

Un:



**General Assembly
Economic and Social Council**

Distr.: General
9 November 2006

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixty-sixth session
Social development
Social development
world social development
persons and

Questions relating to the
ageing, disabled

**Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2007
Social and human rights questions: social
development**

Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond: progress and constraints	1–85	3
A. Introduction	1–4	3
B. Youth development in a globalizing world	5–82	3
1. Globalization	10–21	5
2. Poverty and hunger	22–27	8
3. Education	28–42	9
4. Employment	43–58	12
5. Proposed indicators for measuring youth development	59–82	15
C. Conclusions and recommendations	83–85	20
II. Progress achieved by the Youth Employment Network	86–124	21
A. Introduction	86–89	21
B. High-Level Panel on Youth Employment	90–94	22
C. Political leadership, support and national action	95–97	24
D. Status of national action plans on youth employment	98–104	24
E. Strengthening youth participation	105–115	26
F. Engaging partners and capacity-building	116–123	28
G. Recommendations	124	30

I. Implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond: progress and constraints

A. Introduction

1. In its resolution 60/2 of 6 October 2005, the General Assembly took note of the three clusters of priority areas of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond presented in the report entitled “World Youth Report 2005”,¹ and requested the Secretary-General to provide the General Assembly at its sixty-second session, through the Commission for Social Development at its forty-fifth session, with a comprehensive report on the implementation of one of the three clusters.

2. The present report presents a review of the progress made and the constraints that young people face in relation to their participation in the global economy. The World Programme of Action for Youth and follow-up General Assembly resolution 60/2 identified 15 priority areas of youth development that are key to the successful transition of youth to adulthood. These priority areas are grouped into three areas — youth in the global economy, youth in civil society, and youth and their well-being. Each cluster relates to different aspects of the development of young people. In view of the priority theme of the Commission for Social Development at its forty-fifth session on the theme “Promoting full employment and decent work for all”, the report is presented to the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond at its forty-fifth session to the Commission for Social Development at its forty-fifth session.

31 million by 2015.² Owing to a combination of factors, youth today are better poised than ever before to participate in, and benefit from, global development. The majority of youth around the world is healthy, having survived childhood years, which only a few decades ago accounted for considerably higher infant and child mortality. Compared to previous generations, a higher proportion of young people today have completed primary schooling. Youth in many countries have the added advantage of increased access to the media and communication technologies. There is a growing interconnectivity among people across the world, nurturing the realization that the world is becoming — albeit slowly — a true global community. Youth are key links in this process. Furthermore, across the world, young people want to be included in local and global development as important and equal participants, rather than as passive bystanders unable to shape their own future.

6. Although the present cohort of youth has numerous advantages and assets, it also faces a complex and rapidly evolving economic and social environment where new opportunities coexist with major constraints and obstacles. In many ways, every market in the world is becoming more demanding, and increased competition is affecting the global marketplace and its rules and practices. Forces of globalization often impose constraints on national policies, and not every country has the means to manage its integration into the global economy and to provide its citizens with social and economic opportunities. Youth often remain in a vulnerable situation and lack the requisite knowledge and skills to adapt to a new economic and social environment. With an uneven distribution of economic growth across and within countries, youth are facing not only the traditional (largely domestic) barriers to their development, but they must also surmount new barriers associated with the changing global economy.

7. In the past two decades or so, Governments everywhere have made considerable strides to improve economic performance by promoting greater productivity, lowering or recovering costs and promoting private sector development. A thrust of these changes has been to improve access to the global market for goods, services and capital by lowering or removing barriers to international transactions. This process of liberalization of international trade and finance has been a major force in increasing the integration of the global economy. The opening up of international global markets has been associated with a wave of related forces that have affected social policy, giving rise to concerns about income distribution, inequality and social exclusion. As a result of liberalization, major

envir0238

finance, knowledge, technology and investment, remains key to a country's beneficial integration in the global economy.³ National policies and international cooperation that address poverty reduction, environmental sustainability and other social goals are also required.

9. In addressing the priority areas under the cluster, "Youth in the global economy", the report first highlights how youth have fared generally in the context of globalization. This leads into a discussion of progress with respect to poverty and hunger, education and employment. Although each priority area is examined separately, it is important to note the strong interrelationship among areas.

1. Globalization

10. Globalization is a complex phenomenon that offers many opportunities, but also poses many risks. It presents a major challenge to policymaking and implementation, both at the national and international levels. Globalization has increasingly transformed the global markets for goods, services and capital, and has introduced new ideas, knowledge and technology. This transformation has created enhanced opportunities for youth to participate in the global economy, especially in those countries that have been able to generate significantly new employment opportunities from investments and have prepared their young job-seekers for such opportunities; e.g. those associated with the adoption of new technologies. In addition to its strong links to employment, education and hunger and poverty, discussed in subsequent sections, globalization has expanded youth access to technology, especially information and communication technologies (ICT); it has also fuelled the flows of young migrants between and within countries in search of better opportunities.

11. With increasing flows of goods and services, a growing segment of youth now have access to essential consumer goods and services previously beyond their reach. Food, educational materials, clothing, medicines and information on political and social developments elsewhere in the world are quickly and easily transferred across borders. Unfortunately, globalization has also increased unemployment, as well as job flexibility and casualization, which have exacerbated the social exclusion of youth in many contexts. It has also provided youth around the world with easier access to goods and services that have encouraged consumerism, alienation and delinquency. For example, one aspect of globalization is the expanding global trade in illicit drugs and substances, which is tearing families and societies apart, spawning crime, spreading diseases such as AIDS, and killing youth and adults alike. It has been noted, for example, that deregulated and privatized markets have allowed the drug industry to spread its activities worldwide, opening new trafficking routes and production zones and infiltrating the "legal" economy to a degree that decision makers cannot ignore.⁴ Even when they are not the main participants of this trade, youth are often the main targets of such trade promotion efforts.

12. Internet technologies increasingly serve as hubs for the communication and social networking of youth. These technologies are embedded into the lives of increasing numbers of youth every day. Internet use among young people across the

³ See A/58/394.

⁴ See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), "The globalization of the drug trade", *Globalization of Drug Trade*, No. 111 (April, 1999), available at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/00115833e.pdf>.

world is high and rising and offers new opportunities for youth to harness benefits of globalization from outside national borders. Countries that are very different in socio-economic and cultural terms may have similar patterns of Internet use. For example, in Kuwait, where the Internet is used by 23 per cent of the population, 63 per cent of users are young people. In South Korea, the Internet use rate is

young people to acquire basic skills in preparation for the workplace. Success or failure in these years affects the readiness of young people to participate in the global economy and to assume leadership roles in their communities.

30. Governments have made sustained efforts to improve access to education in past decades, resulting in impressive improvements in access to primary and secondary education. Gross enrolment ratios for secondary school, for example, increased from 56 to 78 per cent in the last decade.¹⁴ Generally, opportunities for secondary and especially tertiary education have improved less dramatically than for primary education. This situation, which directly affects youth, reflects in part, the intensification of Government efforts to recover costs in secondary and especially tertiary education. A positive trend, however, is that at the tertiary level, there is a gradual reversal in the male domination of education, with more women than men enrolled in tertiary institutions.

31. Despite progress in other areas, 115 million primary school-age children were not in school in 2002.¹⁵ Further, in most developing countries, a large proportion of primary school graduates do not make the transition to post-primary education. The greatest concentration of educational deprivation is found in Africa and South Asia, and a child in sub-Saharan Africa can expect to attend an average of five to six fewer years of primary and secondary schooling than a child in Western Europe or the Americas. The gap between male and female literacy rates in Asia and Africa also appears to be widening. The largest inequalities are in Western Asia and North Africa, where educationally deprived girls outnumber boys by almost 3 to 1.¹⁶ Youth, especially young women are therefore at a clear disadvantage to be able to cope in the global economy.

32. Youth currently take advantage of opportunities to access education outside their national borders, either through travel or via information and communication technology. For many youth, in both developing and developed countries, access to quality education is constrained by factors such as overcrowded classrooms, inadequate infrastructure, lack of instruction materials and a shortage of well-trained staff. The cost of and shortages of equipment and qualified teaching personnel may also limit the academic options and skills that students can acquire at schools. As a result, technically demanding areas, such as the sciences, mathematics and engineering, often lack adequate funding and have lower enrolment. Despite the ongoing revolution in ICT, in many parts of the world, access to modern technology, including computers and audio-visual aids, is limited. This affects the quality of education and makes graduates inadequately prepared for the modern demands of the global economy.

33. Although the instability or unavailability of connections to the Internet bar many countries from linking students to the information superhighway, "schoolnets" have been established in some countries to promote the development of knowledge

¹⁴ See UNESCO, "Global monitoring report on education for all", *Quality Education for All Young People: Challenges, Trends and Priorities* (Paris, 2004).

¹⁵ See UNESCO, "Education for all, year 2000 assessment", in United Nations, *World Youth Report 2003: The Global Situation of Young People* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 03.IV.7).

¹⁶ See UNESCO, *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2005*, available at www.unesco.org/education/gmr_download/chapter3.pdf.

societies by connecting schools to the Internet and sharing information and resources.¹⁷

34. There is great potential for ICT to promote development that directly benefits young people, particularly in areas of education and livelihoods. In terms of accessing remote and rural areas, radio and low-cost mobile telephone technology are essential. ICT should be used to expand access to teaching and learning materials and to create an environment conducive to improved teaching and learning. Outside the classroom environment, ICT can help provide information on business development and related opportunities for youth. Various new livelihoods can be enabled by ICT, including web-based businesses.

35. Young women face additional challenges with respect to education. The majority still do not reach as high a level of educational attainment as young men. In many developing countries, young women are more likely than men to drop out of school at times of acute financial need or family crises.¹⁸ Early marriage and childbearing are major impediments to girls' ability to complete their schooling. Young women are also likely to be taken out of school to assist with domestic and other chores. Structural problems, such as lack of bathroom facilities for girls and policies that prevent young mothers from continuing their education, still hinder educational attainment.

36. Though more women are participating in the labour force, the educational choices of girls and young women often limit access to certain types of employment and cause wage differentials to become entrenched. These choices are sometimes encouraged by stereotypical casting of women in domestic roles in textbooks and other teaching material. Although curricular revision has accompanied much of the education reform that has occurred in many countries around the world, much more remains to be done to provide relevant classroom education that addresses the needs of both girls and boys.

37. It is becoming increasingly clear that higher education and training are equally important in developing a labour force that supports growth and poverty reduction and helps businesses to survive global competition. Governments need to place greater emphasis on what happens when young people leave school by creating supportive and ongoing skills training that translates into poverty-reducing employment.

38. Training is a good investment if those trained are able to find better jobs and decent work or can use their newly acquired skills in their current positions.

Obt0 Tw TfoGovgtng .e6huchbv)-6(e)-4twemen thedremind for and the(supwlyfo)-6ifd trainingshfo
e pl(n)-60 Tw (of du)-6(ch)-6(prgramres.)-12(Th ccu)-6(rti)-8icue of manytiraining(prgu)-6(amm

some youth, skills training can replace formal education; for most, it will serve as a complement to formal education by providing job-specific skills. As the economy and the global labour market are constantly in flux, skills training needs to be constantly upgraded and expanded to suit the contemporary job market.

39. Characteristics of successful training programmes may include flexibility and responsiveness to the needs of the workplace, links with the labour market and employers, on-the-job training, targeted programmes for disadvantaged youth, inclusion of young people in the informal economy, opportunities for mentorship after training ends and partnerships with local business. Training programmes, job centres or schools may also play a useful role in establishing an initial relationship with an employer for youth through identifying volunteer or structured internship opportunities that serve as vehicles for youth to acquire technical and social skills.

in which one out of every three youth in the world is either seeking but unable to find work, has given up the job search entirely or is working but still living below the US\$ 2-a-day poverty line. Without the right foothold from which to start out right in the labour market, young people are less able to make choices that will improve their own job prospects and those of their future dependents.²⁰

44. In most areas, youth unemployment rates are two to three times that of the general population. The ratio of the youth-to-adult unemployment rate was 3.0 in 2005, up from 2.8 in 1995. Moreover, youth have an even smaller share of decent and productive jobs.²¹ Youth unemployment rates themselves do not adequately capture the challenges of young people in the labour market. Many work for long hours and for low pay, ultimately remaining poor. Since a majority of youth have not yet acquired the skills and experience required by most employers, their earnings have been falling in comparison to the rapid rise in earnings of skilled workers. This trend has been observed in most countries; in developing countries, this is owed mainly to the increasing size of the informal economy as a dominant source of new jobs.

45. In some developing countries, only 5 to 10 per cent of new entrants into the labour market can be absorbed by the formal economy, leaving the bulk of new jobs to be generated by the informal economy. The International Labour Office estimates that 93 per cent of all jobs available to young people in developing countries are in the informal economy, where there is often little respect for the rights and legal protections of workers, and where youth often work for long hours with little job security and low pay. Wages in the informal economy are estimated to be 44 per cent below formal economy wages.²²

46. A positive aspect of the global economy and the growth in information and communication technology is the opening of new opportunities for youth to search for jobs. Young people are increasingly looking to online websites for career resources and training. In Europe, use of these sites by youth jumped by 21 per cent, to 9.5 million youth between 2005 and 2006, and outpaced the total growth of youth Internet use in Europe, which grew about 10 per cent, to 36.4 million youth.

48. Though often requiring a significant influx of capital, the employment creation effects of labour-intensive public works projects can enhance the supply of jobs and improve local infrastructure in a manner not achievable with private investment. These projects can also stimulate local economies through the demand for tools, equipment and materials. They can also be particularly good entry points into the labour force for youth. In this context, a diverse range of agricultural and rural development projects in sub-Saharan Africa have contributed to expanding employment, but much more remains to be done.

49. Government policies that ensure that economic growth is geared towards employment creation and benefits for the poorer segments of the population can greatly affect the lives of young people. Yet, out of the poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) of 21 African countries, only seven contain macroeconomic goals linked to employment creation, and only 11 have a core section containing an analysis of youth employment. In contrast, over two thirds of the PRSPs focused on the supply side, specifically issues of education and training.¹¹

50. In many areas, there is a need to strengthen the link between young employees and their employers. Some countries have supported the development and enhancement of employment support services at university and secondary school levels. Partnerships with the private sector that identify skills in high demand and define entry-level requirements can help to fine-tune the role of educational institutions in easing the school-to-work transition for youth. They can also help to encourage the flow of labour to expanding industries where youth will be most productive.

51. In the light of the large informal economy in many developing countries, particularly in Africa and Latin America, serious consideration should be given to developing the institutional capacity to extend and improve the quality of social protection to youth working in the informal economy. Information on training and financial services for young people should be extended to those involved in the informal economy with the goal of assisting them to move from low to higher-productivity activities and upwards along the continuum of decent work.

52. Explicit in the United Nations Millennium Declaration is the commitment to “develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work”.²⁴ In response, the United Nations, together with the World Bank and the International Labour Organization, launched the Youth Employment Network. Progress in the work of the Network is described in Section II of the present report.

53. The labour market challenges for young women are often more daunting than they are for men. Overall, the female unemployment rate is significantly higher than the male unemployment rate; the widest gender gaps occur in Latin America and the Caribbean and the Middle East and North Africa. The gender pay gap is negatively correlated with the participation of women in the workplace.²⁵

54. Gender inequalities in education, training and recruitment are a major cause of persistent gender wage gaps in all sectors throughout the world. Women are often steered towards household-related or low-skilled jobs characterized by low status or

²⁴ See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

²⁵ See World Bank, *Gender and Development in the Middle East and North Africa*. “Constraints on Women’s Work”, chap. 4 (2004).

little pay; teachers, along with well-trained guidance and vocational counsellors, may be helpful in reducing this type of stereotyping so that young women may pursue life-long learning and real career development. Often, young women will need extra incentives to pursue studies in a male-dominated field. Without many role models in such fields, scholarships and mentoring programmes will open up new areas for women and fuel their confidence and ambitions.

55. To build assets and prosper in a competitive economy, young people often need access to credit and microinsurance. With access to a range of financial tools, young people can plan for their futures and invest according to their own priorities, such as school fees, health care, housing or starting a business. Adding to the survival toolkit of poor youth, these financial services connect this population with little or no assets to productive capital.

56. The needs of young people who engage in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and microenterprises are often overlooked. It is essential for commercial banks to extend lending to youth-headed SMEs and microenterprises. In this regard, central banks and designated financial service regulators must play a proactive role by integrating the objective of increasing access of SMEs and microenterprises to financial services into regulatory and supervisory policies.²⁶ As part of the enabling environment for youth entrepreneurship, the process of starting and expanding a new business can be streamlined and made less costly, while preserving transparency, so that small and medium-sized enterprises are able to train and hire more youth.

57. Through microfinance, many young women have become active participants in economic activities. Furthermore, because of microfinance and the enabling role it plays, they own assets, including land and housing, play a stronger role in decision-making and take on positions of leadership in their communities. Some areas have witnessed a positive shift in values and expectations that affect the role of women in society. However, in other cases, women's successful businesses have added to their burden, as domestic and family responsibilities may not be shared by male household members.

58. When choosing to engage in business enterprises, many youth have not acquired the financial and business acumen to ensure success in these activities. As starting any enterprise involves risk, entrepreneurship programmes targeting youth should include the provision of adequate information and support to enable them to choose whether or not to engage in economic ventures. Programmes should also be linked with opportunities to upgrade skills, learn business development technique and take advantage of networking opportunities, while providing youth with necessary resources for market access.

5. Proposed indicators for measuring youth development

59. Data limitations impede the assessment of national and international progress in addressing youth development, as outlined in the World Programme of Action for Youth. These limitations apply not only to the priority areas under the cluster "Youth in the global economy", but also to the other two clusters of priorities of the

²⁶ See United Nations Capital Development Fund and Department of Economic and Social Affairs,

World Programme of Action for Youth — “Youth in civil society” and “Youth well-being”. Appropriate and comparable indicators for measuring progress with respect to priorities such as globalization, intergenerational relations, armed conflict and leisure, for example, are difficult to define; and even priority areas, such as health and employment, for which data have traditionally been collected, often lack data that are specific to youth.

data, which measure a critical element of youth involvement in the global economy, indicates a pressing area for future data collection and research.

Poverty and hunger

64. Various factors contribute to the paucity of data on hunger and poverty in relation to youth. The frequently temporary living arrangements of youth may cause them to be excluded from poverty surveys. Difficulties in the definition and measurement of hunger and poverty also frustrate monitoring efforts.

65. Four indicators are, however, proposed for consideration to be included in a compendium of youth development indicators for Governments to use to monitor progress on poverty and hunger. The indicators are the percentages of young people living in poverty and in absolute poverty and the percentages of underweight youth and severely underweight youth. For each indicator, it is important to disaggregate by age and sex, wherever possible. It may also be necessary to disaggregate by regions or other geographical or socio-economic groupings to facilitate within country monitoring.

Education

66. Five indicators are proposed for which global data are available to measure progress in youth education. Youth literacy rates provide a broad indication of the ability of an individual to read and write at a basic level. The gross enrolment ratio in secondary education, which indicates the general level of participation in secondary education, and the net enrolment rate for secondary education, which indicates the extent of participation of youth belonging to the official age group for secondary education, give indications of progress in providing youth with intermediate levels of education considered the minimal levels required to function in today's global economy. This indicator gives a sense of access to educational levels essential in the global economy. A final indicator, the transition rate to general secondary education, is also recommended to provide a sense of progression from basic to secondary schooling.

Employment

67. Five indicators are proposed for monitoring progress with respect to youth employment. The indicators are the percentages of youth in the labour force, the percentages of youth in the informal sector, the percentages of youth in the agricultural sector, the percentages of youth in the manufacturing sector, and the percentages of youth in the services sector.

Health

68. A number of indicators are available for tracking the health of youth. Five of them are proposed for Governments to consider for measuring youth development. First is adolescent fertility as a percentage of total fertility. This indicator focuses specifically on the 15- to 19-year age group. Childbearing at very young ages often threatens the physical health and social well-being of both mothers and children, and can have negative social and economic effects. This indicator therefore provides a measure not only of the level of fertility, but also of the age burden of childbearing at the national level.

69. A second indicator is the percentage of married or in-union young women currently using modern contraception. Access to and use of contraception is a key determinant of the reproductive health of young persons. Pregnancy and childbirth during the young adolescent years can have negative consequences on young people's pursuit of higher education and on their ability to attain economic stability before starting a family. Of even greater importance is the fact that the availability of contraception protects youth from unwanted pregnancy and the risks of unsafe abortions.

70. Third, the maternal mortality ratio, which measures the risk of death once a woman has become pregnant, provides an indication of the safety of pregnancy and childbearing in a particular context. In many developing countries, complications of pregnancy and

cocaine/crack cocaine, heroin, opium, amphetamine/methamphetamine, ecstasy and inhalants) have been used at least once in a lifetime. It suggests the potential for the

Intergenerational relations

Development, at its forty-fifth session, and the General Assembly, at its sixty-second session, may wish to consider the following recommendations:

(a) **Integrate and protect youth in the global economy through the provision of employment under decent work conditions. This is essential for reaping the full returns to national investment in human resource development, especially in the education sector;**

(b) **Ensure that youth development, especially their access to food, education and employment, are specifically addressed in national policies and programmes, including PRSPs and other policy documents that aim to foster the participation of countries in the global economy;**

(c) **Ensure adequate funding for education, including programmes geared at fostering the acquisition of requisite skills by youth, in order to overcome the mismatch between available skills and the demands of the labour market shaped by globalization;**

(d) **Improve the ability of young people to make a better transition into the world of work and enhance their access to the changing labour market. Governments should promote policies that expand opportunities for youth to get quality education and training. Skills development must be combined with other programmes that are targeted at the specific labour market needs of youth and that focus on the multiple needs of those most at risk of joblessness. Skills training must be incorporated into education planning at all stages, as it provides an opportunity for youth to realign their skills to the changing needs of the competitive international economy;**

(e) **Promote youth involvement in information and communications technologies in all sectors, in a manner**

87. The Network focuses its activities on the establishment of a network of networks at the political, technical and economic levels. Towards that end, it has worked to foster partnerships to promote youth employment. Building on the core partnership of the United Nations, the World Bank and ILO, it has been able to bring together policymakers, employers' and workers' organizations, young people and other stakeholders to pool their skills and know-how and diverse experiences to shape coherent policy and programme solutions to youth employment challenges.

88. The Network promotes a comprehensive approach to youth employment, which integrates macro and microeconomic policy interventions, addresses both labour supply and demand dimensions, and underlines the quality and quantity of employment. The process for developing national action plans provides a framework for national consultations on youth employment and for setting priorities that have broad-based ownership. These national action plans on youth employment also provide a delivery vehicle for developing and implementing strategies that give young people a real and equal opportunity to find full and productive employment and decent work.

89. The Network combines a political strategy with the technical experience and implementation capacity of its partner organizations to address the ongoing challenges of unemployment and underemployment among young people. It therefore plays an important role in facilitating communication and information sharing, linking good practice initiatives and stakeholders. In addition, it is assisting countries in developing their national action plans, strengthening the capacity of partners in this process, especially youth, and increasing the knowledge base and attention on issues such as the connection between youth employment and child labour and between youth employment and collective security.

B. High-Level Panel on Youth Employment

90. In 2001, the Secretary-General appointed a High-Level Panel of 12 experts and practitioners on youth employment to advise the heads of the United Nations, the World Ae a7a 2ru-6(e Unite5a7273nemploy)-6oeu.eral l6-2Efnsei3nempf02 er .12tions -7(tia-5(p1-2e9and di

intergovernmental mandate, and encourages all Member States to prepare national reviews and action plans on youth employment.²⁷

92. When the High-Level Panel met in 2003, it invited the full participation of a youth panel and representatives from ministries and Governments, social partners and civil society. At that meeting, agreement was reached on the next five steps for building a Global Alliance for Youth Employment. A roadmap and guidelines on implementation policies and best practices were issued to facilitate efforts by countries to address the four global priorities of employability, entrepreneurship, equal opportunities and employment creation. Social dialogue on youth employment and the key role of trade unions and employers' organizations were also highlighted. In particular, the need to involve youth organizations in all initiatives addressing youth employment challenges was recognized.

93. At its 2004 meeting, the High-Level Panel focused on how to facilitate the development of national action plans on youth employment. At that meeting, the President of the World Bank affirmed the support of that organization, as well as his personal commitment, to mobilize Governments in lead countries to prepare national action plans in time for the five-year review of the Millennium Development Goals in September 2005. The Youth Consultative Group was launched at that meeting. The Group represented 605 youth organizations in 130 countries.

C. Political leadership, support and national action

95. The High-Level Panel on Youth Employment called upon countries to

on lessons learned; draw on existing reports or policies on youth employment, such as poverty reduction strategies, national youth policies and national employment policies, and reports on ILO conventions relevant to youth employment to ensure that the national action plan is integrated into national policymaking processes and funding mechanisms; (b) involve young people, different government ministries and departments, employers, workers and civil society in the preparation of the plan; (c) put in place mechanisms, baseline indicators and statistical data for monitoring progress and evaluating the national action plan, and provide baseline indicators or statistical data to monitor progress; and (d) seek, as appropriate, assistance from the Youth Employment Network core agency partners — ILO, the World Bank, and the United Nations Secretariat — or from other outside institutions in the drafting process.

100. The development of a national action plan can be a long and complicated process, involving numerous stakeholders. The Youth Employment Network has been actively supporting lead countries and other Member States in the formulation of their plans by providing, through its core agency partners, technical guidance, training and activities to build capacity for the development and/or implementation of action plans. To facilitate the development of national action plans, the core agency partners of the Network have prepared or are in the process of preparing tools to assist countries.

101. ILO, for example, has prepared its guidelines for the preparation of national action plans on youth employment³⁰ to assist different groups — particularly government officials, representatives of employers' and workers' organizations, youth groups and other relevant stakeholders — to work together in countries in preparing a balanced and comprehensive national action plan on youth employment. It provides guidance to national institutions with regard to the information to be collected in preparation of a technical advisory mission fielded and coordinated by one of the core agency partners at the request of the country.

102. As policymakers seek measures to help young people make the transition into the labour market, they are hampered by a lack of information on what options are available, what works in different situations, and what has been tried and failed. In response, the World Bank is assembling a global inventory of interventions to support young workers. By documenting these experiences and consolidating the lessons learned through synthesis reports, this project will build a knowledge base

A/62/61
E/2007/7

encouraging them to form networks and facilitating their introduction to Governments and United Nations agency country offices to enhance their opportunities to become involved in national policy development processes; and contributing to workshops conducted to build the capacity of youth groups to participate effectively in the process to develop national action plans.

109. Young people have been very active, both in lead and other countries. The Youth Consultative Group is collaborating with youth organizations and individuals to facilitate increased access to Governments and policymakers in order to promote greater inputs from youth into the various youth employment policymaking processes. Their involvement is leading to increased voice and acceptance for youth in local, national, regional and global initiatives on youth employment. In some countries — Georgia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Rwanda, Nigeria and Namibia — youth organizations have even been the driving force that has shaped the decision by their Governments to become lead countries.

110. Building on their global work and experiences in the lead countries, the Youth Consultative Group, in partnership with the Youth Employment Network secretariat, is producing a guide for youth to facilitate and motivate their participation in youth

174 Tc 0.1974 Tw -7.528 -1.190.1974 Tw nte t

and the Youth, Development and Peace Network is in close contact with the Youth Consultative Group to exploit synergies and avoid duplication of work in this field.

113. The World Bank has launched a trust fund to support training and capacity-building activities to strengthen youth organization involvement in decision-making processes. This decision underlines the conviction of the World Bank that young people represent a powerful force for change and that they need to be empowered to participate actively in development. The initial financial support for this multilateral trust fund was provided by the German Government. The trust fund activities will include a mapping of projects and activities supporting youth development being carried out by youth groups and donor organizations; a needs assessment of youth organizations based on this mapping; the design and implementation of training and capacity-building activities; and sharing experiences regionally.

114. The Youth Employment Network organized a high-level dialogue on youth employment, which was followed by a technical meeting in Geneva in June 2005. That event, co-financed by the World Bank, brought international policymakers face to face with young people to discuss the role of youth employment in the international development agenda. The interactive panel discussion involved labour ministers, members of tripartite delegations to the International Labour Conference, representatives of young people from the Youth Consultative Group and lead countries, as well as experts and practitioners on youth employment from international and civil society organizations. Discussions revolved around the issue of job creation.

115. The World Bank held consultations with youth around the world to gather inputs for the *World Development Report 2007: Development and the Next Generation*, which has a chapter on youth employment (see www.worldbank.org).

Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), are exploring or developing operational activities with the Network.

119. Products for advocacy and awareness-raising are being distributed, both through the country offices of the core agencies and youth groups. These include: information leaflets; Youth Employment Network fact sheets; Network information packs for potential partners, agency staff, journalists and the general public; the Youth Employment Network Newsletter, with an ever-growing partner and issues coverage; and a comprehensive interactive website. A working paper series was launched in 2005, with the first paper entitled “Youth employment promotion: a view of the ILO’s work and the lessons learned”. The second paper in the series will focus on World Bank messages on youth employment.

120. The Youth Employment Network has provided, leveraged and pooled resources to support activities on youth employment undertaken by a wide range of partners, including lead countries, core agencies, youth organizations, civil society organizations and other social partners. Assistance, including seed funding in some cases, to support activities on youth employment have expanded. For example, the Network was invited by UNOWA to help coordinate its work on regional security and youth employment. The UNOWA report on the theme “Youth unemployment and regional security in West Africa” was first issued in December 2005 and reissued in 2006.³⁵ It provides concrete recommendations on youth employment and calls on the Network to facilitate the establishment of a regional focal point for this issue. Support from the United Kingdom, Sweden and UNIDO have enabled the establishment of the Youth Employment Network/UNOWA unit for youth employment and regional security in West Africa.

121. There has been financial assistance from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) for project activities in the lead countries, Senegal and Sri Lanka, as well as continued support from the German Development Cooperation (GTZ) for Youth Employment Network activities in Egypt and Uganda. The BMZ has also financed the global inventory of interventions to support young workers, which is being conducted by the World Bank under the auspices of the Network. There are projects on youth employment in a number of countries in Latin America — Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Honduras, Mexico, Peru and the Dominican Republic — that are being funded by the Spanish Employers’ Association, private sector companies and the Spanish Government.

122. The Youth Employment Network has also been working with core agencies to develop improved youth employment indicators in order to address the inherent weaknesses of the unemployment rate of young people for measuring progress towards the youth employment goal of the Millennium Development Goals. ILO continues to produce and refine global and regional estimates on youth labour market indicators that have been published in its *Global Employment Trends for Youth* publications since 2004. These indicators are intended to both inform policies at the national level and to contribute to the overall monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals. In this connection, an expert group meeting on youth development indicators, organized by the United Nations Programme on Youth in December 2005, served as a forum to examine indicators used by the United Nations

³⁵ See UNOWA, “Youth unemployment and regional insecurity in West Africa”, UNOWA issue papers, second edition (Dakar, Senegal, August 2006).

