

Youth Employment Matters

A Newsletter for the Youth Employment Summit

Volume 2, Issue 2

Summer 2001

Launching a Global Campaign of Action in Alexandria in 2002, so that an additional 500 million young adults, especially youth facing poverty, will have productive and sustainable livelihoods by the year 2012

Dear Friends: One year from now, the world's first global Youth Employment Summit will kick off in Alexandria, Egypt. More than 2,000 delegates, from the world's nearly 200 countries, will attend. Together, we will launch a decade campaign of action to build sustainable youth employment around the world. The reach and stature of this event will generate world attention and create momentum for change.

Every day, I talk with youth from around the world and make connections with partners who are helping us mold and shape the Summit. This is one of the richest, most exciting activities I've ever been involved with. The owners of the Summit are young people, who have hopes for a better future, both for themselves and their countries. They are our valuable partners in building global youth employment. As a team, we create ideas, share them with our colleagues around the world, receive valuable feedback, and then revise them. It has been a truly iterative process of shaping and molding.

Instead of preaching doom and gloom, we can harness the energy, initiative, vision, and capabilities of young people to clean up the environment and bring stability to civil societies. There is so much work to be done, and we can all play our part. YES 2002 will be a forum to share information, develop long-lasting collaborative relationships, and gather tools and ideas from successful practitioners around the world.

Sometimes I think of the Summit and our planning process as a "sandbox" of sorts. Everyone is invited to come and participate! Bring your spade—we'll give you some more tools and some water. You can build your own castle.

As always, thank you for your continued support and partnership.

With regards,

Poonam Ahluwalia, Youth Employment Summit Director

YES Summit to be held in Egypt

The Government of Egypt and the City of Alexandria have generously agreed to host the Youth Employment Summit, September 11–15, 2002.

YES organizers expect about 2,000 participants, representing different sectors from the world's nearly 200 countries. "The Summit will not be a typical 'conference,'" says Poonam Ahluwalia, Summit director. "It will be an opportunity to share innovative practices, meet colleagues, and build action plans for the future. It will engage and unleash the innovation and enthusiasm of youth. It will be very interactive."

To focus the Summit's activities and the subsequent Campaign of Action, conference organizers are preparing a "Framework for Action." This Framework will identify about a dozen key issues that need to be addressed to improve youth unemployment, and then recommend both ways to reach goals in those areas and helpful tools for doing so. Three of these issues are improving financial credit for youth, engaging young

Continued on page 3

Organizing Committee

Chaired By:

Ismail Serageldin,
Director-General,
Library of Alexandria,
Egypt

Hafsat Abiola,
Director, Kudirat
Initiative for Democracy

Esteban Gonzalez,
President, Nexus Group

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

Rick Little, President,
International Youth
Foundation

Carlos Magariños,
Director General UN
Industrial Development
Organization

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

**Hon. Robert B.
Reich,**
US Secretary of Labor,
1993-97

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

M. S. Swaminathan,
World Food Prize
Laureate

**Rt. Hon. Baroness
Shirley Williams,**
UK House of Lords

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Letter from the Summit Director
- 1 YES Summit to be Held in Egypt
- 2 Hafsat Abiola, OC Member: Seeking Synergy and Connections
- 2 YES Consultations Promote Action Around the World
- 3 Focus of New YES Project: Renewable Energy and Employment
- 3 Second Global Meeting of Generations
- 3 YES Invitation: Please Join the Alliance
- 4 What Can You Do?
- 4 Upcoming Events

Hafsat Abiola, Youth OC Member: Seeking Synergy and Connections

Dignity, balance, and community. Hafsat Abiola, new organizing committee member, is devoting her life to these ideals. Born in Nigeria to a family of nine, Ms. Abiola's tragedy-filled family history has fueled her commitment to improving the world for young people by empowering them as leaders.

She is the daughter of M.D.O. Abiola, who won Nigeria's presidential election in 1993 but was imprisoned and ultimately killed by the military. Her mother, Kudirat, was a democracy leader who organized strikes and marches in opposition to the military. She was assassinated in 1996.

After her mother's death, Ms. Abiola, 26, who holds a degree from Harvard University, founded the Kudirat Initiative for Democracy (KIND). Following the vision and goals of her mother, the organization promotes the principles of responsible democracy, good government, and respect for human rights.

"KIND aims to empower women and youth to be recognized as central focal groups in the development of their communities," says Ms. Abiola. "Youth often don't know what they can do to make a difference, so KIND seeks to experiment, be creative, take different approaches, and try out new things to inspire people to promote KIND's principles."

Empowering women and increasing our investment in youth, she firmly believes, are keys to effectively addressing poverty and population growth. She also believes in strengthening the connections between the essential features of our lives: health, economics, peace and democracy, the environment, and the threat of conflict, starvation, and poverty. Focusing on youth employment clarifies those connections, she says: "For example, there is a clear connection between the economy and the environment. The challenge for YES is to identify what those links look like and how to best promote them on a global level. I believe YES can take a lead in identifying these synergies."

Her personal losses deeply affect not only what she does, but how she does it. "I became clear about what was important. I got to rethink my life and learned to focus on different things," says Ms. Abiola. "My father's imprisonment and the loss of my mother made me realize that I wanted to support my community. Whatever I do must serve this vision. That vision has to be about the collective gain."

She prizes youth involvement in YES. Young people should see their work as planting a seed, according to Ms. Abiola. "You first prepare the ground, then plant the seed, and nurture it as it grows. Storms, weeds, and other setbacks will come, but so too will the harvest."

YES Consultations Promote Action Around the World

Maikel Lieuw Kie Song, from Suriname, is currently studying for his Ph.D. at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa. Earlier this year, after a meeting with the Summit director at the State of the World Forum, he took it upon himself to coordinate the YES South African Nation Consultation in conjunction with a conference at his school. The consultation involved 35 participants from four countries who enthusiastically networked, shared information, and laid plans to form a network to address youth unemployment in South Africa.

This consultation, one of many that YES participated in last year, showcased the talent and energy of youth, as well as their determination to be the prime molders of their future.

Highlights of YES's involvement in empowering youth to become actively engaged in improving youth employment are given below.

The State of the World Forum, New York September 2000: Over 250 youth from more than 30 countries attended workshops, where they identified barriers to finding productive and sustainable employment for youth.

International Youth Parliament, Sydney, October 2000: Forty youth from different countries were trained over a 10-day period in entrepreneurship development and were supported in designing Individual Action Plans to be catalysts for change in their home communities. Many of these youth were given entrepreneurship development resources to support them in the development of their action plans. Cameron Neil, a training participant is now working—in collaboration with the Summit secretariat—to ensure that YES and the issues of youth employment are highlighted on the agendas of both the International Young Professionals Summit and the Commonwealth Youth Forum to be held in Brisbane, Australia, October 2001.

THIMUN (The Hague International Model United Nations), January 2001: More than 150 youth participated in workshops on sustainable development through youth employment. Each participant developed a Personal Action Plan with specific strategies for promoting actions to enhance sustainable development in their home communities. The YES Secretariat continues to be involved with their activities. For example, Dumisani Nyoni, a workshop participant, is now helping the Summit secretariat to promote youth employment in his home country of Zimbabwe, writing a proposal to be presented to the Global Environment Facility that would enhance youth employment opportunities while increasing the use of renewable energies in communities throughout his homeland.

YES has also participated in consultations in Mexico, Paraguay, and Tanzania. During this past year, YES has brought the issue of youth employment to several international conferences, including the Social Summit +5 in Geneva. YES also participated in the Rock in Rio Benefit Concert for a Better World in Rio de Janeiro, and the National Consultation for Youth Entrepreneurship in India.

For more information about consultations, please contact Dumisani Nyoni at vestemp4@edc.org.

Focus of New YES Project: Renewable Energy and Employment

The Youth Employment Summit, in partnership with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the World Bank, is developing innovative strategies that will lead to employment opportunities for youth while providing renewable energy to their local communities. The project, Promotion of Youth-Led Enterprises in Off-Grid Renewable Energy, has two goals: (1) to increase awareness of renewable energy and enterprise development and (2) to promote the reduction of greenhouse gas (CO₂) and other emissions from diesel generators and other carbon-based means of rural electrification. The project will conduct pilot activities in Costa Rica and then disseminate the lessons learned worldwide.

The GEF finances projects—through the World Bank and other global institutions—to address the world's priority environmental issues. This project will develop a knowledge base of good practices and business plans for promoting renewable energies through a youth-led community and business development model.

Specific objectives for the Costa Rican pilot activities include the following:

- Creating an approach that develops youth commitment to renewable energy at the household and community levels.
- Developing local capacity to train youth in business management, sales, marketing, repair, and maintenance of renewable energy products and services
- Training youth to assess the market and to develop businesses to sell and maintain renewable energy products and services

The strategy of the project resonates with the vision of Michael Zammit Cutajar, executive secretary of the UNFCCC. He says:

“It is this linkage with the economy that relates the climate change scenario to that of globalization. Climate change is a by-product of two centuries of economic growth, so action to address it must pass through the economy of the 21st century. Greater efficiency and cleaner technologies are needed in the energy, transport, and industrial sectors, among others. This can be a driver of technological change, ‘green jobs’ and ‘green profits.’ The international response can also generate a new push in favor of the transfer of technology and know-how to developing countries [as well as] capacity-building.”

50th Anniversary of the International Development Conference LinkAGES: The Second Global Meeting of Generations (GMG)

GMG, a partnership of 19 global organizations whose aim is to expand the boundaries of equity to include youth and the aged as explicit assets for, and beneficiaries of, equitable development, will convene the 2nd GMG in Washington, DC, January 15-18, 2002. More than 1000 participants are expected to gather for this 4-day event. Information can be found on the conference website idc.org/gmg or by calling 1-202-783-5980.

YES Summit to be Held in Egypt

Continued from page 1

women in vocational training, and entrepreneurship training, says Ms. Ahluwalia. The Framework will be launched at the Summit.

The development of the Framework is being guided by the principles endorsed by the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes, adopted in Portugal in 1998 during the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth. In a special section on employment, the declaration affirms commitment to 11 principles. (See the Summit Web site, www.youthsummit.org, to view the Lisbon declaration's principles.)

“The Summit is not an end in itself,” notes Ms. Ahluwalia. “It is a capstone of the planning process and a launch of an action campaign.”

It is with great excitement that YES moves forward with our newest partners, the Library of Alexandria and the Government of Egypt.

YES2002 will be a groundbreaking global event—so mark your calendars and save the date!

Please Join the “Global Alliance for Youth Employment”

YES is encouraging institutions from all over the world to join the Global Alliance for Youth Employment, a network that will lead the way in enacting the resolutions of the Youth Employment Summit 2002.

The Global Alliance offers members the opportunity to join in building momentum for the Summit and in taking actions during the decade campaign.

Members and their organizations make a commitment to (1) designating a person responsible for liaison with the YES Secretariat, (2) working within the Summit Framework for Action to promote youth employment, (3) disseminating information about YES 2002 and youth employment within their organization and to community members, (4) using their publications to disseminate information about youth employment and the Summit, (5) bringing senior-level participants to the Summit, and (6) making voluntary contributions or offering in-kind support to YES 2002.

To join, please do one of the following: complete the application form on our Web-site, www.youthemploymentsummit.org, or contact us to receive an application form. You can call us at (617) 618-2682; fax us at (617) 969-4902; or send an e-mail to mlarsen@edc.org.

Upcoming Events

August 2001: *UN Youth Forum*, Senegal. In collaboration with Earth Restoration Corps (ERC) YES will host a workshop entitled "Promoting Environmentally Sustainable Livelihoods for Youth," presented by Dumisani Nyoni of Zimbabwe, Bremley Lyngdoh of India, and Carolina Travesi of Mexico.

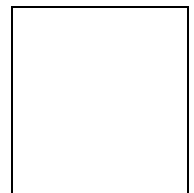
September 16-18, 2001: *Youth Planning Workshop*, EDC, Newton, Massachusetts, USA. This workshop will allow young people to define their roles and provide input to the forthcoming YES Organizing Committee Retreat (October 18, 2001). The workshop's emphasis will be on developing a vision and framework for the Summit.

October 2-6, 2001 *The International Young Professionals Summit (IYPS)*, Gold Coast, Australia. IYPS will focus on four areas - poverty, social capital, environment and sustainability. YES is partnering to discuss how youth employment cuts across these areas.

January 15-18, 2002: *Global Meeting of Generations*, Washington, D.C. Meeting will focus on including youth and the aged as assets for and beneficiaries of equitable development.

September 11-15, 2002: *Youth Employment Summit*, Alexandria, Egypt. The Summit's focus is on generating commitment to the issue of sustainable youth employment and promoting employment policies, partnerships, and strategies that work.

Youth Employment Summit 2002
Education Development Center
55 Chapel Street
Newton, MA 02458-1060



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

