

A joint initiative of UN, ILO and World Bank



number

18

October - November - December 2008

editorial

Dear Reader of the YEN Newsletter,

2008 was a year of reorientation for YEN. The network reduced the range of activities to concentrate on tangible products that provide value added. Our last 2 newsletters highlighted some of this work like the private sector partnerships for youth employment or YEN's new competitive grant scheme for youth-led organizations.

The last big piece of work with regard to YEN's reorientation is the revision of the Lead Country process, a tool to prioritize youth employment on the development agendas. The Lead Country process has been the flagship product of YEN frequently referred to by politicians and development practitioners. Nevertheless, the absence of clear indicators to report on and the lack of commitment of some lead countries has put at risk the success of this initiative.

As described in this issue, YEN will convert the lead country process into a peer review mechanism based on standardized indicators helping to monitor performance of youth employment policies and to provide targets for which to aim. Lead countries will be asked for a renewed commitment, benefits of fulfilling the commitment will be clearly defined, and sanctions for not meeting the commitments will be introduced.

Another important change in the last year was that YEN joined the Global Partnership on Youth Employability co funded by the World Bank. One of YEN's first activities under this partnership was a workshop on results measurement for training interventions held in early 2009 in Jordan. The event forms part of YEN's knowledge generation efforts which assist project managers on such important questions in monitoring and evaluation. As you can learn from the enclosed article on the Amman workshop, participants have asked for more events of this type giving practical guidance how to do results measurement.

Markus Pilgrim  
YEN Manager

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YEN is a global platform of action dedicated to developing and implementing strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work. YEN's work is made possible thanks to support from the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida).

We welcome both feedback and contributions to this newsletter:  
[YENetwork@ilo.org](mailto:YENetwork@ilo.org)

# ATTENTION ALL YEN LEAD COUNTRIES: Revised Lead Country Process to be Launched

**The Lead Country Process is the flagship product of YEN's activities aiming to foster governments' engagement in the development and promotion of improved youth employment opportunities.** It was introduced in 2001 to recognize countries who have committed to tackling the youth employment challenge at the highest level. This commitment has been expressed through (i) the formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of National Action Plans (NAP) on youth employment; (ii) participation in peer review mechanisms, and (iii) regular reporting on progress to the YEN secretariat.

Since the first countries joined in 2002, the Lead Country Process has been an effective channel of policy advice and advocacy, facilitating the integration of young people into employment around the world. Despite these major achievements, there have been important shortcomings – from lack of commitment of Lead Countries to fulfil the requirements of the Process to slow implementation pace of NAPs. Both, successes and shortcomings call now for a revised Process that will increase accountability, mainstream the benefits of being a Lead Country, and fine-tune YEN's services to the current needs of the Lead Countries.

The revised Lead Country Process brings the following benefits to member countries in addition to international exposure and recognition:

1. YEN will bridge technical expertise on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of youth employment

initiatives through: (i) in-depth training sessions on mechanisms to assess youth labor market conditions as well as other relevant M&E topics; and (ii) annual consultations on monitoring and evaluating performance in youth employment.

2. YEN will provide capacity-building on how to engage youth in national youth employment initiatives.
3. YEN will support Lead Countries in devising fund-raising strategies for youth employment programmes.
4. These benefits will be further mainstreamed through regular Lead Country Meetings that serve as a peer review mechanism on performance of youth employment policies and programs.

To make the most of the Lead Country benefits, countries are encouraged to fulfil the following commitments:

1. In order to facilitate the technical assistance on M&E, it is key that countries report annually on youth labor market indicators. The collection of these indicators will assist governments in better diagnosing youth employment issues and strengthen the M&E of policies and programs currently under implementation.
2. Annual reporting should also feature progress on policy and institutional achievements and information on initiatives to promote participation of youth organizations.
3. Lead Countries will share key youth employment documents – such as NAPs and evaluations – with other Lead Countries and the

Secretariat at annual meetings.

4. New Lead Countries will be recommended to develop NAPs; however, this is no longer a precondition as experience shows that there are other viable options to address youth employment, such as mainstreaming the topic in national development/employment strategies or implementing programs tackling specific youth issues.

With this new framework of benefits and commitments, YEN moves forward to better assist its Lead Countries in making their youth employment initiatives a reality that translates into more and better jobs for young people.

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## Currently, 21 countries have joined YEN as Lead Countries

- Azerbaijan
- Brazil
- Democratic Republic of Congo
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- Georgia
- Ghana
- Indonesia
- Iran
- Jamaica
- Mali
- Namibia
- Nigeria
- Rwanda
- Senegal
- Sri Lanka
- Syria
- Togo
- Turkey
- Uganda
- United Kingdom

# MEASURING RESULTS IN YOUTH EMPLOYMENT: Experience from training interventions

## Too little is known about “what works” in the area of youth employment programming.

YEN strives to increase the evidence base for effective programme design and implementation while encouraging accountability amongst youth employment practitioners. To this end, YEN convened a workshop entitled “Measuring Results in Youth Employment: Experience from training interventions” on January 20th in Amman, Jordan. The workshop was held as a side event to the International Youth Foundation’s meeting on Employability – Youth – Opportunity. The workshop brought together youth employment practitioners from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region with specialists from YEN’s core agency partners (ILO, World Bank and UN).

The workshop began with presentations of monitoring and evaluation designs from IYF’s entra 21 programme and SHABAB’s Know About Business programme. This was followed by a 2 panel discussions, involving staff from the



presented programmes and evaluations specialists from the World Bank’s Children and Youth Unit, the International Initiative for Impact Evaluations (3ie), the ILO’s International Training Centre and IYF. The day finished with a brainstorming session using a metaplan technique where participants were asked “What are the concrete inputs you would expect from YEN facilitating your work on

results measurement?”

## Feedback to Entra 21 and SHABAB case studies:

### Strengths of M&E plans

- The logic models from the 2 programmes were clear, providing a good causal chain between outputs, outcome and impacts.
- Both programmes collected baseline data on programme beneficiaries
- Both programmes collected ex post data on programme beneficiaries: Entra 21 6 months after of programme completion and SHABAB upon programme completion
- SHABAB randomized the sample group by self administering questionnaires
- While developing a standard M&E design for each entra 21 project, programme managers were allowed flexibility in adapting the design based unique features of projects and country contexts.

Both project have shared widely the results

from their evaluations.

### Areas of improvement

- It was cautioned for the projects to avoid indicator proliferation
- Both M&E designs could benefit from use of a control group
- Both projects should consider using a vignette approach when designing survey questions. Vignettes are brief descriptions of



hypothetical people or situations that survey researchers can use to correct otherwise incomparable survey responses (due to subjectivity).

## YEN’s future work on results measurement:

Workshop participants, recommended to YEN to concentrate future evaluation efforts in youth employment in the following areas:

1. Sharing lessons learned and best practices: Examples of evaluation designs and different levels of rigour, benchmarking/international comparisons, database of possible indicators
2. Technical assistance and training: assistance in interpreting data, connect with similar initiatives for mutual learning, review and give feedback on M&E plans
3. Provide access to external consultants
4. Provide funding for evaluations
5. Bridge evaluation work between practitioners and academics

Feedback received from workshop participants was overwhelming positive. Participants especially appreciated the high level of interactivity, especially the use of the fishbowl technique, and expert knowledge on the evaluation topic. The next YEN event on M&E is tentatively scheduled for May 2009 in the MENA region.

## [Final Report from the Workshop](#)

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## SPOTLIGHT:

## DR Congo's Journey towards Lead Country Status

**Alice MIRIMO KABETSI, President of YWCA – DRC, tells her story of Congo's accession as a YEN Lead Country. Alice has been involved in youth participation and development since graduating from the University of Kinshasa with a degree in Law in 2001. She also practises law in several areas, including human rights. Many of her clients are victims of sexual violence and HIV/AIDS.**

"In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), youth represent one of the most marginalized sectors of the population. Of the 58 million Congolese, 25% are between 15 and 35 and 28% are of these youth are unemployed. Long years of civil war, a dysfunctional education system, a weak private sector and the absence of national policy on employment and professional training has led to this dismal situation. As a young, educated Congolese woman with plenty of motivation, I realised that I could make a difference in young people's lives. In 2004 I became President of the Young Women's Christiann Association (YWCA) - DRC and so began the journey to make DRC a Lead Country of the YEN.

It was in 2004, at YWCA-DRC's participation in the World Bank's Youth, Development and Peace conference in Sarajevo that I first heard about the YEN's Lead Country process – an initiative calling on Countries to dedicate themselves to the development of National Action Plans (NAPs) on Youth Employment. To raise awareness on the issue, we informed all of the key stakeholders of the Lead Country process in our country including the President of the Republic and his Ministers, the World Bank, the United Nations, the United Na-

tions Development Programme and all of the national youth organizations. A year later, with input from all of the stakeholders, we came up with a project for the development of the NAP and held the first ever meeting of the YEN – DRC.

YEN-DRC and YWCA continued to lobby the government for accession to the YEN. On May 22, 2005, our cries were finally heard when the President signed a letter to the UN Secretary General requesting our country to become a YEN Lead Country.

Since that time I have been heavily involved in the drafting of DRC's NAP on Youth Employment including the coordination of the Youth Consultative Group. The Youth Consultative Group is responsible for youth inputs on the NAP development process alongside the Government, UNDP and ILO. Since that time the Youth Consultative Group has been restructured and Ms. Rachel Mubake has become its leader.

In November 2008, DRC's NAP on Youth Employment was finalized as part of the Poverty Reduction Strategies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The NAP lays out 4 priority areas of action namely employability, entrepreneurship, equality and employment creation. It also sets out a timeframe of action of 3 years (2009 – 2011) and has thus far raised a budget of 4 545 000 USD. YMCA-RDC and the Youth Consultative Group continue play a role of partnership broker between the youth associations, the policy makers, donors and international organizations.

I recently have taken up a role in the Office of the Minister of Employment, Labour and Social Affairs as coordinator of international cooperation. In this capacity I will be responsible for mobilize the additional resources to allow for successful implementation of the NAP in DRC."



## Information Events on YEN's Competitive Grant Scheme: Liberia, Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire

As part of the outreach strategy for the YEN Competitive Grant Scheme, information events were delivered by YEN staff Maria McLaughlin and Tendai Pasipanodya in Monrovia and Freetown on 10 and 16 December and in Yamoussoukro on 23 January. Local UNIDO staff also contributed to the information events and they are since providing one to one support to the youth led organisations to develop their employment creation projects by which could be funded by the Scheme.

Representatives of forty six youth led organisations in Liberia, forty nine in Sierra Leone and forty eight in Cote d'Ivoire attended the one day events. The information events provided potential applicants with practical information on the Competitive Grant Scheme and advice on proposal design to meet the Grant Scheme criteria. In Guinea local UNIDO staff will

carry out information activities due to current restrictions on YEN staff to travel there.

The visits also gave YEN staff the opportunity to catch up with other youth employment actors in these countries and to discuss options for YEN Grant Scheme funded projects to integrate with other employment initiatives in the longer term.

Participants were generally positive in their evaluation of the Info Events and most requested to have more events like this. Apart from benefiting from the Grant Scheme information itself, youth organisation representatives indicated that they appreciated the opportunity to come together with other youth organisations to share their knowledge and to learn from what others are doing.

The enthusiasm of these representatives strongly confirmed to YEN that youth organisations in the Mano River Union are an ambitious and dynamic actor in youth employment creation and promotion.

The Information events were complemented by local radio advertisements and interviews with YEN staff, features and ads run in local newspapers and distribution of Grant Scheme information by email to over 200 local NGOs engaged in youth employment in the Mano River Union region.

YEN and UNIDO are expecting to receive over 100 grant applications from each country before the 14 February deadline.

Contact: Maria McLaughlin at [mclaughlin@un.org](mailto:mclaughlin@un.org)



Group work at the Information Event in Freetown

## What works in youth employment? The World Bank's Youth Employment Inventory

**Youth employment has become a major concern in many countries,** but policy makers considering measures to help young people transition into the labor market are often hampered by lack of information. To meet this need for information, the World Bank has developed a worldwide inventory to review intervention programs of support for young workers, the Youth Employment Inventory (YEI).

The YEI is the first comprehensive database to provide comparative information on youth employment interventions. Comprising currently more than 300 youth employment programs from around 90 countries, the YEI documents program design, implementation, and results—a great resource for policy makers thinking about new measures to

improve employment outcomes for young people. To make the data easily accessible and facilitate a dialogue among stakeholders, a website has been created that links Ministries, NGOs, implementing agencies, the private corporate partnerships, the donor community, youth networks, organizations, and individuals active in the field of youth employment. As a follow-up to the database, the World Bank's HDNSP labor team also produced a synthesis report and five background paper reviewing and analyzing the results of the compiled information.

Besides searching the database, all users are welcome to post program information and documentation on this website; simply log on [www.yei-worldbank.org](http://www.yei-worldbank.org) and a password will enable you to input program infor-

mation. This allows for constant real-time updates to the body of knowledge in youth employment, while giving programs a format for sharing information on successes and failures in program development and implementation.

This World Bank initiative has been developed in conjunction with the Youth Employment Network (YEN) with financial support from the German Government in partnership with the German Development Cooperation GTZ.

For more information on this initiative, please contact Friederike Rother at [frother@worldbank.org](mailto:frother@worldbank.org)

## News From the Secretariat

**Olga Susana Puerto** joined the Youth Employment Network in January 2009. She will lead YEN's work on monitoring and evaluation of youth employment initiatives and coordinate the work of the Lead Country Process. Before joining YEN, Susana worked for over three years in the Labor Markets Team of the World Bank particularly on youth employment topics with emphasis on Latin America,



Sub-Saharan Africa, and the OECD area. She has also worked on specific country studies on employment issues in Colombia, Kosovo, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Turkey. Her research interests focus on econometrics, skills development, and economic policy. In addition to the analysis of the labor market, Susana has worked on infrastructure and urban issues in South Asia and Latin America. Susana holds an M.A. in Economics from Georgetown University.

**Laura Brewer** left the YEN secretariat in October 2008 to join the ILO's SKILLS department. Laura first joined the YEN secretariat in August 2005 as Senior Policy specialist where she was

key to the establishment of the Lead Country process as well as leading YEN's work on employability. In her new role at SKILLS, Laura is expected to develop research and policy guidance in the area of core skills, to support projects underway through the MDG-Spanish funds and UNIDO partnership in West Africa, and to develop collaboration with UNESCO on linking general education and technical training. Laura holds a Phd in Social Policy from the Australian National University, Research School of Social Sciences.