

Youth Employment Matters

A Newsletter for the Youth Employment Summit

Volume 1, Issue 1

Autumn 2000

Launching a Decade Campaign of Action so that an additional 500 million young adults, especially youth facing poverty, will have productive and sustainable livelihoods by the year 2012

Dear Partners:

Welcome to the first edition of *Youth Employment Matters*, a newsletter of the Youth Employment Summit. Please do share your comments with us on how we can make this newsletter best serve your needs. In this introductory issue we are mainly reporting on our activities and outcomes at the State of the World Forum 2000. We will also give an introduction of Organizing Committee member, Dr. M.S. Swaminathan.

In future issues we will post interviews with our Organizing Committee members and others, showcase good practices and promising strategies that promote youth employment, print summaries of our email based discussion lists, pass on news of our various activities, stories about young people, updates from our virtual forum, letters, and partner institution news.

Nikki Dryden, our intern from the International Institute for Sustainable Development in Canada, has written all the articles posted in this issue. Among her many accomplishments she is also a swimmer who has represented Canada twice in the Olympic Games.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the team at the Secretariat comprised of David Stern, Linda Gelberg, Mette Larsen, Victor del Rosal, Laurent Morel-à-L'Huissier, and Nikki Dryden. With regards,



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YES finds success in NYC

The Youth Employment Summit (YES) was honored by the presence of over two hundred and fifty Youth Delegates who attended the 2000 State of the World Forum in New York City. Young people from over thirty countries came to share their knowledge and stories with us and the entire State of the World Forum.

The overwhelming feeling of Forum 2000 was one of inspiration. We met some great people, and interacting on a personal level was a wonderful growth experience. It was also a time to learn about many of the initiatives being taken by young people around the world.

Of course there were some moments that were not ideal. At times the panels and sessions seemed too big with no real discussion. But despite the lack of true incorporation of the young people into all sessions, the impact of the young people was enormous.

We sponsored three sessions at the Forum, as well as an opening luncheon and a debriefing event. Lunch gave many of the youth delegates an occasion to meet one another and learn about

Organizing Committee

Chaired By:

Ismail Serageldin, Vice President, World Bank, 1993-2000

Esteban Gonzalez, President, Nexus Group

Goran Hultin, Executive Director of Employment, International Labor Organization

Huguette Labelle, President, Canadian International Development Agency, 1993-1999

Rick Little, President, International Youth Foundation

Hon. Gertrude Mongella, Secretary General, Beijing Conference for Women

Hon. Robert B. Reich, US Secretary of Labor, 1993-1997

H.E. Michel Rocard, Chairman, European Committee on Employment & Social Affairs

Hon. M. S. Swaminathan, Chief Architect of the Green Revolution in India

Rt. Hon. Baroness Shirley Williams, House of Lords

SUMMIT PARTNERSHIP NETWORK?

If you have not yet joined our Summit Partnership Network,

Poonam Ahluwalia
Youth Employment Summit Director

M.S. Swaminathan, Ph.D.

Named by *Time* magazine in its August 1999 issue, as one of the twenty most influential Asian leaders of the 20th Century, Dr. Swaminathan is recognized worldwide as the "Father of India's green revolution." "The word 'impossible' exists mainly in our minds," his father once told him, "but given the requisite will and effort, great tasks can be accomplished." In a career dedicated to alleviating human suffering, Dr. Monkombu Sambasivan Swaminathan has completed the work of many lifetimes.

He is widely recognized as the architect of the "Green Revolution" in India, which radically improved agricultural yields through the introduction of genetically superior grain varieties. This work alone transformed India from a "begging bowl" to a "breadbasket" almost overnight, nearly doubling the total crop yield from 12 million tons to 23 million tons in four crop seasons.

His enthusiasm for passing on knowledge has earned him a reputation as a lucid educator. And his record of community service and political leadership has won him recognition as a profound humanitarian.

The impact of Dr. Swaminathan's work has reached far beyond the borders of his homeland. His worldwide reputation has made him an apt choice to chair many prestigious international conferences, including the United Nations World Food Congress in Rome in 1974. His foresight and inspiration have led to the establishment of renowned organizations to promote international scientific collaboration, notably the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, where he has served as President, the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics, and the International Federation of Agricultural Research Systems for Development - the first significant efforts to promote scientific collaboration in developing countries.

Dr. Swaminathan has often been noted for his understanding of the breadth of the entire food systems. His service in government is testament to this: in several political leadership positions, he established programs of ecological rehabilitation, rural development and technology transfer. His programs effectively helped subsistence farmers reap their fair share of credit and income while conserving national resources. "Ultimately," Swaminathan has stated, "it is the political will of the country to have policies in place which will stimulate production by small farmers. Without it, all research, technology...any external advice will go in vain."

Dr. Swaminathan has proven that he is not only a brilliant scientist, but a capable administrator as well. His infectious enthusiasm and love of humanity have inspired and motivated thousands of others to give whole-heartedly to the cause he has chosen for his life's work: humbly serving the rural poor.

Special Thanks

YES would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge with gratitude the State of the World Forum 2000. Our many thanks go to Hon. Wally N'Dow Convening Chairman, Jim Garrison, President, Carmen Melendrez, Director of Development, and Barbara Kaufman for all their help and generous support of YES and the hundreds of youth delegates who attended Forum 2000.

Hundreds Gather for State of the World Forum in NYC

Tai Chi masters, poets, rabbis, journalists, and students joined with world leaders from politics, business, civil society, academia, and science to attend the State of the World Forum in New York City.

Forum 2000 centered around the issue, "Shaping Globalization: Convening the Community of Stakeholders." Forum 2000 was juxtaposed with the United Nations Millennium Summit in order to convene a "global town meeting." The intent of the Forum's Executive was to allow the private sector and civil society the opportunity to come together for substantive dialog with Heads of State concerning the many issues facing humanity as globalization moves into the next millennium.

Mikhail Gorbachev, the Convening Chairman of the Forum, was on hand with Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan to open the conference. While actor Christopher Reeves made a special appearance to close the seven-day event. The interim heard over sixty speakers including Primatologist Dr. Jane Goodall, Economist Muhammad Yunus, Spiritualist Deepak Chopra, Senator Alan Cranston, and General Colin Powell.

Forum 2000's belief is that global governance must include governments, civil society, and the private sector, each operating in its own sphere with distinctive rights and responsibilities, and coming together in a process of mutual discernment and deliberation. True to this belief, it was Heads of State, emerging leaders, the business sector, trade unions, civil society organizations, major world religions, and the science and technology sectors who made Forum 2000 a success.

Special Meeting

Dr. Jane Goodall, Joseph Firmage, Senator Alan Cranston, and Jonathan Granoff requested the presence of the youth delegates for a roundtable conversation during Forum 2000. The event took the form of a fireside chat, during

YES Plenary Session

Our plenary session, *Partnerships for Youth Employment in a Globalizing World* was well attended and gave many young people the opportunity to learn about existing collaborating partnerships between youths and other sectors of society. Huguette Labelle, President of the Canadian International Development Agency (1993-1999) and YES Organizing Committee member, moderated the panel. Our panelists included: Nitan Desai, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Ken Dryden, President of the Toronto Maple Leafs, Muhammad Yunus, Managing Director of the Grameen Bank, Jonah Wittkamper, Founder and President of Sadhna Solutions, Fabian Koss, Youth Liaison of the Inter-American Development Bank, Nancy Spence, the Director for Gender and Youth Affairs of the Commonwealth Secretary, and Carlos Magariños, Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

Debriefing Session

Many youth wanted to engage in a longer and deeper conversation regarding the summit and its goals. Keeping these needs and requests in mind the afternoon session on *Peer Mentoring* was changed into a *Brainstorming* session on YES issues and actions needed.

Our conclusions were as diverse as the youth involved which gave many of the participants a better understanding of the challenges we all face. Fiona Macaulay, President of Making Cents was our moderator for the session. She was able to create an open working space for everyone to take part and contribute freely.

Our session was divided into five groups of about ten people, and there were many themes raised with regards to the question, "Why are young people unemployed?" Concerns included issues surrounding education, communication, work experience, government policy, macro-economic climate, poverty, corruption, opportunity and self-confidence.

After examining the question of why, the youth tackled the question of "How do we change the pattern of youth unemployment?" There were many suggestions including the following: teaching youth how to teach other youth, involve unemployed youth in this process, create a forum for providing feedback, involve organizations at all levels of society, and involve the media.

Emerging Leaders Program

Our third session was *Youth Taking Responsibility for the Future* led by Jessica Garza, President of Emerging Leaders Program International (ELP). There we learned about ELP, which in only nine months has almost ten local chapters throughout North and South America. It was evidence of the commitment young people have made to the issue of youth

more about our mission.

YES reactions from Forum 2000

The State of the World Forum was a place to be inspired by many of the world's greatest leaders from a diversity of fields, but it was also a place to be inspired by each other. Hearing the stories of young people reaching out to their communities and helping to lift the lives of so many was life changing.

Forum 2000 was a learning opportunity for all involved. Part of the journey towards creating a movement is experiencing the good with the bad. What was once a dream became a reality when over two hundred and fifty young people attended Forum 2000. Although the individuals who came inspired us, we were unprepared for the sheer number of youth delegates. Because we had prepared ourselves for fifty young people, our capacity for engaging over two hundred youth in an outcome based conversation was limited.

Yet this happy and overwhelming situation inspired us to create a more comprehensive and focused email discussion list that is currently underway. Over the next nine months we will discuss nine core themes. Our first topic is Information and Communication Technology and we are excited about working together on the challenges ahead. We encourage everyone to take part in this discussion group. You can subscribe by emailing Laurent Morel-à-L'Huissier at yestemp2@edc.org.

We met many individuals and organizations who are already working on and committed to youth employment. Credit and micro credit programs, entrepreneurship, and commitment from leaders all need to be incorporated into this process.

This movement is youth driven; during and since Forum 2000 there has been a great deal of energy from young people around the world. The target of this movement-youth-can contribute to their own transformation directly.

International Youth Parliament

The YES team of Poonam Ahluwalia, Mette Larsen, Sarah Winters, and Fiona Macaulay from Making Cents will attend the International Youth Parliament (IYP) in Sydney, Australia October 19-28, 2000.

IYP is a preparatory meeting for YES and our team will be there to promote youth employment, create partnerships, and encourage youth to take initiatives in youth employment in their home countries and communities.

Fiona Macaulay will conduct and facilitate a workshop on entrepreneurial skills as well as a week-long intensive session with the youth in the employment working group.

The goal of IYP is to bring together 300 young leaders aged 15-28 to discuss and devise action strategies around conflicts, poverty, and culture to enable them to effect positive change in their communities.

The Summit Framework for Action

The goal of the Youth Employment Summit is to launch a Decade Campaign of Action so that an additional 500 million young adults, especially youth facing poverty, will have productive and sustainable livelihoods by the year 2012.

Planning for the Youth Employment Summit's Decade Campaign of Action will focus around the following core themes:

Policies:

- Key global policies that affect youth employment and livelihoods
- Key government policies that promote youth employment and livelihoods

Strategies that promote:

- Self-employment and entrepreneurship
- School to work programs, and work-based training
- Private sector partnerships
- Productive on-farm and off-farm employment
- Use of new information and communication technologies to support youth employment and training
- Empowerment of youth in generating the solutions to youth unemployment
- Education targeted for work opportunities

Special emphasis will be placed on adolescent girls and disadvantaged youth.

The Hague International Model United Nations

Inspired by a keynote address by YES Organizing Committee Chairman Ismail Serageldin at The Hague International Model United Nations (THIMUN) in 2000, Youth Employment has been adopted as a major agenda item for THIMUN 2001.

Additionally, THIMUN has been designated as a YES preparatory meeting. Our team will host two workshops on youth employment.

THIMUN is a five-day simulation of the United Nations for secondary school students being held in the Netherlands January 21-26, 2001. The event attracts around 3,500 students from over 200 schools and 100 different nations.

This year a Youth Assembly will also take place. The goal of the Youth Assembly will be to give voice to young people around the world. Documents will be produced on key issues, such as youth employment, that will be presented to the United Nations.

The Committee for Education and Employment will be developing an action agenda for youth employment.

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