
*Youth Employment Summit
and
Earth Restoration Corps*

*Workshop at the
World Youth Forum of the United Nations System
Dakar, Senegal, August 7 2001:
“Promoting Sustainable Livelihoods for Youth”*



Report on the Workshop Presented by:
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Summary of the workshop

The Fourth Session of the World Youth Forum of the United Nations System was held in Dakar, Senegal from the 6-10 August 2001. Its central purpose was the empowerment of youth to participate more effectively in every aspect of society. With this in mind, the Youth Employment Summit Secretariat and the Earth Restoration Corp hosted a workshop titled “Promoting Sustainable Livelihoods for Youth”. The relationship between these are crucial, as youth employment is essentially a major vehicle for youth empowerment. Of the over 300 participants, approximately 35 youth from all over the world participated in this workshop.

Overall, it was a resounding success as the input and comments obtained assisted with defining the overall empowerment strategy of the Forum and will play a role in refining the Alexandria Summit and its Framework for Action.



The process

The workshop commenced with a history and an overview of The Youth Employment Summit (YES) and the Earth Restoration Corp (ERC). The overall goal of YES is to launch a decade campaign of action to ensure that an additional 500 million young adults have productive and *sustainable* livelihoods. The workshop focussed on this and how to ensure complementarity of sustainability and youth employment (Concept Paper for the workshop attached).

The workshop was facilitated by Dumisani Nyoni, the 20 year old YES International Youth Coordinator from Zimbabwe, Carolina Travesí García, 21 year old student from the University of Tamaulipas in Mexico and works with the Earth Restoration Corps, and YES Youth Advisor and ERC UN Representative, Bremley Lyngdoh from India.

After an extensive and highly charged session of open commentary and discussion, the main ideas of the workshop were outlined and five working groups were established. The aim of each of these were to compile recommendations on how each theme could be resolved, and on how the Summit could best address these. The themes identified were :

- Education and Training
- Sustainability
- Agenda of the Summit (event)
- Increasing Participation and outreach for the Summit
- Micro Credit and other support systems

The balance of this report focuses on outlining the debate and discussion around these themes and all recommendations were presented within the framework of ensuring youth employment and sustainable

development.

Outcomes of the Working Groups

Working group on Education and Training

This working group was tasked with making recommendations on how the Summit can place emphasis on the importance of Education and Training in addressing youth employment. The lack of adequate education systems and training programs and in some cases, the total unavailability of these systems and programs was recognized as a key barrier to promoting youth employment.

Members of the Working group

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Recommendations:

1. Establish more education centers and make them accessible to a larger number of young people.
2. Create vocational training for rural youth to reduce the rural-urban migration. Education leads to community development.
3. With the guarantee of education, there should be a guarantee for employment, or at least a lead up to employment opportunities.
4. Formal and informal education should be expanded, especially in Africa.
5. The curriculum should be improved to 'meet the market needs' (the gap between education and practice must be bridged)
6. Effort must be made to work against the brain drain in most developing countries. This is important to promote development in these countries.
7. Place emphasis on apprenticeships and internships to improve working skills and practical experience.



*Working group on Sustainability
(sustainable development)*

This working group was tasked with making recommendations that will help to develop an understanding of the importance of promoting sustainable development together with youth employment. It was meant to reinforce the need to promote sustainability in all development initiatives.

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Recommendations:

1. Promote sustainable jobs in urban settings and raise the awareness of the various types of sustainable jobs and employment opportunities available in urban areas.
2. Highlight existing best practices of sustainable livelihoods. Hold a “Best Practices” discussion or platform at the Summit. Hold a contest for creative/promising/ most innovative best practices. This can be an opportunity for Governments to announce their initiatives and programs.
3. Increase the number of training programs that focus on sustainable living.
4. Create incentives to promote sustainability. This can be done through areas such as government policy
5. Link self help to sustainability
6. Encourage youth to take action now. They can learn about or launch a project in their own countries
7. Declare a Year Campaign (e.g. September 2001 to September 2002) the “Year of Youth in Sustainable Careers”. This will involve searching for a U.N sponsored best practice contest which would motivate/ inspire youth to utilize similar programs in their own areas and communities geared towards promoting sustainable development.

Working group in the Agenda of the Summit (event)

This working group was tasked with formulating ideas and inputs around the agenda of the Summit in Alexandria. They answered questions such as “What themes would we like to see discussed?”, “What activities should be included in the Summit agenda and to achieve what goals?”

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Recommendations:

1. Training for trainers at YES 2002. Participants at the Summit should be the same people who will implement the program (the Summit Framework of Action). (i.e. they should be members of the Global Alliance for Youth Employment). There must be an activity at the Summit to build the capacity for Global Alliance members to be active implementers of the Framework and for them to train their peers and other groups in their countries.
2. Workshops should be held for employees who want to take part in the implementation of the program.
3. Identify successful projects in Alexandria or surrounding areas for Summit participants to visit and learn from. (Perhaps a day or two of post-YES2002 on-site learning/practice exchange can be organized.)
4. Clearly defined objectives and structure even accordingly. More small groups and workshops rather than big, information (plenary) sessions.
5. Invite people who previously had successful projects to share their experiences.

Themes:

- How to write a project proposal
 - Ideas of self-sustaining projects
 - Networking and building networks
1. “Connect point X to point Y”; i.e. not how to write project proposal but format to be handed out specific to implementation of this project.
 2. A consultative process before hand so a project implementation schedule can be presented and refined at the Summit in 2002.
 3. Action plan on how to approach the problem and implement the plan
 4. Regional working groups to share common problems and appropriate best practices at the Summit.

Working group on Increasing participation and outreach for the Summit.

This working group was tasked with making recommendations on how to increase participation in the YES Campaign and how to expand outreach of Summit activities and outcomes to Grassroots levels around the world.

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Recommendations:

1. The Summit in 2002 should aim to have at least one delegate per country present in Alexandria.
2. These youth should be knowledgeable, experienced and active youth.
3. There should be emphasis on accommodating African Latin America and Asian youth as they represent regions most affected by youth unemployment.



4. A fund should be developed to support participation of youth and other delegates at the Summit. The Government of Egypt could be requested to provide free visas for Summit participants.
5. (An exhibition should be held to showcase Best practices)
6. Selection should not be language biased.
7. Some form of pre-Summit orientation should be carried out.
8. Local groups in each country should be supported to run local campaigns.
9. Tap into youth forums already in existence.
10. Inform and engage youth oriented media.
11. Partnerships with corporations to help with sponsorships.
12. Use the Rio+10 Summit in Johannesburg as a pre-event build-up.

Working group on Micro Credit and Other Support systems

This working group was tasked with outlining how the Summit can tackle the barriers produced by a lack of adequate access to credit for youth.

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Recommendations:

1. Enhance appropriate skills training linked with access to credit. Life skills training to be integrated into other training programs to provide an integrated training approach.
2. Micro-credit facilities are a good way to promote development. Governments should allow for them to be more accessible to people, especially youth. They must be linked with training programs and vice-a-versa.
3. Navigate past bureaucracies.
4. The Gambia has a fund that makes international money available to organizations.
5. Get governments to spend more on such funds (micro credit funds). Free up more money for training and advocacy.
6. Youth should get commitment from the Private sector to contribute to a fund for youth employment.
7. Are there any other ideas other than Micro Finance Institutions out there? E.g. the Worldwide Christian Church founded a program to give youth money for education. They pay back only when they can. This can be extended to cover employment.
8. Increase gender sensitivity when formulating solutions.

QUOTES FROM OUR SESSION

“I would like to find out from all of you on ideas as to how we (Swedish people, Government, Youth and Development Agencies) can help. What can Sweden do?”-Sebastian Giwa, Sweden.

“We need to improve the access to resources of organizations without access to facilities such as those provided by the World Bank. Those organizations making a difference or without the potential and yet are not yet established or recognized need to be supported.”-Lydia Bosire, Kenya

“The issue of youth employment is devastatingly urgent in some countries. There are a lot of young

people who cannot wait for the Summit to receive support. We should not focus all of our attention around the Summit. We need to start working to promote youth employment at the grassroots level.”- Mohamed Rhanimi, Morocco

“Through YES2002, employers can have a chance to interact with youth and explain some employment issues such as the contracts etc. They (the youth) need to see the corporations views on employment and the Summit is a good Forum to share those perspectives.”- Afifa Raihana, Bangladesh

“If the focus should be on self-employment, then one must address the need for capital. Partners like major banks could provide seed funding for youth projects.”-Benjamin Quinto, USA

“The linkages between HIV/AIDS and youth employment must be highlighted at the Summit.” Lydia Bosire, Kenya

“We need to highlight the barriers to youth employment and find solutions to these barriers.” James Moody, Australia

Additional Comments

Overall, the Workshop was a great success. It provided a unique opportunity at the World Youth Forum for an interactive and constructive dialogue between youth. Once again, all participants must be commended for their commitment to participating, especially following a long day of WYF meetings, working groups and a whole host of other challenges that we were faced with in Dakar! It really was special to see young people so inspired to make a change and contribute to the YES campaign. We were all very honored to have worked together on this initiative.

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