

Poonam Ahluwalia
Executive Director
Youth Employment Summit

Poonam Ahluwalia, the founder and executive director of the Youth Employment Summit (YES) a program of the Education Development Center (EDC), an international, nonprofit research and development organization in Newton, Massachusetts, and managing director of the YES Academy International in Hyderabad, India.

Under her leadership, YES has created and implemented a 10-year international campaign to ensure that youth throughout the world have access to the education and training programs, skills development opportunities, resources, and credit that they need to build productive, decent, and sustainable livelihoods.

The campaign was launched in 2002 at the world's first international summit on youth employment in Alexandria, Egypt. More than 2,000 youth and government leaders from civil society organizations from over 100 countries participated in the summit. Today, there are YES Country Networks with more than 400 youth employment projects now in more than 80 countries.

Ms. Ahluwalia is often on the road, traveling the world, supporting the Country Network teams, and meeting with government leaders, foundations, international aid agencies and others to generate awareness and raise money to fund the work. She has received significant support from the UN, NGOs government agencies, and others.

Prior to starting YES in 2002, she was a project director at EDC where she planned and coordinate USAID funded global workshops on workforce development in Latin America, Asia, and Africa

Ms. Ahluwalia is a native of India where she was a leader in the anti-dowry movement at Delhi University. She also was involved in developing a program for women in India as part of The Hunger Project called "Ending the Subjugation of Women as a Critical Step to Ending Hunger."

She holds an M.S. in mass communications from Boston University, Boston, Mass. and an M.A. in political science from Rajasthan University, Jaipur, India.