



International Young Professionals Foundation & Youth Employment Summit 2002



Report on the work of the IYPF and YES at the World Summit on Sustainable Development Johannesburg August 26 – September 4, 2002

Background:

The International Young Professionals Foundation (IYPF) and the Youth Employment Summit (YES) worked in partnership prior to and while in Johannesburg for the WSSD and convened two panel discussions one on the theme of “Sustainable Development and Youth Employment” at the NASREC Auditorium on the 29th August 2002 and the other on “Sustainable Livelihoods and Social Entrepreneurship” at the USAID Auditorium on the 2nd September 2002.

Outputs of the discussions:

The first panel discussion included short presentations from the World Bank Vice President H.E. Karlsson, introductions about IYPF by James Moody and about the YES by Bremley Lyngdoh. The floor was opened to questions after the panelist made their contributions on the theme that was then followed by a very lively discussion. About 100 participants came to the meeting and many of them contributed concrete recommendations on how youth employment was critical and linked towards achieving sustainable development. Experiences from on going field projects and programs in different countries were shared by the participants and issues of access to resources and funding of youth employment related initiatives were raised to the World Bank representative.

The panelist highlighted the importance of creating micro credit for youth sustainable livelihoods projects especially in the developing countries. Some of the participants make a call for the setting up of a “Global Youth Sustainable Development Fund” where developed nations, foundations and business could contribute for specific time bound action oriented grassroots projects that would make a huge impact in the lives of the unemployed youth. Other participants raised of UN inter agency cooperation at the country level where by UNDP, UNESCO, FAO and UNICEF could pool in their resources and work together with youth and youth serving organizations to help achieve sustainable livelihoods goals.

The 8 UN Millennium Declaration Goals were introduced by the panelist and the youth participants discussed on the goals where they could play an active role for implementation in partnership with their respective governments and all concerned stakeholders. The issue of creating Type II Partnership projects on youth employment for sustainable development was introduced to the discussions by members of the panel and the participants were encouraged to engage their

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organization in creating such meaningful collaborations. After a three hour long fruitful discussion the meeting ended with concrete recommendations that were then taken to the Youth Employment Summit in Alexandria. Later all the participants had lunch and had informal discussions.

The second panel discussion included short presentations from Calestous Juma, Harvard University, Mr. Henry Habicht, the CEO of Global Environment Technology Foundation, Prof. Pierri, COBASE. Introductions about IYFP were presented by Swati Raut and about the YES by Mr. Bremley Lyngdoh. About 25 participants came to the meeting and all most everyone had a chance to contribute to the discussion being a smaller group. The panelist presented the work of their respective organizations and networks and introduced the importance of Social Entrepreneurship in creating Sustainable Livelihoods for young people globally. The question of capacity building and training for youth to gain new skills was raised by the young participants from developing countries.

The panel responded by highlighting the importance of reorienting the educational system in our respective countries in order to produce graduates that will create their own new jobs as social or an environmental entrepreneur rather than look for jobs. The issue for developing countries being dependent on international development aid was questioned as being an unsustainable model of development. The participants agreed that human capital and knowledge creation at the national, local and grassroots level is the best way to bridge this huge disparity gap between the rich and the poor.

The members of the panel recommended the creation of centers of excellence or sustainable development training centers which can be created and implemented by the youth themselves to enable them to have informal or vocational training in sustainable development issues and how to create employment generation opportunities in their communities through working on social, environmental and economic projects and programs. The participants felt that development agencies should work directly with the youth and youth serving organizations at the national and level and engage in true partnership with the youth by helping to fund their sustainable livelihoods projects. The meeting came to an end with a common agreement that youth are the major stakeholders that represent 50% of the planet's populations and investing in them is critical to the success of sustainable development globally.

Outcome Documents:

The outcomes from these two panel discussions directly contributed to the Youth Caucus statement to the WSSD and to the statement presented by Mr. Bremley Lyngdoh later at the Youth Employment Summit in Alexandria, Egypt. The Youth Caucus also had inputs to the political declaration of WSSD and to the Alexandria Declaration. Both documents attached below.

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(1) YOUTH CAUCUS INPUT TO POLITICAL DECLARATION:

As recommended by the Delegates of Johannesburg

The Youth Caucus represents the future. We are leading the way now in making sustainable development a reality. We, the delegates of Johannesburg +10, have a concrete vision for the sustainability of the planet, and the future of humanity. We are exasperated at the inability of today's governments to address the problems that face us. We call on the Heads of States to take inspiration from our vision and lead the world toward a sustainable future. To this end, we call for the inclusion of the following key priorities as vital components for the further implementation of sustainable development.

Poverty Eradication

- Extreme poverty, a product of historical injustice, is one of the **biggest problems** affecting sustainable development in the developing countries.
- The basic **human right to an adequate standard of life**, including provisions for food security, must be ensured.
- **Employment and sustainable livelihoods**, especially for youth, must be created, and over-consumption patterns must be reduced.
- The **Millennium Declaration** goals for poverty eradication must be achieved.
- The Youth Employment Summit goal to launch a decade campaign of action must be met, so that an additional 500 million young adults can have a productive and sustainable livelihood.
- The **ecological debt** of the developed countries must be redressed.
- With the aim of establishing global equality, the **national debts** of developing countries must be cancelled.

Education

- Action must be taken to ensure **equal access** to education for all.
- **Sustainable development education**, including health, environment, and consumption patterns, must be integrated into curricula at all levels, especially higher education.
- Education must be restructured as a **fundamental agent for change and capacity building** in society.
- Financing for education should be a policy tool for **correcting the regional imbalances** of the past.
- **Local and cultural diversities**, and indigenous peoples' educational practices, must be taken into account when addressing sustainability issues.

Human Security

- People displaced by conflicts, such as refugees, must have the **right to protection and life free from fear**.
- **Peace** and sustainable development are inherently linked; one necessitates the other.
- Access to **safe drinking water, clean air, and a healthy environment** must be guaranteed.
- **Consistency** must be ensured when responding to issues of human security.

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- The UN Security Council must be restructured to ensure democracy – weaker countries must not be excluded.
- Sustainable development must be adopted into the priorities of the UN Security Council.
- Access to **basic healthcare for all must be achieved**, with a specific focus on combating communicable diseases.

Environment

- **Biological and cultural diversity** must be preserved and protected.
- The **ecological footprint** of humanity must be reduced to the carrying capacity of the earth.
- **Environmental justice** must be assured to all people and at all levels.

Participation

- **Equality of participation** must be fundamental in all governance processes.
- Full **recognition and a voice** must be given to marginalised groups such as youth, women, Indigenous Peoples, the poor, unemployed, and disabled people.
- **Access to justice**, information, and tools of information dissemination held by public and private authorities must be provided to all people.

Governance

- Political systems must be rebuilt for the purposes of sustainable development.
- The **UN body must become an exemplary model** of sustainable development practices.
- All people, particularly women, young people, and indigenous peoples, must be ensured the **rights to self-determination, land territories, and resources**.
- **Multilateral Environmental Agreements must take precedence** over the WTO, and the profit of big business.
- The international community, working with the WTO, must institutionalise economic recovery mechanisms to redress past imbalances, with specific reference to countries of the south.

Trade

- **Equality** – an even playing field between developing and developed countries – must be ensured in all trade endeavours.
- Financial systems must be restructured in order to prevent the damaging economic effect of **short term speculation**.
- **Global markets must be fundamentally changed** in order to redress the imbalances between the North and the South.

Corporate Accountability

- There must be a **UN binding convention agreement on corporate accountability**.
- There must be **transparency, accountability, and participation** of all stakeholders in international finance institutions and trans-national corporations.

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- To ensure accountability, trans-national corporations must be **monitored internationally**.

Ethical Framework

- **Shared responsibility and interdependence**, and the prerequisite of **prior and informed consent** must be recognised.
- An integrated ethical framework of shared values, such as the **Earth Charter**, must be established to guide us toward the common good and effective implementation of the sustainable development agenda at all levels.
- Commitment to **existing global governance agreements** is essential.

(2) YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SUMMIT 2002 DECLARATION:

Alexandria Declaration

We the participants in the first Youth Employment Summit (YES 2002), meeting at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, in Alexandria Egypt, hereby reaffirm our profound commitment to a decade-long global campaign for the creation of hundreds of millions of additional opportunities for sustainable livelihoods for youth all over the world. A paradigm shift on Employment is needed. Quality is as important as the quantity of jobs created. The poor, living on less than a dollar a day, cannot be locked into a life of deprivation. We must move from unskilled to skilled occupations, from low paying to high paying jobs, from subsidized public employment to sustainable productive livelihoods.

We recognize that these goals can only be met if all actors agree to address a number of important issues: peace, fair trade, market access, technology transfer, capital flows and poverty eradication. This will require redoubled efforts from the entire international community, and donors must meet their commitments and give special attention to projects and programs for youth employment. Convergence and greater synergies between different initiatives and programs dealing with youth employment will benefit youth.

While national governments have a special responsibility for according overriding priority to youth employment and for creating the necessary policy framework, we recognize that all segments of society must collaborate to empower youth to become the artisans of their own future.

To that end, we engage ourselves to support vigorous action in each of the following areas:

Employability: To ensure access for all youth to appropriate education and training followed by adequate support during the transition to work, regardless of their location or background. We cannot confront the challenges of tomorrow with yesterday's skills. Educational institutions must show unprecedented imagination and vision, using new tools for new times. They must impart marketable skills, promote self-esteem and shape a worldview that embraces the new, opens up to the other, and rises to the challenge of the untried.

Employment Creation: To adopt those policies that will encourage job-led economic growth, reduce the bias towards capital, and foster the institutional structures that can provide the advantages of

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scale at both the production and marketing phases of micro-enterprises supported by micro-credit. The corporate sector has a major responsibility in supporting micro-enterprises and self-employed youth through mechanisms of franchising, outsourcing and buy-back arrangements.

Equity: To provide equal opportunities for all to realize their full potential. Education, health and nutrition are fundamental rights for all. Special attention must be given to the needs of the disabled, the rural, and the marginalized groups in society, and above all, to young women, whether in education or when entering the labor force for the first time, and who in many parts of the world still suffer from discriminatory barriers. No society has truly advanced by depriving itself of the talents and abilities of half of its population.

Entrepreneurship: To engender the special creativity of youthful entrepreneurs, who see social and economic opportunities where others only see problems. Entrepreneurs, whether they are working in the villages or in the capital markets, are the visionaries who generate livelihoods for themselves and for others. We need to encourage, nurture and support their quest for the new and the untried.

Environmental Sustainability: To seek sustainable employment opportunities based on attention to water, land, energy, the atmosphere, biodiversity and eco-system management. It would be shortsighted to destroy our environment in the quest for transient employment opportunities.

Empowerment: To harness the uncommon opportunities of the ICT revolution to include the excluded and reach the unreached in terms of knowledge and skill empowerment. The whole constellation of institutional arrangements from credit to resource-use, from marketing to connectivity and content, must be structured in a way that empower youth in their quest for sustainable livelihoods.

We recognize that solutions to problems must be homegrown and responsive to the particular socio-cultural and economic context. But we can all learn from the experiences of others, and derive strength from our common purpose. Thus national campaigns through the YES Country Networks must be embedded into a global campaign that will help share knowledge and experience. The Global Knowledge Resource of the campaign should help make the best practices of the few into the common practices of the many.

The costs of inaction on the issues of youth employment are too dreadful to contemplate. We must act now to start the process of creating this better future. We shall act now and in the future. The goals are inspiring, but the tasks are enormous. To those who ask, can it be done? We say with youth organizations and networks spearheading this global campaign... **YES!**

It can be done. It must be done. It will be done!

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