provide input to decision-making, provision of physical meeting spaces for young people to gather and coordinate projects, support for youth artistic and cultural expression, promotion of sport for development and peace, and access to Information and Communications Technologies. The establishment of City-to-City development partnerships with an emphasis on youth should be encouraged.

C. ACTION: YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLEMENTING THE MDGS

a) **Youth Financing:** One of the main challenges young people face is a lack of access to finances, whether it be grants or loans, to support the implementation of their projects. Existing grant mechanisms within the UN system should be made more relevant and accessible to young people, through simplified or adapted application processes, the inclusion of young people on the selection committees, and recognition that young people often lack formal structures, such as legally registered organizations through which to carry out their activities. New grant programs should also be established around particular thematic topics, such as renewable energy, ICTs for Development, HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness, and water conservation. Micro-credit programs that empower young people to start businesses should be expanded and married with comprehensive, localized entrepreneurship training.

b) **Activate priority youth projects and best practices:** As a result of the national campaigns, or another competitive or consultative process, each country should identify a suite of "National Priority Youth Projects towards the MDGs". Example projects might include: a centralized youth employment service in the capitol city where young people can go to gain skill training and visit a job-market

(related to Goal 8), or a radio program on the public broadcaster led by youth about HIV/AIDS (related to Goal 6). Each project would then receive basic support and strong mentorship from local country field offices of relevant UN agencies, NGOs, and especially the national government. These projects will also be showcased internationally with the intention of replicating successful implementation strategies.

c) **Mentorship:** Youth led projects, whether they emphasize social or economic development are often hampered by a lack of skills, experience, networks, and connections with 'traditional power centers' within a community. Mentorship (including two-way mentorship) needs to become a major priority, as a practical realization of the concept of "Intergenerational Partnership", connecting experienced adults with young economic and social entrepreneurs.

d) **Engaging young in people in monitoring:** Young people must be actively involved in the effort to continually monitor and measure work towards attainment of the MDGs. One project might provide university-age students with credit for interviewing other young people in their city and country, and writing up reports and analysis of action, including case-studies of young people leading change. Another project might engage youth who speak multiple languages to translate MDG progress reports to their local language.

D. NETWORKING AND COLLABORATION: YOUNG PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPLEMENT THE MDGS

a) **Youth Media Network:** Information is critical for development and tangible support should be provided for the thousands of existing, successful youth-media initiatives around the world – including technology tools, training, and financial resources. The creation of networks to allow sharing of stories and cross-pollination of reporting would increase audiences and enhance influence and impact. Emphasis might also be placed on education that bridges a youth's experience with youth media with involvement in mainstream independent journalism.

b) **Global online networks:** As the Internet becomes an increasingly important and accessible medium for youth interaction, support should be provided for global spaces that engage young people in dialogue and action around important international issues.

c) **Thematic Coalitions:** Young people coordinate their effort through a myriad of global coalitions, networks, and caucuses around critical global issues, international campaigns, and UN processes – from climate change to HIV/AIDS. These networks are important knowledge and action resources and should be mapped and provided with at least basic resources to support their coordination and work plans. Far greater research and evaluation needs to be conducted regarding best-practice models for youth engagement in specific global challenges. These coalitions should in particular have a presence at regional reviews of the MDGs and other significant development meetings, such as the G-8 summit and the African Development Forum in 2005 which has the theme of "Youth Leadership for the 21st Century".

APPENDIX A: MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
    Target 1:   Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day
    Target 2:   Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education
    Target 3:   Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women
    Target 4:   Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and to all levels of education no later than 2015

Goal 4: Reduce child mortality
    Target 5:   Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate

Goal 5: Improve maternal health
    Target 6:   Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
    Target 7:   Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS
    Target 8:   Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability
    Target 9:   Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources
    Target 10:   Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water
    Target 11:   By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers

Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development
    Target 12:   Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system
    Target 13:   Address the Special Needs of the Least Developed Countries
    Target 14:   Address the Special Needs of landlocked countries and small island developing States
    Target 15:   Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term
    Target 16:   In co-operation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth
    Target 17:   In co-operation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries
    Target 18:   In co-operation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications

Source: United Nations, 2000.

APPENDIX B: SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY AND YOUTH DECLARATIONS

1. UN Millennium Project Taskforce 1 Interim Report (February 2004), *An Enhanced Strategy for Reducing Poverty by the Year 2015* www.unmillenniumproject.org/documents/tfoneinterim.pdf

2. YES Country Network Report, Third Edition, December 2003
www.yesweb.org/yesnetworks/docs/ycn3.pdf

3. Best Practice Youth Enterprise Models In the Commonwealth Caribbean, paper prepared for the Creating Common Wealth Conference, November 2003
www.thesource.gov.au/creating_common_wealth/daily_updates/images/armstrong.pdf

4. Letter From the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly on the Occasion of the Fifty-Sixth Session of the United Nations General Assembly, Agenda Item 29, Follow-Up to the Outcome of the Millennium Summit, including Recommendations of the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Youth Employment
www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/yen/publ/unga57res.htm
www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/yen/publ/recomm.htm

=> including Appendix: Decent Work for Young People: A Guide To Action
www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/yen/publ/dwyp.htm

5. Youth Employment Summit Alexandria Declaration, September 2002
www.yesweb.org/alexandria_02/vfa.html

6. Youth Employment Summit Framework for Action, September 2002
www.yesweb.org/alexandria_02/doc/ffa.pdf

7. Global Employment Trends For Youth, August 2004, ILO
www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/global.htm

8. Highly Affected, Rarely Considered, IYP Youth Commission into Globalisation Report, 2003
www.iyp.oxfam.org/campaign/youth_commission_report.asp

**APPENDIX C: USEFUL RESOURCES & GUIDELINES RELATING TO TARGETS 12 & 16
(GOAL 8)**

(a) The Recommendations of the YEN
www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/yen/publ/recomm.htm

R1: A youth employment dimension integrated into comprehensive employment strategies
R2: Strong institutional support for youth employment policies
R3: Investment in education, training and life-long learning
       A. Adopt national educational and training strategies
       B. Ensure that girls and boys are able to obtain quality education
       C. Improve the accessibility, relevance and effectiveness of secondary and higher education and technical and vocational training
R4: A bridge between the informal and the mainstream economies
R5: The potential of information and communications technologies
R6: New sources of work in the service sector
R7: Entrepreneurship and enterprise development
R8: Access of youth to employment services and support
R9: A Social floor for working youth
R10: Partnership for youth employment
R11: An enabling international environment
R12: The Future of the Youth Employment Network

(b) The YES Framework for Action
www.yesweb.org/alexandria_02/doc/ffa.pdf

Adopted the 4 E's of the UN Secretary General's Youth Employment Network: Employability; Employment Creation; Equity (Equal Opportunity); and Entrepreneurship. YES has, in the year of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, added a fifth E – Environmental Sustainability.

1. Employability = Education for Work, Transition to Work
2. Employment Creation = Government Policy, Private Sector Partnership, Rural Development, Investing in Youth, Employment
3. Equity = Information Communication Technology: Bridging the Digital Divide
4. Entrepreneurship "Building an Entrepreneurial Workforce" = Entrepreneurship in all forms – Economic, Social and Environmental
5. Environmental Sustainability = Youth Employment for Sustainable Development, such as Promoting Renewable Energy

(c) YES Country Network Frameworks and Investment
www.yesweb.org/yesnetworks/index.html

See Case Study in text on YES Country Networks, Goal 8, Target 16

(d) Highly Affected, Rarely Considered: IYP Youth Commission into Globalisation Report
www.iyp.oxfam.org/campaign/youth_commission_report.asp

Highly Affected, Rarely Considered was written by young people who are part of the Oxfam International Youth Parliament network. These young people not only undertook research into the identified issues as part of IYP's Youth Commission but had as their primary resource hundreds of submissions received from young people around the world, discussing what globalization means to them. The report is written by young people as 'agents of change', presenting alternatives to the current processes of globalization.

There are action items and policy recommendations for governments, multilateral institutions, non-government organizations, corporations and individuals. The report provides sophisticated analysis of eleven key areas as well as some examination of six key cross-cutting themes including privatisation, global infrastructure, displacement, representation, education, and activism and human rights. In essence, the report argues that the processes of globalization must be managed from a human rights perspective. The report presents a multilevel response of action to achieve that end.

HARC analyses the issues connected with many of the MDGs as well as conceptualizing forms of change to achieve a human rights approach to globalisation. The cross-cutting theme of global infrastructure considers the rules of the trading and financial system in a critical way and presents alternatives. The action-oriented focus of the report means that it provides you with ways of taking action in relation to these issues on an individual, community, national and global level.

APPENDIX D: BIOGRAPHIES

Task force members

MELANIE ASHTON (Co-coordinator), age 25, has a Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Earth Sciences. Melanie is a Project Manager and consultant for the Australian based firm GHD. She is primarily involved in overseas development assistance projects in the fields of environment, poverty reduction, water supply and institutional strengthening. She provides technical expertise on these projects in environmental training, capacity building, international conventions and sustainability. In 2003 Melanie was an Australian Youth Ambassador for Development and spent four months developing training and institutional strengthening programs in Datong, China. Melanie is an active volunteer and in the last five years has worked on sustainable development initiatives locally in Australia as well as internationally. This includes working extensively with the Earth Charter Initiative and co-founding the Earth Charter Youth Initiative. During 2002 Melanie was an active member of the youth caucus for the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development. At PrepComm IV she represented youth in the negotiation on Type II outcomes. Melanie has recently become a Director of the International Young Professionals Foundation.

CATHERINE KAMPING (Co-coordinator), age 24, is the current Coordinator of the Youth Caucus of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development and the Regional Coordinator of Global Youth Action Network for Asia and the Pacific, she also provides Youth Advisory role to the Conference of NGO with Consultative Status with the UN, Youth Employment Summit, and the Education Development Center Equip 3 Youth Trust. At the National level she is the outgoing VP-External Affairs of the SAVE Mother Earth Movement and former Chairperson and Country Coordinator of the Philippine Youth Employment Network. At present she is taking up Master in Entrepreneurship and Social Entrepreneurial Development at the Asian Institute of Management and managing a youth led social enterprise that provides trainings, capacity building, educational and outdoor activities for schools and organizations highlighting ecological-tourism. In the last five years she has taken very active role in youth development and sustainable development advocacies both at the local, national and international level. In 2002, she has taken active role and leadership in the processes of the Youth Employment Summit and the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development also presenting the youth caucus final statement. In 2003 she was involved in the Updating of the Philippine Agenda 21 as the only youth representative in the process.

EMILY FREEBURG (Executive Secretary), age 24, currently works for the Lutheran World Federation at the United Nations in New York where she also serves as chair of the NGO Committee on Youth, of the Conference of NGOs (CONGO) in consultative status with the United Nations. Focusing on young women and the media, she was a "youth-expert observer" to the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on Women and the Media in 2002, and spoke about youth media at the World Summit on Information Society in 2003. She also helped to create the Youth Advisory Committee to CONGO and was the editor of a report, "Best Practices in Poverty Eradication, Case Studies from the Field" by the NGO Committee on Social Development in 2003. Recently focused on the impact of HIV and AIDS on young women, she organized an e-consultation in February 2004 on the different gender impacts of HIV/AIDS on young people and presented the results at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. Currently, she helps facilitate an ad hoc international youth caucus on HIV and AIDS. She is also a freelance journalist, often contributing to Wiretap Magazine (wiretapmag.org). She received her Bachelors of Arts (Honors) from the University of Redlands in International Development and Creative Writing in 2002.

JAMES BRADFIELD MOODY, age 27, is the outgoing president of the International Young Professionals Foundation. He was formerly managing director at Natural Resource Intelligence (NRI), Australia's first publicly listed environmental spatial information company, providing environmental, social, and economic intelligence to assist organizations in monitoring and evaluating natural resources. In the last five years, James

has been heavily involved with the United Nations, and was co-facilitator and Australian representative of the forty-strong youth advisory council to the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). He was also a member of the Science and Technology delegation to the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development earlier this year and attended the World Economic Forum as a Global Leader of Tomorrow in 2003. In 2000, James was named Australian Young Professional Engineer of the Year. While holding this title, he promoted the engineering profession and his particular brand of "socially conscious engineering." In 2000 James was also awarded Young Queenslander of the Year and in 2001 was awarded Young Australian of the Year in Science and Technology. James is passionate about the supporting role that young socially conscious businesspeople can play in society and works actively towards communicating these views to the general community.

LUIS A. DAVILA ORTEGA, (age 22) is a strong believer on the power that active youth can have in their communities, by becoming engaged, organized and motivated. He is currently the Associate Director for the Global Youth Action Network (GYAN) at its headquarters in New York City. He is responsible for GYAN's programmatic and regional and national engagement, as well as staff management at GYAN HQ. He is also the international coordinator for Global Youth Service Day (GYSD), the largest celebration of youth volunteers in the world. He is part of the international team for Students Forum 2000, an initiative created by former Czech President Vaclav Havel. He has also worked with governments such as the regional government of Nuevo Leon in Mexico and the National Assembly of Wales, fostering networking and collaboration among youth organizations. He has spoken at dozens of international events on issues related to youth participation, and has participated in different UN and multilateral policy process targeting sustainable development, reform of international institutions, social entrepreneurship and youth-led development. Luis was born in Venezuela and lived in the Netherlands Antilles for 5 years. He has a BS (Honors) in Diplomacy and International Relations from Seton Hall University (USA), and graduate coursework from the University of Ghent (Belgium), Charles University (Czech Republic) and the University of Bolzano (Italy).
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AMIR FARMANESH, age 25, received a B.A. degree in materials engineering from the Iran University of Science and Technology and earned several diplomas - in subjects ranging from economic globalization to project management - along the way. Over the past decade, he has worked extensively in both governmental and non-governmental organizations at the local, national, and international levels. Among the highlights of his experience are serving as a youth advisor to the mayor of Tehran; acting as Focal Point in Iran for United Nations International Year of Volunteers 2001; working for the United Nations Environment Program, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok, Thailand; Founding member and Focal Point of UNEP-SAYEN (United Nations Environment Program, South Asia Youth Environment Network). Mr. Farmanesh has been involved in the United Nations (UNEP – UN-Habitat) Governing Councils and was a member of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) Youth Advisory Council. He also provides Youth Advisory role for Managing Board of Conference of NGOs (CONGO) with Consultative Status with the UN. He is currently in Leadership Program with East West Center in University of Hawaii and will start his study in Master of Public Administration and International Relations in Syracuse University, Maxwell school with Full scholarship from the World Bank.

SOLANGE MÁRQUEZ ESPINOZA, age 26, has a B.A. in Law and is currently a student of B.A. in Political Science from the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM, National University). She is currently the National Co-coordinator of Rescue Mission: Planet Earth, Mexico (Peace Child International), and is the Mexican alliance of the Global Youth Action Network. She has been working for three years as a Parliamentary Advisor at the Mexican Senate at the Foreign Affairs Commission, Parliamentarian Practices and Security and is a member of the National Parliamentarian Investigators Network. She currently serves as the Latin-American representative of the Youth Network for Peacebuilding, UNESCO, Mexican representative of the Youth Environmental Network of Mexico at the Youth Caucus.

NICK MORAITIS, age 21, is Strategic Development Coordinator at TakingITGlobal. Prior to joining TIG, Nick was Executive Director of Nation1, a New York based, youth-led, non-profit supported by the MIT Media Lab. A member of the Australian National Commission for UNESCO, Nick has twice been a member

of the Australian government's delegation to the General Conference of UNESCO and preparatory process of the World Summit on the Information Society, for which he was also facilitator of the Youth Caucus. Nick is also an author ("Cyberscene", Penguin Books, 1999), contributor to major Australian newspapers, and speaker at more than forty events such as ITU TELECOM Asia, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and the Australian government's National Innovation Summit. In 2002, Nick completed a term on the Advisory Council of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. He is also currently working on the development of a global youth strategy for Amnesty International.

CAMERON NEIL, age 28**,** is an entrepreneur and development professional with particular interests and experience in sustainability, youth development, entrepreneurship, venture development and social and eco business. Cameron is owner and Consulting Director of Catenate Pty Ltd, an Australian not-for-profit social innovation consulting company, as well as being Chief Executive Officer of the International Young Professionals Foundation. Throughout 2002 and 2003, he worked in Brisbane to promote and catalyse youth enterprise programs through a platform called YES!BE! with the support of Social Ventures Australia. Cameron serves on the Youth Employment Summit International Youth Leaders for Employment Advisory Group, and is one of the facilitators of the Youth Employment Summit Australian Country Network. In January 2004, Cameron moved to Canberra to take up the role of Development Coordinator of the Fair Trade Association of Australia and New Zealand. In this role, Cameron works with businesses, consumers and advocates to increase provision and consumption of fair trade products in Australian and New Zealand markets for the benefit of third world farmers. Previously, Cameron has spent time in Australia managing youth and community development services, running non-government organizations, and working in education policy research for state government. He maintains an active interest in action research and action learning, global governance, social justice, and socio-cultural animation.

ROBERT SAGUN, age 27, is concurrently President of the Young Volunteers for Sustainable Development (The Philippines) and Policy Coordinator of the UN World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Youth Caucus. He is an independent environmental economist and researcher and has worked for a number of research projects commissioned by international development organizations and donor agencies. His expertise revolves around environmental sustainability, poverty reduction strategies, information and communications technologies for development (ICT4D), youth participation in political processes, employment and entrepreneurship, multi-stakeholder partnerships, knowledge management and development financing. He is also an active member of the UN CSD Youth Caucus.

APPENDIX E: REFERENCES

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