LIFE PROJECT
4 YOUTH

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YOUTH FACING
EXTREME EXCLUSION

Global overview
November 2010

INTERNATIONAL
YEAR OF
YOUTH
OUR YEAR OUR VOICE

Avant-propos

Un simple sac de plastique à la main il a réussi à se glisser dans le car qui descend de la montagne au petit jour. Il fuit la mine ou il travaille depuis toujours, autant qu'il se souvienne. Depuis quelques temps il crache souvent. La douleur dans la gorge il pense que c'est la faim. Domenico ne parvient pas à me sourire. Debout dans l'allée centrale il s'endort. Domenico n'a pas encore 15 ans.

Bamba n'a jamais connu de père, sa mère est morte l'année passée, on a dit que c'était le sida. Bamba est convoitée par les hommes. Son frère frappe dur ceux qui s'intéressent à elle. La passion de Bamba c'est la cuisine. Elle ne se souvient pas très bien de l'école. De la petite cabane au bord du lac qui tient lieu de restaurant, on entend juste les casseroles remuer. Ils ont passe un pacte. Bamba travaille. Son grand frère la protège. Pour pleurer Bamba se cache. Mais Bamba est déjà si belle …

Nadya a de nombreux frères et sœurs. Elle réfléchit sérieusement avant de me dire combien. Depuis que sa mère est partie, on n'a plus eu de nouvelles. Son père est souvent au port ou il va pour parier. Quand il rentre à la nuit c'est souvent pour frapper. Nadya prend les coups à la place des plus jeunes. Cela fait longtemps qu'elle ne sent plus rien. Dans la nuit, Nadya rêve que son bras droit est toujours là et brode, brode avec du fils doré, avant de sombrer.

Jeff rit beaucoup, surtout quand je lui demande de me parler de son passé. Jeff aime trop boire et trouve toujours la façon de tout oublier sauf … la bouteille. Mais Jeff n'a peur de rien, déjà plusieurs fois il a vu la mort. Petit, la mort lui a rendu visite, il s'est défendu, l'a poursuivie par la fenêtre, au troisième niveau. Trouvé à moitié mort, à quelques centaines de mètres, il a été sauvé de justesse. Le plus dur, après, c'est quand Jeff évoque la chaine qui est restée longtemps fixée à sa cheville pour éviter qu'il ne s'échappe. Jeff promet qu'il saura lire pour ses 20 ans. Pour ca il travaille chaque jour 15 heures à collecter du plastique … sauf quand la bouteille le lui interdit.

Simples petites histoires au hasard des rencontres. Mais derrière l'histoire si particulière de chacun –passé qu'on ne peut qu'écouter- il y a la misère que partagent aujourd'hui plus de 500 millions de jeunes dans le monde. Nous avons voulu pour la deuxième année de Life Project 4 Youth Foundation comprendre l'ampleur d'un phénomène mondial dramatique : <u>l'exclusion d'un nombre chaque jour grandissant de Jeunes dans le monde.</u>

Avec chacune de ces histoires et chacun de ces jeunes nous avons compris qu'entreprendre pouvait rapidement devenir l'acteur principal de tous leurs rêves. Nous avons cherché à savoir quelles étaient les stratégies gagnantes pour l'insertion des Jeunes et vérifié que l'entrepreneuriat pouvait être un moyen extrêmement dynamique pour y parvenir. Les premiers résultats des projets pilote de Life Project 4 Youth Foundation renforcent cette idée.

Ensemble mobilisons nos efforts pour trouver les moyens de rendre au monde des Jeunes plein d'avenir.

Jean-Marc & Laure Delaporte
1er novembre 2010

Photo de couverture : Cebu City . July, 19th 2010, 12am. Behind the Cathedral.

FORWARD

As dawn breaks he makes it into the bus which will take him away from the mountain and into the city, his only possessions in a plastic bag. He is leaving the mine where he has worked for as long as he can remember. He recently started spitting. He thinks that the pain in his throat is caused by hunger. Domenico cannot manage to give me a smile. Standing in the aisle he falls asleep. Domenico is not yet 15.

Bamba has never known her father, and her mother died last year, from AIDS it is thought. Men are drawn to Bamba. Her brother beats those who show too much interest. What Bamba loves is cooking. School hasn't left much of a mark. From the little lakeside shack which serves as a restaurant comes the sound of pots and pans. They've come to an agreement: Bamba works and her big brother protects her. Bamba hides if she feels like crying. But she's already so beautiful.

Nadya has many brothers and sisters. She has to think hard before she can tell me just how many. They've heard nothing from her mother since she left. Her father spends much of his time down at the harbor, betting. When he returns at night it's often to beat them. Nadya bears the blows to protect the younger one – she no longer feels the pain. At night Nadya dreams that she still has her right arm, and that she is sewing, sewing with a golden thread, until sleep comes.

Jeff laughs a lot, especially when I ask him about his past. Jeff likes his drink, and always finds a way to forget everything ... except the bottle. But Jeff has no fear. He's already faced death more than once. When he was little, Death came to see him, and he chased him off, through the window of the third floor. Jeff was discovered, half dead, having plunged some hundred meters, and was only just saved. The hardest thing afterwards is when Jeff talks about the chain attached to his ankle, to stop him from escaping. Jeff has sworn that he will learn to read by the time he's 18. To achieve this goal he works 15 hours a day collecting plastic ... except when the bottle beckons.

A few simple stories shared during chance encounters. But behind each personal experience lies the misery shared by over 500 million young people throughout the world today. To mark the second year of Life Project 4 Youth Foundation we wanted to try and understand the scale of this dramatic worldwide phenomenon: <u>the exclusion of an ever increasing number of young people in the world.</u>

As we met these young people and listened to their stories we tried to identify the winning strategies which might lead to their social and professional reinsertion. We realized that entrepreneurship could be the catalyst to fulfilling their dreams; if only they could start their own small business they might begin to achieve their goals. These findings were confirmed by the early results of Life Project 4 Youth's pilot project.

Together let us find the way to help these promising young people realize their potential in the world.

Jean-Marc and Laure Delaporte
1st November 2010

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Introduction

To live a life with a minimal standard of living, free from poverty and hunger, and to receive assistance when one is no longer able to live a life in compliance with human worth and dignity is a fundamental human right. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) states in the article 25.1 that: "*Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.*"[1]

Despite this statement, among the 1.2 billion young people aged between 15 and 24 in the world today, nearly 515 million are living in poverty (on less than 2 dollars a day), more than 200 million in extreme poverty (less than 1 dollar a day), 130 million are illiterate, around 74 million are unemployed and 10 million are living with HIV/AIDS, according the latest estimates (2005). This situation is not only morally and ethically unacceptable, it is also very worrying, especially since the next generation of young people will be half as many again, reaching 1.8 billion, with nearly 90% of them living in developing countries. Moreover, the food and energy price hikes in 2007-2008, the latest economic and financial crisis and the climate change crisis have very concerning consequences on global poverty. For many countries, these issues seriously endanger the chances of meeting the Millennium Development Goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger by 2015. The problem therefore needs to be urgently addressed!

With this challenge, young people appear as crucial, and there are many good reasons why young people should be specifically targeted in poverty reduction interventions. First, they represent a large part of the population and consequently of poor people (reaching sometimes 40% of the population in less developed countries). But above all, given the right conditions, they have the potential to become strong drivers for change and development, capable of establishing a new path for the future. For today's young people are tomorrow's parents. Targeting youth in poverty alleviation strategies can be the way to break the vicious cycle of poverty transmission. Furthermore, while the transition period between childhood and adulthood is a period when young people are vulnerable, it is also a time when they are very receptive to interventions aimed at long term positive change. It is thus not surprising that young people are increasingly becoming the focus of international attention.

This report aims to draw attention to the critical situation faced by many young people today, to examine the problems they encounter and to ask questions about possible solutions. We will try to estimate the scope of poverty and exclusion among young people and its related issues (unemployment, education, HIV, drug, violence, conflicts, etc.), and to present some recommendations, strategies and existing programs. This work is mainly a compilation of the latest data and information on the subject and does not claim to be exhaustive or totally up to date. Most are from the United Nations system or international organizations such as the International Labor Organization.

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[1] http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/housing/standards.htm

Chapter 1:
YOUTH FACING EXTREME EXCLUSION: AN ALARMING SITUATION

Who do we mean by youth? What is poverty and exclusion and how can poverty be measured? What are the different dimensions to poverty? The first part of this chapter will try to answer these questions: defining the terms and creating a better understanding of these concepts.

The chapter will then present the main current global trends related to youth exclusion and highlight the latest estimated figures about youth poverty.

The importance of targeting youth will also be discussed at the end of this chapter.

I.   DEFINITIONS

1) Who do we mean by youth?

A widely accepted statistical convention is the definition of "youth" by the United Nations:

> "The United Nations, for statistical purposes, defines 'youth', as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years, without prejudice to other definitions by Member States. This definition was made during preparations for the International Youth Year (1985), and endorsed by the General Assembly (see A/36/215 and resolution 36/28, 1981). All United Nations statistics on youth are based on this definition, as illustrated by the annual yearbooks of statistics published by the United Nations system on demography, education, employment and health.

> By that definition, therefore, children are those persons under the age of 14. It is, however, worth noting that Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines 'children' as persons up to the age of 18. This was intentional, as it was hoped that the Convention would provide protection and rights to as large an age-group as possible and because there was no similar United Nations Convention on the Rights of Youth.

> Many countries also draw a line on youth at the age at which a person is given equal treatment under the law – often referred to as the "age of majority'. This age is often 18 in many countries, and once a person passes this age, they are considered to be an adult. However, the operational definition and nuances of the term 'youth' often vary from country to country, depending on the specific socio-cultural, institutional, economic and political factors. Within the category of "youth", it is also important to distinguish between teenagers (13-19) and young adults (20-24), since the sociological, psychological and health problems they face may differ."[2]

However, Mclean and Fraser's 2009 study, *Youth exclusion, violence, conflict and fragile states,* emphasizes the complexity of the concept of youth beyond the numerical definition:

> "The United Nations General Assembly has defined youth as the age between 15 and 24. However, there is no single agreed definition of whom and what constitutes youth and definitions vary between countries and organisations. For example, the lowest age range for youth is 12 in Jordan and the upper age range is 35 in a number of African countries including Sierra Leone and Rwanda.

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[2] United Nations website, http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/qanda.htm

The World Health Organisation (WHO) and UNICEF use the term adolescent for those aged 10-19, youth for those 15-24, and young people for those 10-24. There is also a degree of overlap between international definitions of youth and children, with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) defining a child as everyone under the age of 18 unless under the law applicable to the child, maturity is attained earlier.

In practice, youth is better understood as a transitional stage in life between childhood and adulthood, rather than as a rigid construct based on age. This new life stage can be characterized as a period of semi-autonomy, when young people experiment with adult roles but do not fully commit to them (World Bank, 2007). There is a growing literature on the transition to adulthood and what it means to become an adult in different cultural contexts. […]This transition to adulthood can be prolonged or cut short by several factors.

Curtain (2001) suggests that this period of transition involves a complex interplay of personal, institutional and macroeconomic changes that most young people have to negotiate and has identified at least four distinct aspects: (1) leaving the parental home and setting up new living arrangements; (2) finishing full-time education; (3) forming close stable personal relationships, often resulting in marriage and children; and (4) settling into a more or less stable source of livelihood.

It is critical to recognize that "youth" is not a homogenous construct, but encapsulates several different experiences and diversities, for example according to gender, class, disability, ethnicity, education and provenance (e.g. region, rural/urban)."[3]

2) Defining poverty, exclusion and vulnerability

The World Youth Report 2005 underlines the challenge in defining poverty and questions the way in which it is measured:

"It is not possible to determine the extent of poverty among young people until a consensus is reached on how poverty should be measured. Such an exercise is fraught with difficulties. The first challenge is defining the concept of poverty itself. Is it merely a lack of income, or does it also reflect deficiencies in other dimensions of human survival and well-being such as access to adequate sanitation, health care and educational opportunities? If poverty is defined more broadly, what measures are appropriate to ensure access to needed services? In relation to the poverty measures used, should the reference point be some absolute level, or is poverty a relative concept that needs to be defined based on the standard of living of the society in which the poor live?"[4]

a. Poverty: a multidimensional concept

The Report on the World Social Situation 2010, *Rethinking poverty*, focuses on the analysis of poverty and discusses its complexity and ways in which it can be measured:

"Poverty is not simply a lack of adequate income. It is a multidimensional phenomenon that extends beyond the economic arena to encompass factors such as the inability to participate in social and political life (Sen, 1979; 1985; 1987).

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[3] MCLEAN HILKER, L. and FRASER, E. (2009), Youth exclusion, violence, conflict and fragile states, Report prepared for DFID‟s Equity and Rights Team, Social Development Direct, p 9
[4] UNITED NATIONS (2005), World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015, p 23

In short, poverty is the deprivation of one's ability to live as a free and dignified human being with the full potential to achieve one's desired goals in life. The Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development (United Nations, 2006, resolution 1) characterized poverty as follows:

Poverty has various manifestations, including lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure sustainable livelihoods; hunger and malnutrition; ill health; limited or lack of access to education and other basic services; increased morbidity and mortality from illness; homelessness and inadequate housing; unsafe environments; and social discrimination and exclusion. It is also characterized by a lack of participation in decision making and in civil, social and cultural life.

While this characterization is very broad and seeks to capture various dimensions of poverty, it manages to encompass in a balanced manner such aspects as restrictions in opportunities, vulnerability to shocks and social exclusion.

These three aspects combined contribute to a truly multidimensional perspective on poverty. They are not, however, dissociated from issues of growth and income.

Indeed, the scatter plot involving several developing countries […] demonstrates that lower levels of poverty are associated with high per capita incomes.

From the multidimensional perspective, what matters is a focus on the opportunities—such as a set of endowments, access to markets, etc.—that are available to people. If an individual does not possess sufficient endowments or capabilities, such as a basic education, or does not have the opportunity to acquire them, he or she will have a limited ability to escape poverty."[5]

Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen's view of poverty

"This broader view of poverty has evolved largely owing to the work of Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen, who contends that poverty is best understood as various forms of "unfreedom" that prevent people from realizing and expanding their capabilities. From this perspective, civil and political liberties and economic and social rights are viewed as primary goals of development and the principal means of progress (International Labour Organization, 2003)."

Source: UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015, p 24*

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b. *Measuring poverty*

According the Report on the World Social Situation 2010 "measuring poverty accurately is important within the context of gauging the scale of the poverty challenge, formulating policies and assessing their effectiveness […] but is never simply a counting and collating exercise".[6]

- **In developed countries**

  "In most developed countries, there has emerged a shift in focus from absolute to relative poverty, stemming from the realization that the perception and experience of poverty have a social

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[5] UNITED NATIONS (2009), Report on the World Social Situation 2010: Rethinking Poverty, pp. 8-9
[6] UNITED NATIONS (2009), Report on the World Social Situation 2010: Rethinking Poverty, p 45-46

dimension. Although absolute poverty may all but disappear as countries become richer, the subjective perception of poverty and relative deprivation will not. As a result, led by the European Union (EU), most rich countries (with the notable exception of the United States of America), have shifted to an approach entailing relative rather than absolute poverty lines. Those countries treat poverty as a proportion, say, 50 or 60 per cent, of the median per capita income for any year. This relative measure brings the important dimension of inequality into the definition.

[…] More recently, the perspective in developed countries has widened further through the application of the concept of social exclusion. A hallmark of this approach is its emphasis on the relational dimension of deprivation"[7].

- **In developing countries**

"In contrast, in developing countries, the field is still dominated by a definition of absolute poverty in terms of income. […] What has finally emerged as the dominant instrument is the dollar-a-day money poverty line created by the World Bank for the purpose of measuring and monitoring poverty—but only in developing countries—within an internationally comparable framework."[8]

"The broader definition of absolute poverty based on the $2 a day measure (462 million) is said to reflect the national poverty lines more commonly used in lower-middle-income countries."[9]

The poverty line

The poverty threshold, or poverty line, is the minimum level of income deemed necessary to achieve an adequate standard of living in a given country. In 2008, the World Bank came out with a revised figure of $1.25 at 2005 purchasing-power parity (PPP)

Source: *http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poverty_threshold*

However, the World Youth Report 2005 draws to our attention various criticisms that have been aimed at the use of such poverty lines:

"The use of poverty lines (such as the benchmark of US$ 1 a day) has been criticized in academic literature and policy discourse. One critique is that the poverty lines do not account for purchasing power differences between countries (Sala-i-Martin, 2002); a second is that the poverty lines are not based on the costing of the basic resource requirements; and a third relates to the uncertain baseline data on which the poverty estimates are based (Pogge and Reddy, 2003). Despite these observations, it may be argued that the current income poverty indicators do serve as an entry point for international comparisons of young people living in poverty."[10]

It also highlights the generally accepted notion that income is not the only measure of poverty and explains that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)[11] take this into account in their targets:

"The MDGs acknowledge the multidimensional nature of poverty and establish benchmarks not only for increasing income levels but also for improving access to food, basic education and literacy, educational opportunities for girls, quality health care, and adequate sanitation in the form of good

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[7] UNITED NATIONS (2009), Report on the World Social Situation 2010: Rethinking Poverty, p 45-46

[8] UNITED NATIONS (2009), Report on the World Social Situation 2010: Rethinking Poverty, p 45-46

[9] CURTAIN, R. (2002), Youth in Extreme Poverty: Dimensions and Country Responses, p 10

[10] UNITED NATIONS (2005), World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015, p 33

[11] See later an explanation about the MGDs (Part IV. 2) and Annex II

drinking water. The Millennium Declaration and the MDGs reflect the international consensus on the importance of poverty eradication as a major development objective.*"[12]*

c. Defining exclusion and vulnerability

- **Exclusion**

In their 2009 study, *Youth exclusion, violence, conflict and fragile states* Mclean and Fraser define exclusion as follows:

"Exclusion describes —a process by which certain groups are systematically disadvantaged because they are discriminated against on the basis of their ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, caste, descent, gender, age, disability, HIV status, migrant status or where they live‖ (DFID, 2005: 3). Exclusion can take place in a number of arenas, from public institutions, such as the legal system or education and health services, as well as social institutions like the household. Exclusion is multidimensional and includes different types of disadvantage which interrelate and compound each other, for example unemployment, lack of voice and loss of status/respect. The various dimensions of social exclusion vary from one society to another, as do the groups affected, because processes of exclusion are highly contextualized and depend upon local histories, social structures and categories. In Silver's (2007) comparative analysis of European and Middle Eastern youth, she emphasizes that analyses of social exclusion and youth requires a context-dependent definition of social belonging and what it means to be a fully participating adult. Although youth is not a dimension of exclusion per se, Silver highlights the importance of social exclusion as a framework for looking at the intersection of youth with other dimensions of disadvantage, particularly the ways in which young people are excluded from full participation in adult life."[13]

The multiple dimensions of exclusion

<u>Economic exclusion</u> e.g. unemployment, underemployment, lack of livelihood, ownership of assets
<u>Political exclusion</u> e.g. lack of political participation, voice and decision-making power
<u>Social exclusion</u> e.g. access to services (education, health, water, sanitation and housing)
<u>Cultural status</u> e.g. lack of recognition of group's cultural practices, discrimination, loss of status/respect, humiliation/honor, lack of identity

Sources: Stewart (2008); Kabeer (2006) *in MCLEAN HILKER, L. and FRASER, E. (2009), Youth exclusion, violence, conflict and fragile states, p. 10*

- **Vulnerability**

The concept of vulnerability is particularly well explained in the Report on the World Social Situation 2010:

"The concept of vulnerability captures the likelihood that people will fall into poverty owing to shocks to the economic system or personal mishaps. Vulnerability is thus a reflection of economic insecurity. Although poor people are usually among the most vulnerable, not all vulnerable people are poor, a distinction which facilitates differentiation among lower-income populations.

Many people not currently living in poverty face a high risk of becoming poor if faced with a change in situation such as job loss or the major illness of a family member. Such individuals, while not poor

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[12] UNITED NATIONS (2005), World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015, p 23

[13] MCLEAN HILKER, L. and FRASER, E. (2009), Youth exclusion, violence, conflict and fragile states, Report prepared for DFID‟s Equity and Rights Team, Social Development Direct, p 9

per se, are highly vulnerable to falling into poverty. In addition, people already living in poverty are vulnerable to being pushed into deeper poverty when faced with mishaps.

Estimates show that a large number of people on the edge of poverty, especially those just above the official poverty line, are economically insecure.

If the World Bank's poverty line of $2 per day is used, instead of its line of $1 per day, poverty rates rise dramatically in many developing countries, reflecting the extent of vulnerability of their population to small shifts in their opportunity set.

Because commonly used poverty measures are generally fixed in time, they tend to miss this dynamic aspect of poverty. Unlike poverty, this is assessed after the fact, vulnerability "focuses on assessing the extent of the threat of poverty or low well-being, measured ex ante, before the veil of uncertainty has been lifted" (Dercon, 2005, p. 486)."[14]

3) Different dimensions of poverty as a means to understanding youth poverty

a. *Static and dynamic views of poverty*

Poverty can be seen as either a static or a dynamic phenomenon. In his study *Youth in Extreme Poverty: Dimensions and Country Responses* (2002), Curtain summarizes the definition of these two dimensions:

> "The static view of poverty highlights how people experience difficulties on a continuing or persistent basis. These difficulties are likely to be caused by entrenched structural or cultural factors such as regional location and lack of access to basic services related to education and health. The poor are often seen as victims, born into poverty or otherwise trapped due to where they live. This type of poverty is relatively easily measured through household surveys because the population is stable and all age groups are equally affected.

> However, a more dynamic definition of poverty can offer a different starting point for understanding and researching youth and poverty. This alternative approach acknowledges that poverty may be more situational than inherited, and more prone to short-term durations. The latter are likely to be associated with difficulties negotiating a particular stage in the lifecycle such initially developing a regular source of livelihood or coping with the birth of a child. A more dynamic view of poverty also emphasizes the active role the poor do play in seeking to get themselves out of poverty largely by their own efforts."

The dynamic view of poverty is especially relevant to understanding youth poverty, as explained in the World Youth Report 2005:

> "The dynamic view of poverty is often particularly relevant to young people; given the obstacles most of them face in endeavoring to achieve independent adult status. The dynamic view of poverty starts from the premise that the "determining condition for poor people is uncertainty" (Wood, 2003). Young people's capacities to cope with uncertainties are shaped by a range of supports, including the legal rights, entitlements and support systems provided by Governments and employers. They are also influenced by personal attributes and achievements such as educational attainment and physical health (Wood, 2003). The best policy responses in such circumstances involve the provision of various forms of social protection to help the poor cope with the unexpected."[15]

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[14] UNITED NATIONS (2009), Report on the World Social Situation 2010: Rethinking Poverty, p 9

[15] UNITED NATIONS (2005), World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015, p 24

b. *Chronic, life course and intergenerational poverty*

Chronic, life course and intergenerational poverty are three different notions that are commonly used to define and understand poverty. They can also be very useful for understanding the specificities of youth poverty. A thorough analysis of these notions would go beyond the scope of this report, but we will briefly look at how they can be relevant in gaining a better understanding of youth poverty. The World Youth Report 2005 defines the terms and the connection with youth poverty and reports the findings of Moore's work on the subject[16].

> "**Chronically poor people** experience deprivation over many years, often over their entire lives, and sometimes pass poverty on to their children. Many of the chronically poor die prematurely from health problems that are easily preventable. This group experiences deprivation at multiple levels; chronic poverty is typically characterized not only by low income and assets, but also by hunger and undernutrition, illiteracy, the lack of access to basic necessities such as safe drinking water and health services, and social isolation and exploitation. […] Higher concentrations of the chronically poor are often found in remote and low-potential rural settings, politically marginalized regions, and areas that are not well connected to markets, ports or urban centers—places that are often home to indigenous communities. There are also concentrations of chronically poor people in the slums of towns and cities, and millions are homeless."[17]

See Annex I, a table which specifies the key maintainers and drivers of chronic poverty and their implications for young people.

> "**Life-course poverty** denotes the ways in which a poor child or young person can grow into a poor or even poorer adult; **intergenerational poverty** refers to the transmittance of poverty through generations."[18]

In her work, Moore explains why it is relevant to observe youth poverty through the use of such concepts. Here are her conclusions and main findings:

> "The related concepts of chronic poverty, life-course poverty and intergenerational poverty contribute to a better understanding of youth poverty. First, an analysis of the multiple and interacting causes of chronic poverty can help identify the relative positions of different groups of poor people, facilitating policy prioritization in contexts of resource scarcity. Second, life-course events and experiences such as leaving school, starting work, getting married and having children can seriously affect a person's vulnerability to poverty. These and other critical events are likely to occur at particular stages of the life cycle; as previously mentioned, these stages are not necessarily defined by age and are highly contextual.

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[16] MOORE, K. (2005), Thinking about youth poverty through the lenses of chronic poverty, life-course poverty and intergenerational poverty, Working Paper, Institute for Development Policy and Management (IDPM), School of Environment

[17] UNITED NATIONS (2005), World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015, pp 43-45

[18] UNITED NATIONS (2004) Report of the Secretary-General about the *World Youth Report 2005*, General Assembly, Economic and Social Council, 6 December 2004, p 35

Third, it is important to adopt an intergenerational perspective because poverty experienced in youth is often linked to parental poverty (manifested in poor maternal nutrition or inadequate shelter, for example) and childhood deprivation (such as being forced to leave school early or engage in dangerous work); in addition, youth poverty—like poverty experienced in childhood or old age—can have implications across the life course of a young person and that of his or her household."[19]

II.   CURRENT GLOBAL TRENDS

The world in which we live is very youthful; almost half of the current global population is under the age of 25. There are around 1.2 billion young people in the world today (19% of the global population), and the next generation of young people (children currently below the age of 15) will be half as large again, reaching 1.8 billion. In absolute numbers there are more young people than ever before and 85 per cent of them live in developing countries.

Today the situation is alarming: a great many of these young people are excluded from growth and development. With 515 million young people living in poverty, 130 million illiterate, around 74 million unemployed, and 10 million living with HIV/AIDS, youth poverty or exclusion is a serious global problem.

1) A very youthful global population

With more than a half of the population under the age of 25, youth is a crucial matter in today's world. There are around 1.2 billion young people in the world today and the majority (almost 85%) live in developing countries, with more than 60 percent in Asia alone. By 2025, the number of young people living in developing countries will have grown to around 89%.

According to the results of the *2008 Revision* of the official world population estimates and projections prepared by the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the demographic structure poses major challenges:

> "Currently, the population of the less developed regions is still young, with children under age 15 accounting for 30 per cent of the population and young persons aged 15-24 accounting for a further 19 per cent. In fact, in the less developed regions the number of children (at 1.6 billion) and the number of young people (at 1.0 billion) are both at all time highs, posing a major challenge to their countries, which are faced with the necessity of providing education and employment to large cohorts of children and youth even as the current economic and financial crisis unfolds. The situation in the least developed countries is even more pressing because children under age 15 constitute 40 per cent of their population and young people account for a further 20 per cent.
>
> In the more developed regions, children and youth account for just 17 per cent and 13 per cent of the population, respectively, and whereas the number of children is expected to change little in the future, remaining close to 200 million, the number of young people is projected to decrease from 163 million currently to 134 million in 2050.
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> In both the more and the less developed regions, the number of people in the main working ages, 25 to 59, is at an all time high: 603 million and 2.4 billion, respectively. Yet, whereas in the more developed regions that figure is expected to peak over the next decade and decline thereafter, reaching 528 millions in 2050, in the less developed regions it will continue to rise, reaching 3.6 billion in 2050 and increasing by nearly half a billion over the next decade. These population trends

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[19] UNITED NATIONS (2005), World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015, p 63

justify the urgency of supporting employment creation in developing countries which should be part of any strategy created to address the global economic crisis being experienced worldwide."[20]

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[20] UNITED NATIONS (2008), Executive Summary, *World Population Prospects, the 2008 Revision,* Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division

Youth Population prospects

Year	Youth Population (thousands)	Percentage of Total Global Population
1995	1 032 139	18.1
2005	1 176 550	18.1
2010	1 218 070	17.6
2015	1 205 447	16.5
2025	1 230 407	15.4

Source: World Population Prospects, the 2008 Revision, Population Database, *http://esa.un.org/unpp/*

Regional distribution of youth, prospects for 2010

	Total population (thousands)	Youth population (percentage)	Youth (15-24) (thousands)	Global youth population (percentage)
Asia	4,166,741	18.1	755,830	62.1
Africa	1,033,043	20.2	208,897	17.1
Europe	732,759	12.7	92,976	7.6
Latin America & the Caribbean	588,649	17.9	105,457	8.7
Northern America	351,659	14.1	49,415	4.1
Oceania	35,838	15.3	5,495	0.5
Total	6,908,689	17.6	1,218,070	100.0

Source: *World Population Prospects, the 2008 Revision, Population Database, http://esa.un.org/unpp/*
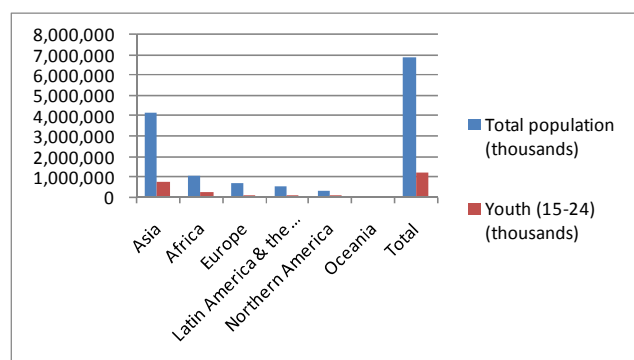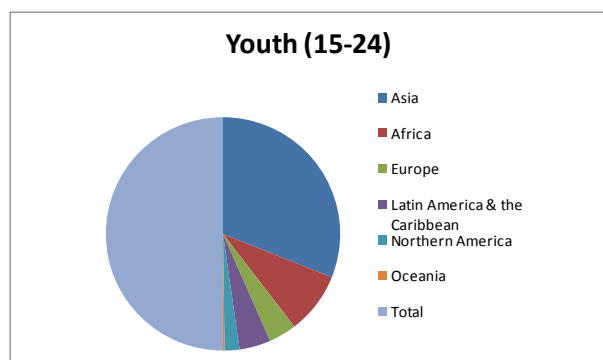
2) Poverty in today's world

The United Nations' most recent report on the world social situation offers the latest estimated figures on poverty:

"Despite remarkable progress achieved since the Second World War, especially in parts of Asia, abject poverty remains widespread in many parts of the world.

According to the World Bank's much cited "dollar-a-day" international poverty line, which was revised in 2008 to $1.25 a day in 2005 prices, there are still 1.4 billion people living in poverty, although this represents a decline from the 1.9 billion in 1981. This figure is higher than the 2004 estimate of 984 million made with the old measure of $1-a-day.

Poverty is the principal cause of hunger and undernourishment. According to most recent estimates of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO, 2009), the number of hungry people worldwide is 963 million (figure I.1), or about 14.6 per cent of the estimated world population of 6.6 billion, representing an increase of 142 million over the figure for 1990-1992. Most of the undernourished are in developing countries."[21]

World population and number of people living in poverty, 1981-2005
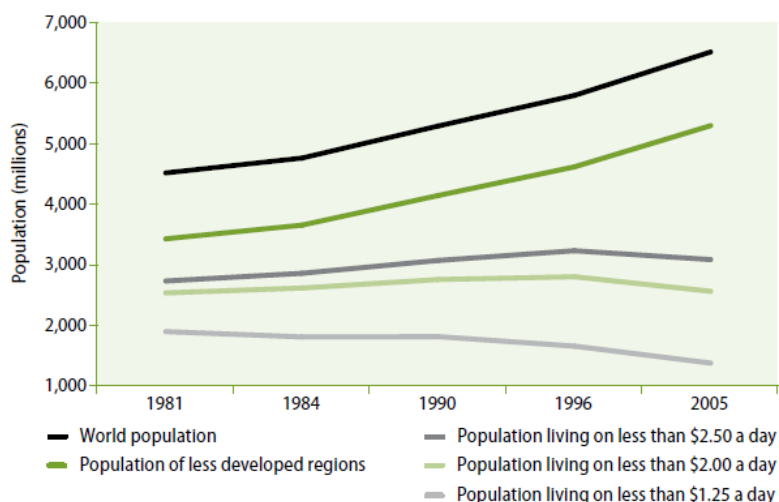
Sources: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division; and World Bank, Development Research Group (2009).

Source: UNITED NATIONS (2009), *Report on the World Social Situation 2010: Rethinking Poverty*

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[21] UNITED NATIONS (2009), Report on the World Social Situation 2010: Rethinking Poverty, p 1

3) Crises endangering social progress

The Report on the World Social Situation 2010 pays particular attention to the very negative impacts of the recent crises, which dangerously jeopardize the social and economic progress already achieved:

> "Progress in meeting this poverty target is now seriously threatened by the worst financial and economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s, which hit the world before it could fully recover from the sudden surges in energy and food prices. FAO (2009) estimated that soaring food prices had pushed another 115 million people into conditions of chronic hunger in 2007 and 2008 and noted (p. 6) that "The impact is most severe in Africa, where many countries are highly dependent on imported cereals (in some cases for up to 80 per cent of their dietary energy supplies) and undernourishment is already rife".
>
> According to estimates contained in a press release of the World Bank (2009b), the food and energy price hikes in 2007-2008 increased the global poverty headcount by as many as 155 million people in 2008."

The financial crisis of 2008, which was triggered by a liquidity shortfall in the United States banking system caused by the overvaluation of assets, had and continues to have very worrying consequences for global poverty:

> "The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat (United Nations, 2009b) estimates that the drop in per capita income growth in 2009 will slow poverty reduction significantly. Between 73 million and 100 million more people will remain poor or fall into poverty than would have if the pre-crisis growth rate had continued. Most of the impact of this setback will be felt in East and South Asia where between 56 million and 80 million people, about half of whom are in India, are likely to be affected. The crisis is expected to keep from 12 million to 16 million more people in poverty in Africa and another 4 million in Latin America and the Caribbean. These projections most likely underestimate the true poverty impact of the crisis, as its distributional consequences have not been fully accounted for".[22]

4) Impacts of globalization on youth exclusion

The Secretary-General's report summarizing the main findings of the *World Youth Report 2005* underlines the mixed consequences of globalization on poverty, especially on youth poverty:

> "Globalization can be a powerful force for poverty reduction. Many countries have seen improvements in their welfare and educational systems as a consequence of globalization. Unfortunately, about 2 billion people live in countries that do not benefit from globalization, mainly in parts of sub-Saharan Africa, Western Asia and the former Soviet Union. These countries have seen a declining economic growth rate, loss of jobs, low incomes, and poor education and health provision. The income gap is widening not only between, but also within countries.
>
> Globalization, roughly defined as the global integration of economies and societies, affects many aspects of young people lives. Youth have an ambiguous relationship with the globalizing world, both economically and culturally. On the one hand, they are most flexible and perhaps best able to adapt to and make use of new opportunities offered. They are the best educated generation on new information technologies; they benefit from economic growth; many travel around the world for

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[22] UNITED NATIONS (2009), Report on the World Social Situation 2010: Rethinking Poverty, p 3

work, studies, exchange projects and vacation; and telephone and the Internet enable them to stay in touch with friends and relatives abroad. On the other hand, many youth, especially in developing countries, have been left out of the digitalization and modernization process and lack the economic power to benefit from the opportunities globalization offers."*[23]*

Some effects of globalization such as the distribution of employment opportunities, migrations or global consumerism can be considered potentially risky for the social integration of many young people:

"Globalization has substantially changed the job market, to which young people, as newcomers, are most vulnerable.. New technologies have replaced manual labour, mainly affecting low skilled jobs in the service sector. Even in China, which has seen remarkable economic growth, the rate of unemployment is rising due to the ongoing transformation from agriculture to the less employment intensive manufacturing and service industries, the reform of state-owned enterprises and the reorganization of the public sector. Trade liberalization forces companies to become more flexible and competitive. Many have become increasingly dependent on low-cost, flexible labour, often employed on an irregular basis. The outsourcing of sophisticated programming assignments and semi-skilled jobs in call centers to low-wage countries is perhaps the best known example of the global shift of employment opportunities for young people.

Migration, both within and between countries, is another aspect of globalization. Young people have always been a significant group among migrants. As foreign investment often creates job opportunities in the cities of host countries, rural workers move to the cities. In 2003, 48 per cent of the world's population lived in urban areas, and it is projected that over 50 per cent will do so by 2007. In 2002, there were 175 million international migrants. On the basis of available immigration data, it is estimated that some 15 per cent, or 26 million, are youth. Every day thousands of young people illegally try to pursue a life of fortune in a rich country, often motivated by unrealistic information and high expectations. A parallel industry of illicit travel agents, job brokers and middlemen has arisen, which directs the trafficking of these migrants. The past two decades have seen a dramatic increase in the trafficking of girls and young women, who are often lured into prostitution. Young women and girls who are impoverished, uneducated or from indigenous, ethnic minority, rural or refugee groups are most vulnerable to being trafficked.

Globalization has numerous consequences for youth cultures. The increase in media streams has resulted in global consumerism. Through television, music videos and movies, American and European-produced content is increasingly dominating entertainment around the world. Young people tend to adopt and interpret global products in terms of their own local cultures and experiences, thereby creating new hybrid cultural forms whose meanings vary with local and national circumstances. Many youth in developing countries, as well as marginalized youth in the industrialized world, are unable to fulfill their raised expectations of material wellbeing. This may result in alienation and frustration and, potentially, in crime and social strife."[24]

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[23] UNITED NATIONS (2004) Report of the Secretary-General about the *World Youth Report 2005*, General Assembly, Economic and Social Council, 6 December 2004, p 26

[24] UNITED NATIONS (2004) Report of the Secretary-General about the *World Youth Report 2005*, General Assembly, Economic and Social Council, 6 December 2004, p 26

III.   YOUTH IN POVERTY: FIGURES AND PROJECTIONS

1) Scarcity of statistical data on youth poverty

Even though research on the subject is on the increase, most studies emphasize the lack of figures and specific data on youth poverty:

> "In the World Youth Report, 2003, the observation was made that young people had been neglected in poverty reduction strategies, in part because there was little poverty research focused specifically on young people and a consequent lack of relevant data disaggregated by age. (…) Some approximate figures were derived by the author based on different measures of poverty. (…) these calculations were based on the assumption that poverty in a country was evenly distributed among all age groups in the population. It was concluded that further quantitative and qualitative research on poverty alleviation among youth was needed to provide a better understanding of the poverty dynamics for this group. In the coming chapters, this argument is reiterated. Because the static definition of poverty provides only a limited picture, emphasis is given to the importance of longitudinal data studies that monitor poverty dynamics over time. This kind of data would provide a sounder basis for anti-poverty policy formulation than would reliance on poverty trend data alone."[25]

Moreover, the report warns against the possible lack of reliability or consistency of some data:

> "The international poverty line measures are extrapolations from nationally representative household surveys, which constitute the primary sources of data. These surveys were undertaken in different years, and many are not recent. Some date from as far back as 1989 (Sierra Leone) and 1990/91 (Zimbabwe). Only two of the household surveys took place as recently as 2002 (Albania and Indonesia), and 10 include data for 2001 only. For the remaining 139 countries, the survey dates and periods of coverage fall between the early 1990s and the year 2000. As the source data used in the World Development Indicators are unlikely to change over a short time span for many countries, a meaningful comparison between two recent periods is difficult, if not impossible."[26]

2) Main estimates

We can find the latest figures on youth poverty in the World Youth Report 2005 which updates the World Youth Report 2003's estimates. Here are the main findings:

> "It is possible to use the widely accepted indicators of absolute income poverty to estimate the numbers of young people in extreme poverty. The proportion of people in a country living below the poverty line of US$ 1 or US$ 2 per person per day is adjusted based on the proportion of young people (aged 15-24 years) in the overall population; this simple calculation provides an indication of the number of youth who live below the poverty line. Estimates of young people in poverty can be derived for countries for which there are no poverty measures by matching them with the closest country with an available poverty measure.
>
> Based on the most recent data available up to 2002, it is estimated that there are some 209 million young people living on less than US$ 1 a day and around 515 million young people living on less than US$ 2 a day (see table 2.2). These estimates have been derived from data provided in the World Bank's World Development Indicators, 2004 on the proportions of people in each country living

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[25] UNITED NATIONS (2005), World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015, p 18
[26] UNITED NATIONS (2005), World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015, p 33

below the international poverty lines. The overall figures indicate that almost one in five young people (18 per cent of the 1,158 million 15- to 24-year olds worldwide) are living on less than US$ 1 per day, while almost half (45 per cent) are living on less than US$ 2 per day."[27]

3) Regional disparities

Regional estimates of young people* living in extreme poverty, 2002 (Millions)

Region	Numbers of young people living on less than US$ 1 per day	Numbers of young people living on less than US$ 2 per day
South Asia	84.1	206.1
East Asia and the Pacific	46.5	150.5
Sub-Saharan Africa	60.7	102.1
Latin America and the Caribbean	11.1	27.2
Europe and Central Asia	4.1	18.2
Middle East and North Africa	2.0	12.1
Total**	208.6	515.1

Source: The two sets of figures are calculated from data contained in the World Bank's *World Development Indicators, 2004* on the proportion of people in each country living below the international poverty line (United Nations population estimates for 2000, derived from *World Population Prospects: The 2004 Revision, Population Database* (available from http://esa.un.org/unpp/)).
  * Individuals between the ages of 15 and 24.
  ** Totals may not add precisely due to rounding.

Source: UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015,* p 33

These figures are commented by the United Nations:

"The largest proportion of the world's poorest youth can be found in South Asia, which accounts for 4 out of every 10 young people living on less than US$ 1 or US$ 2 a day. Sub-Saharan Africa is home to 3 in 10 young people living on less than US$ 1 per day, and to 2 in 10 youth living on less than US$ 2 per day.

The 10 countries with the largest concentrations of young people living on less than US$ 1 a day are India (67.7 million), China (33.3 million), Nigeria (18.6 million), Bangladesh (9.9 million), Democratic Republic of the Congo (6.9 million), Pakistan (3.8 million), Sudan (3.7 million), Ethiopia (3.4 million), Indonesia (3.1 million) and Viet Nam (2.9 million). The list of countries with the largest concentrations of young people living on less than US$ 2 a day is the same, with one exception; Brazil replaces Sudan in tenth place. The ranking of countries is also slightly different, with Indonesia and Vietnam moving up to the fifth and eighth positions respectively.

Sex-disaggregated indicators for per capita income are not available. However, the indicators used for other MDGs—relating to literacy, access to primary and secondary schooling, and access to health services—clearly show that girls and young women are much more likely than boys and young men to be disadvantaged (Curtain, 2004), though there may be significant intraregional variations. In South Asia, for example, the primary net enrolment ratio (females as a percentage of males enrolled

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[27] UNITED NATIONS (2005), World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015, p 32

in primary education) is lowest in Pakistan (55 per cent), followed by India (77 per cent) and Nepal (79 per cent), but Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have been able to achieve much better ratios (96 and 94 per cent respectively) (Curtain, 2004)."[28]

4) What trends?

"The more recent global estimates of youth in extreme poverty can be compared with the estimates of 238 million and 462 million young people living on less than US$ 1 and US$ 2 a day, respectively, in the World Youth Report, 2003. The latter estimates were based on the international poverty lines reported in the World Development Indicators for 2000. The two sets of statistics suggest that the number of young people living on less than US$ 1 a day has decreased by nearly 30 million; it is likely, however, that a significant portion of this group has moved into the nominally better category of those living on less than US$ 2 per day, which has increased by 53 million."[29]

5) Rural and urban poverty

About rural and urban youth poverty, the United Nations stated that:

In many countries, poverty rates are substantially higher in rural areas than in urban areas. Some may argue that the rural-urban poverty gap is to some extent a statistical artefact—the result of shifts in urban boundaries as wealthier villages situated near towns are in time redefined as urban areas (Pogge and Reddy, 2003). Nonetheless, the fact remains that most poverty in developing countries occurs in rural areas and is especially prevalent among small farmers and landless families. Much of the poverty found in urban areas is a consequence of rural deprivation and rural economic decline, which trigger distress migration to the cities. In 1995, the United Nations General Assembly placed strong emphasis on rural development in the World Programme of Action for Youth, calling for actions focused on making farming more rewarding and life in rural areas more attractive for young people.

Over the past 10 years, however, there has been a sharp decline in the national and international resources devoted to agricultural and rural development in developing countries (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2002; Majid, 2004). Poverty reduction efforts need to incorporate explicit agricultural growth strategies.[30]

IV. YOUTH AS A SPECIAL TARGET IN POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY

1) Why focus on youth?

Youth poverty and exclusion is a very serious problem: mainly because of the shocking reality of large numbers of young people and children living in absolute poverty, suffering terrible conditions such as hunger and malnutrition, ill health, limited or lack of access to education and other basic services, increased morbidity and mortality from illness, homelessness and inadequate housing, unsafe environments, social discrimination and exclusion, etc. But not only for this reason: many other reasons can justify targeting youth in fighting against poverty.

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[28] UNITED NATIONS (2005), World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015, p 33
[29] UNITED NATIONS (2005), World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015, p 33
[30] UNITED NATIONS (2005), World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015, p 34

Principle among them are the following, as reported in different works on the subject:

- **Youth are an extremely vulnerable group and face specific obstacles which need to be addressed individually**

"In many contexts, youth are relatively likely to experience poverty compared to other age groups, because of the uncertainties and dynamism surrounding the transition from child to adulthood (particularly in terms of relationships and responsibilities), or due to age-based discrimination, particularly in labour markets. (…)

However, it is not always the case that youth are disproportionately poor. Context matters, and the relative extent of youth poverty in a given community or country depends on the interaction of many different factors. In those cases where youth, or particular groups of youth (e.g. young women, indigenous youth, disabled youth), are disproportionately poor or vulnerable to poverty, understanding what has driven and maintained this poverty is crucial for developing effective policy interventions. Falling into, getting stuck in, or escaping from poverty during youth is, like poverty in general, based on combinations of structural and idiosyncratic factors from the individual to global levels, including on events related to life-course."[31]

- **Youth is a crucial stake and driver in the development process**

"Young people account for a large share of the population in most countries. Societies that fail to acknowledge the particular challenges facing youth and to involve them in devising solutions will find it difficult to achieve the MDGs, including sharp reductions in poverty levels, by 2015. Addressing the health, education and employment needs of young people can contribute to economic growth, generating additional income for both individuals and Governments that may, in turn, be used for human development. Investing in youth can therefore initiate a virtuous cycle of pro-poor development. The price that countries pay for not investing in youth development may be economic decline and rising poverty."[32]

- **Addressing youth poverty can break the vicious cycle resulting from intergenerational transmission of poverty**

"This brief review of the interrelated concepts of chronic, life-course, intergenerational and youth poverty suggests another reason that targeting youth within anti-poverty policies and programmes can be justified. Not only can poverty experienced in youth have implications across the life course of the young person, it can hinder the capacity of a young person to bounce back from deprivation suffered in childhood, and affect the long-term life chances of any dependents, including and especially the young person's own children."[33]

- **Young people can be seen as more adaptable and resilient, and therefore more likely to be impacted by anti-poverty policies**

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[31] MOORE, K. (2005), Thinking about youth poverty through the lenses of chronic poverty, life-course poverty and intergenerational poverty, Working Paper, Institute for Development Policy and Management (IDPM), School of Environment, p 24

[32] UNITED NATIONS (2005), World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015, p 37

[33] MOORE, K. (2005), Thinking about youth poverty through the lenses of chronic poverty, life-course poverty and intergenerational poverty, Working Paper, Institute for Development Policy and Management (IDPM), School of Environment, p 21

"At the same time that youth may not always be among the poorest or the most vulnerable, it may be the case that, after early childhood, adolescence and young adulthood may be the period in which anti-poverty interventions have the most potential for long-term positive change."[34]

- **Employment is key : for improving young people's future employment prospects, for avoiding the economic cost of an idle youth, and for fostering economic development**

"Youth unemployment and situations in which young people give up on the job search ("discouragement") or work under inadequate conditions ("underemployment") incur costs to the economy, to society and to the individual and their family. A lack of decent work, if experienced at an early age, often permanently compromises a person's future employment prospects and frequently leads to unsuitable labor behavior patterns that last a lifetime. There is a proven link between youth unemployment and social exclusion. An inability to find employment creates a sense of vulnerability, uselessness and idleness among young people. The most obvious gains then, in making the most of the productive potential of youth and ensuring the availability of decent employment opportunities for youth, are the personal gains to the young people themselves.

The second obvious gain to recapturing the productive potential of underutilized youth is an economic one. Idle youth is a costly group. They are not contributing to the economic welfare of the country – quite the contrary. The loss of income among the younger generation translates into a lack of savings as well as a loss of aggregate demand. Some youth who are unable to earn their own income have to be financially supported by the family, leaving less for spending and investments at the household level. Societies lose their investment in education. Governments fail to receive contributions to social security systems and are forced to increase spending on remedial services, including crime or drug use prevention efforts. All this is a threat to the development potential of economies. Focusing on youth, therefore, makes sense to a country from a costs-benefits point of view.

It is also important to focus on youth because they are the drivers of economic development in a country. Young people might lack experience but they tend to be highly motivated and capable of offering new ideas or insights. Foregoing this potential is an economic waste. In the 2004 report, the ILO estimated that halving the world's youth unemployment rate, and thus bringing it more in line with the adult rate while allowing for some natural differences, would add between an estimated US$ 2.2 and 3.5 trillion of the 2003 value, or between 4.4 and 7.0 per cent, to the global GDP."[35]

2) An increasing international focus on youth over the recent years

Many organizations, NGOs or foundations, have been focusing their action on young people for some time now, for example The International Youth Foundation, The Victor Pineda Foundation, The European Youth Foundation and many other regional or national foundations, NGO's working specifically with youth or with programs targeting young people (Amnesty International, ATD Quart Monde, Action Against Hunger, among many others…).

But, over recent years, an increasing number of international or bilateral organizations have also *acknowledged the importance of working with young as beneficiaries, assets, and partners*[36]. The United Nations system and related agencies (UNICEF, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, FAO, the Millennium Development Goals) but also the World Bank, the International Labor Organization (ILO), the United States Agency for International

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[34] Idem, p 24

[35] INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (2006), Global employment trends for youth, October 2006, p 1

[36] This distinction is made by Maguire (2007) as follows: (i) Youth as beneficiaries – interventions targeted at youth; (ii) youth as partners – working with youth; (iii) youth as assets– work done by youth.

Development (USAID), GTZ, HABITAT, etc. have all been developing programs or research with a special focus on youth.[37] We will just look briefly at the youth-related policies and work of the United Nations system, the World Bank, and the relevance of youth within the MDGs.

- **The United Nations system (see Annex III)**

There is a well-developed UN youth agenda, led by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), which houses the UN focal point on youth. Known as 'Empowering Youth for Development and Peace', three basic themes are advocated: participation, development and peace. In 1995, the UN also adopted *The World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond*, an international blueprint for action revolving around ten priority areas: education, employment, hunger and poverty, health, environment, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, leisure-time activities, girls and young women and youth participation. Five additional issues were added by the General Assembly in 2007: globalization, information and communication technologies, HIV/AIDS, youth and conflict, and intergenerational relations. It provides a policy framework as well as practical guidelines for national action and international support to improve the situation of young people. Even more recently, on 18 December 2009, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming the year commencing on 12 August 2010 as the International Year of Youth (IYY): Dialogue and Mutual Understanding.[38]

- **The World Bank**

The World Bank also widely acknowledged the importance of youth in development:

> "The World Bank has a dedicated Children and Youth Unit in the Human Development Division and a framework for working with youth which focuses on three key areas it considers provide an enabling environment for youth: (i) Policies and institutions which enable children and youth investments to succeed at the sectoral and macro-level; (ii) Families and communities which support, benefit from, own and demand interventions; and (iii) Gender-equitable participation and empowerment of youth and children as agents of their own development. The Bank has also recently developed a Policy Toolkit for supporting youth at risk in middle-income countries in five key areas: (i) Youth unemployment, underemployment and lack of formal sector employment; (ii) Early school leaving; (iii) Risky sexual behaviour leading to early childbearing and HIV/AIDS; (iv) Crime and violence; and (v) Substance abuse. Finally, the Bank has also launched a separate web portal "Youthink"[39] designed to engage young people in development issues by providing information and inviting their involvement and views."[40]

- **Youth and Millennium Development Goals**

> "In September 2000, at the United Nations Millennium Summit, world leaders agreed to eight specific and measurable development goals—now called the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)—to be achieved by 2015. The first seven goals focus on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality and empowering women; reducing child mortality; improving maternal health; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; and ensuring environmental sustainability. The eighth goal calls for the creation of a global

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[37] To see the list of youth-related organizations: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/links.htm

[38] http://social.un.org/youthyear/ ; New 2010 Edition of the World Programme of Action for Youth available: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/wpay2010.pdf

[39] http://www.youthink.worldbank.org/

[40] MCLEAN HILKER, L. and FRASER, E. (2009), Youth exclusion, violence, conflict and fragile states, Report prepared for DFID‟s Equity and Rights Team, Social Development Direct, p 37

partnership for development, with targets for aid, trade, and debt relief. A significant step toward meeting the MDGs was taken in Monterrey, Mexico, in March 2002, when the international community adopted a two-pillar strategy, whereby sustained pursuit of sound policies and good governance by the low-income countries is to be matched by larger and more effective international support, as well as an enabling international economic and trade environment for development."[41]

The World Youth Report 2005 observes how young people are taken into account in the MDGs (see in the targets and indicators in Annex II):

"Most of the MDGs relate to challenges young people are facing. Around 51 per cent of the combined population of developing and least developed countries are below the age of 25, and 20 per cent are 15 to 24 years of age (United Nations, 2005). It is clear, given such age demographics, that if the specific needs of young people are not identified and addressed, the MDGs will not be met. Young people per se do not appear to have a prominent place in the MDGs. However, on closer scrutiny, five of the Goals may be identified as referring directly to youth because they relate to issues primarily associated with young people, including educational attainment, gender balance in education, improved maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS and other diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis, and decent employment opportunities for youth. Greater investment in improving adolescent health and education will not only reduce poverty, but will also bring countries closer to achieving the targets for two other MDGs. Overall improvements in adolescent health will reduce the incidence of high-risk pregnancies among undernourished teenagers and thereby contribute significantly to reducing child mortality, the objective of Goal 4. Higher educational levels and improved nutrition among young mothers will help reduce the prevalence of underweight children below five years of age (one of the indicators for Goal 1), which will contribute substantially to the eradication of hunger, as called for in Goal 1."[42]

Conclusion

515 million young people worldwide were living in poverty in 2005, and that figure has certainly risen since. The alarming situation of many young people has been highlighted in this first chapter. Furthermore, it has been possible to see how important it is, for many reasons, to address youth poverty and exclusion. The crucial challenge of youth has been acknowledged by an increasing number of organizations over recent years. Now, let us examine more deeply the main issues facing young people and related to their exclusion or poverty, as well as causes, consequences, or characteristics.

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[41] http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/mdg.htm
[42] UNITED NATIONS (2005), World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015, p 25

Chapter 2:
YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE VARIOUS THEMES OF EXTREME EXCLUSION

Since the majority of young people live in developing countries, and more than 500 million young people worldwide live in situations of poverty or extreme poverty, it seems important to understand the main characteristics, causes and consequences linked to this phenomenon.

Obviously it is very difficult to separate the causes from the consequences: is it because a young man is poor that he did not complete his secondary education or because he did not finish school that he is still poor? The following headings will help us to better understand the issues faced by young people in situations of major exclusion.

We have divided them into three categories:
- Part I - Youth Education and Employment
- Part II - Youth at risk
- Part III - Conflicts and migrations

These themes are not exhaustive but are useful in giving as much summarized information as possible.

Part IV, extracted from the United Nations' *World Youth Report 2007*, proposes a synthetic regional picture of these issues.

I. YOUTH EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

1) Education

As revealed in various reports and declarations, education plays a key role in the improvement of young people's living conditions:

> "Education has long been regarded as one of the primary components of poverty reduction efforts and overall social development. The World Declaration on Education for All, adopted in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990, affirmed the international commitment to universalizing primary education and massively reducing illiteracy before the end of the decade. In the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, education is listed first among the 10 priority areas for youth development. The Dakar Framework for Action, adopted at the World Education Forum in 2000, identified six major goals for education, two of which became Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) later that year. The two Goals incorporate the following targets: (a) ensure that by 2015, all children will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling; and (b) eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and at all levels of education by no later than 2015."[43]

The figures show that primary, secondary and tertiary school enrolment has globally increased since 1995, making today's young people the most highly educated generation in human history.

> "Primary school completion rates have continued to climb since 1995. Gross secondary enrolment has risen from 56 to 78 per cent over the past decade (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2004). Global tertiary enrolment increased from 69 million in 1990 to 88

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[43] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 14-15

million in 1997, with the most substantial growth achieved in developing countries (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2003). Some countries even doubled their net enrolment rates during the 1990s. (…) Today's young people comprise the most highly educated generation in human history."[44]

This is confirmed by the latest World Youth Report:

"Worldwide, perhaps the greatest progress with respect to youth development has been made in the area of education. More young people are completing basic education, making this the best-educated generation of youth ever. Although public sector funding for education has not kept up with demand, in many regions, private and transnational ventures have played a vital complementary role, and distance learning opportunities have expanded as well."[45]

However, the United Nations comments that this positive trend is not seen across all countries and identifies many causes for this lack of education: poverty, gender inequalities or a low access to education in rural areas:

"Unfortunately, some countries have not been as successful as others in providing education for their young people. A few countries experienced declining enrolment during the 1990s and have registered only moderate increases in the past five years. Some of the transition economies have suffered a regression in primary education, suggesting that achieving basic education for all is tied to socio-economic circumstances. In spite of the overall progress achieved, 113 million primary-school-age children around the world were not in school in 2000 (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/ Institute for Statistics, 2000). These children will become the next generation of illiterate youth, taking the place of the estimated 130 million illiterate youth of today as they enter adulthood and the job market—already at a serious disadvantage.

Poverty remains a major barrier to schooling, and gender discrimination is a factor as well. When poor parents need to make a choice about which of their children should receive an education, girls tend to be excluded first. The literacy gap between young men and young women appears to be widening in Africa and Asia; the greatest gender inequalities are found in North Africa and Western Asia, where educationally deprived girls outnumber the corresponding groups of boys by almost three to one. Countries in East Asia and Pacific have come close to achieving gender parity in access to education, while in Latin America and the Caribbean there appears to be a slight bias against boys. In rural areas, young people have less access to education, the quality of education is poorer, and adult illiteracy rates are higher."[46]

A further issue is the *quality* of education: a lack of funding in some countries lowers the quality of education and thus affects young people's learning experience. Furthermore, educational needs are evolving in response to the technological revolution and new labour market demands. To address these issues, the United Nations recommends the use of various alternative learning approaches outside the traditional classroom.

"The most important challenge, apart from achieving education for all, is ensuring the provision of a quality education. Many countries have abolished school fees, and while such a move stimulates school enrolment, it can have negative implications for the quality of education. Experience in various sub-Saharan African countries has shown that without additional funding for qualified teachers and material resources, schools are unable to accommodate the larger numbers of students seeking an education. Teachers and trainers in many parts of the world lack sufficient training, resources, support, materials, and conducive conditions of service, which adversely affects young

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[44] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 13

[45] UNITED NATIONS (2007), *World Youth Report, 2007: Young People's Transition to Adulthood: Progress and Challenges*, p 236

[46] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 13-14

people's learning experience. In pursuing the goal of a quality education for all, the importance of teachers and trainers must be recognized. Attention should be given to their education, professional development, wages, working conditions, and career paths in order to make teaching a more attractive option.

New approaches are needed to respond to the evolving educational needs of youth, especially in the light of the ongoing technological revolution and the global inequalities it has engendered. Educational curricula are not always in line with the demands of the labour market, and young people may find themselves inadequately prepared for the world of work. It has been estimated that in developed countries, roughly 10 to 20 per cent of the general population's learning needs are not adequately met by the current formal learning systems (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2003). Developing countries face major challenges in introducing new ICT in the education system. Urgent attention is needed to prevent the digital divide between developed and developing countries from widening in the next generation.

(...) In the past decade there has been a growing emphasis on "life competencies" within the education system. The rising popularity of alternative approaches and modalities such as non-formal learning, lifelong learning, distance education, e-learning, peer education and on-the-job training shows that the concept of education is increasingly expanding beyond the traditional classroom. It is important that efforts be made to reach youth and young adults who have dropped out of the formal education system before acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills and provide them with education or training that will enhance their employability."[47]

These issues were still relevant when the United Nations made its recommendations in the 2007 World Youth Report:

"Many of the deficiencies in educational performance and attainment among youth reflect past and present inadequacies in education systems. Wide, entrenched gender gaps in access, the relatively poor quality of instruction in many settings, and the lack of relevant, up-to-date curricula prevent many students from acquiring the knowledge and skills they need to function effectively in society. Even the developed market economies, which offer many and varied opportunities for education, have not been universally successful in addressing the wide intracountry and intercountry disparities in access to schooling. Youth from disadvantaged backgrounds are particularly vulnerable to exclusion."[48]

Unfortunately, improvements in the area of education do not always have a positive impact on youth employment, and this is particularly relevant for young women, as stated in the 2007 World Youth Report:

"High educational qualifications do not necessarily guarantee decent employment. Increasingly, it is not just those with little education and training who are left behind, but also educated youth, whose knowledge, skills and attitudes may not be compatible with the needs of the global economy.

(…)Evidence indicates that educational gains among females around the world have not necessarily improved their position in the labour market. Young women face higher rates of unemployment and underemployment and are typically paid lower wages than their male peers." [49]

2) Employment

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[47] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 14-15

[48] UNITED NATIONS (2007), *World Youth Report, 2007: Young People's Transition to Adulthood: Progress and Challenges*, p 236

[49] UNITED NATIONS (2007), *World Youth Report, 2007: Young People's Transition to Adulthood: Progress and Challenges*, p 236 and p 238

The 2007 World Youth Report presents some major concerns regarding the status of youth employment:

"Unemployment and underemployment among youth constitute a global problem. All over the world, young people are finding it increasingly difficult to break into the labour market. Youth make up 25 per cent of the global working-age population but account for 43.7 per cent of the unemployed, which means that almost every other jobless person in the world is between the ages of 15 and 24. A global deficit of decent work opportunities has resulted in a situation in which one out of every three youth in the world is either seeking but unable to find work, has given up the job search entirely, or is working but still living on less than US$ 2 a day. To circumvent the difficulties associated with unemployment, growing numbers of young people are staying in full-time education for longer periods.

(…) Many young people throughout the world have limited options in the formal economy and may be compelled to work in the informal economy for low pay. Apart from inadequate remuneration, informal employment typically offers little social protection or job security, and working conditions may be dangerous. Youth often have trouble finding ways to build upon their education so that they can be better prepared to participate in a rapidly changing job market. Young women and young men are active participants in the labour force, yet opportunities for decent work are limited. Many young workers, aware that they are at a disadvantage in the labour market, accept lower wages than older workers and are more willing to accept short-term contracts."[50]

The latest figures presented by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in its "*Global Employment Trends, January 2010*" confirm this worrying situation: the number of unemployed young people in the world was 72.5 million in 2007, 74.2 in 2008 and the ILO estimated that they would be 82.7 million in 2009. (see also Annex IV)

The ILO analyses these figures in the latest economic crisis perspective:

"(…) Youth are often in a disadvantaged position in labour markets. Preceding the economic crisis, youth were on average already 2.8 times more likely to be unemployed than adults at the global level, and this ratio showed little change in 2009. On current estimates, the global youth unemployment rate rose by 1.3 percentage points from 12.1 per cent in 2008 to 13.4 per cent in 2009 (with a CI between 12.7 and 14.0 per cent), compared to an increase by 0.7 percentage points for adult workers (from 4.3 per cent to 5.0 per cent, with a CI between 4.7 and 5.2 per cent). The number of unemployed youth increased by 8.5 million between 2008 and 2009, the largest year-on-year increase in at least ten years, and by more than 10 million since 2007."[51]

The ILO also presents regional analysis summarized as follows (See also Annexes V to VII):

"Regions showing some **encouraging trends** with declining youth unemployment rates over time (comparing only 1997 and 2007) and declining youth-to-adult unemployment ratios:
- Developed Economies & European Union
- Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS
- East Asia
- Middle East
- North Africa
- Sub-Saharan Africa

Regions showing some **discouraging trends** with increasing youth unemployment rates over time and increasing youth-to-adult unemployment ratios:
- South Asia

[50] UNITED NATIONS (2007), *World Youth Report, 2007: Young People's Transition to Adulthood: Progress and Challenges*, p 238-239
[51] INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (2010), *Global Employment Trends, January 2010,* p 16

- South-East Asia & the Pacific
- Latin America & the Caribbean

(…) It is worth noting, however, that in more recent years these same regions have also started to show some encouraging signs, with youth unemployment rates descending from peaks in 2006 (South-East Asia & the Pacific), 2005 (South Asia) and 2003 (Latin America & the Caribbean). Decreasing shares over time of youth in the total working-age population (15 years and over) in all regions but Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS and sub-Saharan Africa are indicative of encouraging demographic trends in the populous regions (Developed Economies & European Union and Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS are the exceptions here) where economies struggle to absorb the large cohorts of youth entering the labour market stream each year. (See figure 1.2.)"[52]

Figure 1.2
Youth share in working-age population, by region, 1991-2007
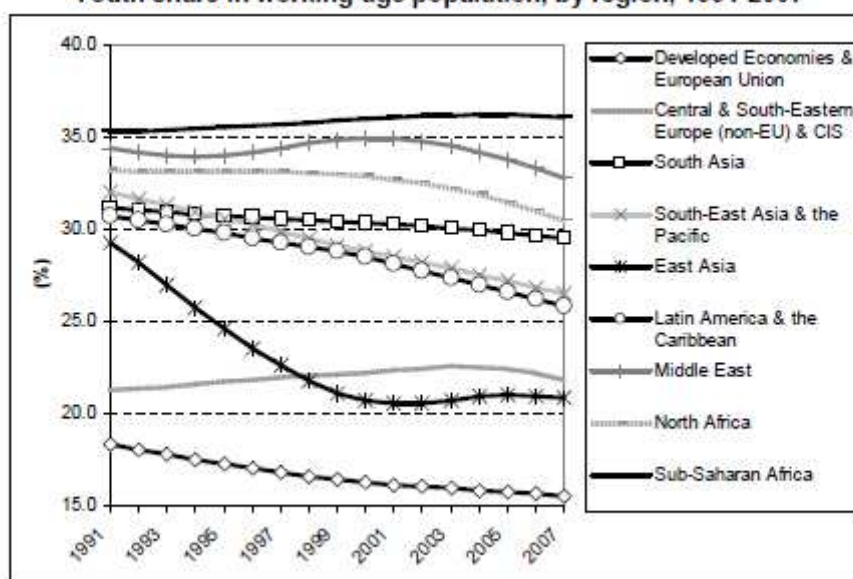
Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, April 2008; see Annex 1 for information on methodology.

Further regional analysis was provided in the 2010 ILO "Global Employment Trends" (See also Annex VIII):

"At the regional level, similar to the unemployment rate across age groups, the largest jumps in youth unemployment rates between 2008 and 2009 occurred in the Developed Economies and the European Union, which saw an increase by 4.6 percentage points, in Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS, by 4.5 percentage points, and in Latin America and the Caribbean (2.2 percentage points). Although increases were much smaller in the Middle East and North Africa, these two regions continue to show the highest youth unemployment rates.

It was highlighted before that labour force participation rates of youth were on a long-term downward trend in many countries preceding the crisis, and that the crisis was reinforcing this trend in some countries. Globally, youth labour force participation rate decreased by 3.4 percentage points between 1999 and 2009, and all regions saw decreasing youth participation rates. The change at the global level is driven to an important extent by the large decreases in East Asia during the past ten years, where the youth labour force participation rate decreased by 9.3 percentage points and in South-East Asia and the Pacific (minus 5.3 percentage points). Only in the Middle East and Sub-

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[52] INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (2008), *Global employment trends for youth, October 2008,* p 3-4

Saharan Africa were changes in youth participation rates small, at 0.5 and 0.2 percentage points, respectively.

Looking at the most recent years, the youth participation rate showed relatively large decreases (in comparison with preceding years) in the Developed Economies and the European Union (minus 0.4 percentage points), as well as in Latin America and the Caribbean (minus 0.5 percentage points), underlining the discouragement effects of the crisis on youth labour force participation. However, in all other regions, youth participation rates either showed little change between 2008 and 2009, or were increasing, suggesting that the need for youth to participate in labour markets and support family income is important in much of the developing world."[53]

In 2005, the United Nations was already expressing some concern about the youth employment situation; it carried out analysis of the educational situation and advanced some worrying consequences (see also Annexes IX and X):

"The increase in the numbers of youth in secondary and tertiary education is a positive development; however, labour markets in many countries are presently unable to accommodate the expanding pools of skilled young graduates. In a number of settings this is partially attributable to the failure to coordinate education provision with labour market needs, but it is perhaps more fundamentally linked to the fact that large numbers of youth are now coming of age and are trying to find work. In the absence of opportunities in the formal labour market, many young people resort to "forced entrepreneurship" and self-employment in the informal economy, often working for low pay under hazardous conditions, with few prospects for the future. Together, these factors can cause disillusionment and alienation among younger workers. (...) Young people also constitute a significant proportion of the 175 million global migrants, which contributes to the brain drain in their home countries (United Nations, 2003).

There has been increasing concern among policymakers that the frustrations accompanying long-term unemployment among groups of urban young men may feed political and ideological unrest and provoke violence (Commission for Africa, 2005). Many countries have experienced "youth bulges", which occur when young people comprise at least 40 per cent of the population, and it has been argued that in such a context, the large numbers of unemployed and idle youth may challenge the authority of the Government and endanger its stability (inter alia; Urdal, 2004; Cincotta, Engelman and Anastasion, 2003)."[54]

Some conclusions to the various data analysis are presented in the 2008 ILO "Global employment trends for youth":

"Beyond the basic data-driven trends, what have we learned given our supposed expansion of knowledge on the topic of youth labour markets? One thing we have learned is that youth born in developing economies – and this was as much as 89 per cent of the world's total youth population in 2007, up from 87 per cent in 1997 (see figure 1.5 for the changing regional youth population distribution over time) – face distinct challenges from those born into developed economies. Hence there is a need for disaggregation of data at least to the regional level. (…) With diverse youth employment challenges in the two groups, it is inevitable that policy focuses differ as well (keep in mind, there is bound to be some overlap in policy focuses across the two groups).

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[53] INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (2010), *Global Employment Trends, January 2010,* p 16-17

[54] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 16-17

Figure 1.5
Regional distribution of the youth population, 1997 and 2007
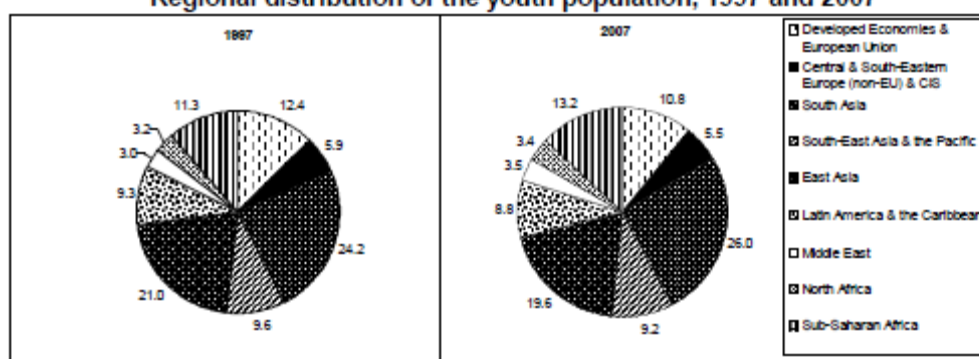
Source: UN, World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision Population Database, Panel 2: Detailed data, median variant; http://esa.un.org/unpp/.

There is increased recognition of the fact that there are specificities to youth employment that require directed policy responses. This fact, in itself, is an important "lesson learned". Job growth policies are crucial to setting the scene for promotion of decent and productive employment opportunities for all men and women, including youth, but only more targeted policies will promote employment opportunities for youth directly. Hence the need to strengthen (or create) labour market institutions that help youth access jobs, avoid discrimination based on the "experience gap", promote entrepreneurship and direct training toward market needs. (…) Other youth employment challenges and other policy responses do exist. The hope is that more countries will undertake detailed national situational analyses of youth employment challenges so that specific policy responses can be designed in a deliberated national context."[55]

II.   YOUTH AT RISK

The transition from childhood to adulthood is generally well managed by young people throughout the world. Unfortunately, as detailed in the United Nations report, certain risks which we will address below are inherent to the process.

"Most young people manage the transition from protected childhood to independent adulthood quite well. With family, school and peer support, the majority of youth eventually find a meaningful place in society as young adults. A minority of young people deviates from this path; some engage in risky behaviour that can damage their social position or undermine their health. Many young people are beginning to explore their sexuality, and for some there are attendant risks. Some youth experiment with drugs or venture into delinquency, though such phases are generally temporary. These transitional risks have not changed much over the past several generations, and for most young people today they remain areas of primary concern."[56]

1) Health

The United Nations proposes the following definition of health and explains why focusing on young people in extreme poverty is extremely relevant:

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[55] INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (2008), *Global employment trends for youth, October 2008,* p 6-7
[56] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 133

> "Health may be defined as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Because youth are a relatively healthy segment of the population, their health (with the exception of reproductive issues) has typically been given little attention. When they do suffer poor health, it is often a result of the effects of accidents, injuries caused by armed conflict, violence, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. Extreme poverty and undernutrition make some youth vulnerable to disease. Accidents and injuries are major causes of youth morbidity, mortality and disability.
>
> (…) Many who become sexually active at an early age do not know how to protect themselves during sexual activity. Young women are often unable to negotiate condom use with male partners and may fear violence if they try to do so. One third—or more than 100 million—of the curable sexually transmitted infections (STIs) contracted each year are among women and men younger than 25 years of age. Having an untreated STI significantly increases the risk of HIV infection (United Nations Population Fund, 2004)."[57]

Girls and young women are particularly concerned since early pregnancy brings many risks for both mother and child:

> "Although early pregnancy has declined in many countries, it remains a major concern, primarily because of the health risks for both mother and child, but also because of its impact on girls' education and life prospects. Births among women and girls under the age of 20 account for 17 per cent of all births in the least developed countries, which translates into 14 million births worldwide each year. In developing countries, one woman in three gives birth before the age of 20; in West Africa, 55 per cent of women do so. Pregnancy-related problems constitute a leading cause of death for young women aged 15 to 19 years, with complications from childbirth and unsafe abortion representing the major contributing factors (United Nations Population Fund, 2004)."[58]

Another issue that we will also address further is the problem of young people's health during conflicts:

> "The impact of armed conflict on the lives of young people and on society as a whole is enormous. Conflict seriously endangers the socialization process, affecting young people's chances of becoming economically and socially independent adults. Conflict often destroys the safe environment provided by a house, a family, adequate nutrition, schooling and employment. During conflict, youth health risks increase, especially for young women. Anxiety and depression, extreme stress, high-risk drug use and suicide are disturbing aspects of youth health that are particularly prevalent in countries experiencing war, occupation or sanctions. In the face of war and instability, adolescent engagement in risky sexual behaviour tends to increase. In countries in which HIV prevalence is high in peacetime, rates of HIV infection among both soldiers and civilians can jump dramatically during periods of conflict, spurred by an increase in sexual violence and prostitution, massive population displacements, and the breakdown of health systems (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, 2004). Trauma and the lack of social support and services seriously affect young people and cause lasting harm to their physical and mental health."[59]

2) HIV / AIDS

Data on the prevalence of HIV among young people aged 15-24 is limited to the data presented in the 2005 World Youth Report by the United Nations. It highlights a major fact of HIV infection: more women are infected than men.

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[57] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 133-134

[58] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 134

[59] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 141

"The present generation of young people has not known a world without AIDS. As a group, they are especially vulnerable to HIV infection. Among the 10 million young people currently living with HIV/AIDS, 6.2 million are in sub-Saharan Africa and 2.2 million are in Asia. Nearly half of all new infections occur among individuals between the ages of 15 and 24 (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, 2004). The HIV incidence rate is higher among young women than among young men. One third of women infected with HIV are between the ages of 15 and 24 (UNAIDS Inter- Agency Task Team on Young People, 2004). The higher rates among women can be attributed to factors such as greater biological susceptibility, gender inequalities, socio-cultural norms, financial insecurity, forced and early marriage, sexual abuse and the trafficking of young women. In some countries, between 20 and 48 per cent of young women aged 10-25 years have experienced forced sex (Global Coalition on Women and AIDS, 2004). In sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean, young women are two to three times more likely than men to be infected with HIV. In Eastern Europe and Central Asia and in much of Latin America, however, young men are more likely to be infected than young women. In many regions, injecting drug users and men who have sex with men are particularly at risk."[60]

According to the 2007 United Nations Youth Report, HIV/AIDS is one of the main risks faced by young people, especially in the developing economies:

"The period between the ages of 15 and 24 is typically one of the healthiest in the life course of an individual. However, young people in both developed and developing countries are currently facing a number of serious health risks that can derail their transition to healthy, productive adulthood. In developing countries, and in many of the economies in transition, HIV/AIDS represents perhaps the greatest risk. Around the world, the reproductive health needs of adolescents have been largely ignored. In many countries, regardless of the level of development or well-being, there is a lack of information and services to protect youth from unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS."[61]

In order to evaluate and observe this main issue more clearly, UNAID identifies those young people most at risk.

"Millions of young people around the world face a high risk of infection from HIV and other negative sexual and reproductive health (RH) outcomes as a result of behaviors that they adopt, or are forced to adopt. Three groups of young people who are considered to be most at risk of HIV are young men who have sex with men and young people who sell sex or inject drugs. In addition to these three groups, other young people are also at higher risk of infection, especially in generalized epidemics. Those who have sex with someone who is or is likely to be HIV-infected are at risk of acquiring HIV if they do not use a condom. This broad group includes the clients of sex workers, the wives of these clients, an HIV negative partner in a discordant couple, and, in high prevalence settings, adolescent girls who have sex with older men. All of these groups include substantial numbers of young people."[62]

As confirmed above by the United Nations, the risk of HIV seems higher among young people in extreme exclusion:

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[60] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 135-136

[61] UNITED NATIONS (2007), *World Youth Report, 2007: Young People's Transition to Adulthood: Progress and Challenges*, p 242

[62] Meeting Report and Discussion Paper from the Interagency Youth Working Group, U.S. Agency for International Development, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) Inter-Agency Task Team on HIV and Young People, and FHI (2010), *Young People Most at Risk of HIV,* p 5

"The vulnerability of young people to HIV infection is highlighted by the fact that they constitute a significant percentage of high-risk groups in high-risk settings. For example, in several Asian countries, young people comprise over 60 per cent of sex workers, and in Central Asia and Eastern Europe, it is estimated that up to 25 per cent of those who inject drugs are below the age of 20 (UNAIDS Inter-Agency Task Team on Young People, 2004). In some regions, especially those with a high prevalence of injecting drug use, the age of initial drug use is declining. Young refugees and migrants constitute another group at high risk of HIV infection. The 120 million children who are not in school worldwide are also at a disadvantage, as they do not have the opportunity to learn about HIV and other reproductive health issues in a stable, credible classroom environment (Burns and others, 2004)."[63]

The same group of experts from UNAID and other organizations identify some of the factors that can explain HIV infection among young people.

"At an individual level, many factors affect young people's health. In terms of HIV, young people are less likely to be able to prevent themselves from becoming infected. They often do not have sufficient correct knowledge about HIV, the skills to use the knowledge that they do have (to negotiate condom use, for example), or access to the services and commodities that they need. (…) Risk factors associated with early sexual debut include having friends who are negative role models and engaging in other risky behaviors, such as substance use."[64]

3) Drug abuse

The use of various drugs is often a way for young people to escape from their reality but it involves many risks.

"Adolescence is a period characterized by efforts to achieve independence from parents and other adults, by the formation of close friendships with peers, and by experimentation with a range of ideas, products and lifestyles. During this very fluid and sometimes volatile stage of their lives, young people often find themselves taking increased risks, making choices that may involve trade-offs, and taking advantage of opportunities that may lead to uncertain outcomes. The use of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol may become a means of escaping from situations that youth feel powerless to change."[65]

Alcohol and tobacco are consumed in both developed and developing countries, but unfortunately, advertising campaigns are now more effective (because still authorized) in developing countries.

"Despite efforts to restrict the advertising and marketing of alcohol and tobacco in industrialized countries, the youth market remains a major focus of the alcohol and tobacco industries. Some recent curbs on such marketing in developed countries have led these industries to concentrate increasingly on young people in developing and transition countries, where similar protective measures have not yet been implemented, and where, unfortunately, young people do not have access to the same levels of health and safety protection."[66]

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[63] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 136

[64] Meeting Report and Discussion Paper from the Interagency Youth Working Group, U.S. Agency for International Development, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) Inter-Agency Task Team on HIV and Young People, and FHI (2010), *Young People Most at Risk of HIV,* p 9

[65] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 137

[66] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 134

Consumption of these various drug is also closely related to other risks facing young people, such as HIV infection:

> "Growing alcohol and drug abuse in many countries has contributed to increases in both mortality and HIV infection rates among children and young people. In some Central Asian countries, the proportion of the population engaged in injecting drug use is estimated to be up to ten times that in many Western European countries. (…) It is believed that up to a quarter of those who inject drugs in Central Asia and Eastern Europe are below the age of 20."[67]

4) Juvenile Delinquency

The United Nations defines juvenile delinquency as follows and presents it as a group phenomenon:

> "Juvenile delinquency covers a range of different violations of legal and social norms, ranging from minor offences to serious crimes. Quite often, youth take advantage of illegal opportunities and engage in crime, substance abuse and violent acts against others, especially their peers. Young people constitute one of the most criminally active segments of the population. Eventually, however, most youth desist from such activity, with few going on to develop criminal careers. (…)
>
> Delinquency is largely a group phenomenon; the majority of juvenile offences are committed by members of various types of delinquent groups. Even those juveniles who commit offences on their own are likely to be associated with groups. In some countries, youth gang activity rose in the 1990s as gang cultures were popularized through the media and as economic factors and a decline in economic opportunities led to an increase in poverty in urban areas. Involvement in delinquent groups works to determine the behavior of members and cuts individuals off from conventional pursuits. The likelihood of experiencing violent victimization is much higher for gang members than for members of other peer groups. In one study, involvement in gang fights increased the likelihood of violent victimization more than threefold (Loeber, Kalb and Huizinga, 2001). "[68]

In its report, the United Nations acknowledges various reasons for delinquency among young people, confirming that juvenile delinquency is very often linked to situations of severe exclusion.

> "Young people who live in difficult circumstances are often at risk of delinquency. Poverty, family dysfunction, substance abuse and the death of family members are proven risk factors for becoming delinquent. Insecurity deriving from an unstable social environment increases vulnerability, and young people with poorly developed social skills are less able to protect themselves against the negative influences of a peer group.
>
> Delinquency rates have risen dramatically in the transition countries; in many cases, juvenile crime levels have increased by more than 30 per cent since 1995. Juvenile delinquency is often highly correlated with alcohol and drug abuse. In Africa, delinquency appears to be linked primarily to hunger, poverty, undernutrition and unemployment. Crime rates tend to be higher in urban areas than in rural areas, which may be attributable to differences in social control and social cohesion. Many of the urban poor live in slum and squatter settlements with overcrowded, unhealthy housing and a lack of basic services. (…)
>
> Young delinquents often suffer social and economic exclusion. There is a strong reinforcing and reciprocal link between low crime rates and social inclusion and control."[69]

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[67] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 137
[68] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 138
[69] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 138-139

5) Violence against women

Violence against girls and young women still exists. As stated by the World Heath Organization, *"Lack of access to education and opportunity, and low social status in communities are linked to violence against women."*[70] Thus, it is also a phenomenon partly linked to the problem of youth exclusion.

> "Violence continues to be perpetrated against girls and young women worldwide. Physical and sexual abuse affects millions of girls and women but are seriously underreported. In some African countries, well over half of all women and girls have undergone female genital mutilation; despite international efforts to halt this practice, its prevalence has not declined significantly. Women and girls comprise half of the world's refugees and in such circumstances are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence (United Nations, 2000).

> Legislation is needed to protect girls and young women from all forms of violence. Particular attention should be given to measures aimed at preventing female infanticide and prenatal sex selection, genital mutilation, incest, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, child prostitution and child pornography. There is a strong need for safe and confidential age-appropriate programmes as well as medical, social and psychological support services to assist girls who are subjected to violence."[71]

III.   CONFLICTS AND MIGRATIONS

1) Youth and armed conflict

According to the 2005 United Nations Youth report, armed conflicts affect a "disproportionate number of young people", and one explanation for this phenomenon is that young people in search of an income might seek a solution in armed conflicts.

> "In 2003, more than 72 countries were identified as unstable (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, 2004), and 50 million people were living outside their communities or countries, displaced by conflict (United Nations, 2004). A disproportionate number of young people are affected by armed conflict. They are most likely to be recruited as soldiers and constitute the majority in most armed forces, they are the primary targets of sexual violence and thus run a high risk of contracting STIs, and they are the most likely to miss out on education. In the past decade, an estimated two million children and youth have died in armed conflict, and five million have been disabled (United Nations, 2004). Unfortunately, these individuals are the least likely to receive assistance (United Nations Children's Fund, 2005).

> In environments that provide few viable options for employment, armed conflicts frequently offer young people a way of generating income. Providing youth with opportunities for meaningful work decreases the risk of their being recruited into or voluntarily joining hostile forces."[72]

2) Migrations

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[70] WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION, http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs239/en/

[71] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 140

[72] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 141

One last phenomenon which can affect young people experiencing poverty and exclusion is that of migration: young people make up a large proportion of migrants, but their migrations do not always lead to a better life.

> "Young people have always been a significant group among migrants. As foreign investment often creates job opportunities in the cities of host countries, rural workers move to the cities. In 2003, 48 per cent of the world's population lived in urban areas, and it is projected that over 50 per cent will do so by 2007. In 2002, there were 175 million international migrants. On the basis of available immigration data, it is estimated that some 15 per cent, or 26 million, are youth. Every day thousands of young people illegally try to pursue a life of fortune in a rich country, often motivated by unrealistic information and high expectations. A parallel industry of illicit travel agents, job brokers and middlemen has arisen, which directs the trafficking of these migrants. The past two decades have seen a dramatic increase in the trafficking of girls and young women, who are often lured into prostitution. Young women and girls who are impoverished, uneducated or from indigenous, ethnic minority, rural or refugee groups are most vulnerable to being trafficked."[73]

This situation presented in 2004 by the United Nations is still true today:

> "In the context of poverty and lack of opportunities, migration has become one of the coping mechanisms used by young people across the world to improve their livelihoods. Though much of this migration may initially be for educational purposes, many youth remain in their host countries in search of better-paying jobs than they would find back home. The exploitation of young migrants by traffickers, unscrupulous employers, and agents needs to be addressed as a stand-alone policy issue. Unfortunately, both internal and international migration among youth tends to be neglected by policy makers and researchers, even though members of this age group are known to be among the most mobile."[74]

IV.   SYNTHESIS OF THE MAIN IDEAS IN A REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

In its 2007 *World Youth Report*, the United Nations presents a regional approach of the main issues faced by young people, an approach that includes the main facts and figures concerning each specific region.

"Asia
- 55.7 per cent of the global youth labour force lives in Asia. (The global labour youth force was estimated at 633 million in 2005)
- Access to education has expanded in many parts of Asia, with the gains most noticeable at the primary level. Girls are increasingly benefiting from primary education. In India, for example, the proportion of girls enrolled in primary education rose from 84 to 96 per cent between 1998 and 2002.
- Asia is a major receiving and sending region of migrants, as job opportunities outside home communities and countries have encouraged millions of young Asians to become mobile on both a permanent and nonpermanent basis.
- Opportunities for migration to OECD countries have increased for highly skilled Asian youth, resulting in considerable outflows of the most qualified and brightest young people in many countries.
- With 29 per cent of the global total of those studying outside their home country,, East Asia and the Pacific contribute the largest group of students studying abroad.
- China accounts for 14 per cent of all mobile students.

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[73] UNITED NATIONS (2004) Report of the Secretary-General about the *World Youth Report 2005*, General Assembly, Economic and Social Council, 6 December 2004, p 26-27

[74] UNITED NATIONS (2007), *World Youth Report, 2007: Young People's Transition to Adulthood: Progress and Challenges*, p 240-241

Latin America
- The net enrolment ratio for primary school in Latin America is 95 per cent --higher than the developing world average of 85 per cent.
- Gender disparity in literacy and educational attainment is relatively small compared with other regions in the world. For most countries, the literacy gap is less than two percentage points.
- In Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, and Venezuela, literacy rates are higher for young females than for young males.
- Argentina has the highest gross tertiary enrolment ratio in the region. With more than three quarters of its young women and slightly over half of its young men pursuing higher studies (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2007).
- But in regard to employment and income levels Latin American youth are worse off today than they were 15 years ago.
- In 2002, about 18 per cent of those between the ages of 15 and 19 were neither studying nor working, and about 27 per cent of those between 20 and 24 were in a similar situation.
- Young people aged 15-19 is the second highest proportion of those living in poverty, after children under 14 years (the poorest segment of society).

Sub-Saharan Africa
- Great progress has been achieved in education. Net primary school enrolment has increased from 57 per cent in 1999 to 70 per cent in 2005.
- Tertiary enrolment in the region nearly doubled between 1991 and 2004. However, secondary school enrolment rates continue to remain very low, with little change recorded in recent years.
- Youth in sub-Saharan Africa are the fastest growing labour force in the world, yet the number of unemployed youth in all of Africa grew by about 34 per cent between 1995 and 2005.
- Many young people are forced to undertake jobs that are characterized by poor conditions in the informal sector and agriculture.
- The percentage of youth living in poverty is extremely high. More than 90 per cent of Nigerian and Zambian youth (almost 40 million) live on less than $2 per day.

Middle East and North Africa
- Literacy and average years of schooling have increased significantly across the region since the 1970s. The gender gap in average years of schooling has been closing rapidly.
- The region is the only one in the world in which the share of youth who are employed has increased over the past decade.
- Unemployment is primarily a youth issue rather than a generalized population issue. Young people represent only about one third of the total working age population while they account for almost half of all unemployed people in the region
- The region has the highest rate of youth unemployment in the world, and the lowest rate of youth labour force participation (40 per cent). The Middle East and North Africa region also has the lowest youth employment-to-population rate (29.7 per cent) in the world. This means that only one in three young people in the region has a job.
- The average labour force participation rate for female youth remained at 25.1 per cent in 2005. This is the lowest in the world and well below the rate of 54.3 per cent for young men in the region.

Small island developing countries
- Most small island developing States have high primary enrolment rates but the rate of those who make it to the last grade of primary school varies widely.
- In Barbados, for example, 99.5 per cent of girls and 95.7 per cent of boys complete primary school while only 55.9 per cent of children in the Comoros stay in primary school until the last grade.
- Gross secondary enrolment rates have generally increased since the late 1990s, and the great majority of Small Island developing States has achieved gender parity in secondary education or have even more girls enrolled than boys.
- Youth unemployment continues to be high in most Small Island developing States; one in ve youth is unemployed in the Caribbean.

- Young women's higher attainments in education do not seem to translate into gains in their employment prospects; they are still much more likely to be unemployed than young men. In Saint Lucia, almost half of all young women in the labour market are unemployed.

Countries with economies in transition
- Primary and secondary school enrolment decreased in some countries of the region, but higher education enrolment has continuously increased in most transition economies.
- The share of young women in tertiary education has grown in many countries and now exceeds that of young men.
- However, the socio-economic transformation that has taken place in this region over the past two decades has given rise to significant changes in labour market prospects for youth.
- In Central and Eastern Europe, 33.6% of youth are not in school and not employed.

Developed market countries
- The opportunities available to youth living in developed market economies are unmatched in other parts of the world.
- Enrolment and completion rates are high at all levels of education.
- The total number of unemployed youth in these economies has declined over the past decade, and young men and women are almost equally likely to participate in the labour market.
- Despite fairly good labour market conditions, many young people have difficulty obtaining stable, decent and long-term employment corresponding to their skill levels.
- Internships appear to have become a waiting stage for those who are unable to find suitable immediate employment or for those who seek to improve the chances of finding good jobs.
- The inability of youth to secure well-paid employment has been a major factor in slowing the transition of youth to independent adulthood in the developed market economies. Between 1985 and 2000, young adults' abilities to form independent households in the developed market economies declined.
- With the influx of young migrants, youth populations in developed countries are becoming increasingly diverse. Migrants now constitute 9.5 per cent of the developed countries' populations."[75]

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[75] UNITED NATIONS, World Youth Report 2007 - Young Peoples: Transition to Adulthood: Progress and Challenges

Chapter 3:
STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

"To address the challenges of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and HIV/AIDS among youth, interventions that have successfully addressed these problems on a small scale should be replicated and supported by increased funding."[76]

I. PUBLIC ACTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Some general ideas

The causes of poverty and exclusion are very diverse: thus, there are many ways to approach poverty reduction. However, the World Youth Report 2005 observes that integrated approaches are more likely to be successful and suggests some general measures:

"There is no single recipe for alleviating poverty among youth. Poverty eradication measures are as numerous and varied as the causes of poverty. Successful country-level strategies reflect an integrated approach based on local, regional and national assessments of the range of problems poor young people face. This integrated approach should be applied in national pro-poor growth strategies, with specific provisions for infrastructure development and agricultural policy changes that will benefit the poor. Youth-focused strategies will be most effective if young people are involved in their design and implementation.

A paper entitled "Investing in children and youth for poverty reduction" outlines the various types of public investment that may be undertaken to reduce poverty among young people in the age group 12-25 (Hoddinott and Quisumbing, 2003). The suggested measures, listed separately according to whether the investments are directly or indirectly aimed at young people, are displayed in table 2.4.

At both the national and international levels, the successful elements of relevant policies and programmes must be identified and scaled up if they are to have any real impact on poverty reduction. Many countries have youth policies and/or youth development programmes in place. Few of the existing youth programmes have been evaluated for their effectiveness, however, which means that information about successful investments in youth is lacking. Where reliable indications of effectiveness exist, progress has been measured over too short a period to allow meaningful assessment (Curtain, 2004)."[77]

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[76] UNITED NATIONS (2004) Report of the Secretary-General about the *World Youth Report 2005*, General Assembly, Economic and Social Council, 6 December 2004, p 22-23

[77] UNITED NATIONS (2005), World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015, p 36

Table 2.4
Suggested forms of public action aimed at improving the situation of adolescents and young people

Direct Measures	Indirect Measures
Employment/sporadic unemployment	Long-term unemployment
• Improved public provision of secondary education • Improved design and quality of education service delivery, measures for girls to continue to secondary school • Scholarship programmes for girls • Basic education and literacy training for adolescents • Conditional cash transfer programmes • Reproductive health-care and peer counselling • Programmes to reduce tobacco consumption • On-the-job training and work-study programmes • Tertiary education	• Time-saving infrastructure • Labour regulations that do not reduce employment • Macro policies conducive to employment and distribution-oriented growth • Infrastructure development to create a favourable business environment • Labour market laws that do not discriminate against women

Source: J. Hoddinott and A. Quisumbing, "Investing in children and youth for poverty reduction" (Washington, D.C., International Food Policy Research Institute, 24 June 2003), p. 24.

2) Various thematic recommendations

The following points are quotations from the 2005 United Nations *World Youth Report.* They mainly enforce the belief that:

- Precise information on the various issues and needs is necessary in order to address the problems as efficiently as possible
- All the issues being generally linked, some solutions to one issue will also have positive effects on others
- Young people should be part of their own development

a. Education

In the area of education, the United Nations underlines the importance of targeting girls and young women with coordinated action from both State and non-State actors:

"International efforts to promote education have mainly targeted girls and young women. Continuing efforts should be made to sustain the positive trend towards gender parity and equality in education and subsequently in employment. There is evidence that educated girls and young women are better able to make decisions that enhance their wellbeing and improve the lives of any children they may have. Public policy measures that have proved successful and should be promoted

include creating an enabling environment for advancing female education through legislative and policy reforms; redistributing resources to meet girls' specific educational needs; reforming curricula; providing incentives to families that make sending all children to school a worthwhile proposition; increasing the number of educational facilities in underserved areas; improving teacher training; confronting violence; working with parents; instituting school feeding programmes; increasing the presence of female teachers; separating sanitation facilities and providing privacy for girls; furnishing school-based health education; and raising the minimum legal age of marriage. Such interventions require a strong public commitment from the State, though the support of non-State actors is essential as well."[78]

b. Employment

Here is a list of what has already been done in the area of employment for young people. The United Nations particularly emphasizes the importance of the Youth Employment Network.

"Over the past decade, the international community has strengthened its commitment to addressing youth employment. In 1995, Governments called for special attention to youth unemployment in the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development (United Nations, 1995). Six years later, youth organizations adopted the Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy at the fourth session of the World Youth Forum of the United Nations System (Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy, 2001). The United Nations Millennium Declaration, adopted by the General Assembly in 2000, reflects the commitment of heads of State and Government to develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere real opportunities to find decent and productive work. This objective was subsequently integrated into the MDGs (United Nations, 2000); the eighth Goal, which relates to developing a global partnership for development, explicitly refers to creating employment opportunities for young people.

The Youth Employment Network (YEN), comprising the United Nations, ILO and World Bank as core partners, was established following the Millennium Summit to initiate action on the ground, with the result that the youth employment issue has gained momentum at the national level. Recommendations based on four global policy priorities— employability, entrepreneurship, equal opportunities for young women and men, and employment creation—were issued in 2001 by the High-Level Panel on Youth Employment, a team of experts appointed by the Secretary-General. The YEN is now supporting the efforts of 13 lead countries committed to the development and execution of strategies for youth employment, as well as those of a number of other countries currently at various stages in the planning or implementation of national action plans in this context."[79]

It seems also that solutions helping young people to create their *own* job opportunities are expanding:

"At the national level, several of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers recently completed by developing countries have outlined youth employment strategies focusing on youth entrepreneurship training, microcredit schemes, the development of vocational training and career guidance services, youth leadership training, youth-targeted labour-intensive programmes, and the acquisition of ICT skills. In addition, several national human development reports have been devoted entirely to youth, and others have included sections dedicated to national youth employment initiatives and policies."[80]

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[78] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 15-16

[79] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 17

[80] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 17

c. Health

Regarding health issues, the United Nations underlines the important role of health workers who need to be well-trained, good communicators, and efficient in the treatments they provide:

> "Easy access to health information, general health services, and sexual and reproductive health services is a necessity for young people. It is important to ensure that health workers receive the training they need to provide youth-friendly services; they must be able to communicate effectively with young people and have the competence to handle their specific health concerns. Particular attention should be given to dealing with substance abuse among young people, immunization and nutrition, chronic conditions, trauma, and other health problems that may begin in youth but have implications for well-being in adulthood."[81]

The United Nations also enjoins young people to be part of their own development:

> "Ensuring the full participation of youth in the development and promotion of health-related programmes and policies would enable them to become agents of change in their communities, improving their own lives and the lives of their peers. Youth who do not have a nurturing family environment, or who suffer abuse or neglect within the family setting, should be specially targeted."[82]

d. Drugs

To address drug issues, it seems essential to be aware of the different profiles of the young people using them before devising appropriate policies.

> "Special strategies are needed for young people who are using or at high risk of using drugs, including youth from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, refugees and displaced persons, injecting drug users and sex workers. Initiatives undertaken to address drug use must constitute part of a country's overall strategy to reduce poverty, facilitate social inclusion, and ensure that the benefits of economic growth are accessible to all. Prevention and treatment interventions at the community level, combined with policies such as minimum drinking age laws and alcohol taxation, have proven effective in some countries."[83]

e. Juvenile Delinquency

The United Nations maintains that when dealing with young offenders social approaches are much efficient than judicial ones.

> "The United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (the Riyadh Guidelines) assert that the prevention of juvenile delinquency is an essential part of overall crime prevention in society, and the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (the Beijing Rules) recommend instituting positive measures to strengthen the overall wellbeing of juveniles and reduce the need for State intervention. It is widely believed that early-phase

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[81] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 135
[82] Idem
[83] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 138

intervention represents the best approach to preventing juvenile delinquency, and that the prevention of recurring crime is best achieved through restorative justice.

The policy options available to address juvenile delinquency and crime cover a wide spectrum but generally reflect one of two opposing perspectives that have emerged from the long-standing debate on whether it is better to "deter and incapacitate" or to "engage and rehabilitate" young offenders. The Beijing Rules state that "wherever possible, detention pending trial shall be replaced by alternative measures, such as close supervision, intensive care or placement within a family or in an educational setting or home" (United Nations, 1985). There is a danger of further criminal contamination when juveniles remain in detention pending trial, which argues for the development of new and innovative alternatives to pre-trial detention. Law enforcement is not the only answer to antisocial behaviour by young people, just as purely preventive or suppressive efforts are not very effective for youth already in contact with law enforcement. There is some evidence that community-based programmes are valuable alternatives to the locked detention of youth. It should be noted, however, that the detention of small groups of repeat offenders known to have committed the majority of registered offences does appear to have had a positive impact on crime rates.

Young delinquents often suffer social and economic exclusion. There is a strong reinforcing and reciprocal link between low crime rates and social inclusion and control. Over the past ten years, there has been a growing trend towards the adoption of effective practices that promote community safety and reduce crime in urban settings. Many of the relevant programmes are effectively targeted at the young people most at risk, or at those living in areas of high risk, and range from early childhood interventions, educational programmes, youth leadership initiatives, mediation efforts, and job and skills training to rehabilitation and reintegration programmes. To discourage violent behaviour and address delinquency, communities have to adopt strategies that combine prevention, intervention and other such options with suppression."[84]

f. *Exclusion and Conflicts*

In order to take the right action to help young people before, during or after a conflict, it is necessary to review their needs as well as the existing solutions and programs. Only then can the appropriate means of addressing all the related issues be put in place. One solution is to provide training and work to the ex or potential youth soldiers.

"In post-conflict situations, policies that emphasize strategies for youth employment not only help to provide a decent living for young people, but also discourage young soldiers from being re-recruited into armed conflicts. Special attention may be directed towards tailoring education, vocational training and skill development to the actual labour market needs of the areas to which young ex-soldiers will return. In this context, training has to go hand in hand with job creation in the formal and informal local labour markets. (…)

In order to address the challenges faced by vulnerable young people during and after periods of armed conflict, international frameworks for action, including humanitarian and human rights laws and related guidelines, should be analyzed and perhaps revised to ensure their specific application to youth in such circumstances. The rights and responsibilities of young people in and after armed conflict must be explicitly articulated in efforts to monitor, report on, and enforce international, national and regional commitments to youth. Work on behalf of children and adults must be more effectively linked in order to address the distinct concerns of young people. (…)

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[84] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 139

The diverse roles and experiences of youth during and after war, which go well beyond youth as perpetrators or victims of violence, must be further explored and addressed through diverse policy and programming approaches. It is essential to accumulate and exchange information on effective ways of responding to the special needs of youth both during armed conflict and after the hostilities have ended (during disarmament, demobilization and reintegration)."[85]

The box below summarizes different options for the programs that target young people in a specific area to address youth exclusion and violence:

Key programming options to address youth exclusion and violence

Education and skills development
- Delivery of emergency education for war-affected and displaced populations (in conflict)
- Supporting rapid rehabilitation and equipping and staffing of schools (post-conflict)
- Improving equality of access to education (prevention, post-conflict)
- Supporting accelerated —catch-up‖ programmes (post-conflict)
- Supporting non-formal, vocational and outreach education (prevention, post-conflict)
- Support to secondary and tertiary education
- Work with government to ensure relevance of education (prevention, post-conflict).
- Curricula reform / development and teacher training (prevention, post-conflict).

Employment generation
- Work with governments to promote enabling labour policies (prevention, post-conflict)
- Support equitable job-creation programmes (prevention, post-conflict)
- Private sector development (especially the SME sector) (prevention, post-conflict)
- Support the informal sector as well as the formal economy (prevention, post-conflict)
- Support land reform and rural development programmes (prevention, post-conflict)
- Promote employment-intensive post-war reconstruction (post-conflict)
- Support social protection programmes that include youth (prevention, post-conflict)

Governance, Voice and Accountability
- Promote youth political participation (prevention, in conflict)
- Promote government capacity, accountability and responsiveness (prevention, post-conflict).
- Support implementation of national youth policies (prevention, in conflict).
- Promote accountable security services (prevention, in conflict, post-conflict).
- Support juvenile justice reforms (prevention, in conflict)

DDR (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration) programmes
- Target interventions at non-combatants as well as combatants (post-conflict)
- Prioritise flexible, appropriate and long-term reintegration packages (post-conflict)
- Support a wide range of skills training and awareness raising (post-conflict)
- Support community sensitization and benefits programmes (post-conflict)
- Address the special needs of young women (post-conflict)

Youth, peacebuilding and reconciliation
- Support youth peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives (post-conflict)
- Support youth dialogue and peace education (prevention, post-conflict)
- Use media to disseminate messages of violence prevention, tolerance and dialogue (prevention, in conflict, post-conflict)

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[85] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 141-142

In conclusion, it appears that young people, when included in the programs that prevent conflicts, can also be agents of peace:

> "Youth should be engaged as central actors in identifying issues that concern them and in formulating solutions. The many initiatives of young peace builders around the world are evidence that youth are also agents of peace; with the right educational tools for crisis prevention and peace building, they can develop the skills needed to help prevent violent and armed conflicts."[86]

g. HIV

Young people are the primary actors of their own prevention: they can make the right choices but only if they have enough information.

> "Intervention policies and programmes at the local and national levels should include life-skills-based HIV/AIDS education that empowers young people to make informed choices and decisions about their health. Young people will not benefit from the information, skills and services offered unless they are provided with a supportive environment within their families and communities and are safe from harm."[87]

It is therefore important to concentrate efforts on the most vulnerable segments of the youth population, with national policies supporting those programs which have proven to be effective.

> "Community-based interventions have proven highly effective when specifically targeted at marginalized young people such as sex workers and injecting drug users, who have poor access to information and services and are at high risk of HIV/AIDS exposure.
>
> National policy should support these programmes and, at a broader level, ensure that an appropriate environment exists for reducing young people's vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and for implementing targeted interventions. Policies must be based on evidence of what is effective, and programmes should be scaled up in acknowledgement of the true scope of the problem. Continued international cooperation and collective global efforts are necessary for the containment of HIV/AIDS. Young people should be made aware of the full range of prevention options, with emphasis given not only to developing healthy lifestyles, but also to sexual health and behaviour issues. A behavioural change approach includes abstinence, delayed sexual debut, a reduction in the number of sexual partners, and correct and consistent condom use."[88]

In conclusion, we can quote the United Nations, stressing that action is needed on all fields simultaneously, because improvement in one area, health for example, also impacts positively on others such as education or employment.

> "Drawing on the experience of the past ten years, a comprehensive approach to youth health programming has emerged as part of a global consensus on the need to link reproductive health interventions to efforts to provide adolescents with choices and options through investments in education, job training and citizenship development. It is imperative that health education, including the teaching of life skills, is introduced into both school curricula and programmes designed for out-

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[86] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 142

[87] UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 136

[88] idem

of-school youth. Investing in young people's health, education and skill development, and empowering girls to stay in school, marry later and delay pregnancy are essential interventions that can substantially improve their chances of becoming well-informed, productive citizens. Youth health programmes and policies should be interdisciplinary in nature, extending beyond the health sector. Efforts need to be scaled up if the enormous health challenges facing the world's youth are to be adequately addressed."[89]

The following box from the 2007 United Nations *World Youth Report* presents a synthesis of the main recommendations and solutions to implement in order to improve the situation of young people.

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[89]UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*, p 135

Box 8.1

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IN CORE AREAS OF THE WORLD PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR YOUTH HIGHLIGHTED IN THIS REPORT

Education

1. Improve technical, secondary and higher education, maximizing the use of new technologies.
2. Preserve cultural heritage and diversity and encourage participatory dialogue.
3. Increase vocational, professional and life-skills training.
4. Promote human rights education, including among migrant and indigenous youth.
5. Facilitate the transition from school to work.
6. Train skilled guidance and vocational counsellors, as well as youth workers.

Employment

1. Increase microfinance and entrepreneurship programmes to benefit young people.
2. Target the unemployment of vulnerable and marginalized youth.
3. Encourage youth-led and youth-run voluntary service projects.
4. Promote youth employment and skill development in the context of globalization.

Poverty

1. Empower young people as key contributors in poverty reduction strategies.
2. Promote decent work with social protection schemes, even in the informal economy.
3. Increase vocational training and employment opportunities.
4. Foster rural development to include youth in strengthening food security and sustainable agriculture.

Health

1. Ensure the provision of youth-friendly basic health services, including sexual and reproductive health care.
2. Further the development of health education, including sexual and reproductive health education.
3. Scale up the prevention and treatment of HIV infection and AIDS among youth.
4. Promote good hygiene and sanitary practices.
5. Reduce preventable diseases and illnesses.
6. Eliminate the trafficking and sexual abuse of young people.
7. Reduce obesity, hunger and malnutrition.

Rights of girls and young women

1. Eliminate discrimination and ensure equal participation at all levels of society.
2. Increase levels of education and literacy, including non-formal education.
3. Develop gender-sensitive health programmes, including sexual and reproductive health programmes.
4. Increase employment opportunities and ensure equal representation at decision-making levels.
5. Eliminate all forms of violence against girls and young women and strengthen the family.

Source: Drawn from the World Programme of Action for Youth (A/RES/50/81).

Source: UNITED NATIONS (2007), *World Youth Report, 2007: Young People's Transition to Adulthood: Progress and Challenges*, p 235

II.   SOME EXAMPLES OF PROGRAMS AND SUCCESSFUL INITIATIVES

These examples come from the United Nations' *World Youth Report, 2007: Young People's Transition to Adulthood: Progress and Challenges.*[90]

Box 3.7
TANZANIA: PARTNERSHIP FOR COMMUNITY-BASED VOLUNTEERING

The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Youth Development of Tanzania has set up youth camps as a mechanism for mobilizing youth and engaging them in community activities. The camps are encouraging young people to get involved in volunteering within their community and are supporting the delivery of social services.

The programme began in June 2006 with 30 male and female volunteers in the Moshi district. The original plan, which provided for four camps, has been expanded to allow the establishment of ten camps in various districts by December 2007. The volunteers assist with "cleaning up" and preserving the environment, construction activities (schools, dispensaries, and road rehabilitation), and tree planting. The camps also provide spaces where community youth can meet the volunteers to discuss issues and to learn through seminars. Seminar topics include:

- The concept of development and volunteerism;
- The National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (MKUKUTA);
- HIV/AIDS education;
- The formation and registration of community-based and non-governmental organizations;
- The formation of Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOS);
- The National Youth Policy;
- Environment conservation.

A key lesson from this Tanzanian initiative is that a range of partners can contribute to the success of a youth volunteer programme. This programme draws strength through its partnership with the local government structure. This helps to ensure that community members are aware of the camps and are willing to participate in them. In addition, the youth department liaises with district youth offices to ensure that the programme is well supported through access to infrastructure and equipment. The programme has also aligned itself with the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (MKUKUTA) and receives international support from UNDP and UNV.

The youth camps in Tanzania have shown that if young people are given opportunities and adequate facilitation, they are often willing to participate actively in structured community activities that support local social services. The involvement of local citizens with youth in community activities has helped to revitalize the spirit of volunteering and self-help, breaking down the notion that development is to be delivered only by the Government.

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[90] UNITED NATIONS (2007), *World Youth Report, 2007: Young People's Transition to Adulthood: Progress and Challenges*, p 108-109

Box 3.5

MOZAMBIQUE: ATTRACTING YOUTH INTO DISTRICTS

One of the key development issues for Mozambique is the need for skilled people to live and work in rural areas. Like young people in many countries, the skilled youth in Mozambique are attracted to the towns and cities, where they hope to find interesting jobs and a comfortable lifestyle.

Through an initiative called *Férias Desenvolvendo o Distrito* (meaning "youth developing districts"), the National Youth Council and the University Students' Association have devised a means of addressing this issue. Supported by the Ministry of Youth and Sports and various United Nations agencies, they are using volunteering as a means of building up the skills of graduates while opening up possible alternative employment paths for them. Graduate students have the opportunity to volunteer at district offices (where working conditions are normally deemed not to be good) through volunteer vacation programmes. The initiative helps the Government of Mozambique fill posts that have been vacant and works to improve the level of service provision for development at the district level.

The programme began in 2006 with the placement of 200 undergraduate and postgraduate students from all public universities in Maputo in 18 district offices that deal with issues such as agriculture, education, health, social action, fishing, public administration, decentralized planning, environment and justice. Before their placement, the volunteers were trained in community-based participation and public administration. The programme was repeated in 2007 and included participants from all over the country.

This programme has been successful in at least three ways: it has ensured that skills are brought to offices that are otherwise under-resourced; it has taken some steps towards addressing the major problem of youth unemployment in Mozambique by giving young people skills and practical experience and opening up opportunities they may not have previously considered; and it has helped change young people's perceptions of working in district offices. Surveys indicate a significant decrease in the percentage of students expressing discontent with working and living conditions at the district level.

Box 3.6

SIERRA LEONE: YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND JOB CREATION THROUGH AGRICULTURE PROGRAMME

Food insecurity, skill deficiencies, and problems associated with population growth and increasing urbanization are all challenges faced by large numbers of youth in Sierra Leone. One volunteer programme addresses all of these issues in one go.

Through a programme called Youth Engagement and Job Creation through Agriculture, some 15,000 young men and women between the ages of 15 and 35 are involved in a major effort to improve food security. At the same time, they are improving their own skills and gaining access to resources, which in turn ensures sustainable livelihoods. The Ministry of Youth and Sports, with assistance from UNDP and UNV, is meeting three goals simultaneously:

- *Youth empowerment and employment.* Many subsistence farmers are young people; training and resources that have been passed on to the youth provide them with the means to sustain their businesses and livelihoods, which in turn contributes to their sense of empowerment;

- *Food security.* The programme has proved that young people can manage crops and animals effectively;

- *Rural-urban migration.* The programme demonstrates that there are viable livelihood alternatives outside the cities.

By supporting young people in farming activities, the community-based programme also empowers youth to organize themselves for microenterprise development; facilitates the process of youth empowerment by organizing and supporting various voluntary group projects; establishes networks between engaged youth groups for voluntary experience and best-practice sharing; and provides for self-employment for mixed groups of youth farmers in vegetable gardening, food-processing, other agricultural activities, and marketing, which will promote recognition of their volunteer actions in the districts.

The programme has been successful in proving that young people can be positively engaged in their own development as well as in the development of the nation.

III.   ENTREPRENEURSHIP: A WAY TO ADDRESS YOUTH POVERTY

Having described some general ideas about programs or policies that could improve the situation of young people today, let us now take a closer look at the entrepreneurship solution. In this section, we will mainly use the findings of F. Chigunta's report, *Youth Entrepreneurship: Meeting the Key Policy Challenges (2002)*, in order to better understand the specificities and the benefits of youth entrepreneurship. This part could initiate discussion about considering entrepreneurship as one solution to the problem of youth poverty.

"In recent years, the promotion of entrepreneurship as a possible source of job creation, empowerment and economic dynamism in a rapidly globalizing world has attracted increasing policy and scholarly attention. However, despite this attention, there has been no systematic attempt to look at it from a youth angle. The tendency has been either to subsume the youth into the general adult population or to ignore their efforts to forge a livelihood through enterprise activities. This has resulted in the lack of an adequate understanding of the potential benefits of youth entrepreneurship as a means of improving youth livelihoods."[91]

1) What is entrepreneurship?

There are so many different definitions of "entrepreneurship" that reviewing them all would go beyond the extent of this report. We will therefore use the definitions adopted by the Chigunta report which seem appropriate for the analysis of youth entrepreneurship:

"This paper adopts a definition of entrepreneurship along the lines proposed by Stevenson (1989). According to Stevenson, 'entrepreneurship' is "the process whereby individuals become aware of business ownership as an option or viable alternative, develop ideas for business, learn the process of becoming an entrepreneur and undertake the initiation and development of a business".

Drawing upon the above definition of entrepreneurship, and for the purpose of this paper, 'youth entrepreneurship' is defined as the "practical application of enterprising qualities, such as initiative, innovation, creativity, and risk-taking into the work environment (either in self employment or employment in small start-up firms), using the appropriate skills necessary for success in that environment and culture" (Schnurr and Newing, 1997).1

We define 'self-employment' as anyone who works for himself or herself but for anyone else, except under arm's-length contracts (OECD, 2001). The OECD definition includes those who work alone – at home, from a workshop-truck or in separate businesses."[92]

2) Benefits and consistency of youth entrepreneurship and self employment

In the following section, we report Chigunta's findings on the value of youth entrepreneurship and underline the main ideas[93]:

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[91] CHIGUNTA, F. (2002), *Youth Entrepreneurship: Meeting the Key Policy Challenges,* Produced for the Youth Employment Summit (YES2002), p.2

[92] Idem, p2-3

[93] CHIGUNTA, F. (2002), *Youth Entrepreneurship: Meeting the Key Policy Challenges,* Produced for the Youth Employment Summit (YES2002), p.2-5

- **Employment, social insertion, local community development**

"It is now widely accepted that there are many good reasons to promote entrepreneurship among young people. While caution should be exercised so that entrepreneurship is not seen as a 'mass' or wide-ranging solution which can cure all society's social ills, as many experts such as Curtain (2000) warn, it has a number of potential benefits. An obvious, and perhaps significant one, is that **it creates employment for the young person** who owns the business. This is especially the case in an economy subject to rationalization, change and restructuring. Many experts believe that this could **bring back the alienated and marginalized youth into the economic mainstream** (Curtain, 2000; White and Kenyon, 2000).

There may also be a direct effect on employment if new young entrepreneurs hire fellow youths from the 'dole' queues (Curtain, 2000). In this way, **it could help address some of the sociopsychological problems and delinquency that arise from joblessness**. Youth-run enterprises (YREs) also provide valuable goods and services to society, especially the local community (OECD, 2001; Stone). This results **in the revitalization of the local community.** It has also been observed that new small firms tend to raise the degree of competition in the product market, thereby bringing gains to consumers (Curtain, 2000). In addition, the enterprises may create linkages between youth entrepreneurs and other economic actors, such as through sub-contracting, franchising, and so on (White and Kenyon, 2000)."

- **Innovation**

"Youth entrepreneurship also **promotes innovation and resilience as it encourages young people to find new solutions, ideas and ways of doing things through experience-based learning** (OECD, 2001; White and Kenyon, 2000). In certain circumstances, young entrepreneurs may be **particularly responsive to new economic opportunities and trends.** This is especially important given the on-going globalization process. It is increasingly accepted that youth entrepreneurs can present alternatives to the organization of work, the transfer of technology, and a new perspective to the market (White and Kenyon, 2000)."

- **Upward social mobility, self accomplishment, sense of meaning and belonging, development of new skills**

"White and Kenyon further note that **social and cultural identity is promoted through youth enterprises, as is a stronger sense of community where young women and men are valued and better connected to society**. They note that youth enterprises give young people, especially marginalized youth, a sense of meaning and belonging. This can shape the identity of youth and encourage others to treat them as equal members of society. A popularization and democratization of entrepreneurship **can allow the disadvantaged in society to succeed regardless of social or family background** (OECD, 2001).

In a broader sense, 'entrepreneurship', when treated as 'enterprise'**, helps young women and men develop new skills and experiences that can be applied to many other challenges in life."**

- **Harness the natural resourcefulness of young people**

"In the Oxford Thesaurus, 'enterprise' is defined as "resourcefulness, initiative, drive, imagination, enthusiasm, zest, dash, ambition, energy, energy, vitality, boldness, daring, audacity, courage, get up and go…" It is worthy noting that these attributes are generally associated with youth. In that sense, youth have "the qualities of resourcefulness, initiative, drive, imagination, enthusiasm, zest, dash, ambition, energy, boldness, audacity, courage…" (Schnurr and Newing, 1997:2). Ghai (1988:21) also notes that "youth are known to possess qualities of enthusiasm, motivation, enterprise, risk-taking, flexibility, energy, resourcefulness and willingness to try new approaches". Bennell (2000) in this regard argues that the challenge for governments, NGOs and international bodies seeking to improve youth livelihoods is to **"tap into the dynamism of young people and build on their strong spirit of risk-taking".**

- **Usefulness of youth entrepreneurship programs beyond the entrepreneurship purpose and importance of self-employment**

"It follows, therefore, that policies to promote youth entrepreneurship need not be seen as a departure from the broad policy orientation needed in any case. As the OECD report (2000) observes, programs to train young men and women for self-employment and help them to achieve it can enhance what must be done to attack youth unemployment in general. This is based on the recognition that not all young people can become entrepreneurs in a business sense. **Enterprise skills can, therefore, help youth adapt well to other non-entrepreneurial careers.**

Moreover, the success of the 'new economy'-however defined-is dependent on the promotion of a culture of entrepreneurship. It has been observed that youth have the capacity to understand it and be its pioneers. This is reflected in high youth participation in internet business start-ups (OECD, 2001; Curtain, 2000).

Given this situation, the promotion of youth enterprise in general and youth entrepreneurship in particular is vital. The importance of promoting youth entrepreneurship should also be seen in the context of improving social attitudes towards entrepreneurship. Collectively, these influences are referred to as an 'enterprise culture'. The improving social attitudes towards entrepreneurship are also evident among young people. Recent survey data suggest that more and more young people in both developed countries (here after DCs) and developing countries (here after LDCs)6 increasingly view entrepreneurship as a viable career option

The importance of promoting entrepreneurship is also reflected in the increasing role that self – employment now plays in job creation across the world. **In DCs, and especially in LDCs, self-employment is emerging as an important source of employment, livelihoods and economic dynamism.** In DCs and more industrially advanced developing countries, there has been increasing *flexibilisation* of production and employment relationships which involve sub-contracting production to small enterprises due to increasing global competition and information technology. In LDCs and transition economies, the bulk of new employment in recent years has been in the informal sector.

Given the growing importance of self-employment as a source of new jobs and economic dynamism in developed countries, and livelihoods in developing countries, there is need to tap the potential of entrepreneurship as a source of youth development, employment creation and economic empowerment."

3) Motivations of youth for starting a business

It is always of value to understand the motivation behind any initiative: if you understand the motivation you can fully understand the challenge and so hope to address it properly. In our chosen group, namely excluded or poor young people, we can highlight the following motivations for starting a business:

"In contrast, **youth in developing countries tend to go into business out of economic necessity or need to survive, or out of failure to find productive use of their energy in other avenues.** Survey data from Zambia show that the overwhelming majority (92.3 percent) of the respondents cited socio-economic problems as the major reason for starting the business (CHIGUNTA, 2001). Of these, close to half (46.2 percent) cited lack of employment, a third (30.8 percent) the need to supplement household income; and 15.4 percent poverty. Only 7.7 percent of the respondents cited the need to accumulate wealth as the major reason for starting the business. Similarly, in Malawi, the majority of youth entrepreneurs cited unemployment and poverty as the major reasons for starting their businesses (Kambewa, *et al.*, 2001).

In some countries, the different life experiences and expectations of females and males in society influence their reasons for starting an enterprise. For example, the data from Zambia suggest that the need to supplement household income is the motivating factor for starting an enterprise among female youth proprietors, while among male youth proprietors it is lack of employment.

Recognizing the various reasons why young people decide to start a business is important for the promotion of youth entrepreneurship. **As White and Kenyon (2000) observe, the challenge lies in promoting entrepreneurship as a genuine career alternative for young people, especially as a way to achieve greater financial reward and work satisfaction, rather than focusing on self-employment as a way to escape the negative circumstances of unemployment and poverty."**[94]

4) Specific Constraints of youth entrepreneurship

"In general, the data suggest that, compared to adults, young people are disadvantaged in the following areas: more youth face problems of access to resources such as capital; more young people start their enterprises with lower levels of initial capital; more enterprises owned by young people have a lower market value or inventory; more youth entrepreneurs are engaged in a narrower range of activities; more young people tend to operate from homes or streets; more young people do not bring experience and contacts to the business, and; more enterprises owned by youth tend to rely on simple tools or had no equipment at all."[95]

5) Categories of young entrepreneurs and their specific challenges

Chigunta's survey gives a good analysis of the challenges faced by the young entrepreneurs in different stages of the entrepreneurship process. Understanding these challenges is essential to developing appropriate programs. Chigunta divides young entrepreneurs into three categories: pre-entrepreneurs, budding entrepreneurs, and emergent entrepreneurs. We will cite his findings in the two first categories, which are those most likely to involve the target group of excluded young people.

- *Pre-entrepreneurs*

"This being a probationer or transitional stage, the key challenge facing *pre-entrepreneurs* who are just starting out in life on their own is choosing what they want to do. White and Kenyon (2000) warn that there is a danger in 'selling' enterprise as the best option for everyone and forgetting that successful enterprise development begins with the initiative coming from young people themselves.

Thus, the key challenges facing the *pre-entrepreneurs* and *potential entrepreneurs* among them are the *promotion of awareness* of various career options and possibilities for business startup.

Young people in this category largely require awareness and understanding of what enterprise is and what it takes to own and manage a business so that they can consider self-employment realistically as a career option. Then, should a young person decide to explore further, or to start their own business, the second step – the provision of practical support services (such as training, advice, access to finance) – can be provided. Evidence collected by Lang, *et al.*, (n.d) suggests that business start-up for pre-entrepreneur youth is likely to involve the following stages:

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[94] CHIGUNTA, F. (2002), *Youth Entrepreneurship: Meeting the Key Policy Challenges,* Produced for the Youth Employment Summit (YES2002), p.9-10

[95] CHIGUNTA, F. (2002), *Youth Entrepreneurship: Meeting the Key Policy Challenges,* Produced for the Youth Employment Summit (YES2002), p.7-8

The Formative Stage: This relates to the various factors (including environmental) that influence the development of the desire to become an entrepreneur as well as attributes and attitudes that are highly correlated with entrepreneurial success. *At this stage, it is important to encourage young people to acquire appropriate entrepreneurial skills, motivations, attitudes, attributes, behaviors, and values.*

The Developmental Stage: This relates to the more specific learning and targeted skill development that will equip and prepare an individual to move to the *start-up* and *launch* of a business venture. These are *learning skills* and *strategic skills*. *Learning skills* relate to the willingness and ability of a person to acquire information, knowledge, and experience from the world around them that is relevant to their entrepreneurial success. On the other hand, *strategic skills* relate to how a person sees the world, envisions what is possible/desirable, and identifies entrepreneurial opportunities in the world around them.

The Start-up Stage: This refers to the specific skills that are relevant for a successful entrepreneur who is looking to advance an entrepreneurial venture to a period of growth and expansion. These are *tactical skills for start-up*.

Tactical skills are important to conceptualizing a business, developing a business plan and establishing, launching, and operating a business. The start-up stage also requires access to credit or finance for youth entrepreneurs. On the basis of the above discussion, the key challenges for youth entrepreneurship institutions and programs is to provide practical support services such as targeted business development training, advice, role models, and access to finance.

- **Budding entrepreneurs**

These young people are just starting to run their own business. Their key challenge is to increase the rate of survival and success in new businesses. White and Kenyon (2000) observe that growing or expanding an existing business is an aspect often forgotten in enterprise promotion programs. It requires specific skills, knowledge and attitudes that differ from those of establishing a new business.

This means that *budding entrepreneurs* have a different set of needs from those of *pre entrepreneurs* and *potential entrepreneurs*. Given that they need to manage the expansion of their businesses, their needs largely revolve around the following:
- *Tactical skills for Growth*-these are skills that are important to moving a business into and through a period of growth and expansion. They include business management, management of business finances; time management; stress management; improving sales; managing and reducing costs; debt recovery techniques; stock control techniques; marketing; recruitment (employing the right people); risk management, and; negotiation skills (Weeks and Kenyon, 2000),
- Access to working capital, and
- Advice (through such mechanisms as mentoring and business counseling)

Basically, this stage requires *multiple competencies*. Thus, the key challenge for youth entrepreneurship institutions and programs is to provide practical support services, in particular business management training and access to working capital, aimed at promoting the growth of YREs. The starting point in assisting the budding entrepreneurs to acquire these competencies should aim to build upon their capabilities. The involvement of these young people in business suggests that they have already acquired some experience and skills."[96]

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[96] CHIGUNTA, F. (2002), *Youth Entrepreneurship: Meeting the Key Policy Challenges,* Produced for the Youth Employment Summit (YES2002), p.13-14

6) To conclude: an example of an entrepreneurship success story.

Golam Arif Liton, Bangladesh[97]

Arif, a young man in his early thirties, is the eldest son in the family and has 3 brothers. Due to poverty, he could not continue his study after passing his senior secondary school examination. But being the eldest son, he had the responsibility to earn a living and look after his young brothers. But he was unsuccessful in his previous attempts to earn a living. A youth leader of the National Federation of Youth Organisations in Bangladesh motivated him to take training from the Youth Department. He then became interested and took a three month training on livestock, poultry and fishery at the youth training centre. After completion of the training, he took a small loan and started his a poultry project with 200 pullets at the primary stage. Now he has 7000 egglaying hens in his project. Arif also took a six months computer course. This made it possible for him to start a computer training centre near his house in rented premises. Initially, there were five computers in his centre. He started this computer centre with a loan of Taka 34,000/- from a bank and invested Taka 10,000/- from his poultry project. Arif is now providing computer training to 25 students in five batches. His average monthly income is Taka 100,000/- (US$ 2,000/-). He has now become a dignified and successful young businessman in his community. Last year he was selected for the National Youth Award.

Source: Dulal Biswas, 2002.

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[97] CHIGUNTA, F. (2002), *Youth Entrepreneurship: Meeting the Key Policy Challenges,* Produced for the Youth Employment Summit (YES2002), p.12

Conclusion

These data and facts draw their own clear conclusion: **the situation facing young people in extreme poverty throughout the world is extremely worrying and action must be taken to improve it**. This situation needs to be addressed urgently since today's young people are tomorrow's adults. The vicious circles of poverty, exclusion, unemployment could be reversed with appropriate actions specifically targeting the youth population and its particular issues.

But these actions require information that is not currently available. Young people as a group are not subject to many studies, and there is therefore a distinct lack of recent data on the areas requiring specific attention. This is also linked to a lack of knowledge about youth issues in general. The various causes and consequences, the links between the different issues, the specificity of the various regions, the specific needs of young people, their challenges…, all require further in-depth analysis and investigation.

This should encourage all those involved – international organizations, states, non-governmental organizations, local representatives, and, of course, the young – since it has been proven that actions taken successfully for the young can have multiple long term effects, (for example, increasing the level of girls' education reduces the number of early pregnancies and thus the risk of contamination by many sexually transmitted diseases). It is also very inspiring since young people can transform their lives very fast: they have the capacity to adapt to changing environments and are very receptive to the policies and strategies aimed at them if these strategies are well prepared and efficient.

Addressing the situation of young people facing exclusion is thus a very major challenge but also an exciting one. And as we are reminded by the United Nations in various reports, young people should be at the heart of all strategies aimed at them since their enthusiasm, their capacities and their strengths can make them agents of their own change but also of poverty reduction and peace.

Of the various strategies identified**, the promotion, training and support for entrepreneurship among young people facing extreme exclusion stands out as a very powerful and efficient option.**

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Life Project 4 Youth Foundation Inc.
November 2010

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Annexes

ANNEX I: KEY MAINTAINERS AND DRIVERS OF CHRONIC POVERTY

Box One – Key maintainers and drivers of chronic poverty, with examples of implications for youth
Source: Adapted from CPRC (2004).

Key maintainers of chronic poverty	Examples of implications for youth
° *No, low or narrowly-based economic growth* means that there are few opportunities for poor people to raise their incomes and accumulate assets.	° The employment effects of no, low or narrow-based growth appear to be most extreme for youth. In most countries, young people are between two and four times as likely to be unemployed as those over 25 (ILO 2004). This may reflect real or perceived lower skills levels among disadvantaged youth, and more limited social capital networks (CHIP 2004). ° Disillusionment, disappointment and desperation can affect young people who are unable to find or keep decent or productive work despite education and skills, undermining their sense of well-being, and increasing the likelihood of recruitment into militant groups[3] or organised crime.
° *Social exclusion and adverse incorporation* interact so that people experiencing discrimination and stigma are forced to engage in economic activities and social relations that keep them poor – poorly paid, insecure work; low and declining assets; minimal access to social protection and basic services; and dependence on a patron.	° In many contexts, being young increases one's chances of facing discrimination, particularly in the labour market. As is generally the case, youth who also face another form of discrimination – i.e. based on gender, impairment, ethnic status etc. – will be particularly badly off. ° If they have not had the opportunity to build their own networks, young people will be solely dependent on the social and political capital of their households and communities. Where these are weak or destructive (e.g. a member of a marginalized ethnic minority or client-household), the young person's capacity to build her own positive socio-political relationships may be limited.
° In *disadvantaged geographical and agro-ecological regions*, poor natural resources, infrastructure and basic services; weak economic integration; and social exclusion and political marginality create 'logjams of disadvantage'.	° Youth are often particularly determined to escape remote, marginal or stagnant areas, and some are able to build better lives as urban migrants. However, limited skills and social networks, membership of an ethnic or linguistic minority, and a lack of access to information undermine many young people's urban livelihoods. ° Disappointment and desperation can affect young people who are unable to out-migrate, because of gender, illness or impairment, family responsibilities and/or extreme deprivation, further undermining their sense of well-being and increasing the likelihood of recruitment into militant groups or organised crime.
° *High and persistent capability deprivation*, especially during childhood – poor nutrition, untreated illness, lack of access to education – diminishes human development in ways that are often irreversible.	° Poor health and nutrition during their own childhood and adolescence means that pregnant women have higher risks of maternal and child mortality and morbidity. This is compounded by early childbearing. It has been estimated that in 2004, 17% of babies in developing countries were born to women between the ages of 15 and 19, and are at greater risk of ill-health (see Box Three). ° Unhealthy, poorly educated children can grow into young people with more limited capacity for learning and working. However, adolescence and young adulthood – i.e. when 'adult functionings' are being developed – may also act as a 'window of opportunity'. Skills, education, and health and nutrition status acquired during these periods may 'override' earlier disadvantages. See **Figure Four** and subsequent discussion.

Source: MOORE, K. (2005), *Thinking about youth poverty through the lenses of chronic poverty, life-course poverty and intergenerational poverty, Working Paper, Institute for Development Policy and Management (IDPM), School of Environment*

Table 2.1
Millennium Development Goals, targets and indicators relating to young people

Goal	Target	Indicator
1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	1. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than US$ 1 a day 2. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	1. Proportion of the population living on less than US$ 1 a day (1993 purchasing power parity) 4. Prevalence of underweight children under five years of age
2. Achieve universal primary education	3. Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling	8. Literacy rate of 15- to 24-year olds
3. Promote gender equality and empower women	4. Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015	9. Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education 10. Ratio of literate women to men 15-24 years old
5. Improve maternal health	6. Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio	16. Maternal mortality ratio
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	7. Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS	18. HIV prevalence among pregnant women aged 15-24 years
8. Develop a global partnership for development	16. In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth	45. Unemployment rate of young people aged 15-24 years, each sex and total

Source: UNITED NATIONS (2005), *World Youth Report, 2005: Young People today and in 2015*

ANNEX III: UNITED NATIONS AND YOUTH RIGHTS AND THE PROTECTION OF THE YOUTH

Contents of Conventions, Covenants, Recommendations	Date
Universal Declaration of Human Rights	1948
Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples	1965
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	1966
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	1966
The Convention on the Rights of the Child	1979
The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	1979
United Nations Guidelines for Further Planning and Follow-Up in the Field of Youth	1985
United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules)	1985
Declaration on the Right to Development	1986
United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty	1990
United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (The Riyadh Guidelines)	1990
The Rio Declaration on the Environment and Development and Agenda 21	1992
The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action	1993
Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development	1994
Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development	1995
World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond	1995
Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women	1995
The Habitat Agenda and The Istanbul Declaration of the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)	1996
Rome Declaration on World Food Security and World Food Summit Plan of Action of the World Food Summit	1996
Braga Youth Action Plan	1998
Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes	1998
ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work	1998
Special Session on Social Development (Copenhagen+5), Geneva	2000
Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy	2001

Source: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/qanda.htm

ANNEX IV: UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE WORLD, 1999-2009

Table A4. Unemployment in the world (millions)

	1999	2000	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009* CI Lower Bound	2009* Preliminary Estimate	2009* CI Upper Bound
Total	175.2	173.2	191.0	191.1	184.8	177.7	184.9	201.9	211.5	221.2
Male	102.0	101.4	110.6	110.2	106.5	102.8	107.1	116.1	122.0	127.6
Female	73.2	71.8	80.4	80.9	78.4	74.9	77.8	85.8	89.5	93.6
Youth	73.5	73.1	78.4	79.1	76.0	72.5	74.2	78.9	82.7	86.9
Adult	101.7	100.2	112.7	112.0	108.8	105.2	110.7	123.0	128.8	134.3

*2009 are preliminary estimates; CI = confidence interval.
Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, October 2009; see also source of Table A2.

Source: ILO 2010, *Global Employment Trends, January 2010*

ANNEX V: UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR YOUTH AND ADULTS, WORLD AND REGIONS

Table A3. Unemployment rate for youth and adults, world and regions (%)

Youth	1999	2000	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009* CI Lower Bound	2009* Preliminary Estimate	2009* CI Upper Bound
World	12.6	12.5	13.0	13.0	12.4	11.8	12.1	12.7	13.4	14.0
Developed Economies and European Union	13.9	13.2	14.4	14.1	13.0	12.2	13.1	17.5	17.7	17.8
Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	22.7	19.9	19.6	19.1	18.5	17.5	17.1	20.9	21.5	22.0
East Asia	9.2	8.9	8.5	8.4	8.2	7.8	8.7	8.3	9.0	9.7
South-East Asia and the Pacific	13.1	13.2	17.0	17.9	17.2	14.9	14.4	14.6	15.3	16.0
South Asia	9.8	10.2	10.3	10.4	10.0	9.9	9.9	10.0	10.7	11.5
Latin America and the Caribbean	15.6	15.5	16.5	16.1	15.1	14.1	14.3	16.1	16.6	17.5
Middle East	20.5	21.1	20.8	22.6	21.6	21.4	21.7	20.9	22.3	23.8
North Africa	27.3	29.9	27.2	26.8	24.2	23.6	23.5	23.2	24.7	26.1
Sub-Saharan Africa	12.6	12.6	12.6	12.4	12.4	12.3	12.3	12.0	12.6	13.0
Adults	**1999**	**2000**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009* CI Lower Bound**	**2009* Preliminary Estimate**	**2009* CI Upper Bound**
World	4.7	4.6	4.8	4.6	4.4	4.2	4.3	4.7	5.0	5.2
Developed Economies and European Union	5.8	5.6	6.1	5.7	5.3	4.8	5.0	6.9	7.0	7.1
Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	10.4	8.8	7.9	7.5	7.2	6.6	6.7	8.1	8.3	8.6
East Asia	3.6	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.1	3.0	3.4	3.2	3.5	3.7
South-East Asia and the Pacific	2.6	2.6	3.5	3.4	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.5
South Asia	2.5	2.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.3	3.2	3.5	3.7
Latin America and the Caribbean	6.2	6.2	6.0	5.7	5.3	5.1	5.1	5.8	6.1	6.3
Middle East	5.4	5.5	5.5	6.0	5.7	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.8	6.2
North Africa	8.2	8.5	7.3	6.5	6.2	6.1	6.1	6.0	6.5	6.9
Sub-Saharan Africa	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.5	6.5	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.5	6.8

*2009 are preliminary estimates; CI = confidence interval.
Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, October 2009; see also source of Table A2.

Source: ILO 2010, *Global Employment Trends, January 2010*

ANNEX VI: LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE FOR ADULTS AND YOUTH

Table A9. Labour force participation rate for adults and youth, world and regions (%)

| Youth	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009*
World	54.4	53.8	53.3	52.8	52.3	52.0	51.8	51.5	51.1	50.8	51.0
Developed Economies and European Union	52.8	53.1	52.5	51.8	50.9	50.6	50.8	51.0	50.7	50.7	50.3
Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	43.6	42.4	42.1	41.7	40.8	40.9	41.0	41.0	41.5	41.4	41.6
East Asia	68.6	67.2	65.8	64.4	62.9	61.7	60.6	59.7	58.9	58.6	59.2
South-East Asia and the Pacific	56.9	55.8	56.3	55.4	54.8	54.4	53.8	52.7	52.0	51.4	51.6
South Asia	48.4	48.0	47.8	47.7	47.5	47.3	47.2	47.2	46.8	46.6	46.6
Latin America and the Caribbean	54.7	54.2	53.5	53.4	53.0	53.5	53.3	53.3	53.0	52.8	52.3
Middle East	36.9	36.9	37.0	37.1	37.2	37.3	37.5	37.0	36.5	35.9	36.4
North Africa	39.6	39.4	38.8	38.7	38.9	39.1	38.9	38.1	37.2	37.1	38.0
Sub-Saharan Africa	57.7	57.8	57.8	57.8	57.7	57.6	57.6	57.5	57.5	57.4	57.5
Adults	**1999**	**2000**	**2001**	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009***
World	69.3	69.2	69.2	69.2	69.1	69.1	69.2	69.2	69.2	69.3	69.1
Developed Economies and European Union	62.4	62.3	62.2	62.1	62.2	62.1	62.3	62.4	62.6	62.8	62.4
Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	63.2	63.1	63.3	63.5	63.5	63.5	63.8	63.9	64.3	64.4	63.9
East Asia	79.1	79.0	78.8	78.6	78.4	78.1	77.9	77.6	77.4	77.1	76.8
South-East Asia and the Pacific	75.9	75.7	75.7	75.6	75.8	75.7	75.6	75.5	75.6	75.7	75.7
South Asia	64.2	64.1	63.9	63.8	63.7	63.6	63.8	63.9	63.9	64.0	63.8
Latin America and the Caribbean	66.8	66.8	67.0	67.5	67.7	68.3	68.8	69.4	69.4	69.8	69.8
Middle East	57.8	57.9	58.0	58.1	58.2	58.3	58.4	58.3	58.2	57.8	58.3
North Africa	57.3	57.2	57.1	57.1	57.1	57.1	57.0	57.4	57.7	57.7	57.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	78.0	78.2	78.4	78.6	78.7	78.8	79.0	79.0	79.1	79.2	79.5

*2009 are preliminary estimates.
Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, October 2009; see also source of Table A2.

Source: ILO 2010, *Global Employment Trends, January 2010*

Figure 6
Youth labour force participation rates, by region (%)
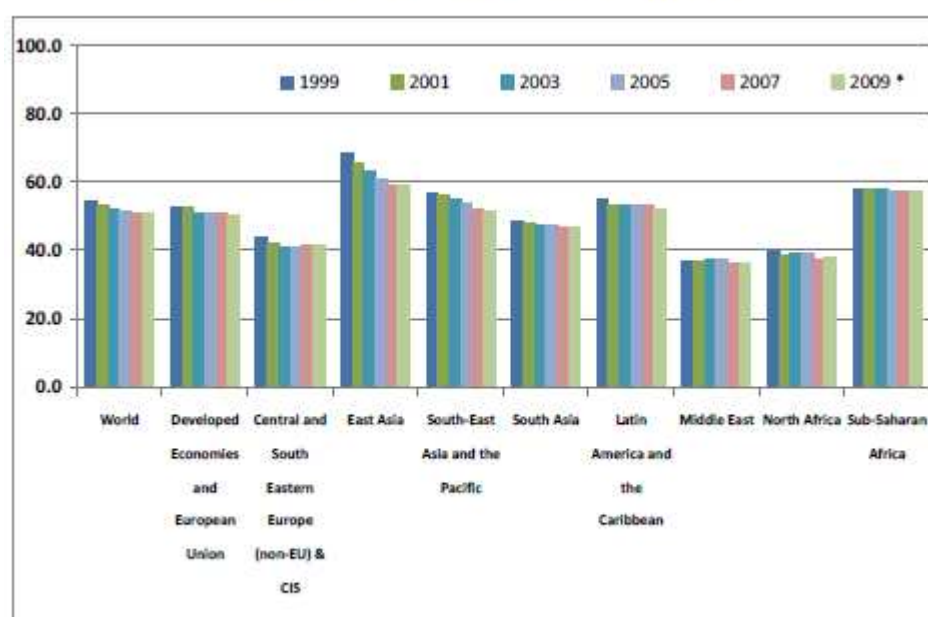
*2009 are preliminary estimates.
Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, October 2009 (see Annex 4).

Source: ILO 2010, *Global Employment Trends, January 2010*

ANNEX VIII: EFFECTS ON THE ECONOMIS CRISIS ON LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION

Box 1
Effects of the economic crisis on labour force participation:
Discouraged youth and prime-age workers; elderly workers remain in the labour force

Changes in employment status, such as movements from employment into unemployment and vice versa, do not affect the labour force participation rate, which is defined as the ratio of the labour force – the sum of the employed and the unemployed – over the total working-age population. However, the labour force participation rate may change due to at least two effects: the "discouragement effect" and the "added worker effect". The impact of the economic situation on labour force participation may also be much stronger for particular groups, such as youth, depending on their constraints and possibilities in the labour market.

Discouraged persons are persons who are available for work but do not actively seek work because they view job opportunities as limited, for example in an economic environment characterized by large-scale dismissals. If the standard definition of unemployment is used, which includes "seeking work" as one criterion, discouraged persons are classified as outside the labour force. An increasing number of workers who lose their jobs and become discouraged would therefore result in a decreasing labour force participation rate. Discouragement regarding current job opportunities in a more general sense may also result in decisions to postpone labour market entry, in particular by youth, or to withdraw from the labour force and retire, especially by older workers, which will have a negative effect on the labour force participation rate. However, discouragement among older workers is countered in a number of developed economies by activation policies, which aim to mitigate the effects of aging populations on labour supply.

A deteriorating labour market may also have an upward effect on the labour force participation rate if the loss of employment of a household member results in an increase to the labour supply of another household member (the "added worker"). Because the "added worker effect" and the "discouragement effect" work in opposite directions, and are influenced by specific policies, the overall effect of a deteriorating economic environment is not certain and can only be assessed empirically.

Table A10 (left panel) shows average changes in labour force participation rates for 17 countries during the last five years preceding the global economic crisis.[1] The average change in labour force participation, amounting to minus 0.2 percentage points across all countries and age groups, is the result from a roughly equal split between increases and decreases in national participation rates. These diverging pre-crisis trends are due to a range of socio-economic and policy factors, which play out differently in each country. However, youth participation rates were on a downward trend in almost all countries (minus 1.0 percentage points on average), and the trend in participation rates for elderly workers was positive in the majority of countries (1.1 percentage points on average). Participation rates for both youth and elderly workers are generally lower than those for prime-age workers.

Comparing the pre-crisis trends in labour force participation with the trends since the start of the crisis gives an indication of the impact of the crisis on participation rates in this group of countries. During the crisis period, the participation rate dropped by 0.3 percentage points across all countries and age groups (see Table A10, right panel). The stronger rate of decrease results from the reinforcement of the pre-crisis trends for all three age groups in Table A10 (youth, prime-age and elderly workers). The stronger trend was most pronounced for youth, as the average change in the participation rate declined from a pre-crisis minus 1.0 percentage points to minus 1.9 percentage points during the crisis. The largest decrease could be seen in Latvia, where the change in the youth participation rate decreased from minus 0.3 percentage points to minus 4.2 percentage points. In the younger Member States of the European Union in Table A10 (Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, but not in Estonia), which were all severely impacted by the economic crisis, a strong increase in participation rates of the elderly can be seen as well (an average increase by 2.2 percentage points, excluding Estonia).

Box 1 – continued

Nevertheless, there were countries in which the trend went in the opposite direction, such as Jordan, where the youth participation rate during the crisis increased by 2.0 percentage points. Similarly, there was an upward pre-crisis trend in participation rates for older workers in Brazil, Jamaica and the United States, but during the crisis these countries saw a decline. Finally, it is important to note that changes in national participation rates that are induced by the crisis may be different for men and women.

[1] The countries are Australia, Brazil, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Jamaica, Jordan, the Republic of Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Philippines, Poland, Spain, Sri Lanka, Thailand and the United States; these countries have been selected because of availability of recent monthly or quarterly labour force participation rates, and it should be noted that the majority are developed economies.

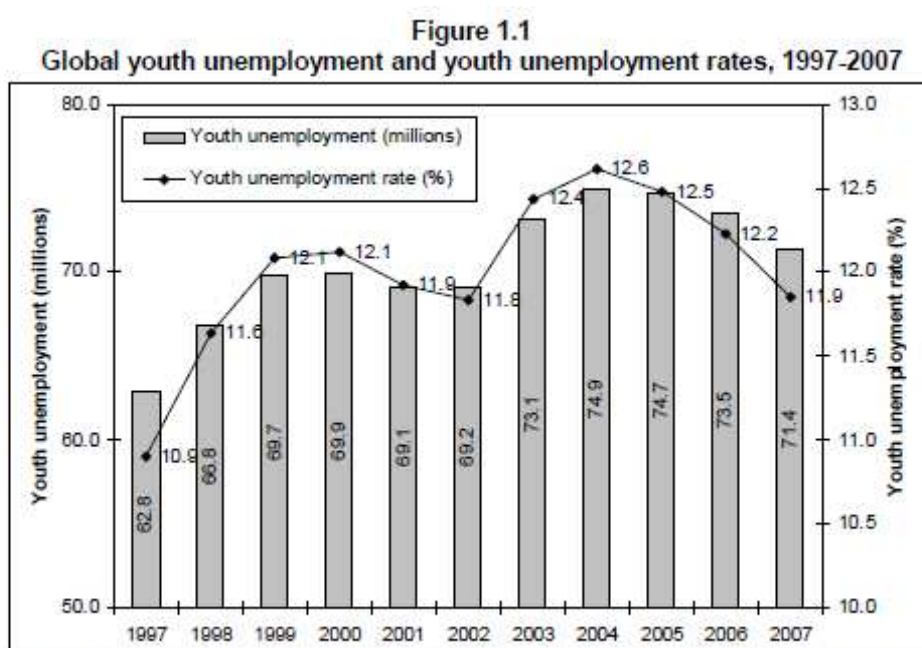**Source:** ILO 2010, *Global Employment Trends, January 2010*

Table A7
Youth inactivity, 1997, 2006 and 2007

	Inactive youth ('000s)			Youth inactivity rate (%)			Female share of inactive youth, 2007 (%)
	1997	2006	2007	1997	2006	2007	
WORLD	468'263	579'553	589'844	44.8	49.1	49.5	56.5
Developed Economies & European Union	61'136	63'503	63'417	47.1	49.1	49.1	51.4
Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	33'680	39'880	39'917	55.0	60.0	60.7	54.1
South Asia	128'933	161'683	165'345	51.0	53.1	53.4	65.2
South-East Asia & the Pacific	43'467	50'874	51'909	43.4	46.6	47.3	57.2
East Asia	66'614	97'142	99'369	30.3	41.8	42.5	42.7
Latin America & the Caribbean	43'933	47'878	48'356	45.0	46.0	46.3	60.6
Middle East	20'400	26'300	26'715	64.2	63.3	63.6	60.2
North Africa	21'002	25'829	26'104	61.8	64.4	64.7	57.8
Sub-Saharan Africa	49'099	66'463	68'711	41.7	43.4	43.7	55.9

Source: INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (2008), *Global employment trends for youth, October 2008,* p 54

ANNEX X: GLOBAL YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATES 1997-2007

Figure 1.1
Global youth unemployment and youth unemployment rates, 1997-2007

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, April 2008; see Annex 1 for information on methodology.

Source: INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (2008), *Global employment trends for youth, October 2008,* p2

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