



# IDEAS TO ACTION

BEST PRACTICES IN YOUTH LED DEVELOPMENT

FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

UN HABITAT

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# CONTENTS

Introduction .....	1
BANGLADESH	
Youth Protecting Human Rights in the Ship-breaking Industry .....	11
KENYA	
Youth Alive .....	13
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	
Fondo Grande Ahead .....	13
BANGLADESH	
Youth-Led Development .....	16
MOZAMBIQUE	
Association for Cooperation Development Social Solidarity Project .....	18
MEXICO	
Anasazi Regalos Empresariales .....	19
CHINA	
Youth-Led Development .....	22
BRAZIL	
Centre of Social Responsibility and Sustainability .....	24
SIERRA LEONE	
Africa Youth for Peace and Development Waste Management Program .....	24
SRI LANKA	
Sri Lankan Youth Parliament.....	26



# INTRODUCTION

As the world's population has become predominantly urban, the population of city and slum dwellers has grown to over one billion, with nearly three quarters under the age of 30. The speed of urban growth and the enormous numbers and diversity of people involved make urbanization one of the major development challenges of this century. The resulting demand on limited resources and the need for accelerated development of infrastructure more than most governments can support, coupled with the assimilation of a variety of cultures and priorities, calls for responsive and inclusive management to ensure sustainability that few governance systems are able to adopt. The emerging crisis will impact all countries, developed and developing, but its most serious repercussions will be felt by those who are least to blame for the crisis and the most ill-equipped to protect themselves from its effects.

All over the world young people are responding to the development needs of their communities through social projects and youth-led businesses. Youth want to be involved and UN-HABITAT believes that all development actors should take youth-led development seriously in their efforts to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Youth have the inherent right, as guaranteed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (art.12), to express their own opinions and to have them taken into account in any matter affecting them.

Youth-led development is a concept, first recognized by UN-HABITAT in 2006 at the World Urban Forum III in Vancouver, Canada, that puts youth at the centre of their own and their community's development. The situation of youth in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is similar to the women's movement in the 20th century that put gender issues on the development agenda.

A similar shift in society's thinking is now required for youth in development. The UN-HABITAT Governing Council, meeting in Nairobi in April 2007, agreed to advance youth development through the establishment of the Opportunities Fund for Urban Youth-led Development (GC 21/7). Such a fund is an important mechanism for ensuring the sustainability and expansion of the agency's efforts towards meaningfully engaging youth as equal partners in achieving UN-HABITAT's goal of sustainable urbanization.

UN-HABITAT has developed 5 Principles of Youth Led Development, titled the Kampala Principles after the multi-stakeholder conference under which they were established. These are:

1. Youth define their own development goals and objectives;
2. Youth have a social and physical space to participate in development and to be regularly consulted;
3. Adult mentorship and peer-to-peer mentorship are encouraged;
4. Youth act as role models to help other youth engage in development; and
5. Youth are integrated into all local and national development programmes and frameworks.

There is ample anecdotal evidence of youth-led initiatives around the world, especially in employment creation and entrepreneurship. An important objective of the Opportunities Fund is to contribute to the understanding of the best strategies for enhancing the contribution of youth to sustainable urban development, and to strengthen international and national policy formulation for youth-led development.

## METHODOLOGY

This report represents the findings of two parallel surveys: a survey on Youth and Harmonious Urbanization and one on Youth Led Development. These studies, undertaken by the Nottawasaga Institute and the Community Alliance, were done to inform the Youth Dialogue Session at the 4th World Urban Forum in Nanjing, China (November 2008) on the role of youth and youth led projects and programs in regards to the main WUF IV theme of Harmonious Urbanization. In addition, this research informed the development and implementation of the Opportunities Fund for Urban Youth-led Development which was officially launched at WUF IV.

The Harmonious Urbanization: the Challenge of Balanced Territorial Development Survey was circulated to 14 key informants from Latin America (4), Africa (2) and Asia (8). The focus of the survey was to determine what youth from these different regions felt were the factors that determine a harmonious city, and how

youth, local government and larger society could better create the conditions for harmonious urbanization.

The Ideas to Action: Best Practices in Youth Led Development case studies were selected as best practices from a larger UN-HABITAT research project that gathered over 100 youth led case studies. These studies were gathered through an online survey administered to over 20,000 youth and youth supporting agencies; an internet desk study; and face-to-face interviews held at key international forums.

The findings from these two surveys cannot be considered statistically representative of any region nor youth in general, but do provide a preliminary insight into the general concerns of young people with regard to harmonious urbanization and issues and initiatives around youth engagement in urban development as identified by the researchers.

# FINDINGS

## Harmonious Urbanization: The Challenge of Balanced Territorial Development

This survey sought to determine what a select group of key youth informants felt were the factors that determined the conditions for harmonious urbanization, and to identify young peoples' larger vision and specific actions they are undertaking to achieve sustainable and harmonious urbanization. There were five sub-themes that the youth responded to in the survey:

- territorial balance and urbanization
- promoting social equity and inclusiveness
- making cities economically productive and equitable
- harmonizing the built and natural environments and
- a city for all generations.

The following are the findings of the survey, organized under each sub-theme.

The objective of this sub-theme was to explore how "the development of the physical form and spatial growth of the city can enhance or impede equity and equality for its diverse residents and economies." The majority of informants felt that the improvement of the physical environment would best enhance the social environment for urban residents.

*There should be provision for more open spaces as in Plazas and Parks that would provide a breathing space in the city that is gradually transforming into a concrete jungle due to modern development.*

- Youth Respondent, Asia

The second most identified factor was a tie between the improvement in road and transportation and the enhancement of infrastructure. This reflects the belief of respondents that the lack of infrastructure in the city negatively effects equity and equality of residents, and harmonization in general. Traffic congestion was mentioned many times as a significant issue as well as other infrastructure needs such as sanitation and water purification. In general there was a consistent theme that poor urban planning was the root cause of many of the challenges associated with spatial growth as it relates to equity and equality, as it did not allow youth and people in general to live quietly, cleanly and securely.

*I believe that a person's liking of a place depends directly on his mental, spiritual and financial habits. Places that provide casual entertainment and socializing are usually the places of interest to the youth.*

- Youth Respondent, Asia

In most cities, wealth and poverty exist side by side. Rich neighbourhoods exist alongside low-income and under-serviced slums and informal settlements. Around the world, close to one billion people live in slum conditions with inadequate shelter, water, sanitation, food, health and education services. Limited employment opportunities exacerbate the situation. Young women in slums experience greater inequity due to poverty and their gender. They are subject to indignity and sexual assault/abuse due to inadequate sanitation and have to drop out of school at an earlier age to assist with domestic and family responsibilities such as fetching water and caring for younger siblings and the sick.

The respondents were asked a series of questions intended to identify actions that may address these inequities. The number one issue that emerged was the need for engagement of youth and other groups in governance, either through local government or through their participation in civil society organizations and initiatives.

*Youth should be pro-active in participation in general matters of governance and development and agitate for inclusion in all bodies of representation.*

- Youth Respondent, Asia

*We would suggest that funds should be taken to the grassroots organizations to help run certain projects more so among the urban poor areas. We advocate equitable sharing of the national cake across all areas in towns and cities.*

- Youth Respondent, Africa

The second most prominent issue in regard to social inclusion, as well as to territorial balance, was access to basic services such as clean water, electricity, and sanitation. Specifically there was concern that access to these basic services was limited to the rich.

*Infrastructure facilities such as electricity and sanitation should be provided to all social classes to improve their lifestyles.*

- Youth Respondent, Asia

The other key issue brought forward by the respondents was employment and training. They expressed a need for youth and women, especially those from more impoverished backgrounds, to have better access to job opportunities and training.

*Occupational equity for the male and female so that all parts of society can get into the mainstream of the city life.*

- Youth Respondent, Asia

Like many other systems, cities consume, metabolize and transform energy, water and materials into goods and waste. As cities consume a significant share of the world's energy they are also responsible for a considerable share of greenhouse gas (GHGs) emissions. However, all cities are not equal and there is no direct correlation between population densities and the production of GHGs. Often the

metropolises of the South produce less GHG emissions than smaller urban centres of the North. Consumption and lifestyles, transportation systems and infrastructure, city form, types of energy source and consumption from households to industry and commerce, airport volume, etc., all impact on GHG emissions.

Other long standing urban environmental issues continue to challenge cities. These include: air pollution, discharge of sewage and industrial effluent into water bodies, solid and liquid waste management, the growth of urban centres and resultant encroachment of human settlements into wetlands, mangroves, woodlots, forests, mountain and hill slopes and river channels and the accompanying loss of natural habitats and biodiversity. Parallel with this is the inequitable distribution of wealth and the poor quality of living and working environments of poor women and men, young and old.

Respondents were asked what they felt were the major environmental issues facing cities, and what could be done to address these to create more harmonious urbanization. Respondents identified pollution and the lack of infrastructure to deal with waste as the most pressing.

*In Medellin, as well as in any city with a river, [the problem is] the adequacy of a system of channels for receipt of organic waste that prevents these from falling into the river and channel them to a treatment and waste recycling plant, [With this infrastructure] the river and its banks would become a recreational site for the resident population and a reference point for tourists to the city.*

- Youth Respondent, Latin America

The second prominent concern was the provision of green space. Mitigating solutions put forward included creating "green pockets to reduce air pollution", increasing "greenery to eliminate toxic gases through photosynthesis", (Youth Respondents, Asia) and the protection of wetlands (Youth Respondent, Africa). The need to construct

new houses and public infrastructures that are environmentally sound was also proposed (Youth Respondent, Africa).

The youth can make a difference if...

1. *Every individual practice small measures like refraining from the rampant violation of usage of unleaded petrol.*
2. *Littering is prevented*
3. *More trees are planted*
4. *Role of women is quite significant as they are mostly engaged in cooking and are likely to engage in waste disposal. Awareness among women can help environmental issues.*

- Youth Respondent, Asia

Cities are about the people who live and work in them. Cities reflect their age through history, as in the heritage of their physical form and cultural wealth. Cities also reflect their history through the ages and lives of current generations. For much of the developing world, children and young people are the majority urban population. In sharp contrast, the industrialized world is experiencing a significant increase in the proportion of elders. How cities involve and respond to the well being of their different generation groups is a key factor in harmonious urbanization. For towns and cities of the developing world, the younger generations are key constituents and actors. The respondents were asked if and how cities serve the needs of young women and men.

The principle issue not being addressed by cities from the intergenerational perspective was the lack of infrastructure, ranging from poor road networks and lack of sanitation facilities to limited access to information and communication technologies.

*The local government has no infrastructure that can help the young in accessing information. Lack of resource centres supported by the local government denies the young women and men opportunity to network with others.*

- Youth Respondent, Africa

Solutions proposed to address these challenges included: "involve the young women and men in the formulation and implementation stage of policies. [This] would be of great help in shaping the lives of youth and their future too" because they "have the potential that is needed by our cities and towns for cultural and economic growth. By creating an enabling environment the young are able to express and release their potential" (Youth Respondent, Asia).

A common sentiment expressed was that it was the responsibility of the youth to "invest themselves and advocate for their involvement and engagement in the processes and activities." The next prominent issue identified was access to training and a healthy economic environment for employment and job opportunities.

*The local government has failed to create a friendly environment for investment especially for the young women and men. The majority of them being in the informal sector are more prone to local government harassment. This has been the order of the day in most of towns where the young wake up to find their business premises demolished without notice.*

- Youth Respondents, Africa

The economy, jobs, and training were key issues throughout the survey, and reflected the desire of the young people interviewed to have local government actively involved in these areas.

# YOUTH LED DEVELOPMENT CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

UN-HABITAT commissioned a series of case studies to inform the Opportunities Fund for Urban Youth Led Development, with the purpose of providing information on youth led agencies that would enhance the effectiveness of the Fund. 106 organizations from North and South America, Africa, Asia and Australasia were surveyed through direct interviews with youth representatives at the World Youth Congress 2008, the Global Youth Enterprise Conference, and the United Nations World Youth Days, and an internet based survey. The following is a synopsis of the findings of the survey.

The survey was administered during August and September 2008. The following gives a breakdown of the responses received.

Africa	40
Asia	13
Australasia	1
Europe	8
Global	3
North Africa	8
North America	19
South America and the Caribbean	14

The youth led projects undertaken by the respondents addressed the following Millennium Development Goals (MDGs):

MDG7 – Ensure environmental sustainability	58.1%
MDG8 – Develop a Global Partnership for Development	57.1%
MDG1 – Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger	54.3%
MDG3 – Promote gender equality and empower women	44.8%
MDG2 – Achieve universal primary education	42.9%
MDG6 – Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria	39.0%
MDG4 – Reduce child mortality	22.9%
MDG5 – Improve maternal health	15.2%

The issue of capacity is always at the forefront when dealing with youth agencies – can they achieve their goals and at the same time maintain financial responsibility and proper reporting?

90.1% of the respondents stated that adults were involved in their project. 75.6% of the adults were involved as mentors, 33.3% were involved in program delivery, 53.3% were involved in administration and the same percentage involved in the board. 65.3% of the groups reported having a bank account.

56.3% of the respondents were registered with government. Out of these 66.1% were registered with national government and 28.5% were registered with local government and councils. 79.6% reported having space - 32.6% had their own space, 34.6% shared their space with others, and 20.9% borrowed the space from other groups. 60.9% of the projects used the space for project activities while 33.3% of the projects used the space for meetings.

The above response demonstrates that the youth led groups have a basic level of capacity, with most being registered under their local authority, having some sort of space and a bank account. A substantial portion involved adults in their projects in key positions, while maintaining their youth led nature, by reducing the level

of adult involvement in actual program delivery.

Over 59% of the groups were either self funded, or funded through resources raised through entrepreneurial ventures. 31% received funding from international agencies.

65% of the respondents believed that grants of up to USD2500 would enable them to achieve their main goals. 81% felt that any amount less than USD1000 would not be sufficient to achieve their key goals. 67.6% reported a monthly operation cost of under USD500, or USD6000, and of these 39.2% had costs lower than USD250 per month or USD 3000 per annum. Desired resources other than funding were identified as equipment (39.1%), training (30.4%), and marketing support (19.6%).

These findings suggest that a large percentage of the respondents raise their own resources for their projects, have annual operational costs below USD6000, and need very small resources to assure success for their programs. This would

suggest that grants to youth led agencies of up to USD5000 would be largely successful in enabling organizations to achieve their goals.

Youth projects are perceived to be short term, one-off initiatives, and the sustainability of the project is always an issue of concern among would be supporters of youth led initiatives. Over 98% of the projects surveyed reported ongoing initiatives. Of these 66% said that there were more than 7 people involved in program delivery. The groups that benefited most from the interventions were youth (83.3%), the general community (65.1%) and women (28.1%). The benefits received by the projects were most of all training (65.1%), while 17.9% received social entertainment or recreational services.

The projects benefited not only youth but also the community at large and women in particular, and delivered a diversity of services. The projects therefore benefit not only the youth engaged, but also the larger community within which they operate.

## CONCLUSION - HARMONIOUS CITIES AND IDEAS TO ACTION SURVEYS

The surveys demonstrate that youth are actively involved in analyzing the social and environmental challenges cities face, and also act on that analysis through youth led intervention programs. The youth involved in both surveys did not solely blame local government for their problems, but proposed and demonstrated a variety of policy and practices, and in the case of the Ideas to Action survey, verified their commitment to development.

These surveys also demonstrate that youth face common challenges, and have similar visions on how to achieve sustainability in cities. These surveys support a key underlying premise of youth led

development - youth are willing to engage with decision makers to bring about positive change. Another premise, that youth are able to effect positive change, is evidenced through the over 100 responses received.

The case studies outlined in this document are some examples of youth led development, intended to enhance understanding of the related processes and issues. This document is the first in a series of research reports on youth led development which intends to assist both practitioners and policy makers to support youth led development more effectively.



## BANGLADESH

### Youth Protecting Human Rights in the Ship-breaking Industry

*In this case study, youth have taken on the challenge of bringing to light the plight of mostly youth workers in an unrecognized industry, in a very poor country. The organisation is run by youth who are addressing the issue at local, national and international levels, using all tools available to them to achieve their desired goal. This study demonstrates all five of the Global Partnership Initiative – Youth Led Development principles.*

A severe cyclone in 1960 drove a Greek ship on to Sitakunda Upazilla's shores in Bangladesh, and it could not be re-floated. In 1964, the ship was bought and scrapped by Chittagong Steel House. This gave birth to the ship-breaking industry in the country. The industry boomed in the 1980s, when developed countries such as the UK, Taiwan and Spain wanted to get rid of their ship-breaking industries since it did not comply with the new environmental protection standards. Bangladeshi industrialists took the opportunity to adopt ship-breaking, as it garnered much profit. Today 52% of large ships are scrapped in Bangladesh.

Ship-breaking activities in Bangladesh are concentrated in Sitakund, just north of Chittagong city. These activities present both challenges and opportunities. Meeting the increasing demand for raw materials such as steel needs to be balanced with the negative impact this activity is having on the coastal environment and the conditions of the workers.

Most of the ship-breaking workers come from the poverty-stricken northern region of Bangladesh where there are limited employment opportunities. Although the workers have been labouring in the scrap yards for years, they are not allowed to form or join a trade union to bargain for and enforce their rights. The workers are deprived of proper compensation due to the lack of valid contracts. In order to maximise profits, little is done to minimise the risk of accidents. Wages depend on the number of hours worked as well as the type of work and skills level. They have no entitlement to overtime, sick or annual leave.

There are no arrangements for clean drinking water, healthy food, hygienic toilets or appropriate living conditions for the workers. Eighty-six percent of the labourers stated that they received no medical benefits from the shipyard owners, 6% said they received some medical benefits, while 4% said they got nominal medical benefits. As the government has not recognised it as an industry, the industry forms and applies its own labour laws.

A majority of the labourers (40%) are between the ages of 18 and 22. One of the most disturbing findings was that child labour (under the age of 18) made up 11% of the workforce. Forty-six percent of the yard workers are illiterate while 43.02% have attained primary school education.

Young Power in Social Action is an NGO working to improve the conditions in the Chittagong ship-breaking yards by:

- raising awareness in the community and at the national level through campaigns and advocacy;
- influencing international policy makers to ensure environment-friendly ship dismantling;
- working to influence the policy makers to ensure that the necessary measures are taken to uphold the rights of workers and that ship-breaking is conducted in a safe and environmentally friendly way;
- conducting research, monitoring and fact finding activities at the grassroots level on the conditions and impact of ship-breaking activities in Chittagong;
- providing support and assistance to injured ship-breaking workers and the families of deceased workers along with different development programmes in the surrounding villages.

Young Power in Social Action's goal is to influence public policy makers to formulate a specific policy for the ship-breaking industry which will ensure that human rights are being upheld. It is the first and only long term advocacy programme targeting ship-breaking. Young Power in Social Action started work on the issue

in 1997 by collecting data, information and doing some surveys. From 2003, the formal advocacy programme began. Young Power in Social Action is the first non-governmental organisation to address the basic rights and needs of ship-breaking workers – of which a majority are youth.

They conduct in-depth research about workers' problems and their rights, and bring to light their findings to inform national policy. At present, there is no official policy for ship-breaking. As a result, Young Power in Social Action faces obstacles such as impaired access to legal aid for workers and their families, and acquiring a draft policy. To gain more public awareness, they would like to develop photography and video documentaries, as well as a website dedicated to ship-breaking. To better access the international arena, Young Power in Social Action has partnered with international organisations such as GREENPEACE, and obtained a membership on an NGO platform addressing ship-breaking, based in Brussels.

As a result of Young Power in Social Action's work, ship-breaking workers are becoming aware of their basic labour rights. People are more aware of the locations where the shipyards are concentrated and, at the district level, government officials have become more active in monitoring the industry. Policy makers are also awakening to the crisis in the yards. There are still a lot of challenges to meet, and Young Power in Social Action is committed to addressing each one as well as they possibly can.

Young Power in Social Action demonstrates youth power by working at all levels – service delivery, research, national and international advocacy.



## KENYA

### Youth Alive! Kenya

*This case study demonstrates the impact of youth-led development. When youth are allowed to make decisions and take responsibility for their own development, they are able to address issues in an innovative manner that also results in overall community development. This study illustrates the application of all five Global Partnership Initiative – Youth-led Development principles.*

The concept of Youth Alive! Kenya evolved from a series of discussions among Kenyan university students. The discussions focused on: the persistent perception of young people as beneficiaries of interventions and programmes, rather than as active partners and players in national and regional development; the potential threat of young people entering the preparatory stages of adulthood without gainful livelihoods and growing up without any meaningful perspective for their future and; what young people in other African countries were doing to alleviate the unfavourable conditions they found themselves in. Youth Alive! Kenya was, therefore, conceptualised as a rallying point and a platform from which young people could themselves address issues affecting their well-being and development, with the support of the wider community.

Youth Alive! Kenya was formally registered as a community-based group in April 1999 and as a national NGO in December 2003. Over the years, Youth Alive! Kenya has grown to be a key player for justice, development and young people in Kenya, serving at both the policy and service levels and expanding from a single programme area of HIV/AIDS to four programme areas: health, justice and human rights, democracy and governance, and

environment and livelihoods in 2007. It is currently expanding its operations to three provinces in Kenya.

Youth Alive! Kenya has a vision of a free, just and equitable world where young people are able to translate their aspirations and potential into productive and fulfilling lives. The organisation's mission is to provide a platform where young people and their communities share skills and explore innate abilities to ensure sustainable development built on a foundation of equity, justice and peace.

Youth Alive! Kenya espouses the following values in their work:

- value the rights of young people which are human rights;
- value the fact that young people can make informed decisions and take charge of the consequences of their decisions;
- value the uniqueness of young people with respect to their needs, access to and control of resources;
- value, respect and appreciate diversity in all its forms;

- value participation and inclusion;
- value integrity, honesty and accountability;
- value the unique insights, understanding and capabilities that reside within communities.

Youth Alive! Kenya as a membership organisation is open to all people regardless of their ethnicity, race, gender, abilities, political or religious affiliation, and sexual orientation.

Youth Alive! Kenya is a young people's organisation primarily serving young people between the ages of 12 and 30. Programmatically, Youth Alive! Kenya focuses on four core areas:

- health;
- justice and human rights;
- democracy and governance;
- environment and livelihoods.

The choice of geographic and programmatic focus has been guided by specific needs as identified in formal quantitative ways and through participatory assessments, government policies and priorities with regard to development.

The efforts of Youth Alive! Kenya have contributed to the existence of a National Youth Policy in Kenya, provided direct service to thousands of children through the justice and human rights projects and empowered hundreds of young people and dozens of youth-led initiatives across Kenya through our health, environment and livelihoods, and democracy and governance projects.

The organisation has evolved from being a purely voluntary initiative to the current 10 full time paid staff of young people and an ever-growing periodic base of skilled volunteers and interns. Financially, the

organisation has seen its resource base expand from no direct financial funding to an annual income of over KES10 million.

The organisation has continued to engage in strategic partnerships at all levels to ensure that the activity base remains strategic and relevant. To facilitate external communications, the organisation has developed and maintained a website and a variety of publicity merchandise, and strives to participate in critical forums that allows for its visibility.

- Consistency and striving for perfection will always bring positive results. Youth Alive! Kenya has year after year sought to improve the quality and scope of its services and this has seen the organisation's profile grow from strength to strength.
- Relevance to its target groups – As a youth organisation, legitimacy is strongly dependent on the relevance of the institution and its services to the constituency it serves. Youth Alive! Kenya has managed to remain relevant in its work due to the consistency in allowing young people to be at the helm and at the centre of its leadership and work.
- Youth Alive! Kenya has embraced innovation and professionalism in its work, allowing the organisation to compete effectively with all other civil society actors in the delivery of services.
- Young people can provide alternative effective leadership in the various spheres of development in Africa. They, however, have to aggressively pursue arising opportunities rather than wait to be handed these on a silver platter. Youth Alive! Kenya has demonstrated that it is possible for young people to engage with policy makers, as well as provide peer-focused services to other young people.



## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

### Fondo Grande Ahead

*This short study brings to light the potential and actual role of youth in environmental conservation and management – the results of which benefit multiple communities. This story illustrates the application of all five Global Partnership Initiative – Youth-led Development principles.*

The Dominican Republic has a population of approximately 9.5 million people. The life expectancy from birth is 71.5 years. Their ranking on the Human Development Index is 79th. Nearly a third of young people aged 15-24 are unemployed – double the unemployment rate for adults in the country.

Fondo Grande Ahead is a youth organization that was founded in December 2007, with the mission of allowing Fondo Grande youth to contribute to the development of their community. Fondo Grande is a rural Dominican community on the border with Haiti. Two headwaters are in its territory: Grand Fond and Manatee rivers, which flow into the Masacre River whose water is shared by many thousands of people living on both sides of the border. The Fondo Grande people have had the challenge of improving their life quality while preserving their environment. Fondo Grande Ahead tries to encourage youth to be an active part of the development programme of the community. The organization's activities include training, discussions on global topics, social research in the community, formulation of new projects, and any other activity likely to increase awareness and build skills among the youth and the community.

Fondo Grande Ahead has several goals for the next two years. One of the

most important is the formulation of an alternative energy project for domestic activities to reduce the use of liquefied petroleum gas. This will be done by producing biogas from organic waste. There is a proposal to intercrop organic cocoa and fruit trees, with the objective of reducing the emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> created by the slash and burn agriculture practiced by some farmers, and preserving the water of the Grand Fond and Manatee rivers.

*This case study illustrates the experiences of a youth organisation working towards the integration of youth into local and national development programmes in Bangladesh. It also provides youth with social and physical space to participate in development, thereby demonstrating the application of Global Partnership Initiative – Youth-led Development principles 1,2, and 3*

So adverse is the economic situation in Bangladesh that some have referred to it as a member of the “fourth world,” the poorest of the poor. Its 110 million people (the eighth largest population in the world) live on constricted land affected by an unkind climate. There is relatively little industry, and most people live at the subsistence level in rural areas. Adding to the nation’s woes are natural disasters. Tropical storms whipping in from the Bay

of Bengal have repeatedly devastated the country, causing huge losses of life and property.

Despite its problems, Bangladesh is a land of miracles and accomplishments. Using traditional methods, farmers manage to produce enough food to maintain one of the densest concentrations of rural people in the world. The Bangladeshi people have liberated themselves twice, once from the British and then from the Pakistanis. The Bangla language has a distinguished history in literature and remains one of the most dynamic forces in South Asian arts and humanities.

Bangladesh has a large young population. More than 33% of the total population falls within the age group of 15-34, and a majority of the total population live in rural areas.

The Federation is the national coordinating council of youth organizations, and has given special emphasis to youth employment. Gainful employment under conditions that are not hazardous to the health of the worker is the primary focus for this youth-led initiative.

The Federation has pioneered a number of social movements including youth employment, poverty eradication, mass education, environment protection, water and sanitation, child rights, human rights, indigenous population, drug abuse prevention, treatment, motivation and rehabilitation programmes, and the promotion and construction of a sustainable culture of peace and non-violence.

Working under the World Program of Action for Youth, the following projects are planned to address the issue of unemployment and underemployment among youth:

- Set up a programme of internship with the cooperation of multinationals and conglomerates operating in the

country to provide youth with work experience, while contributing to their self esteem.

- Organize workshops and seminars conducted on a voluntary basis by professionals from rapidly-evolving fields that are at the cutting edge of technology. This initiative intends to enable professionals to identify individuals that have the potential to be groomed and the drive to succeed in the respective fields.
- Encourage entrepreneurs by awarding grants to the most feasible and most innovative projects in a regular nationwide contest. This contest is to be judged by a panel of leaders from the corporate sector. This will provide youth with the opportunity to present their ideas to individuals who have the ability to make a difference. This will be an opportunity for the youth to practice and improve their interview skills and their self-confidence. In return, the corporate sector will get a source of new ideas and potentially lucrative projects.

Regular leadership training programme:  
Every three months the Federation organizes leadership training for the members of the executive committee of member organisations.

- Self-employment training: the Federation runs a training and self-employment project for rural unemployed youth.
- The Federation works with the Department of Youth Development, Ministry of Youth and Sports and other related departments of the government to update the National Youth Policy on the basis of present needs.
- The Federation is working throughout the country for the development of young people and to empower young people in all spheres of life.

The Federation arranges cultural programmes like street drama, cultural nights, youth fairs, etc. to raise funds, and to train social leaders, youth organizers, teachers and so on to develop the quality of life, alleviate poverty, facilitate the equality and empowerment of women and to deal with reproductive health, population and development.

The Federation gives emphasis to the integration of youth into local and national development programmes and provides youth with the social and physical space to participate in development.



## MOZAMBIQUE Association for Cooperation and Development

*This case study illustrates the experiences of a youth organisation working towards the integration of youth into local and national development programmes in Bangladesh. It also provides youth with social and physical space to participate in development, thereby demonstrating the application of Global Partnership Initiative – Youth-led Development principles 1, 2 and 3.*

Though Mozambique has been on a path to social and economic recovery, the harsh reality of a dilapidated economic and social order is still evident in the country. The country is still among the poorest nations in the world with 70% of the population living below the poverty line. It is with this background that the Association for Cooperation and Development (ACCORD) was established with a vision of stimulating increased youth participation and cooperation for development initiatives.

Unemployment, social neglect and economic alienation are common problems faced by youth in Mozambique. Interventions to reverse this trend have to be deliberate with a focus on empowerment and inclusion of youth in the development of Mozambique.

The project is based in Inhambane province and has been in progress since December 2005. The activities of the project include: organizing work camps where youth participate in research, advocacy, fundraising and evaluation.

The project involves passing skills to young people, researching on areas where youth

can be engaged in gainful employment and offering communities funds for projects.

ACCORD has documented the situation of the youth especially in the areas of unemployment and poverty. This has led to implementation of several programmes which have created employment opportunities for the youth in the province.

***The youth define goals and objectives***  
– ACCORD is a youth led organization and the youth set their agenda for development.

***The youth have a social and physical space to participate in development***  
ACCORD has several programmes running. This programme together with their other programmes form a platform for participation in development

***Youth being role models and helping other youth participate in development***  
Involving other youth led initiatives in the projectThe programme demonstrates that youth need interventions geared to making them more economically and socially empowered.



## MEXICO

### Anasazi Regalos Empresariales

*This study demonstrates the Global Partnership Initiative – Youth-led Development principles 1 and 3. The project was defined by young people, has used a combination of old skills with young technology and is supported by adults and youth.*

Mexico has a population of approximately 110,000,000, with an average age of 26 years. Mexico has the second largest economy in Latin America, and the largest per capita income in Latin America. Approximately 40% of the population lives in poverty, and 18% live in extreme poverty. Life expectancy at birth is 74 years (2006).

Anasazi Regalos Empresariales was founded by Laura Müller in May 2005. Anasazi promotes handicrafts made by indigenous people, sourcing products mainly from five local producers and 10 families. Some products come from other producers and small businesses in the area.

Anasazi sells these products as gifts for promotion events to bigger businesses. Two years ago Anasazi gifts received honorific mention in a youth business contest in the city of Chihuahua.

The aim of Anasazi is to increase income within small communities, by paying fair prices for their work, promoting and

helping local producers with design, marketing and selling their products. Anasazi helps to address MDG1 and eradicate extreme poverty and hunger through valuing people's work. The project benefits indigenous and remote communities by allowing them to market their work locally and internationally.

Anasazi began in May of 2005 with a young Laura focusing on wanting to do something for her community while making a living for herself. Through her own financing, she began the Anasazi website at [www.regaloschihuahua.com](http://www.regaloschihuahua.com). Anasazi is currently planning to expand their business and work with more communities.

This program clearly reflects the goals of youth-led development. It is a project that was defined by young people and is supported by youth and adults, with adults playing an administrative role.



## CHINA

### Youth-Led Development

*A large number of NGOs comprised of youth have been established throughout China in the past ten years. The All-China Youth Federation, the Chinese Young Volunteers Association and the Chinese Young Entrepreneurs Association are just a few examples of these NGOs. Those with the highest youth participation are hobby associations and various public interest organisations. These different NGOs have conducted activities to advance Chinese society in the fields of political life, economic construction, community service, and social affairs of public concern.*

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The following provides briefs of three such initiatives that demonstrate youth involvement in the development of Chinese society. A large number of NGOs comprised of youth have been established throughout China in the past ten years. The All-China Youth Federation, the Chinese Young Volunteers Association and the Chinese Young Entrepreneurs Association are just a few examples of these NGOs.

Those with the highest youth participation are hobby associations and various public interest organisations. These different NGOs have conducted activities to advance Chinese society in the fields of political life, economic construction, community service, and social affairs of public concern.

The following provides briefs of 3 such initiatives that demonstrate youth involvement in the development of Chinese society.

The All-China Youth Federation is the largest youth NGO in China. Its membership was recorded at 68,540,000 in 1997, accounting for 22% of China's youth. The NGO, in conjunction with other CSOs and the government, has launched a series of programmes.

One such programme is the Model Youth Units which aims to encourage young people to participate actively in social development and decision-making in their work environment. The programme organises on-the-job learning, promotes contests among young individuals and youth teams, advocates the spirit of professionalism and rewards outstanding achievement, thus encouraging youth participation and achievement. In the past decade, over 5 million youth teams from more than 30 different industries have joined the programme.

From 2002, the All-China Youth Federation in collaboration with the Chinese Young Volunteers Association are implementing a programme called Chinese Young Volunteers Overseas Service. Under this programme, young volunteers have been organised to provide services to the least developed countries in Africa and Asia.

Since its launch in 1993, the Chinese Young Volunteers Association has been developing volunteer youth organisations in all areas of the country. Every province, city and county has its own young volunteers association, resulting in the establishment of more than 89,000 community service centres and more than 100,000 volunteer teams.

To help reduce the impact of poverty in some of the poorest areas, various Chinese young volunteer associations have launched social practice programmes to give assistance to rural areas during summer vacations. Approximately 10 million college students have participated in the programme to date.

A similar programme named the Chinese Young Volunteers Poverty-Alleviation Relay has been widely carried out. It mobilises and organises youth in urban areas to provide half-year to two-year voluntary service in poverty-stricken areas of the mid-west part of China.

There are other projects in the programme as well, such as Sending Culture, Science and Technology and Medical Care to Rural Areas by PhD students and Going West by college students, volunteers, and so on.

The programmes sponsored by the Chinese young volunteer associations have helped people in rural areas of the west to reduce

the impact and incidence of poverty and live a better life. The Chinese young volunteers actively participate in the services and construction of civil communities. This is a non-profit NGO, jointly founded by the All-China Youth Federation, All-China Students' Federation, and the China Young Pioneers Work Commission.

This organisation seeks support and assistance from both domestic and foreign organisations and individuals concerned about the well-being of Chinese youth and children. The foundation promotes education, science and technology, culture, physical education, health, social welfare, and environmental protection for China's youth and children. It works for the country's modernisation to enhance relations among young people all over the world. China's modernisation and internationalisation is the core mission of the Foundation.

The Foundation is best known for its largest programme to date, "Project Hope", a public welfare undertaking extensively supported from home and abroad to assist dropout students and those at risk of dropping out to continue schooling in China's rural, poverty-stricken areas. In addition to funding the students' studies and building schools, the Foundation strives to improve educational conditions in rural areas (including teacher training) and to strengthen the government's efforts in implementing a nine-year compulsory education law.

Commonly acknowledged as China's most influential public welfare campaign of the 20th century, Project Hope has attracted participation from domestic actors of all ages as well as from overseas.



## BRAZIL

### Centre of Social Responsibility and Sustainability

*This case study based in Brazil, illustrates the importance of mentoring and grooming to nurture a greater sense of involvement and social responsibility among youth. This study demonstrates Global Partnership Initiative – Youth-led Development principles 1, 2, 3 and 4.*

Brazil is the most populous country in Latin America with approximately 190 million people, making it the fifth most populous country in the world. The average age of the population is 29 years, with a life expectancy of 71 years.

Approximately 35% of Brazil's population is children and adolescents. Many live in homes that have a deficient water supply and sewage system. Sixty percent of those who go to school are illiterate after 4 years of studying, and many have to drop out of school to help support their families.

Income-support programmes have helped to contribute to social development. "Bolsa-escola" (school allowance), which provides poor families with a monthly allowance to keep children aged 7–14 years at school, was praised by UNESCO as an exemplary public and private initiative to help fight social exclusion and child labour. The practice has even been adopted in other countries.

The Centre for Social Responsibility and Sustainability was created by Paulo Ricardo Farine Milani of Londrina State University out of concern that youth were not being engaged as full citizens within

Brazilian society. A study undertaken by the University of Londrina found that a large majority of youth were not engaged citizens, but were interested in becoming so. The Centre was created to address this concern by developing youth-led projects in entrepreneurship through developing partnerships among universities, businesses and youth. These small enterprises would address the MDGs, with the larger goal of creating a network to exchange ideas and projects. The other goals include: encouraging micro-, small and medium enterprises in the region of Londrina to adopt the practice of corporate social responsibility; increasing the awareness of the importance of student participation in social issues, raising awareness of entrepreneurship and voluntary actions aimed at the 8 Millennium Development Goals; creating partnerships and networks with organisations that promote the 8 MDGs and encouraging the participation of young people.

The Centre works with young people from poor communities to undertake training in entrepreneurship and enterprise development. The young people involved are expected to learn:

- to use media and research to seek information relevant to the planning of their careers;
- to employ the necessary skills for the performance of an occupation that generates income;
- to establish a professional development project and, considering its potential, to learn the needs and characteristics of the context of their work;
- to assume responsibilities in relation to their family and their community, and confront the problems affecting the country, the planet and global society;
- to reflect critically on their own performance and aspirations.

The Centre promotes understanding of the MDGs.

*"When we look around us, we are disappointed with the many injustices that exist. Often with knowing the needs of our community, comes the desire to do something to change, however there is a lack of wanting to do something and really make the things happen ... the solution was to create a Centre in order to encourage the practice of acting and social transformation through the entrepreneurial activities of young students seeking the scope of Eight Millennium Goals. Through our experience, we learned a lot of entrepreneurial characteristics such as: be passionate about your project; develop good communication skills; have a goal with targets and indicators; the ideas have value only after being executed; have a good network and share ideas with people; have the initiative to start; have dreams; always look for innovative solutions and more," states Paulo Ricardo Farine Milani.*



## SIERRA LEONE

### Africa Youth for Peace and Development Waste program

*Waste management provides a win-win situation on all fronts. In this case study, war ravaged youth in Sierra Leone have come together to build their economic strength through waste management. This project illustrates the application of Global Partnership Initiative – Youth-led Development principles 1, 2, 4 and 5*

Sierra Leone is a beautiful country rich in minerals, agricultural potential and tourist potential. The country was ravaged by a horrific civil war between 1991 and 2002, which has had a major negative impact on the development of the nation as a whole and the youth in particular. There is a general concern that youth unemployment rates are high and that youth must be meaningfully engaged in rebuilding the country, to ensure peace and stability for the future.

Africa Youth for Peace and Development (AYPAD) is a non-governmental, non-political, voluntary youth development organization formed in 1995, and later registered in 2000 under the Ministry of Youth and Sports in Sierra Leone, with the aim of empowering and creating opportunities for youth and youth groups that are in difficult circumstances.

The breakdown of Social structures led to poor sanitary conditions for the residents of Freetown and the rest of Sierra Leone. The Africa Youth for Peace and Development waste program aims at creating opportunities for the youth as well as maintaining high hygienic standards within the cities and towns in Sierra Leone

22

Africa Youth for Peace and Development Waste program is a member of the Klin Salone umbrella Association that coordinates the activities of various private and voluntary groups who are engaged in waste collection and disposal throughout Sierra Leone. It sets standards and provides equipment and marketing support for the groups. The groups provide door-to-door waste collection from homes, offices, restaurant, factories, beaches and other locations at an affordable cost. Sorted waste (e.g. plastic, glass, metal and compost) is sold to interested buyers such as metal workshops and farmers. Efforts are being made to identify external recycling facilities.

Currently the projects have all received tricycles to speedily collect and dispose their garbage. Workers, who previously slept in market stalls, are now able to rent rooms for themselves. Some of the workers have been able to reinvest their earnings into other mini businesses thereby expanding their income base.

From the funds they collect from waste payments, a number of the youth groups have been able to acquire office space to expand their operations base.

***The youth define goals and objectives***

– Africa Youth for Peace and Development is a youth led organization and the youth set their agenda for development.

***The youth have a social and physical space to participate in development***

Africa Youth for Peace and Development has several programs running. This program together with their other programs forms a platform for participation in development.

***Youth being role models and helping other youth participate in development***

Involving other youth led initiatives in the project.

***Youth must be integrated into all local and national development programs and frameworks***

Africa Youth for Peace and Development participates in many national and international programs and events including UN International peace day. Waste collection is an ideal project to engage youth in nation building. It is an intervention that helps create employment for youth that are very vulnerable. Also it has created a network of youth organizations and unity among member groups as they all share the same goal.

The project is self sustaining at the moment, and there are future plans to invest in technologies which will enable the groups do more recycling for better environmental management.



# SRI LANKA

## Sri Lankan Youth Parliament

*The Sri Lankan Youth Parliament is a youth-led, youth-run initiative that encourages critical analysis of issues by young people leading to action for a peaceful, equitable and sustainable enabling environment. It illustrates principles 1,4 and 5.*

Although Sri Lanka has been a democratic country for 50 years, 20 years of civil war has eroded the quality of the country's democracy. Citizens at the grassroots level have little input into the political process, local issues remain virtually ignored by politicians and parties themselves generally lack internal democracy. The youth in Sri Lanka are politically marginalized, often only participating as primary instigators of violence during elections.

In such an environment, there is a great need for initiatives from young people, especially to facilitate and support communication and cooperation between conflicting groups.

The Sri Lankan Youth Parliament is a youth-led, youth-run initiative, whose aim is to mobilise and create a network of young people to bring about positive and sustainable change.

A 'first sitting of the Sri Lankan Youth Parliament' took place in 2005, with the aim of bringing together the first generation of young community leaders to network, develop policy, acquire new skills and most importantly, implement actions for social change around the island state.

The event was a launching pad for action. Young people aged 16 to 25, who are interested in working in their communities to address social issues, and are committed to working towards creating a cohesive Sri Lanka are invited to apply to become Action Partners. Young people currently actively involved in social change activities are invited to apply, as are the budding social activists who have a dream and a vision within them to be the change they want to see.

Action Partners implement their action plans in their own communities and support them through the following activities:

- regional meetings – aimed at motivating and inspiring Action Partners, facilitating networking and the sharing of information, and strengthening alliances;
- skills development programme - aimed at enhancing the skills of Action Partners to become more effective in developing and implementing their strategies for change;
- action support - providing strategic and financial support to ensure a sustainable future;

- networking and alliance-building initiatives - providing Action Partners with ongoing opportunities to build strategic networks and alliances to support their work;
- research and learning agenda - sharing across the network of learning, information and research relating to the issues that face young people and the actions they have taken for positive and sustainable change.

The network uses the word 'parliament' in its name to reflect the importance of young people as actors and decision-makers. Around the world, parliaments are spaces in which agendas are set, strategies are developed and action is planned.

Traditionally, young people have been excluded from such spaces and the Sri Lankan Youth Parliament's use of the term represents a reclaiming of that space by young people.

Sri Lankan Youth Parliament does not operate like a formal parliament. There are no elections, no ministers, or parliamentarians. Nor does it employ an adversarial, majority rules or consensus modus operandi. Rather, Sri Lankan Youth Parliament encourages critical analysis of issues by young people leading to action for a peaceful, equitable and sustainable enabling environment.

The second sitting of the Sri Lankan Youth Parliament took place in September 2008.



