
YES Country Networks Report

December 2003,

Dear Friends,

It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the YES Campaign team, to bring you the third edition of the YES Country Networks Report. The Report will update you on the activities of the most exciting YES Campaign innovation - YES Country Networks! Prior to the launch of the YES Campaign in Egypt in 2002, young people in over 60 countries organized themselves and held national conferences on youth employment. These events attracted people from all sectors. YES Country Networks emerged from these national consultative processes and they are leading the way in setting national agendas on youth employment issues.

At many levels minds are now focused on developing effective strategies to meet the challenge of youth employment. YES Networks lead that process at a national level in many countries. However, to be effective YES Networks need investment. Investment should primarily be from domestic sources in each country but international agencies also have a capacity-building role to play. The capacity of youth-led networks to catalyze national debates on youth livelihood issues will grow in strength with strategically placed assistance. We are very proud of the accomplishments of all the YES Country Networks, and the YES Campaign calls on all institutional partners to recognize what has been accomplished to date and to increase investment in YES Country Networks.

At a global level the YES Campaign's vision is to build a Global Alliance for Youth Employment. The purpose of such an Alliance is to build a *community of practice* where large and small organizations can work together on youth employment issues. The YES Campaign is dedicated to offering mechanisms, services and tools to members of the Global Alliance that advance the work of YES Networks at national level and of governments and institutions at international level.

The YES Networks are forming the structures that will fulfill the goals of the Youth Employment Summit (YES) Campaign. Their mandate is to bring the Alexandria Summit "Framework for Action" to life in their countries! The YES Framework provides a road map to creating productive and sustainable livelihoods for youth. Over the coming months and years, our mission is to ensure that in every country YES Networks are able to garner the necessary support to make youth employment a priority on local, national and global agendas.

The objectives of YES Networks are to:

- Continue to raise awareness on the issue of youth employment
- Convene Multi-stakeholder Consultations on youth employment and within them, develop strong partnerships for youth employment.
- Identify what is missing in each country with regards to youth employment and develop relevant responses.
- Work with diverse stakeholders to put in place an effective strategy to generate employment for youth using the Framework for Action.
- Develop and support innovative initiatives promoting youth employment.

This report, while not comprehensive, captures the highlights of the actions of YES Country Networks in 32 countries. It also provides contact details and a website address for each network to facilitate communication and interaction.

My hope is that as you go through this report, you begin to see the impact of the YES Networks and realize the possibility that they present. Supporting the efforts of the YES Networks through your institution is one of the biggest contributions that can be made to the YES Decade Campaign of Action.

I look forward to sharing with you the achievements of the YES Networks on a regular basis.

With regards,



Poonam Ahluwalia,
Executive Director
Youth Employment Summit Campaign

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YES Afghanistan

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About YES Afghanistan

Afghanistan was represented by a strong delegation of three youth and two ministers at the launch of the YES Campaign in Alexandria, September 2002. This experience represented a 'coming out' for the delegates concerned, given the decades of political turmoil experienced by Afghanistan. Mr. Ajmal Obidy, who organized the delegation, says the Alexandria Summit was a breakthrough for himself and his fellow delegates.

"For us to be invited and to be able to coordinate the participation of ministers together with young professionals is an accomplishment in itself for Afghanistan. Representing our country internationally was a dream until recently. We're grateful to the organizers for the opportunity. It was a thrill to be among the family of nations in Alexandria."

The young Afghan delegates are typical of many Afghans who are returning to their country to contribute to reconstruction. They are university educated and ready to step into roles of responsibility. Ajmal Obidy and his two youth colleagues are all computer science graduates working in various organizations in the reconstruction effort.

Initiatives for YES Afghanistan in 2004

- National Youth Employment Conference, September 2004

In partnership with the Ministry of Labor, YES Afghanistan announces plans to host Afghanistan's first-ever national youth employment consultation in September 2004. Omar Mansoor explains:

"The National YES Consultation in Kabul in 2004 will be a platform for indicating effective youth employment strategies across the country and will form joint ventures for creating economically and environmentally workable livelihoods for young people. It brings together the nation's leaders in development, statesmen, business leaders and youth on the same stand to share and exchange experiences for creating a unique forum for learning and networking. National YES Kabul 2004 is preceded and followed by provincial youth employment forums to create awareness among all walks of life in the country."

- Renewable Energy Program

YES Campaign Afghanistan is working in partnership with YES Iran and Ayvazian & Associates- a leading wind energy company in Iran, to train young Afghan wind energy experts. The program will train Afghan youth in Iran on how to use and install the newest wind energy technology, and explore ways to plan for Afghanistan's long term energy needs.

- Youth Employment Library

"Working for every modern movement of life is a new effort in Afghanistan, as the country because of prolonged instability remained in dark. Modern education and modern principles of life infrequently reach to all Afghans. The *Youth Employment Library* is an effort to provide all concerned people with standard print and electronic material concerning youth, youth leadership, youth employment, micro-economics, entrepreneurship, small businesses as well as the National YES Campaign and the Global YES Campaign. Also, the YE Library, which we plan to launch in 2004, will serve as a study and research corner for the youth leaders to learn about how to address specific youth employment challenges."

Omar Mansoor, YES Afghanistan Action Plan, November 2003

Omar Mansoor reports that YES Network members are confident that a strong delegation to the YES Regional Forum in Hyderabad will provide fresh impetus to the network's emerging role. "We're expecting up to ten Afghans in the delegation to Hyderabad, and we're excited to work with the ideas we'll come home with", he said in October, 2003.

YES Angola

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About YES Angola

Report by Rhonda Staudt

YES Angola has come a very long way in a year. While we were not part of the initial 2002 Summit we were in our very own developing stage of creation in Luanda, Angola.

In the fall of 2002 a group of young men gathered in the Vida Abundante School in Luanda, Angola (where 4,500 students study in shipping containers) partnered with Shirley Ann Sullivan Educational Foundation (SASEF) and launched YES Angola. The goal was simple – help youth get a job and the youth should give back by mentoring another youth into getting a job.

A year later YES Angola's lead partner is CARE in collaboration with its livelihood program where the overall social agenda is poverty alleviation. Another organization, AJACRA has assisted in translation services and community linkages.

YES Angola provides a vital solution to the Angolan community by linking youth directly to employment opportunities and vocational training. By working in collaboration with Angola's established employment and vocational training centers YES-Angola will direct youth to the appropriate center for employment registration.

YES Angola links the community to jobs and information. Communications is crucial in obtaining employment. YES Angola through its marketing efforts creates a communication portal of information through various mediums; newspaper, radio, posters, collaboration with youth serving organizations, website, email while serving as a catalyst in disseminating employment and job training information to the Angolan community.

YES Angola currently has forty six Angolan youth as members. A Steering Committee has been appointed to work on planning the future activities of the Network. All members are employees or volunteers with various non-profit organizations.

Partners of YES Angola

- Shirley Ann Sullivan Educational Foundation, www.sasef.org
- CARE Angola
- AJACRA

YES Argentina

Contacts:

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About YES Argentina

The YES Argentina Network, founded formally in August 2002, has wasted no time in making an impact on youth employment issues at a national and international level. Led by a very able coordination team, the YES Argentina core team members have implemented a range of initiatives in public policy and project arenas. In each case, the Network has been used for organizational leverage and to maximize impact.

YES Argentina has also labored to spread its lessons learned and offer horizontal technical cooperation to other networks in the Latin American region in order to strengthen the YES Campaign in this region of the world. Highlights of the work of YES Argentina are listed below. Complete information about each of these initiatives can be found at the YES Argentina web page and by contacting members of the Network.

- October 10-18, 2003: In Colombia, YES Ambassador for Latin America, Dacil Acevedo Riquelme inaugurated the Young Entrepreneurs Fair in Colombia. Meetings were held with different sectors (government, civil society, universities, and international organizations) interested in founding in the context of YES an inter-institutional and multi-sectoral network to promote youth employment in Colombia. This network will be the next stage in the evolution of YES Colombia.
- September 28-October 2, 2003: In Mexico, Dacil Acevedo Riquelme presented the *YES Ambassador for Latin American Report 2002-2003* to YES Co-Chairman, Esteban Gonzalez as well as to the Mexico YES Network and also to YES Campaign Headquarters in Boston.
- August 24-30, 2003: the YES Argentina Coordinator, Dacil Acevedo, as main spokesperson for Latin America participated in a Conference in Taiwan, "Youth and NGO Participation in Delivery of Social Services to Socially Excluded Groups".
- August, 2003: a YES Coordinator in Argentina, Paola Costabella held two very important meetings for the network in the Interamerican Development Bank (IDB) in Washington D.C., USA. One with the IDB Youth Program. Also participated in this meeting, Fabio Moschén from Juventudes Agrarias Cooperativistas (JAC) an Argentinean national rural youth organization that is part of YES. Another meeting was held with the IDB's Interamerican Initiative on Ethics, Social Capital and Development. In both cases, the idea was to communicate progress in the YES Campaign 2002-2012, the actions taken in Latin American and in particular in Argentina.
- In celebration of International Youth Day, on August 12, 2003, YES Argentina hosted an event with the organization "Youth Pastoral": A Roundtable Discussion on Youth and Employment: Ideas and Proposals for Public Politics. The event was held Friday, August 15 and was sponsored by The National Youth Directorate (DINAJU) and the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO). This roundtable was held in the Presidency of the Argentinean Government, in the "Jefatura de Gabinete de Ministros" (Cabinet of Ministers) which is the central agency of the federal government. Organized by Matias Abinet, YES Liaison in Argentina.

YES Country Networks Report

- June 27, 2003: YES-Ambassador for Latin America (from YES Argentina) met with 40 institutions to help launch YES-Panama.
- May 22-23: Meeting with Latin American YES networks with representatives from Argentina, Chile, Honduras and Peru in Santiago, Chile. Argentina's involvement in Global Youth Service Day is selected as one of the 4 best practices within Latin America in a seminar on "Renovating Social Capital through Volunteer Youth Service" where YES Argentina had a crucial role as partner in this initiative.
- May 14-15, 2003: the YES-Argentina coordination team met with 15 Uruguayan institutions in an effort to launch a new YES network in Uruguay. The aim of the event was to promote the YES Campaign, share the experiences of YES-Argentina and other regional country networks to get YES-Uruguay off the ground.
- May 11, 2003: Supports Global Youth Service Day (GYSD) in Argentina. This initiative is selected as one of the 10 best countries for GYSD international coordination. YES-Argentina participated in the production of a promotional video for GYSD 2004 in Argentina.
- May 2003: Offers technical and institutional support to the pilot program "Solidarity Soy Project" under the leadership of Hope Station Civil Association. The project's aim is to create a self-employment cooperative in one of the poorest urban areas in Argentina, create jobs, combat hunger and poverty, and become a self-sustaining community. The project also receives the financial support of Fundación Baskonia in Spain.
- May 2003: Published final revision of the First National Youth Rural Report with the support of the National Youth Directorate (DINAJU), the Central Council of Rural Youth Cooperatives (JACA) in Argentina, the Latin American Network of Rural Youth (RELAJUR), IDB, and the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLASCO). The report will be published in hard copy and on CD ROM for distribution throughout Argentina.
- September 2002: A YES Argentina delegation participated in the YES Alexandria Summit with the presence of the government, civil society and private sector representatives. Dacil Acevedo Riquelme is officially named as YES Ambassador for Latin America. Argentina YES Network presented the Argentina Youth Employment Report prepared by the Argentina YES Network.
- August 10, 2002: National Consultation on Youth Employment, as a Preparatory Event to the YES Alexandria Summit. The founding event of the YES Argentina Network, it was held in the National Library of Argentina.
- June 2002: Successful launch of youth employment website: www.empleojuvenil.com.ar.
- June 2002: Launch of the "YES National Information Center", a resource center for youth with the help of the National Youth Directorate.

Team Members: Dacil Acevedo Riquelme (YES Ambassador for Latin America/YES Coordinator for Argentina –international level-), Paola Costabella (YES National Coordinator), Matias Abinet (YES Liaison in Argentina), National Youth Directorate (DINAJU), Mariano Cascallares, Young Americas Business Trust – OEA (YABT): Hugo Castañeda, VIENTOS DEL SUR: Damián Profeta.

Upcoming Plans for YES Argentina

- Proposal to work with international organizations with a presence in Latin America to develop strategic alliances and financial support for the Latin American YES Networks.
- Re-launch and enhancement of the YES-Argentina webpage: www.empleojuvenil.com.ar.
- YES Ambassador for Latin America, Dacil Acevedo Riquelme (from YES Argentina) plans in the first term of 2004 to help in the institutional strengthening of YES Networks in Bolivia, Costa Rica and El Salvador.

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About YES Australia

Since 2001 young Australians have made significant contributions to the YES Campaign. It is worth noting that in late 2001 Mr. Cameron Neil was instrumental in launching the YES Nepal Network. From that point on YES Country Networks became a global phenomenon, with many countries noticing the Nepal example and following suit.

YES Australia is a vibrant network of young professionals working to offer Australian youth the very best in livelihood practices from around the world. In terms of entrepreneurship models and information sharing, Australia has produced a range of initiatives worth replicating in other countries. Below are detailed only some of the initiatives YES Australia members are involved in.

- Enterprise Network for Young Australians (ENYA)

The launch of the Enterprise Network for Young Australians (ENYA), a A\$52,000 Australian Government initiative, was the centerpiece of the Creating Common Wealth Forum in November, 2003. The new Network's business plan states that "it is essential that an organization be created to provide support and mentoring so that young people can make their newly formed or ongoing business a success." Check out ENYA at <http://www.enya.org.au/>

- Blueprint, A National Entrepreneurship Workshop Program

Blueprint is a workshop and case study project about and for enterprising young Australians. It is an initiative of the YES-Australia network, led by the International Young Professionals Foundation in collaboration with Youth 2 Youth. Blueprint was launched as part of Australian Global Youth Service Day 2003 celebrations on Saturday April 12.

"Australia has thousands of young people with great ideas for new businesses and projects," says Cameron Neil, the 27-year-old CEO of the International Young Professionals Foundation. "Blueprint is all about recognizing what young entrepreneurs are already doing and showing others the way to do the same."

For hard copies of the Blueprint CD and booklet, and to register for information on future Blueprint workshops, contact Tamara Price on tamaraprice@iypf.org or 00 61 417 629 238.

Blueprint website: <http://projects.takingitglobal.org/blueprint>

International Young Professionals Foundation: www.iypf.org

- Green Enterprise Training Program

Ms. Jessica Kiely, of Youth 2 Youth, participated in a YES organized green enterprise training workshop in Chennai, India in April, 2003. Upon returning home Ms. Kiely worked to author a similar program tailored to Australian conditions. For information about this curriculum contact Jessica Kiely, <jessica@youth2youth.com.au>

Youth 2 Youth Website: www.youth2youth.com.au

- Success Stories: Small Business Case Studies

A series of excellent small business case studies of young Australians can be found on the YES Australia website. <http://projects.yesweb.org/YES-Australia>

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About YES Azerbaijan

Since the YES Azerbaijan Network formed in mid-2002, a range of new initiatives have been launched. The Network has forged a coalition of similarly-minded groups to work together with national and local government officials to offer fresh employment-related services to youth.

Below are detailed the highlights of recent initiatives undertaken by the YES Azerbaijan Network.

- Entrepreneurship Training Seminars in Five Provinces

Between March and June, 2003 the Network organized training seminars in five regional towns. The seminars, which reached 150 youth, aged 18-25, in each town, offered practical training in business plan writing for start-ups, attracting investment and management skills. As a result of the series of seminars, youth in each town are working collectively to launch Small Business & Computer Training Centers.

- National Business Fair

In April, 2003 the Network organized a National Business Fair in the capital city of Baku to offer firms an opportunity to network and for youth to make business contacts.

- Information Communications Consultancy Launched

After attending the small business workshops offered by YES Azerbaijan, a local government official launched a web services IT company. The company is a partnership with the Municipality Training Center in Baku. Ten young people have found full time jobs with the company in its first six months of operation.

- Partnership with Baku Business University

From September, 2003 YES Azerbaijan's offices are located within the Baku University of Business. The Network will draw on the institutional support of the university to continue to offer an expanding range of small business training services to youth.

In 2004 YES Azerbaijan plans to expand its activities. Major goals include:

- Coordinating business study exchanges abroad for promising young Azerbaijanis
- Hosting a National Employment Fair, in partnership with the Ministry of Youth and private firms
- Leveraging the Network to develop and fund training programs to reach Azerbaijani youth in isolated and regional areas.

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About YES Bangladesh

Since the Network's formation in mid-2002 a series of efforts have been undertaken to improve public awareness of the extent of the youth unemployment crisis in Bangladesh. At the forefront of these activities are efforts to emphasize entrepreneurship and self employment. The lead agency, the National Federation of Youth Organizations, acts as the coordinator of Network activities.

Below are detailed some of the major activities of YES Bangladesh in 2003.

- National Country Report on Youth Employment

In June, 2003 the Network appointed a Study Team to research and prepare a *National Country Report* to present at the YES Regional Forum in Hyderabad, India in December, 2003. The Team was led by Mr. Quazu M. Ahmed, President of the Future Leaders Forum.

- Seminar: Youth Employment Opportunities in the National Youth Policy

In September, 2003 the Bangladesh Institute of Administrative Management (BIAM) hosted a seminar to explore the elements of the new National Youth Policy which affect employment. Participants included officials from over ten major training institutions and government agencies responsible for youth.

At this seminar YES Coordinator, Dulal Biswas delivered the key speech "National Youth Policy- a way to Employment". He emphasized the need to provide a wider range of entrepreneurship training services to Bangladeshi youth. A resolution was adopted to form an inter-agency taskforce incorporating civil society representatives to maximize the employment opportunities offered by the National Youth Policy.

- Workshop: Self-Employment for Young People

A workshop on Self-Employment for Young People was held in Dhaka, October 16, 2003. Hosted by Bangladesh Association for Social Advancement (BASA), the workshop offered fifty participating youth skills training in business plan development and information on access to credit for youth.

- Participation: The Role of Youth in Implementing the National Youth Policy

To celebrate Global Youth Service Day, YES Bangladesh hosted a workshop in Dhaka, April, 2003. The theme of the workshop, attended by over fifty young Bangladeshis, was "Youth Employment Situation and the Role of Youth in Implementing the National Youth Policy".

In December, 2003 YES Bangladesh is coordinating a delegation of twenty youth, development professionals and government officials to participate in the YES Regional Forum, Hyderabad, India, December 14-18, 2003.

YES Bhutan

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About YES Bhutan

YES Bhutan launched in April, 2003 with a national consultation held in the city of Phuentsholing. Over 500 school students attended the event, hosted by a coalition of NGOs, development agencies and government departments.

Coordinator Dechen Wangmo participated in the Green Enterprise Development Workshop, held in Chennai, India in April 2003. Ms. Wangmo, who is the Principal of Phajoding Primary School, intends to disseminate ideas about environmentally sustainable business in Bhutan. She says she was motivated to attend the workshop by the increasing environmental problems Bhutan is encountering.

"A statement made by H.M. the King Jigme Singye Wangchuck essentially represents the policy of Bhutan towards the environment: Throughout the centuries, the Bhutanese have treasured their environment and have looked upon it as the source of all life. This traditional reverence for nature has delivered us into twentieth century with our environment still richly intact. We wish to continue living in harmony with nature and to pass on this rich heritage to future generations." YES Bhutan Report

Ms. Wangmo identifies urban migration as perhaps Bhutan's greatest challenge. The implications of this challenge for the youth of Bhutan's employment prospects are myriad. Ms. Wangmo identifies the following ways to stem rapid urban migration:

- Improving infrastructure and quality of life in rural areas.
- Creating employment opportunities in the non-agricultural sector.
- Developing more regional centers with better infrastructure and service facilities to ease pressure on the two largest cities, Thimpu and Phuentsholing.
- Developing small and medium sized cottage industries (such as weaving).
- Developing and implementing housing schemes that provide low-cost and weather-proof housing for all.

The goals of YES Bhutan are to encourage youth entrepreneurship, smooth young adults' transition to work, and make available to youth the information they can use to make informed livelihood decisions. Ms Wangmo believes a national YES Network can play a strategic role in linking youth to opportunity.

"YES Bhutan will produce creative citizens through the provision of proper guidance to our youth and provide opportunities to every Bhutanese youth by instilling high standards of Bhutanese traditions and customs, encourage self help groups, development of skills and sense of responsibility, self discipline and dedication to TSA-WA-SUM (King, People and Country), as well make friendship between the youth around the world as a brotherhood."

YES Bhutan led a delegation of ten members, including Ministers and senior government officials, to the YES Regional Forum, Hyderabad, India, December 14-18, 2003.



YES Canada

Who are we?

The YES Canada Country Network is part of the Global YES Campaign tackling the issue of worldwide youth unemployment. The ten-year initiative aims to build the capacity of youth to create sustainable livelihoods and to establish an entrepreneurial culture where young people will work towards self-employment.

What do we do?

We link youth across Canada with youth overseas to work together on grassroots projects. We also promote education on global issues and provide information on tons of like-minded programs, organizations and services across Canada and around the world.

Who's involved?

The YES Campaign has over 60 country networks around the world, involving thousands of youth and youth-serving organizations.

Why get involved?

Gain international experience without leaving home, plus, it's free! The YES Canada Country Network links you with youth from around the world to learn about their culture, to share info on your culture and to work together on projects, large and small, that make a difference and that directly affect the lives of youth!

Who are we looking for?

Anyone! From individuals to businesses, from youth groups to youth-serving agencies and from non-profits to student unions, we're looking for people interested in making a difference and getting involved in global issues.

Wanna know more?

JOIN TODAY! Check out our site at <http://yescanada.org>

Find out more about the global YES Campaign at <http://yesweb.org>

Email us at info@yescanada.org



YES Country Networks Report

YES DRC (Democratic Republic of the Congo)

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About YES Congo (Democratic Republic of the Congo)

Since launching in June 2002, the YES DRC Network has worked hard to distribute information about effective practices in youth employment to young people throughout the country. That DRC youth have a strong desire to improve their employment prospects is evident from the 83 people who applied to attend the Alexandria Summit in 2002. Eight people from the DRC were fortunate to participate in Egypt.

In November 2003, the YES-DRC Network signed a lodging protocol with the Union Centrale des Coopératives d'Epargne et de Crédit (UCCEC) - an important credit cooperative - which allows the YES-DRC to operate from a National Coordination Office. Below are the major initiatives and accomplishments of YES DRC in 2002/2003.

In August, 2003 Mr. Jules Ramazani, National Coordinator, represented YES-DRC youth at the Southern Africa Regional Workshop, held in Johannesburg, South Africa. This workshop forms part of the activities of the Regional Support Plan (RSP), funded by the Dutch Government, and implemented by the Youth Development Network (YDN) of South Africa. The Regional Support Plan seeks to promote and stimulate youth employment in the region through various targeted initiatives.

The main aim of the workshop was to build collective support for the implementation of the plan. YES Networks from Southern Africa participated in the workshop. After he returned from South Africa, Mr. Jules Ramazani held a number of public briefings on the South African-led Regional Support Plan. YES DRC has held briefings with the following officials relating to the Regional Support Plan to build institutional support for its initiatives:

- Mr. Fan, Secretary General, Ministry of Youth and Sports
- Madam Djumba Marie-Rose, Employment Director, Ministry of Labour
- Madam Salua Nour, German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) Representative in DRC
- Mr. Ramazani Dihumba, President of the Microfinance Institutions Network (RIFIDEC)

In October, 2003 YES DRC was instrumental in securing a scholarship for one of its members to study entrepreneurship in Mauritius in 2004. Throughout 2003, the emphasis of YES DRC members has been to offer youth increasing opportunities in entrepreneurship training. Drawing on models tested in other countries, YES DRC is seeking institutional support to offer microcredit to youth. Work on these plans is ongoing.

In January, 2003 YES DRC members participated in a micro enterprise conference held in Kinshasa. Over thirty organizations participated, including youth, micro finance organizations, officials of the Ministries of Youth, Labor, officials from the Secretariat General of the Francophonie, and officials from UNDP, UNICEF, GTZ, and USAID.

In September 23, 2002, a General Assembly of YES DRC was held at the "Cité de la Voix du Peuple" (National TV Building) in the capital, Kinshasa. Over 50 youth, NGOs and officials attended this event. Its goals were to share the Alexandria Summit (YES2002) outcomes and encourage YES-DRC Members to effectively commit themselves to the activities of the decade-long YES Campaign (2002-2012).

In 2003, YES DRC members have worked to formalize the structure of the network to be more effective. However, the extremely high cost of communications in DRC has been a continuing barrier. For example, the cost of using cyber cafes to access the internet costs approximately \$1 per half-hour. Nevertheless, the Network reports that it is now moving forward with more confidence to offer a greater range of services to DRC youth in the latter half of 2003 and into 2004.

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About YES Egypt

Since launching in December, 2001 YES Egypt has been involved in many projects. Its initial focus was to mobilize the youth of Alexandria to assist in preparing for the Alexandria Summit in September 2002. After more than sixty young people formed an active volunteer force for the duration of the event, the impetus was in place to form an effective national network.

The most significant achievement since September 2002 is the registration of YES Egypt as an official non-government organization. Taking the name "Sustainable Development Association" (SDA), the Network is registered with the Ministry of Social Affairs. This is a critical step in solidifying a nascent volunteer network into an organization with genuine capacity. SDA manages a vibrant online community with over 100 members.

Highlights of the activities of YES Egypt (SDA) are detailed below:

- Youth Employment in the Euro-Med Region

In September, 2003 Mr. Abdallah Sobeih represented YES Egypt at a regional Euro-Med strategy session in Malta. Joining Mr. Sobeih were delegates from 35 Euro-Med countries. Mr. Sobeih reports that participants learnt a great deal about the policies of the European Union (EU) in regard to partner countries in the Euro-Med group. Specifically, opportunities for youth organizations to become involved in EU-sponsored programs headed the agenda.

In February, 2003 YES Egypt members presented the global YES Campaign and the work of YES Egypt to a group of fifty youth invited to Egypt by the Swedish Institute of Alexandria. Youth participated from England, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Jordan and Egypt. Participants focused on developing a greater understanding of the youth employment challenges common across the region.

- Workshop on Youth with Special Needs, Egypt, July 29-30 2003

YES Egypt organized a two-day workshop in July to discuss the realities of youth with special needs in Egypt. In preparation for the event YES member Amira Sobeih published a paper exploring challenges facing special needs educators and disabled youth in Egypt - A Brief Review of Disability in Egypt.

The paper notes that while approximately two million Egyptians (3.5%) are disabled, according to official sources, other studies estimate the real figure may be as high as 4.7 million. Recommendations, a survey of current services and the role of government agencies and medical professionals are also reviewed in the paper.

- Computer Illiteracy Program.

Sponsored by Virgitech, Inc., Microsoft and Unilever, YES Egypt negotiated 2,000 computer scholarships for disadvantaged youth. The classes, which offered introductory computer skills, were offered between December, 2002 and June, 2003.

- National Public Policy Forum

YES Network members were appointed to the Youth Committee of the National Democratic Party's Alexandria branch, September 30 2002. Later, in October 2002 Mr. Abdallah Sobeih and the YES Egypt team presented a report, "The State of Egypt's Youth" before an audience of the ruling National Democratic Party's Alexandria branch.

- Public Information Campaign on Youth Livelihoods

YES Coordinator Mr. Abdallah Sobeih led a YES team to meet with local youth associations in 10 Egyptian towns in November, 2002. The highlight was a series of interactive sessions aimed at identifying ways for youth to be active in community development. Groups of local youth also received information about self-employment opportunities, youth livelihood resources, and career advice.

YES Country Networks Report

YES El Salvador

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Website: <http://projects.yesweb.org/YES-ElSalvador>

About YES El Salvador

The lead agency for YES El Salvador is the Entrepreneurship Network of the University of Economics and Business in San Salvador. The Network is very active in providing business training for El Salvadoran youth.

Highlights of the Network's recent activities are detailed below:

- August 28-30, 2003: VI International Congress of Entrepreneurs: "The Entrepreneur as Generator of Employment and Youth Employment in Developing Countries: Good Practices and Challenges".

This event was organized by YES members, Entrepreneurs Students Association (SAE) and Escuela Superior de Economía y Negocios (ESEN). 900 people attended the event. The objective of the conference was to promote an entrepreneurial spirit in young people and to create leaders committed to create productive employment and capital to ultimately maintain sustainable development. For more info: www.emprendedor.com.sv

- August 4-9, 2003: YES members participated in the Latin American Summit on Youth in Mexico.
- Summer 2003: Competing in the Arroba de Oro competition in the categories of technology with www.transmind.net, in entertainment with www.leadervision.com and in associations with www.emprendedor.com.sv.
- YES El Salvador is also working on a project called "Municipality of Entrepreneurs". This project works with the Entrepreneur Program within the University of Economics and Business. It focuses on recent graduates to launch small businesses at the end of a year-long training program. It is based in a rural zone of El Salvador.
- The Network is actively collaborating with the ICON Institute on a good practices research project, to be published in early 2004.
- 2002: Winner of the Arroba de Oro, a competition run by the daily newspaper: El Diario de Hoy, elsalvador.com and Microsoft El Salvador to recognize the best websites in El Salvador. TransMind won in the category of "government and associations" with the site: www.emprendedor.com.sv which promotes the International Convention of Entrepreneurs (ESEN).

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About YES Georgia

YES Georgia has consistently demonstrated its ability to organize events and lead initiatives that contribute to youth participation in Georgian community development. Since launching in May, 2002 the Network of over 40 organizations has hosted three national events, launched four regional initiatives and become a fresh voice for youth in Georgia.

Highlights of YES Georgia's activities in 2003 are detailed below:

- Renewable Energy Fellowship Program

In April 2003, Levan Kobakhidze became one of five winners of a YES Renewable Energy Fellowship competition. The Fellowship offers training and a \$5,000 seed grant to Mr. Kobakhidze to launch a renewable energy small business in Georgia. In September, 2003 Mr. Kobakhidze organized a renewable energy workshop for 25 Georgian youth in the capital of Tbilisi. The workshop shared background information on renewable energy technologies, Georgia's energy use patterns and possible ways for youth to contribute to widespread take-up of renewable technologies.

Mr. Kobakhidze's business plan involves offering photovoltaic solar panels at affordable prices to Georgians living in off-grid areas. Read about the Global Environment Facility-funded Fellowship Program at the YES website:

<http://www.yesweb.org/projects/renewable.html>

- YES Network Leads School Reconstruction Effort in Georgia

Green Earth, a YES member, led a successful community intervention to reconstruct a school in the country's Khoni region in October, 2003. The project involved rehabilitating the schoolyard and buildings at Number Three School, and initiating a new curriculum in ecology and energy use for students. YES Coordinator Mr. Nugzar Meladze describes a dramatic turnaround for the school.

"The whole territory of the school was cleaned up and new trees were planted. In this action 35 pupils and inhabitants of the region actively took part. 400 trees were planted. The school was totally broken down. Previously, pupils and teachers had to have lessons in unbearable conditions."

Meladze says the Japanese funded project employed 65 people in cleaning up the school, and it represents a triumph of community involvement. "Today the school offers ecological education. A governor of the region and the administration of the school actively supported the project. Also, it has been a success for the YES Network in the region."

- Regional Employment Networks Established

YES Georgia established the Shida-Kartli Network at a meeting of youth activists in the town of Gori, November 6, 2003. Twenty three young people gathered to discuss a range of community development initiatives YES Georgia is proposing. At a similar event in Khoni, over forty organizations participated in the establishment of the Imereti Network, October 20, 2003. Reports on these events are available at the YES Georgia website.

YES Ghana

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About YES Ghana

The most significant achievement since YES Ghana launched in July, 2002 is the registration of YES Ghana as an official non-government organization. This is a critical step in solidifying a nascent volunteer network into an organization with genuine capacity. YES Ghana manages a vibrant online community with over 100 members.

Highlights of the activities of YES Ghana in 2003 are detailed below:

- Renewable Energy Fellowship Program

In April 2003, Emmanuel Edudzie became one of five winners of a YES Renewable Energy Fellowship competition. The Fellowship offers training and a \$5,000 seed grant to Mr. Edudzie to launch a renewable energy small business in Georgia.

In September, 2003 Mr. Edudzie organized a renewable energy workshop for 25 Ghanaian youth in the capital of Accra. Co-sponsored by the Energy Foundation, the workshop shared background information on renewable energy technologies, Ghana's energy use patterns, and possible ways for youth to contribute to widespread take-up of renewable technologies, and opportunities for youth employment in this sector.

Mr. Edudzie's business plan involves piloting a micro hydro electricity generating turbine in an isolated off-grid rural community. Read about the Global Environment Facility-funded Fellowship Program at the YES website: <http://www.yesweb.org/projects/renewable.html>

- Skills Training and Employment Placement (STEP) Program

YEN-Ghana has developed the Skills Training and Employment Placement (STEP) Program, which recognizes that the only asset a poor person has is his/her skill or labor. The STEP Program entails a coordinated set of interventions to develop the assets a poor person has to offer through employability skills training for self or wage employment and income generation to lift people out of poverty.

- Youth Linkages with Government

In late October, 2002 the Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment invited YES-Ghana to co-launch and implement a National Youth Orientation Campaign. In addition, two members of YES-Ghana's steering committee were appointed to liaise with the Ministry of Manpower on an ongoing basis.

- National Action Plan Published

In July 2002, YES Ghana was launched at a National Consultation held in the capital, Accra, with over two hundred senior officials, youth and development professionals in attendance. A valuable outcome of the event is a well-researched National Action Plan for Youth Employment in Ghana.

The Plan's major recommendation is to incorporate youth employment policies into a comprehensive employment strategy and strengthen their linkages with macroeconomic, social and economic policies and make social and economic institutions work for youth. Read the full report at the YES Ghana web page.

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About YES Honduras

The YES Honduras Network, launched in March 2002, has expanded to different areas of the country, with a mission to reach marginalized citizens. Local consultations have taken place in the different zones of Honduras to raise awareness about YES, to collect perspectives on youth employment from young people around the country. The outcomes of these consultations in 2002 have fed into the National Plan of Action, a document authored by YES Network members and distributed widely in Honduras. The Honduras National Action Plan emphasizes community-based strategies.

Other activities of the Network have included:

- Training Youth to Deliver HIV / AIDS Programs, July, 2003

Gwendolyn Smith of the International Health Program (IHP) organized a focus group of 20 YES youth members on how to establish sexual and reproductive health programs and improve access to those resources in Honduras. Youth from ten organizations participated, including regional and rural groups.

- HIV / AIDS Advocacy & Awareness, July, 2003

Seventy five people living with HIV/AIDS participated in a series of interactive seminars to design a public sexual and reproductive health awareness campaign. The campaign will specifically target young women, youth at risk and rural youth. YES Honduras was involved in recruiting participants and managing the USAID-funded campaign.

- National Youth Leadership Initiative in Honduras, July, 2003

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) hosted a national seminar, "Building the Capacity of Youth Leaders in Social Development and Democracy". Two YES Honduras members participated.

- Entrepreneurship for People Living with HIV/AIDS

The YES Network is assisting people living with HIV/AIDS to apply to the Global Fund for HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis for micro-enterprise grants.

- Youth Leadership in Latin America

In August 2003, two YES Honduras members were selected to participate in Mexico's Latin American Youth Summit, held in Mexico City.

- Involving At-Risk Youth & Youth in the Regions

Network members have worked to establishing contact with youth in the different zones of Honduras. This has taken place in the capital region (Tegucigalpa), the Northern Zone (La Ceiba), and in the Western Zone (Gracias, the poorest department in Honduras). Local YES groups have been formed in three regional locations.

A range of small public consultations have been organized to target specific groups of young people. Events have been held in seven towns and cities with leaders of youth groups, universities, people living with HIV/AIDS, orphans, street children, indigenous youth, rural and urban youth, and youth leaders from church groups. In these events YES Honduras volunteers have worked with participants to identify the challenges of youth employment and create goals and objectives to create solutions to these challenges.

YES Country Networks Report

YES India

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About YES India

India is host to the biggest event of the YES Campaign in 2003. The YES Regional Forum, to be held in Hyderabad, December 14-18, brings together up to 600 development professionals, youth, Ministers, officials and business leaders from twenty two Asian countries. The Regional Forum is hosted by the Government of Andhra Pradesh. The Patron is Hon. Chandrababu Naidu, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh.

The agenda of the Forum focuses on six themes: information & communication, rural development, water & sanitation, renewable energy, HIV/AIDS and gender. Development professionals and youth leaders from each field will join their peers in interactive panel discussions for four days in Hyderabad. A highlight of the Forum will be the high degree of interaction between youth and senior leaders, one of the fundamental principles of the YES Campaign.

On a national level YES India is in the early stages of drawing together a coalition of multi-stakeholders to contribute a voice to debates on youth employment issues. However, YES India has already contributed a number of strategic interventions at regional and national level.

In January 2003, an introductory meeting in Hyderabad drew one hundred participants to launch the Hyderabad chapter of YES India. Over 85 organizations are now members of the YES Hyderabad Network. In partnership with the Government of Andhra Pradesh and the YES Hyderabad Network, a *YES Academy* will be launched at the Regional Forum in December, 2003. The *Academy* will draw on wide strands of research and effective practices to design training programs, launch public policy initiatives and offer youth entrepreneurship opportunities in India.

In April, 2003 YES India presented the Green Enterprise Project Design Training Workshop in Chennai, in partnership with The M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) and the YES Campaign Secretariat (YES). The one-week workshop trained twenty selected participants from seven countries in project design and implementation skills in eco-entrepreneurship.

YES India launched at a National Consultation on Youth Employment, July 23rd 2002 in New Delhi, an event sponsored by the global software and training group, NIIT. Prominent speakers included the Minister of Labor, Dr Sahib Singh Verma, the Egyptian Ambassador, Honorable Gehad Madi, Mr. P Rajendran, President of NIIT, Mr. Naresh Chandra, the former Ambassador to the USA, Prof. Anand Kumar of JNU and Mrs. Raka Rashid of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

The fledgling YES Network succeeded in alerting the Labor Ministry and the Youth Affairs and Sports Ministry to the importance of participating at the launch of the YES Campaign at the Alexandria Summit in 2002. Over forty Indians formed the national delegation at YES 2002 in Egypt.

Milestones for YES India:

- A YES Hyderabad Network Committee was constituted in January, 2003 with H E Shri S.S. Barnala, the Governor of Andhra Pradesh as the Chief Patron and top corporate and other high profile dignitaries as advisors.
- A consultation was held for the launch of the YES Academy on June 16, 2003 under the chairmanship of Hon. Chandrababu Naidu, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Prof. Swaminathan of MSSRF, Ms. Poonam Ahluwalia Executive Director, YES Campaign and senior bureaucrats of the Andhra Pradesh government.
- YES India members participated in the Third Annual Baramati Initiative on ICT and Development in Baramati, Maharashtra, India from 30 May - 2 June 2003, that was attended by over 500 high profile delegates from across the globe representing organizations such as the World Bank, HSBC, International NGO's and Digital Partners. A presentation was made on the YES Campaign.
- In November, 2003 YES organized a consultation for the launch of a YES Club in the district of Medak, Andhra Pradesh, where about 150 youth participated. Organizers are planning to launch the first YES Club in the first half of December 2003 in Medak.
<http://www.yesweb.org/hyderabad/photo.html>

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About YES Iran

In Iran 28 per cent of the population (18 million) is between 15-29 years of age, a proportion projected to exceed 30% within the next two decades. According to the YES Iran Network, 75 per cent of Iranian youth have no income. 700,000 high school and university graduates enter the labor market each year, with prospects for employment slim. No official figures of youth unemployment are published.

- Tehran Regional Session

The highlight of 2003 for the YES Iran Network was undoubtedly the tremendously successful Tehran Youth Employment Session, held in the first week of September, 2003. Bringing together youth from all of Iran's provinces, senior government officials, private firms and development professionals, the three-day event attracted a high degree of public interest. Discussions were lively, with plenty of attention given to the respective roles of government and the private sector in generating employment.

Mr. Mohammed Ghafari, a senior official from the government's Planning and Management Office, had this to say about the work of YES Networks;

"I think in less developed countries (LDCs) this is the best way to give youth self-reliance and not look for government work, especially in the field of ICT. With a small budget and teamwork they can achieve a lot. It's the best way to stand on their own two feet and make a useful contribution to society. Our office is very happy to be supporting YES Iran this year."

The Tehran Session amply demonstrated that youth can set the public agenda when goals are set, groups work together, and key supporters recognize the importance of the issue. Mr. Shafiq Ullah (Qadri), a visitor from Afghanistan, said he found the conference valuable;

"I think it was brilliant. I now have some new ideas. Previously, I had heard a little about YES but now I have a much clearer idea about it and some plans for work when I return home. Plus, I made some new friends."

In Iran, the Ministry of Labor, the NGO Resource Center, the Translators & Interpreters Association and many others worked together to bring public attention to the issue of youth employment. Read the official report at the YES Iran website.

- Regional Cooperation and Partnership

The YES Network has formed a working relationship with a number of key government departments at Ministerial level. In Syria, YES Iran met with government officials who welcomed ideas for increased dialogue on youth employment issues and signed a *memorandum of understanding*. In Lebanon, YES Iran met with NGOs, government officials and youth groups, and in Jordan meetings were held with NGOs and members of the YES Jordan Network.

In December 2002 YES Iran held a very well attended National Conference on Youth Employment in Tehran. Three hundred participants learned of the outcomes of YES 2002, the launch of the YES Campaign, and YES Iran's national goals for youth employment. YES Iran has established itself in a very short time as a national voice on youth issues, an achievement which cannot be underestimated and which should lead to positive results for Iranian youth and regional dialogue.

- Government Partnership

YES Iran aims to win government approval for its key recommendations, contained in its National Strategy for Youth Employment. This document is available at the YES Iran website. Key recommendations include increased investment in information technology and official encouragement to attract Iranians living abroad to return home to share technical expertise.

YES Iran is organizing a delegation of up to twenty youth, development professionals and government officials to participate in the YES Regional Forum, Hyderabad, India, December 14-18, 2003.

YES Kenya

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About YES Kenya

Kenya elected its first new government in twenty four years in late 2002. Since then, the opportunity for civil society groups to participate in policy making has increased significantly. YES Kenya is one of the many groups making a concerted contribution to the new government's inclusive approach.

In 2003, YES Kenya has been involved in two major public policy processes:

1. National Youth Policy Consultation Process

A national youth policy process, coordinated by the Ministry of Social Affairs and funded by the German Technical Service (GTZ). Again, YES Network members have been involved in this process, which culminated in the adoption of a new National Youth Policy in November, 2003.

As part of the national youth policy process, YES member Ms. Hope Muli traveled to Ethiopia in September, 2003 to participate in a regional workshop on youth policy. The workshop was organized by the International Council for National Youth Policy (ICNYP, www.icnyp.net), UNDP and other donors.

William D. Angel, ICNYP Secretary General, was in Kenya for the policy launch. "I travelled to Kenya to participate in the Consensus-Building Workshop on the preparation of the Kenya National Youth Policy. For me, it was really a wonderful experience to see at first hand in Poland, Rep of Korea and Kenya the processes by which the respective Governments began to plan a cross-sectoral national youth policy in consultation with youth and youth organizations".

He further added that "the situation in Kenya was quite different from the other countries visited on similar missions on National Youth Policy. First, Kenya is a developing country with major political and economic challenges and second, the NYP process began in the capital city (Nairobi) in June 2002 with a National Youth NGO Capacity-Building Workshop".

2. Youth Employment "Road Map" Policy Process

A youth employment "road map" coordinated by the Ministry of Labor. This process was launched in November, 2003, with a budget of two million Kenyan Shillings (US\$26,000) for 2003/4. YES Network members are involved in this process, which envisages a one-year series of consultations at national and regional levels. The process plans to pull together policy-makers and practitioners from all sectors, and youth. The process will include focus on the following areas:

- Policy Harmonization
- Stakeholders linkages and inter-relations
- Capacity building
- Investment and entrepreneurship
- Resource mobilization

In 2004, YES Kenya plans to register itself as an organization and widen the range of its activities. Critical to its long term success will be creating an effective governance structure and including all stakeholders in its activities. A *member retreat* in December, 2003 of the Network Steering Committee plans to address issues of governance and strategy.

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About YES Liberia

YES Liberia formally announced itself in a public ceremony in late April, 2003, just as Liberia was descending into the climax of years of violent civil war. While the timing for a youth employment initiative in Liberia appears to be a triumph of hope over experience, the expected comments from the official launch report below show that leaders in Liberia identify the same issues as their counterparts in other nations.

“Serving as Co-Launcher was Mr. Peter Z.N. Kamei, National General Secretary, YMCA of Liberia. In his statement, he noted that our planet is plagued and burdened by youth unemployment, HIV/AIDS, environmental degradation, hunger and poverty as well as violence and terrorism. He stated that the YES-Liberia Network is being launched at a critical time in Liberia’s history. Mr. Kamei further noted that by creating employment opportunities for young people, major contributions to addressing challenges such as hunger, poverty and violence will be made.

Outlining key areas that will stimulate and inspire the youth employment campaign in Liberia, the YMCA National General Secretary also stated that our failure to act now in addressing the problems of young people in Liberia is a prescription for disaster. The areas named include:

- Self-employment and entrepreneurship programs;
- School-to-work programs and work-based training;
- Private and public sector partnership;
- Use of new information and communication technologies;
- Education targeted for work opportunities; and,
- Micro-credit schemes.

In concluding, the YMCA General Secretary called on the YES-Liberia Network to foster partnership and collaboration defined by actions and accomplishments. He also urged young people to recognize their roles as partners and accept as their responsibility to be accountable for results, as a new sense of interdependence and national responsibility. In conducting the campaign activities, Mr. Kamei encouraged the Network to place special emphasis on adolescent girls and disadvantaged youths.

Hon. Calvin Z. Coleman, a Labor Ministry official noted that over the next two decades, some less developed regions will be a temporary “bulge” within the working age population relative to older and younger dependents. He stated that more than 10,000 jobs need to be created in Liberia between now and 2010, to accommodate young workers entering the labor force and to reduce unemployment. The Employment Services Director noted that the situation in Liberia is very grave, and there is no new investment in the country coupled with the closure of a number of companies every week for fear that the war might destroy their lives and properties.

The Labor Ministry official went further to state that his agency was worried about the success of the YES Campaign when the country is experiencing recession in its economy. He noted that the private sector continues to cry out the “no business syndrome” which makes it impossible for them to employ additional personnel. However, if the youths are employed, Hon. Coleman said, it builds the country’s capital and spurs long-term development, if investment in educational opportunities, jobs creation and health services are made.

Concluding, the Labor Ministry’s Employment Services Director stated that there are thousands of youths in Liberia that are unemployed. He noted that as the campaign is being launched in Liberia, one of the greatest challenges is to generate productive work opportunities for young people between the ages of 18-35 years. Without such opportunities, Hon. Coleman said, thwarted expectations can become the breeding ground for discontent. He then concluded by noting that a targeted and timely intervention for youth employment is urgently required to resolve a rapidly building crisis.” *YES Liberia Launch Report, April 29, 2003*

“Liberia’s government fell under massive pressure from two opposition armies in August, 2003. Thousands of UN “blue helmets” are now stationed in Liberia as a peacekeeping force. The United Nations announced in November, 2003 that it will hold a donors conference in January or February 2004 to raise \$300 million in aid for reconstruction in Liberia.” *New York Times, November 22, 2003*

YES Malawi

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About YES Malawi

The recognition that action is needed to meet the challenge of youth employment is understood very well by leaders in Malawi, young and old. The Malawi government, realizing the great importance of the Alexandria Summit, sent a delegation comprising officials from the then Ministry of Gender, Youth and Community Services (now the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture), the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training, the Technical, Entrepreneurial, Vocational Education and Training Authority (TEVETA), and three young people.

Since 2002, YES Malawi has worked to build on the impetus of the YES Campaign's launch by identifying strategic interventions in national conversations. The Network has benefited immensely from the agreement of His Excellency, Dr. Bakili Muluzi, the President of Malawi, to become the patron of the YES Malawi Network.

- Ministry of Labor Accepts National Action Plan

The Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training has officially accepted the national concept document for Malawi as a workable strategy towards national youth employment creation. The office of the Commissioner for Labor, Mr. Zebron Kambuto has also offered to host the YES Secretariat in the short term.

- Fisheries Project Employs Rural YES Members

In November, 2003 two young people, Kingsley and Bowsten Kondowe Sichali in rural Mphompha, 600km north of Malawi's capital Lilongwe, became the latest beneficiaries (pun intended) of a European Fishery self-employment project. Youth in the area, starting with the two young men mentioned, have constructed 20 by 20 metre fish ponds. In each pond 1,500 fingerlings will breed and be sold at market. The project will ultimately support at least 30 young people, making it the first direct employment project of the YES Malawi campaign. Read more in the first YES Malawi National report due in December 2003.

- YES Malawi Generates Parliamentary Debate on Youth Empowerment Strategy

In July and August, 2003, as a result of the lobbying efforts of YES Malawi, members of Malawi's Parliament debated a bill proposing measures to increase youth participation in the social, economic and political life of the country. Proposals include a call for research on youth employment rates in Malawi. YES Coordinator Kondwani Munthali says research is badly needed. "From 1964 up to the present, there has not been a census on unemployment rates. There is not much data on how many young people are unemployed in Malawi, let alone actively participating in the socio-economic activities of Malawi."

- YES Member Appointed to National Youth Council

One of founding members of YES Campaign Jane Kopa was appointed as a member of the National Youth Council of Malawi. The appointment was recommended by the YES Malawi Secretariat.

- Chamber of Commerce Supports YES Campaign

The President of the Confederation of Malawi Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Mr. Martin Kansichi has boosted the private sector's participation in the YES Malawi campaign. YES Malawi is advocating for a youth desk at the private sector umbrella body. With the support of its president, YES Malawi Coordinator Kondwani Munthali reports that he is hopeful of more energetic participation from the private sector.

- Vocational Clubs for Rural Youth

"Deputy Agriculture Minister and Member of Parliament for Chiradzulu East, Mr. Henry Mussa yesterday threw his weight behind the YES Malawi campaign. Speaking during a meeting with YES Malawi team, Mr. Mussa, who has made open donations to the campaign, says he will launch five cooperative clubs for rural youth in his area to develop skills in general welding, carpentry and also initiate an environmentally sustainable brick making machine." YES Malawi website

YES Mauritius

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About YES Mauritius

YES Mauritius is led by a twelve-member steering committee representing organizations in different sectors and is representatives of different regions of the island, and includes a member organization from Rodriguez Island (Indian Ocean). The objectives of YES Mauritius are to engage other organizations and stakeholders on the island into developing a comprehensive National Action Plan for Youth Employment.

Highlights of Activities in Mauritius

The National Action Plan drafted by Network members in 2003 identifies the following “root causes” of youth unemployment in Mauritius.

- Low wage rates
- Early drop out from the school system
- Poor education
- Fewer people willing to undertake manual jobs
- Fewer skilled workers

The Action Plan identifies the following priority areas for the Network to target in policy forums and project implementation.

- Incentive programs to set up small business (e.g. loan at reduce interest rates)
- Counselling and advice programs for young adults
- Improvement in the investment / trade climate for employment generation
- Introduction of apprenticeships skills in curricula

The objective of the National Action Plan is to inform the youth about the situation of youth unemployment in the country. Our meeting with the officials at the Ministry reveal to us that the adult unemployment figure was 104,300 in 2002 (8.8%) and it is expected to rise. YES Mauritius is working hard to encourage and facilitate the youth to be part of industrial vocational schools. To reach this end, ongoing meetings are conducted with the managers of these schools to allow admission for the younger population, despite their failure at primary school education levels. National Action Plan, 2003

- Employment for Youth With Disabilities

YES Mauritius will shortly begin a short research study to have an overview of youth unemployment with disabilities. In general, people with disabilities tend to be neglected and therefore, Yes Mauritius will dwell into this aspect and based on the results, will pressure the authority to adopt appropriate strategies.

- National Youth Policy Process

Also, YES Mauritius is a stakeholder in the “National Youth Policy Process” that has been setup to coordinate the national youth policy of Mauritius in cooperation with other youth serving ministries and youth organisations.

YES Network Members

Halley Movement, Mauritius Youth Volunteers, Southern Youth Association, Hope For Adolescents, Mauritius Young Women’s Network, Internet Child Safety Foundation, Halley Chapter-Rodrigues Island

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About YES Mexico

Mexican organizations have been involved with YES since 1999/2000. YES Mexico members organized the first YES Campaign international event in February 2000. Since then YES Mexico has proven to be the YES Campaign's strongest reference point in Latin America. Mr. Esteban Gonzalez, *E Foundation* president, has worked tirelessly as a member of the Alexandria Summit Organizing Committee in 2001/2, leading to an invitation to serve as YES Campaign co-chair in 2003/4.

In 2002, YES Mexico coordinated the participation of Latin American delegates in the Alexandria Summit in Egypt. Through ceaseless promotion and long hours of preparation, over fifty citizens of Central and South American nations made the trip to Egypt in September, 2002, including six Ministers of Youth. A key partner in this endeavor has been Mr. Yuri Chillan Reyes, Director-General of the Ibero-American Youth Organization, based in Spain.

YES Mexico 2004

In August, 2002 the Institute of Youth, Federal Government of Mexico agreed to host the first milestone event of the YES Campaign in 2004. The State Government of Veracruz will host YES Mexico 2004 in the city of Boca del Rio, in early October, 2004. The event is a joint initiative of the YES Campaign and YES Mexico. The YES 2004 Secretariat is managed by the *E Foundation*, the YES Mexico lead agency (www.fundacione.org).

The global event is a joint initiative of the YES Campaign and the YES 2004 Mexico Organizing Committee. Prominent members of the YES 2004 Organizing Committee are:

Mr. Cristian Castaño, Director of the Mexican Institute of Youth,
Mr. Miguel Carrillo, Dean, Graduate School in Administration of the Monterrey Institute of Technology,
Mr. Ramón de la Peña, President of the National Council of Education for Life and Labor,
Mr. Sergio García de Alba, Under-Secretary, Small and Medium Enterprises, Ministry of the Economy,
Ms. Isabel Guerrero, Director, World Bank, Mexico Office,
Ms. Martha Juy Domínguez, Public Policy Advisor, Office of the President of Mexico,
Mr. Ary Kahan, President of KASO Consultores,
Mr. Jorge Vergara, President of Grupo Omnilife.

Mr. Cristian Castaño, Director of the Institute of Youth, says Mexico welcomes the opportunity to play a leadership role in examining world's best practices in youth development issues relating to employment.

"The YES Campaign has vigorously put youth employment on the global agenda. YES 2004 will be a tremendously exciting opportunity for senior leaders to meet the next generation of dynamic youth, the people who will lead our grandchildren into the future. The people who will gather in Mexico next year represent an opportunity for the various strands of thinking in development economics to come together in a rare inter-generational atmosphere of exchange and learning."

Visit the YES website for information on YES Mexico 2004: <http://www.yesweb.org/mexico/index.html>

YES Nigeria

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About YES Nigeria

Since its launch in May, 2002 the Network's members have pursued a dogged campaign to bring the crisis of youth unemployment to the attention of the Federal Government and other major institutions. After a long series of public events and consultations in 2002/3, combined with astute lobbying, YES Nigeria is proud to share its major accomplishments.

1. Senate of Nigeria Officially Recognizes YES Nigeria and YES Campaign

August 6, 2003. The Senate of Nigeria passes a motion recognizing the crisis of youth unemployment and the steps taken by the YES Campaign, the United Nations and other bodies to meet this challenge. YES Nigeria successfully lobbied members of the Senate to pass a resolution recognizing the gravity of the unemployment challenge, some of which is excerpted below. In terms of focusing the attention of leaders on the youth unemployment crisis in Nigeria and recognizing the efforts of the YES Nigeria Network, the passing of this resolution is viewed as a significant step.

The motion was moved by Senator Tawa Umbi Wada from Gombe South Senatorial District and it was unanimously accepted.

Whereas there has been concerted efforts both nationally and internationally especially through Government Institutions such as National Directorate of Employment; National Poverty Eradication Program (NAPEP), Ministry of Employment, Labor and Productivity, Ministry of Women Affairs & Youth Development to mention a few, as well as the UN Youth Agenda; the UN Commission for Social Development; the UN Expert Group Meeting on Global Priorities for Youth, and UN Youth Employment Network, which was initiated by His Excellency, Kofi Annan in 2000. And, also through Non-Governmental Institutions such as FATE Foundation, NYRDC, KIND and so on.

In addition, the civil society-led Global Alliance for Youth Employment vide its recent Global Youth Employment Summit (YES) held in Alexandria, Egypt from 7th-14th September, 2002 to launch the Global YES Campaign for Youth Employment, which the Nigerian delegation attended; and where a resolution was adopted to provide employment for the youth through self employment to complement Government efforts towards provision of employment for the youth and Nigerians generally;"

"Whereas the Nigerian chapter of the civil society-led Global YES Campaign plans to hold a National Youth Employment Summit (NAYES 2003/04) from 19th – 21st January, 2004. An interactive session was held on the 12 August, 2003 in commemoration of the International Youth Day".

5th National Assembly, First Session, No. 19/121, August 6, 2003

2. Youth Employment the Theme of International Youth Day, 2003

In August, 2003 YES Nigeria celebrated International Youth Day with a day of celebration in Abuja, capital of Nigeria. Celebrations were hosted by the Women's Development Center, and YES Nigeria Coordinator, James Olawale Ajani says "this year's IYD focuses on "Finding decent and productive work for young people everywhere". On this International Youth Day, let us ensure that we young people are given the opportunity to contribute to the development and the progress of this nation."

3. National Summit on Youth Employment in 2004

Members of the YES Nigeria Network have been working hard to forge a consensus between the Federal Government, the International Labor Organization and civil society organizations to jointly host a National Summit on Youth Employment in early January, 2004.

YES Pakistan

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About YES Pakistan

The YES Country Network in Pakistan has been extremely active and committed to mobilizing young people all across Pakistan to be engaged in the YES Campaign. YES Pakistan has distinguished itself through a nation-wide structure that enables large numbers of young people to contribute to YES Pakistan's activities.

In January 2003 YES Pakistan became the first YES Network to be registered as a legal entity. This enabled the Network to institutionalize its governance structure and begin to initiate a wider range of formal activities. The governance structure of YES Pakistan includes a National Advisory Board, community representatives and regional youth committees.

Highlights of YES Pakistan's Activities

- Youth Service Program Launches

In August, 2003 a province-wide youth volunteerism program was launched by the YES Pakistan Network in the city of Lahore. Coordinator Ali Khan says the program's goal is "to mainstream the youth of Pakistan into the nation building process. The project recognizes youth as major partners in development." Over 100 young people committed to a one-year volunteer service program at its launch.

"A valuable national asset of 100 YES volunteers, all between 15 and 29 years of age will commit to dedicate a valuable part of their lives, a period of one full year, to community service, to demonstrate their capacity for involvement in societal change and uplift. This project will also immensely contribute to improving the employability skills of the youth of Pakistan."

- Primary Household Livelihoods Survey

In January 2003, YES Pakistan announced a partnership with the Social Work Department of Lahore University to initiate a pilot research household survey in 100 households in a poor neighborhood of Lahore.

"The findings of the survey will be very helpful for us to design viable and needs based youth employment projects. The objectives of the study are to determine the socio-economic profile & *personal attributes of youth, to assess the magnitude of unemployment and underemployment, to explore factors influencing the employment status of Youth (social, cultural, political and economical), to study the effects of unemployment, to explore job preferences among youth, to record the views of youth regarding their future aspirations, and to explore what measures should be adopted by the public and private sectors to improve the present status of youth with regard to employment.*"

This survey is now complete and data is available from the YES Pakistan web page. Work is now underway to develop a policy and project response informed by the available data.

<http://projects.yesweb.org/YES-Pakistan>

- YES Skill Development Center Opens

In December, 2002 YES Network Pakistan, in cooperation with local community and NGOs, opened a Skill Development Center in an under-privileged and under-served area of Lahore for poor children, orphans and youth at risk. Network Coordinator Ali Raza Khan says the center is serving large numbers of young people.

"Now, through this skill development center reading and writing skills, computer literacy, tuition services and other educational activities are being provided to youth and children. This skill development center is multipurpose and is being operated by the local youth group with the support of the community. Currently 290 children are provided facilities for literacy, tuition, computer handling, and typing training."

YES Panamá

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About YES Panamá

YES Panama launched with a national event on youth employment on June 27, 2003 in Panama City. YES Panama Coordinator Ms. Albis M. Fernandez led the effort to gather representatives of Panamanian youth organizations, foundations and development agencies. Twenty-eight people attended, with speakers including Ms. Amelia De Perez, an official from UNDP and Ms. Dacil Acevedo, YES Ambassador for Latin America.

The meeting, hosted by the Cooperative for Savings and Credit, in collaboration with the Foundation of the Leadership Movement for Panamanian Youth and the National Youth Council, focused on the following issues:

- Education in Panama prepares kids for jobs, but not for self employment and entrepreneurship
- The importance of lobbying for public policies that promote education to enhance employability.
- Concerns were raised about protecting human rights in the workplace.
- Concern was expressed over the target age of youth; many organizations support youth in the age group between 15-24 years while the average age of school dropout is 11-12 years old.
- Ms. Amelia De Perez, a representative of UNDP, spoke about the Millennium Development Goals of the UN, in particular those that related to youth employment, and the fact that Panama may have a great opportunity with the UN's Report on Human Development 2004 that focuses on youth development.

Highlights of YES Panama's Achievements

- Network launching and organization with participation of civil society, corporate sector, trade union, university and the institutional and advisory support of UN international agencies.
- Successful mass media campaign: radio and TV
- Organization of the contents and structure of the YES Panama National Youth Employment Report to be launched in 2004.
- Planning process for 2004: national report on youth employment; participative consultations for validating it; presenting its results to the next elected president, organizing Panamanian delegation to YES Mexico 2004, evaluating the process and planning year 2005.

Upcoming Plans in YES Panama

- Workshop on Gender Perspective applied to the YES Panama National Youth Employment Report, January 2004. (*)
- YES Panama logo adoption & YES Panama web launching, January 2004.
- YES Panama National Youth Report Content Preparation, January-June 2004.
- Participative and Multi stake holders Validation on the YES National Youth Employment Report, July 2004. (*)
- Results of the National Validation Results and final version on the YES National Youth Employment Report, to the elected president in Panama (elections to be held in May 2004, take power in September 2004).
- Edition, Design and Printing the YES National Youth Employment Report, July-August 2004. (*)
- Organizing, preparation and participation of the Panamanian delegation to YES Summit in Mexico 2004: July-October 2004.
- Evaluation of YES Panama actions: November 2004.
- Plan of Action 2005 Design: December 2004.

(*) With the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFP) office in Panama.

YES Network Members

FUMOLIJUP, (CONAJUPA), National Youth Council, Movimiento Juventud Kuna, JUPA, OCAJ, JAC, Fundación Cultural de las Ameritas, Panamá Verde, FUNDENAL, LIADEM, SCOUT, FUNDACUNA / PROMESA, FUNDES, CoSPAE, CGTP, Universidad Nacional de Panamá, UNFPA, UNDP

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About YES Peru

After hosting a national consultation in August, 2002 the founding members of YES Peru have worked hard to implement activities and strategies that will improve the employment prospects of youth in Peru. As with many other networks, YES Peru has pursued a combination of community project initiatives and policy engagement with government and large institutions.

The 2003 third quarter report of YES Peru details the recent history of attempts to engage government agencies in dialogue with youth-serving organizations and networks Peru, approaches to government have promised much at the outset, but with few outcomes to show for the effort. How the YES Network and other stakeholders respond to this constant challenge will be the test of the Network's effectiveness. (Quarterly Report: <http://projects.yesweb.org/YES-Peru>).

There have been many initiatives undertaken and completed in Peru. Below are the highlights of some of these successful initiatives.

- Enterprise for the Disabled Initiative Launched

In May, 2003 YES member ORVUBID won a USD\$20,000 grant from the World Bank to invest in appropriate technology education for people with disabilities. Initially, the project will focus on skills training for the blind with the aim of finding appropriate employment for participants. The project application was presented in the context of the YES Campaign. Ms. Angie Marin, the project coordinator of "Cyber Café" has been invited to the USA to present this initiative in December, 2003. The Cyber Café provides training opportunities for young blind Peruvians and people with other disabilities.

- National Advisory Council Formed

The highlight of government level engagement is the establishment of a new advisory council to the National Youth Commission. The NYC identifies youth employment as one of its major priorities. YES Network members will serve on the advisory council.

- Renewable Energy: Training and Small Enterprise Development

The Institute for the Protection of the Environment (VIDA) in Peru is implementing a USD\$7,000 small enterprise grant from the World Bank. The grant (administered by YES in Boston) involves a small business training period, group workshops and a seed grant to begin a sustainable renewable energy enterprise in an off-grid community. This process began in June, 2003 and the grant will continue operation until the end of 2004.

- Youth Employment: the Right to Work

In April, 2003 YES Peru members CEDAL, VIDA, Red Online and ORBUVID organized a workshop, "Youth Employment: the Right to Work". Over 30 organizations participated in the two-day event. The current activities of the Ministry of Women and Human Development and those of the YES Campaign were presented. The workshop participants identified four critical areas of concern:

- Appropriate education for the labor market; public / private partnerships
 - Access to employment and ending discrimination
 - Promoting and defending labor rights through public campaigns
 - Higher levels of investment in microfinance, self-employment, entrepreneurship and rural development
- World Bank Youth Consultation in Brazil

In October, 2003 Ms. Ursula Carrascal, YES Peru Coordinator attended a World Bank Regional Consultation on behalf of the YES Campaign in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The meeting, held under the theme of "Regional Integration and Social Equity" was an opportunity for consultation between the World Bank and civil society organizations focusing on economic integration in the Latin American region.

YES Romania

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About YES Romania

The YES Country Network in Romania has been working to promote YES throughout Romania. YES was introduced in Romania as a part of the Global Youth Service Day activities in April 2002. The lead agency for YES Romania is the Children for Peace Foundation.

Highlights of YES Romania Activities

- Macedonia Hosts Balkans Regional Youth Employment Workshop

In October, 2003 youth development professionals from Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Romania met in Skopje, Macedonia to participate in a regional GTZ-sponsored initiative to identify regional effective youth employment programs and policies. The workshop was organized by German Education & Training (GET, <http://projects.takingitglobal.org/employget>).

YES Coordinator, Ms. Rodica Pop says the three-day workshop enabled many young people to learn about the YES Campaign for the first time, and to become aware of youth programs from throughout the region.

- Celebrating International Youth Day, 2003

In 2003 youth employment was the theme of the United Nations' International Youth Day. To celebrate, YES Romania held a day-long workshop on life skills and inter-cultural communication with 40 adolescent participants.

- Small Business Seminars for Rural Youth

In July, 2003 a series of three seminars were held in rural towns in Romania. The seminars offered practical skills in how to set up a small business and how to make it work. More than fifty young people attended each seminar.

- Youth Employment Centers Launched

In November, 2002 the Children for Peace Foundation secured a mid-sized grant from the European Union to design and launch two Youth Employment Centers in North West Romania from January 1 2003. YES Network Coordinator, Ms. Rodica Pop manages the Centers.

- Career Counseling Service for Young Women

In October 2002, YES Romania launched a career counseling course called "Supporting Young People in Choosing a Career". It provided support measures for a group of twelve young unemployed women who recently graduated from university. The course finished on the 1st of November 2002. Within one week of finishing the course, five of the students in the program found employment. The second course started on the 15th of November, 2002 and the third group started the course January 10, 2003.

- Peer Counseling Program

In May, 2002 the "Be Yourself!" peer counseling program began operating in Romania. This ongoing training program offers the following services to aspiring counselors:

1. Facilitated peer mentoring training
2. A framework to promote values of ethical business practices and economic citizenship for young entrepreneurs
3. Skills to prepare teenagers for choosing a career in a changing labor market

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About YES Rwanda

Since forming in August, 2002 YES Rwanda has worked to introduce and maintain dialogue between youth and other stakeholders. This has involved continuous lobbying, training workshops and national events to bring stakeholders together. The goal of a genuine multi-stakeholder partnership to address youth employment continues to motivate the members of YES Rwanda.

Rwanda YES Network is comprised of members of civil society organizations, government, UN development agency, trade union, youth organizations and private sector institutions. The Network has set up a country Stakeholders' Consultative Board (SCB) which a ten member multi-sector body to steer the Youth Employment initiative. Rwanda's main trade union is the Network's lead agency while the Ministry of Labor is the key government partner in promoting the Youth Employment campaign.

Highlights of the activities of the YES Rwanda Network are detailed below:

Youth Information Center

With funding from the Artemisia Foundation, a new IT training and information center is scheduled to open in Kigali in late 2003. The center will offer the following public services to youth:

- Human rights resources
- Public events, debates and other opportunities for civic participation
- Basic computer training to disadvantaged youth and internet access,
- Job search resources
- A peer mentoring program.

For more information about this project contact Mr. Frank Mukama, mukfrank@hotmail.com

Youth Employment Leading to Peace and Prosperity

In October, 2003 YES Rwanda published a paper making a sustained argument for the development of a Youth Oriented Development Strategy (YODS). This paper can be read in full on the YES Rwanda website.

Youth employment therefore should be viewed as a practical step aimed at making the youth and young generations human and humane, a strategy and a transitional arrangement for creation of quality population and democratic societies.

Economically empowered youth with meaningful livelihoods can hardly be engaged in war, bought to cause havoc, tolerate corrupt leadership, or influenced in taking political decisions. It is imagined that people with economic independence and leading a decent life often manifest independence of thought and some degree of rationality. Hence one way of fostering transformation of poor, undemocratic societies is to adopt a Youth Oriented Development Strategy (YODS). <http://projects.yesweb.org/YES-Rwanda>

YES Country Network Goals

"To reduce the number of young people living in abject poverty by at least 75% by 2012."

Specific goals include:

1. To promote entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity in all higher institutions of learning in Rwanda.
2. Rwanda to be included among ten countries of the UN's Youth Employment program administered by ILO, thereby committing the government apparatus to give substantial attention to youth employment.
3. To develop local content that would allow youth of various education levels gain access to valuable information that would enable them realize their economic dreams.
4. To inform each sector of the cost / benefit analysis of the youth employment crisis.
5. To engage all national sectors in a coordinated campaign to meet the challenge of youth employment.

YES Serbia-Montenegro (SAM)

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About YES Serbia-Montenegro

Individuals and organizations from the former Yugoslavia began participating in the YES Campaign in 2002. Relationships between the YES Campaign and local groups in Serbia-Montenegro have evolved into a significantly more coordinated set of activities in 2003.

Young leaders in Serbia-Montenegro have recognized the strategic value of a coordinated youth employment campaign. From the details below it is the belief of the YES Campaign and its partners in Serbia-Montenegro that a firm foundation has been laid for an effective campaign to benefit youth.

Highlights of YES Serbia- Montenegro Activities in 2003

- Grant Approved to Build a National Network

In May, 2003 YES Serbia and Montenegro received a grant from the Balkan Children and Youth Foundation (BCYF). The BCYF grant empowers the YES Network Coordinator, Goran Mitrovic to design a process leading to the establishment of a functional youth employment network of organizations and institutions in Serbia and Montenegro.

The Network's goal is be an advocate for greater involvement of youth in the creation of national youth employment policies and push for creation of new jobs for youth. The first step in this process was to design effective communications tools as a resource for youth.

Download a copy of the Network's excellent first magazine publication at the YES S-A-M website:
<http://www.yes.org.yu/yesnews/index.html>

- National Consultation held in Belgrade

In July, 2003 the first national YES Serbia and Montenegro consultations were organized in Belgrade. This meeting was attended by representatives of 18 non-profit organizations from Serbia and Montenegro and two Serbian governmental institutions (the Ministry of Labor and the Youth section of the Ministry for Education and Sport).

The major goal of this initial consultation was to build consensus and support for the need for a coordinated national campaign for youth employment.

- Coordinating Body of YES Network Meets

In August, 2003 the first meeting of the coordinating body of the YES Serbia and Montenegro network was held. Members of 8 organizations, all members of the fledgling YES network, were present at this operational meeting. During the meeting, the future directions of YES S-A-M network were "carefully dealt with", according to Coordinator Goran Mitrovic.

Also, members of the coordinating body were allocated specific responsibilities with the aim of developing the Network's functionality and sustainability. On this occasion, a delegation was formed to represent the Network during 4th Regional "Youth Business Forum" in Bulgaria, mentioned in the story above.

- Regional Youth Business Forum, Bulgaria

In September, 2003 Goran Mitrovic met with YES Bulgaria Coordinator, Teodor Daskalov to discuss regional cooperation. The meeting took place during the 4th Regional "Youth Business Forum" held in Gabrovo, Bulgaria. The two leaders discussed possibilities for regional exchange of know-how between these two networks, and have agreed that in the future, the two networks will develop tools for joint projects and actions on the regional level.

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About YES Sierra Leone

In June, 2002 the launching of the YES Sierra Leone Network brought together 66 participants from more than 20 non-government and governmental organizations. Prominent participants included Madam Sylvia Fletcher from the United Nations Development Program.

Since that time the organizations involved have re-assessed their work in terms of the impact they are having on youth livelihoods. In many cases this has led to organizations offering new services to youth, or redesigning existing services to reflect increased emphasis on the employment needs of youth. In a number of important cases this has involved incorporating the goals of the YES Campaign into the national operations of new YES members.

Highlights of Activities

- Independent Youth Forum Works for Youth Livelihoods Campaign

In November and December, 2002 the Independent Youth Forum (IYF) decided to involve the YES Network in its current national sensitization program. In a bid to create awareness about the YES Campaign and involve more youth organizations in the campaign, forty minutes were allocated in each district workshop in order for the YES Country Network to give a background on the Alexandria Summit, the Summit itself, its outcomes, and the "Decade Campaign of Action" that was launched. This opportunity was also used to invite members of youth organizations and their organizations to join the Global Alliance for Youth Employment.

- Peace Building & Human Rights Workshop, February 2003

In February, 2003 twenty representatives from the town of Molama benefited from a three-day human rights and peace-building workshop organized by the Independent Youth Forum and YES Sierra Leone. The issue and need for youth employment was thoroughly discussed by both the participants and the presenter, James Hallowell, YES Sierra Leone Coordinator.

- Field Visits to Community Livelihood Projects, Molama Town

On February 9, 2003 members of the YES Network visited local employment initiatives including the Molama Youth Agricultural Project, the various skills units of the Sierra Leone Youth Development Association, AC's tailoring Center, and the Songu-Fortune Youth Protein Project. All the projects that were visited have similar aspects in common. They have the intention to engage themselves in private employment programs, but lack some forms of support to bolster their initiatives. The respective heads of each program appealed increased assistance from donors.

- Leveraging Resources for National Network Building

October 19, 2002: YES Sierra Leone was generously offered a spacious room by the Independent Youth Forum to be used as office space for the network.

- Media Efforts to Promote the YES Campaign

In September and October, 2002 Mr. James Hallowell and Mr. Sylvanus Murray were both interviewed by numerous national media outlets concerning their participation in the Alexandria Summit in Egypt.

YES Puntland (Somalia)

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About YES Puntland (Somalia)

Three Somali youth leaders participated in the launch of the YES Campaign in Alexandria, Egypt in September 2002. Since then there has been a dramatic upsurge in the range and scale of youth-led activities in the Puntland region of Somalia. A YES Puntland Network was launched in late 2002 with support and coordination from local government offices, NGOs and development agencies.

While establishing a national network in Somalia faces many obstacles efforts have been made to widen the communications, joint activities and civic relations between youth groups across the fractious internal borders of Somalia. Read on below to learn of some of the activities of the YES Puntland Network. Steady work continues in efforts to engage youth organizations in the strategies of international agencies such as UNICEF and UNDP, particularly in regard to the awareness of the Millennium Development Goals in Somalia.

Highlights of Activities

- Youth Policy Coordination Session, December 6-7, 2003. The Puntland Ministry of Youth, Sports and Gender Affairs, in partnership with UNICEF, YES Somalia and other local organizations, hosted a community consultation to harmonize youth policies in the region of Puntland. YES Somalia played a lead role in organizing youth participation in this session.
- International Youth Day Celebrations 2003. YES Somalia organized youth groups, other stakeholders (Government, Community Service Organizations and INGOs) to stage and commemorate the International Youth Day 2003, the theme of which is youth employment in 2003. During this event youth expressed their feelings and common concerns. Common problems raised among others were:
a. Education and Skills Advancement. b. HIV/AIDS c. Poverty d. Unemployment e. Conflict. These issues were presented equally to the government and international humanitarian and development organizations (UNICEF, UNDP) to assist Somali youth overcome their problems.
- YES Somalia and Elman Joint Peace Appeal. On 28th August 2003, YES Somalia organized an event to welcome Elman Peace & Sports Club. The Elman Club was visiting Puntland to hold peace football matches with other Puntland football teams under the slogan of "Sport for Peace". Representatives from the government, CSOs, NGOs, youth groups, INGOs, local media and the private sector all participated actively in the event. A joint peace appeal on supporting the youth population in Somalia was issued. At the end of the event, the Elman Club and YES Somalia signed a memorandum of cooperation and partnership.
- In Bossaso, March 16-18, 2003, a national consultation drew 62 participants from all regions of Somalia. The event demonstrates YES Somalia's convening power and logistical talents in its efforts to strengthen civil dialogue in a highly divided country. Officials from Puntland's government, UN agencies and a large number of local and international NGOs attended the A full report is available at the Somalia web page quoted above.
- Updated Action Plan Published. After collating input from the participating organizations in the March consultation (story immediately above), YES Puntland published an updated Action Plan for Youth Employment, the full text of which can be found on the YES Somalia website.
- YES Somalia-Puntland achieved legal recognition from the regional authorities in February, 2003.
- YES Somalia approached the Puntland Minister of Youth & Sports, who agreed to support the YES Network. The Minister agreed to provide support in terms of advocacy efforts in the government to put youth empowerment in the regional agenda.
- In December, 2002 a local NGO, We Are Women Activists (WAWA), agreed to act as the institutional partner for YES-Somalia. WAWA is a network of 23 women NGOs committed to promoting peace and reconciliation and women's human rights in the Puntland region.

YES South Africa

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About YES South Africa

The YES Country Network in South Africa is housed at the Youth Development Network in Johannesburg. The first YES National Consultation in South Africa was held in April 2001, and the YDN Director, Clayton Peters came to Boston in September 2001 for the "Youth Vision Workshop" at the YES Secretariat. The South Africa delegation to the Alexandria Summit was a very strong team of 25.

Since then, YDN has embarked on an ambitious youth employment initiative. This initiative is known as the Regional Support Plan (RSP), incorporating the participation of Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries. The RSP is funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of the Netherlands, and includes the participation of YES Networks in the region.

YDN has developed a wide range of research and content relating to all aspects pertaining to youth livelihoods in Southern Africa. Of particular note are a series of fourteen Country Reports. Here is the introduction to the Angola Country Report:

In 1985 Angolan youth formed 30% of the 5 million employed (ILO). A recent SADC statistic (2000) indicates that the unemployment rate in Angola stood at 31.1%. Youth are likely to be based in the informal and agricultural sectors, as 85% of the labour force is in this sector (ILO Genderstats). Additionally, during the civil war youth were an important source of labour in the lucrative illegal diamond trade.

The complete set of resources can be found at YDN's excellent website: <http://www.ydn.org.za/yes/index.htm>

Major Features of the Regional Support Plan

- Database on youth in Southern Africa: A database on youth statistics in Southern Africa will be produced. The statistics will include information on Southern African context, youth –specific economic indicators, education and skills, youth specific employment policies, key challenges, social and political integration.
- Regional consultation: A consultative meeting of YES Country Networks in the region and other specific youth employment actors, towards getting collective support of the Regional Support Plan.
- Knowledge development: A detailed and systematic study on existing, successful youth employment initiatives in the region, examining the possibility of replication within the region.
- Entrepreneurial Education in Secondary schools and vocational training centres: A pilot project on the introduction and implementation of entrepreneurial education in the school curriculum of secondary schools and vocational training centres in at least 3 Southern African countries together with the development of education policy recommendations.
- Mentorship: A pilot project enhancing youth businesses through mentoring relationships with private sector staff and young entrepreneurs.
- In August, 2003 YDN hosted a Regional Training Workshop on Youth Employment. Ten YES Networks from SADC countries participated in this strategic planning session, details of which can be found at the YDN website.
- Preparation and presentation of the regional model: Documentation and presentation on progress of YES campaign in Southern Africa. This will be presented at the YES 2004 in Mexico.

The outcomes of the Dutch-funded RSP will be presented at YES 2004 in Mexico. It is hoped the Southern African experience will serve as a regional model in the scaling up of the YES Campaign. A primary focus of the regional grant is to build the capacity of YES Networks in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) group of countries, comprised of fourteen southern African members.

YES Swaziland

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About YES Swaziland

YES Swaziland was launched at a national consultation in late August, 2002. The Minister of Labor was present at the meeting and shared in a discussion with the Network on the importance of Inter-Sectoral Partnership for Youth Development in Swaziland. More than 100 youth and other development professionals participated.

The University of Swaziland as well as youth councils from Nhlanguano and Manzini have been extremely supportive of YES Swaziland and are taking the lead in implementing specific recommendations in the YES Swaziland National Plan of Action for Youth Employment.

Highlights of Activities

- YES Regional Needs Analysis

In June, 2003 YES Swaziland contributed to the YES Regional Needs Analysis which is being carried out by the Youth Development Network of South Africa. The needs analysis concludes that what is most needed by youth in Swaziland is finance for establishing employment initiatives.

“From all those interviewed it was disclosed that existing systems are not ready to finance young people in implementing their employment creation endeavors”, according to Coordinator Sizwe Dlamini. “This shows the need for YES Swaziland’s campaign to improve access to credit for youth, and to provide a wider range of employment-related services.”

Later, in August 2003 Mr. Sizwe Dlamini represented Swazi youth at the Regional Training Workshop in Johannesburg. See the South Africa page for more information.

- Youth Technology Center Opens

A center equipped with 40 computers and Internet access opened in a rural Swaziland town in May, 2003. Swaziland Post and Telecommunications Corporation is sponsoring the project, designed by YES Swaziland.

The center provides ICT training and a critical communications access point to rural youth. It is projected to train 1,000 young people in its first year in basic skills as the foundation for further IT education. To learn more about this project, contact Dlamini Sizwe, YES Coordinator in Swaziland. Email. revrobza@yahoo.com

- Arts and Culture Emphasized in Swaziland / Zimbabwe YES Meeting

A fifty-nine strong delegation of Swazi youth visited Zimbabwe for three days of skills workshops, site visits and cultural exchange in early October, 2003. Organized by the respective YES Country Networks, the event marks a turning point in peer-to-peer exchange between the two countries.

The theme for the visit, according to Zimbabwe Coordinator Memezi Nyoni, was ‘culture as a youth employment tool’. A number of successful artists facilitated skills workshops, imparting their experience of making a living as an artist. Hosted by the Organization of Rural Associations for Progress (ORAP), participants from both networks enjoyed traditional dances and songs from the cultures of both countries.

“The point of departure for any young African striving to be economically self sustaining is a rootedness to one’s culture”, said Mrs. Sithembiso Nyoni, President of ORAP and a YES Campaign Committee member.

The cultural exchange provided an opportunity for ORAP to announce that it will be the lead institution supporting the YES Network in Zimbabwe. ORAP staff members also presented local initiatives in ICT and HIV / AIDS. To read the full report, including photographs, visit the YES Zimbabwe web page.

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About YES Tanzania

The YES Country Network Tanzania was formed in August 2001 at a meeting of 50 youth related NGOs in Dar es Salaam. The meeting was organized by the Tanzania Media and Youth Development Association (TAMEYODA), and chaired by the Hon. Gertrude Mongella, Secretary General of the Beijing Conference for Women in 1996. The result was the formation of a YES Country Network Co-ordination Committee.

The committee has since expanded the Network, which now includes representatives over 250 different NGOs including Government and Private Institutions, Religion Institutions, Educational and Vocational Institutions, Youth Groups, Private Sectors and other Diverse Stakeholders. The range of activities in Tanzania continues to be very extensive, some of which are highlighted below.

President of Tanzania Endorses "6Es"

His Excellency Benjamin William Mkapa, the President of the Republic of Tanzania, adopted the YES Campaign's framework of the 6Es in a March 27, 2003 speech to a Southern African Development Community (SADC) meeting of Labor Ministers.

"Creating employment opportunities for many, particularly the youth, is one of the keys to sustainable economic development", the President said. This speech represents a huge accomplishment for YES-Tanzania, and a ringing endorsement of the YES Campaign framework. Visit the YES website to read the full text of the President's speech. The 6Es are;

- Entrepreneurship
- Employability
- Employment Creation
- Equity
- Environmental Sustainability
- Empowerment

PHOTO OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH WEEK (THIS BOX BELOW IS A PLACEHOLDER ONLY)



On November 5, 2003 YES member TechnoServe and the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) launched the "Youth Entrepreneurship Initiative" in the southwestern town of Mbeya in December 2002. Mbeya region is the centre for YES - Tanzania in the Southern Highland Zone. After the teachers were trained, students participated in Tanzania's first "BizCamp" to develop their entrepreneurship skills

In October, 2003 Tanzania's youth celebrated National Youth Week in Lake Zone City, Mwanza. The President of the United Republic of Tanzania, H.E Benjamin William Mkapa spent six hours talking with youths and look at their activities. When addressing the public at Nyamagana stadium Hon. Mkapa emphasized about youth employment as a key factor for their development.

YES Country Networks Report

According to the YES Tanzania report, the President “urged stakeholders to invest in youths and strengthen youth projects. He warned youths not to involve themselves in crimes and to prevent themselves from contracting HIV/AIDS, but instead join forces and initiate development programs. He said the government empowers youths by providing basic education to all Tanzanians. He said his government would create economic projects especially for youths in order to strengthen the national economy.”

The Tanzania YES-country network used the event as an opportunity to improve relationship with stakeholders; new members were also registered. October 14, 2003 was a public holiday to honor the fourth year since the death of the father of nation, the late J.K Nyerere.

On August 12, 2003, in honor of International Youth Day, youth in Tanzania marched in a Peace Rally for Youth Employment, according to YES Coordinator Kaanaeli Kaal. "Youth carried posters through the streets carrying powerful messages about youth employment, and there were also a variety of public debates and sporting activities", she said.

PHOTO OF THE STREET MARCH (THIS BOX BELOW IS A PLACEHOLDER ONLY)

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About YES Togo

Fifty participants attended the YES National Consultation and Country Network launch in Lome, Togo in May 2002. Several government representatives attended the event including representative of the Minister of Employment, the Minister of Economy, Finance and Privatization, and the Minister of Health, Social Affairs, Women's Promotion and Child Protection. Other participants at the consultation represented NGOs, youth organizations, businesses and individuals interested in the work of the YES Country Network.

Since the launch of the YES Campaign, with the help of two young Togolese, Network members in Togo have continued their efforts to concentrate the attention of leaders on the critical issue of youth employment. With few resources, YES Togo maintains a communications network with hundreds of young people and with key officials. The Network is building a reputation as a trusted conduit of information for youth, and as a dialogue partner with institutions.

Highlights of Activities in Togo

On Saturday, 20th September 2003 YES Togo members met to discuss the question of officially registering YES Togo. It was decided to write a set of statutes and internal rules that a new organization would abide by. The Steering Committee is currently working on this proposal and will submit it to the next General Assembly of the YES Network, scheduled for late 2003.

On August 27, 2003 the YES Coordinator, Mr Kossi Ogoubi wrote this letter to YES Togo members.

"Dear Leaders, 1. Good news!! Following the fax the YES Head Office sent to UNDP in Togo on our behalf, a three member delegation of YES TOGO succeeded in meeting the representative of Mr Sarrassoro, the UNDP Representative Resident in Togo on last Monday 25th August.

We presented the YES Project, the objective behind it, YES TOGO and its objectives in Togo, and ways of collaboration. He was very happy with the initiative and said despite the vacuum and weakness shown by the government in tackling young people's needs, young people need to stand up!! He said they will be happy to provide technical advice to us and will be soon creating an online data base of all serious civil society organizations in Togo. We gave him copy of our action plan as well as the strategic action framework chart of YES (the 6 E's).

2. I have advanced discussions with the Agence Internationale de la Francophonie (AIF) project called "Programme de Mobilité Jeunes" that consists of facilitating mobility of francophonie youth in the francophone sphere. The project will consist of gathering youth with entrepreneurship skills from Madagascar, Senegal, Benin, Togo and Canada. I sent applications for two members of YES TOGO.

3. One member of YES TOGO leaves Togo today Wednesday to attend the YES Asia Regional session scheduled in Teheran, Iran.

4. Four members of YES TOGO will attend an international colloquy of African youth scheduled in October 2003 in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. The meeting will be around entrepreneurship. We are about to send applications. Best regards, OGOUBI Kossi, National Coordinator YES TOGO. Lomé, Togo (West Africa).

- National Action Plan Published

In June 2003 YES Togo published its National Action Plan for youth employment in Togo. The Plan elaborates the extent of the employment challenge in Togo and makes a series of recommendations. Uppermost among these are proposals for education-training, community development, youth entrepreneurship, and the use of ICTs. Read the entire Action Plan at the Togo website.

- Junior Achievement Launches in Togo

In May, 2003 YES –TOGO members participated in the official launch of the annual training program of Junior Achievement-TOGO, the Togo branch of Junior Achievement International based in the U.S.A. This program offers business, management and entrepreneurship opportunities to youth.

YES Zimbabwe

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About YES Zimbabwe

Leading up to the National Consultation on Youth Employment in June, 2002 YES Network members in Zimbabwe hosted a series of workshops in schools to gain youth perspectives on issues related to youth employment. Since then, the YES Network has expanded its activities throughout the country. As a result of sustained community activity and a successful media campaign, the Network has enrolled several government Ministries as well as businesses, NGOs, schools, individuals and youth organizations.

Highlights of YES Zimbabwe Activities in 2003

- Arts and Culture Emphasized in Swaziland / Zimbabwe YES Meeting

In October, 2003 a fifty-nine strong delegation of Swazi youth visited Zimbabwe for three days of skills workshops, site visits and cultural exchange. Organized by the respective YES Country Networks, the event marks a turning point in peer-to-peer exchange between the two countries.

The theme for the visit, according to Zimbabwe Coordinator Memezi Nyoni, was “culture as a youth employment tool”. A number of successful artists facilitated skills workshops, imparting their experience of making a living as an artist. Hosted by the Organization of Rural Associations for Progress (ORAP), participants from both networks enjoyed traditional dances and songs from the cultures of both countries.

“The point of departure for any young African striving to be economically self sustaining is a rootedness to one’s culture”, said Mrs. Sithembiso Nyoni, President of ORAP and a YES Campaign Committee member.

The cultural exchange provided an opportunity for ORAP to announce that it will be the lead institution supporting the YES Network in Zimbabwe. ORAP staff members also presented local initiatives in ICT and HIV / AIDS. To read the full report, including photographs, visit the YES Zimbabwe web page.

- Small Business Training Program

In September, 2003 the YES Network began promoting the “Enhance Your Business” training program. The program, offered by the Zimbabwe Institute of Management in Bulawayo, is an opportunity for young men and women to learn entrepreneurship and small business management skills. Several YES Network members are participating in the ILO-funded program.

- Rural Development Training Workshops

In March, 2003 the YES Zim team held a series of community workshops in rural communities. The workshops, held in collaboration with the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises, enabled young people to speak about the challenges they face to become economically active. The workshops focused on viable small business practices in rural settings and the market niches which show potential for investment. Several small enterprises have been initiated as a result of these training sessions, including a tele-center in the town of Lupane.