Involving young people in development

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- Educating for the future
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Looking to the future:
Involving Young people in development
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Editor’s Notes

We are pleased to devote this issue of Development Bulletin to the vital role that young people can play in sustainable development. This issue considers the current situation of young people and their needs in a rapidly changing world. We have planned this issue to provide background information and support for the International Youth Forum which is being held in association with the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Queensland, Australia early October, 2001. Through the delegates at these meetings and the associated conferences and discussions, as well as through our extensive network of readers, we hope to create more informed discussion on the difficulties and opportunities facing young people today and on the long term benefits of involving them in the development agenda.

This journal covers the issues of concern to young people including employment, education, rights, democracy, peace, access to a secure livelihood and to good health. In particular, it highlights the situation of young people in the Pacific and reports on recent initiatives to include young people’s views within the development agenda.

With support from the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) we have invited young people, students, lawyers, health professionals, economists, teachers, actors and academics to consider how best to secure a meaningful future for young people.

AusAID support

We are very grateful to AusAID for helping fund this issue and for the additional copies that they have made available to CHOGM and the Youth Forum. Without this assistance we could not have made this information widely available.

The views and recommendations in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of either AusAID or the Development Studies Network.

Organisations and resources

Tanya Mark has been busy surfing the Internet, researching catalogues and the shelves of government and non-government organisations for information on organisations, projects and resources that support young people and their inclusion in the development agenda.

Publications

We have put together a list of recent books, journals and reports that pertain to youth and development issues. These are listed in the Publications section. We have also enclosed a flyer on youth related publications available from the Last-First Network. Last-First can provide you with a very wide range of publications on development.

Good reading for youth focused development.

Pamela Thomas
Managing Editor
Introduction: Involving young people in development

Pamela Thomas, Development Studies Network, Australian National University

In developing countries today, approximately 40 per cent of the population is under 15 years of age. Each year an increasing number of young people will need education, a livelihood, access to housing, food and decision making, a safe environment, legal protection, and hope of a satisfying and productive life. The current situation of massive unemployment among young people, of inadequate or inappropriate education, of rapid change and urbanisation and resulting alienation, of growing youth involvement in crime, of lack of access to legal rights or representation will continue to deteriorate unless their needs are addressed. It is a dilemma for young people themselves, for local communities, national governments and international organisations and for sustainable poverty reduction. There is now an urgent need to address the developmental role of young people and to incorporate their needs and concerns into strategies and plans of action. More importantly, they must be involved in developing their own future.

As the following papers highlight, the role of young people in sustainable development has only recently emerged as a critical development issue, and attempts to incorporate their needs and concerns into strategies and decision making remain spasmodic. A number of excellent initiatives outlined here provide models for discussion and for how young people’s needs might be integrated into the broader development agenda. Although an increasing number of countries have developed youth policies and action plans over the last five years and the United Nations has convened meetings on youth employment and education, there has been limited involvement by young people in their development. Few donor organisations have a specific youth policy.

Major issues of concern

The following papers review the situation of young people and their concerns for the future. The major themes that emerge are how to deal with a rapidly changing situation and the growing need for: appropriate education, employment opportunities, information on sexual health, a peaceful and secure environment, opportunities for empowerment and participation, how to deal with conflict, and improving their access to legal and customary justice. Other challenges to sustainable development are the continuing high rates of population growth, family breakdown, environmental deterioration and cultural values that oppose the empowerment of young people, most particularly of young women.

Appropriate education

In least developed countries, rapid population growth and economic stagnation have led to a shortage of secondary school places and well trained teachers. This has led to a deterioration in educational standards. The inability of parents to pay the increased costs of education and a growing realisation that education does not necessarily lead to paid employment are resulting in high dropout rates. Hill, Chevalier and Vakaoti point to the growing gap between young people with skills and those without and an increasing divergence between what is being taught and the skills required by employers. There is little in the formal education system that provides young people with the skills needed to be self employed, a situation in which a rapidly increasing number of them find themselves.

In his discussion of street children in Fiji, Vakaoti states that for many of them school has become a meaningless and boring activity that is a waste of money. This opinion was confirmed by young people attending a workshop in Vanuatu in April 2001, where they called for more and better vocational training schools (see Morgan, Conference section). Hill discusses the value of non-formal education and the need to overcome the widely held perception that it is for those who have failed in formal schooling. She found that international youth organisations have made an important contribution to educating young people in small business skills, leadership skills, empowerment and policy development.

Unemployment

Meaningful employment is perhaps the most critical need today. The Juvenile Justice Project in Vanuatu found that unemployment was central to the problems identified by young people. Without access to paid or subsistence employment, they have difficulty finding a role in society. The International Labour Organisation estimates that in 2000 there were over 70 million young people unsuccessfully looking for employment, most of them in developing countries where the situation is deteriorating as employment opportunities decline and the numbers of young people seeking employment increase. Fiji and Vanuatu provide examples of the problem. Since independence, in neither country has there been a significant expansion in the demand for labour in the formal sector, while at the same time population has continued to grow at over 2 per cent annually. In Fiji around 14,000 young people join the labour force each year and in Vanuatu 3,500. Less than 25 per cent find employment.
The complex interrelationship between economic stagnation, structural reform, deteriorating education systems, poor education and lack of employment is apparent in many urban areas. High levels of youth unemployment are closely linked to serious social problems, including drug abuse, crime, vandalism and to young men’s involvement in armed conflict (for example, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Fiji). A World Bank study, quoted in Curtain’s paper, found that conflict is concentrated in countries with relatively few young people in education. The average country experiencing civil conflict had only 45 per cent of its young males in secondary education. The study also found that an increase of as little as 10 per cent of youths in school reduced the risk of conflict.

To date, governments in most developing countries have paid little attention to developing and implementing youth employment strategies. Curtain and Jowitt both recommend better coordination between education and employment requirements, a youth employment strategy that addresses the supply and demand side of the labour market at both micro and macro levels, and greatly increased training and support for young people in self-employment and entrepreneurial activities. The United Nations has recently established the Secretary-General’s Youth Employment Policy Network to make recommendations regarding solutions to the problem.

Health issues

The major health problems for young people are gender-specific. They focus on sexual and reproductive health issues, including HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections and teenage pregnancy — sometimes the result of forced early marriages. Other important health issues are related to drug abuse, in particular alcohol, and mental health problems. There are considerable challenges for governments, non-government organisations (NGOs) and young people in addressing these problems in situations where there is a widespread lack of trained health personnel, acceptance of alcoholism, violence, sexual abuse and early marriage, and cultural barriers to providing young people with accurate and adequate information or services on sexual and reproductive health. The situation is even more difficult for young women, who may be forcibly married at 12 or 13 years of age or become pregnant outside marriage or who have limited or no education. Lendon provides a case study of a young woman in Niger, forcibly married at 13 to ensure she was ‘protected’ and under male control. Ingwersen and Proctor show how early pregnancy impacts on young women’s education, economic well-being, and their own and their children’s health. The risk of dying from complications in pregnancy and childbirth is 25 times higher for girls under 15 years than for women over 25.

Ingwersen and Proctor, Bennoun and Borthwick and Gibson discuss HIV/AIDS and the significant problem it poses for young people today. Research in the Pacific shows that unsafe sex is the norm among young people and that there is an increase in sexual violence perpetrated by young men. This is difficult to address in situations where young women are expected to be subservient to men, there is a reluctance to talk openly about sexuality, and lack of access to reproductive health care, particularly for single people. The situation is not helped by shortage of condoms and the refusal of young men to use them. Today, there is a growing gender imbalance in the risk of contracting HIV. Girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are five to eight times more vulnerable to HIV transmission than boys of the same age. The UNFPA is currently supporting special programmes to address the reproductive health needs of young people using peer educators, peer counsellors, theatre groups and discussion groups. In Fiji, Vanuatu and Kiribati, theatre groups play an important role in providing vital information in ways that are culturally acceptable. A number of NGOs, including the Australian Reproductive Health Alliance, IPPF, Family Planning Australia and Shine SA, are supporting education and reproductive health services to young people. In the Mekong region of Southeast Asia, UNICEF is supporting life skills and HIV/AIDS education.

Substance abuse, mental health problems and suicide among young people are at worrying levels. In comparison with those in industrialised countries, the rates of mental health problems in developing countries are relatively low but alcoholism and suicide rates are very much higher. The use of alcohol and drugs is most prevalent among young men and begins in some countries before the age of 13. Lowe discusses the impact of alcohol abuse and the reasons for the differential between male and female suicide rates. He relates the growing incidence of youth stress to Durkheim’s theory of anomie and calls for further research into the relationship between change, stress, behaviour and gender and how they relate to mental health.

Young people’s rights and the law

Crime and justice are issues of growing concern, as few developing countries have laws that make provision for how young people who come into conflict with the law should be dealt with by the criminal justice system. In many societies, including those in the Pacific, two systems of justice operate: a formal legal system and customary law. While customary law usually focuses on family and/or community retribution and restitution, the formal system is more likely to institute fines and/or prison sentences. Cain and Morgan both extrapolate from the Vanuatu experience to the wider Pacific and illustrate how young men, as perpetrators of crime, prefer to be dealt with by customary law, while this is very much less satisfactory for young women, who are usually the victims of crime, in particular violence or sexual assault.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which most Pacific Island countries are signatories, provides important principles as to how young people should be dealt with by the courts. However, as Tamata shows in a series of case studies, its provisions are not always used and some Supreme Courts have maintained that its provisions do not apply to their particular society. Pacific Island courts are aware of human rights but they are applied inconsistently.
Generally, young people have little knowledge of their legal or democratic rights and almost no information on how the formal legal system works. Morgan and Cain discuss the efforts now being made in some Pacific Island countries to address this through legal literacy programmes that use workshops, community theatre and the formal education system to provide relevant information.

The physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and their neglect are increasingly serious issues in many countries, but ones that until very recently remained hidden. It is only with the work of the women’s crisis centres and through the willingness of women to speak out about family violence that the issue of violence against children has emerged. There is very little formal information on its extent, as only critical cases are ever referred to the police and hospital records seldom report causes of physical or mental trauma. Legislation is inadequate in dealing with these issues, and police, magistrates and health workers do not have the necessary training to deal sensitively or effectively with cases involving child abuse. UNICEF and AusAID are initiating projects in the Pacific that will support child abuse prevention activities and may provide useful models for other countries.

Social change, marginalisation and mobilisation of young people

Rapid social change, urbanisation and a breakdown of the extended family system of rights and obligations have led to confusion among young people about their role. Few governments provide adequate opportunities for them to participate in the economy or in the social development of their countries. Dissatisfaction and marginalisation have led to their living on the streets, becoming involved in crime and, in some countries, in armed conflict. Chevalier observes of Solomon Island young people ‘they are bored, underutilised and devoid of hope or vision for the future’. He suggests there has been no shortage of warnings and analysis of the plight of youth in the Pacific from governments, churches, NGOs and donors. But proposed solutions have fallen far short of the rhetoric, for the fundamental reasons of rapidly expanding populations and weak economies. Chevalier recommends an economic recovery plan, with a special Marshall Plan for Youth. Youth desperately require and deserve education and employment opportunities that keep them in contact with their village and cultural roots. Major investments must be made in our youth – they are the future.
Youth and employment: A public policy perspective

Richard Curtain, Curtain Consulting, Melbourne

Introduction

Generating employment opportunities for young people is a major challenge facing most countries, rich or poor. When jobs are scarce, young people are often at the back of the hiring queue, despite having higher levels of formal education than earlier generations. The difficulties they face in developing countries are compounded by the large numbers seeking limited employment opportunities. Some 80 per cent of the young jobless are in developing countries and economies in transition. Millions more young people work fewer hours than they wish, while others work long hours with little gain to show and no social protection in the informal economy. However, governments in developing countries pay little attention to developing and implementing youth employment strategies.

It is a paradox of globalisation that young people in developed countries, which are experiencing unprecedented levels of extended economic growth, face less competition for jobs than young people in developing countries. The former represent only a fifth of the population in developed countries and, compared with 1970, are a declining share of the total population in those countries (see Curtain 2000: Table 1). This suggests that not only are they benefiting from the greater opportunities available in fast-growing economies, but they are also likely to benefit more from this economic growth than earlier age cohorts, because there are fewer young people chasing the new jobs being created.

However, in the least developed economies, the proportion of young people in the total population is over a third and has increased since 1970 (Curtain 2000: Table 1). This suggests that they face not only more limited economic opportunities than those in the rapidly growing developed economies but also increasing competition for the fewer jobs that are available, because of greater absolute numbers of young people.

This article offers some suggestions as to how governments and international agencies might approach the development and implementation of a youth employment strategy in developing economies. Its approach is based on a critical awareness of the limitations of past initiatives. A successful strategy needs to 'walk the talk' by pointing to the future, not only in terms of its focus, content and the linkages required but also in terms of who implements it and how.

UN Secretary-General's Youth Employment Network

This article draws on a paper prepared by the author for the inaugural meeting of the UN Secretary-General's Youth Employment Network at the end of August 2001 (Curtain 2000). The Network's recommendations (see http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/youthemployment/yenpr.doc) emphasise the importance of incorporating youth employment into comprehensive employment policies and of stimulating broad-based employment-intensive growth as the best means to create jobs for young people. They also propose backing up such initiatives with strong institutions, such as ensuring that all children have access to quality education and creating effective school-to-work transition pathways. Other recommendations address ways to bridge the gap between the informal sector and the knowledge economy by drawing on the creativity of youth to harness the employment potential of the information and communications technology revolution.

Attention is also given in the recommendations to the value of creating partnerships and networks locally and internationally and to findings ways to exploit the new opportunities opened up by the rapidly expanding service sector. Helping young entrepreneurs to access the support they need is proposed as well, through relevant labour market information services, help in setting up small businesses or through access to capital. Also highlighted is the need for employment policies to respond to youth aspirations for a better future through job security, social protection, rights, and representation at work.

Variations in how youth is defined

Uncertainty on the part of governments about the role of youth in the economy and society is reflected in their differing legal, economic or social status between countries and even between genders within countries. In Africa, the legal definition of adulthood is 21 years in many countries and 18 in others. However, legal status can also vary widely for different purposes, such as marriage, voting rights, criminal responsibility, military service, access to alcohol, consent to medical treatment, consent to sexual intercourse, and so on. For instance in South Africa, a young person can legally consent to sexual intercourse at the age of 16, obtain a driver's licence at 17, vote at 18, but own land only at 21 (Mkandawire and Chigunta 1999).

In economic terms, youth from age 15 are defined as economic agents, according to ILO Convention No. 138 (Esim et al. 1999:3). However, they are often denied access to credit, even through microcredit schemes, because of a requirement for clients to be the legal age (18 or 21 years) in order to sign contracts.

Statistical definitions of youth also vary. In Africa, some countries have adopted the UN definition (15–24 years), while others use the Commonwealth definition (15–29 years). For policy purposes, the age range can be even wider: for instance, in Ghana, Kenya and Tanzania, it is 15–35 years and in Nigeria, 12–30
years. South Africa’s National Youth Policy defines youth as any person between the ages of 14 and 35 years (Mkandawire 2000:3).

**Youth as a life-cycle stage**

Youth as an economic and social concept refers to a separate stage in the life cycle between childhood and adulthood. This period of transition entails a complex interplay of personal, institutional and macroeconomic changes that most young people have to negotiate in other than wholly traditional societies. The relative importance and intermingling of these factors can vary widely not only between countries according to their level of economic development but also within countries according to socioeconomic, ethnic and other social groupings.

The changes that young people have to negotiate revolve around moving from dependence to independence, involving, in most societies, at least four distinct aspects: leaving the parental home and setting up new living arrangements; finishing full-time education; forming close stable personal relationships outside their family of origin, often resulting in marriage and children; and settling into a more or less stable form of livelihood through employment and/or career choice (OECD 1996:109).

An analysis of the range of data related to youth unemployment in OECD countries shows that there is a connection between youth joblessness and serious social problems such as drug abuse, crime, vandalism, and so on (Blanchflower 1999:8). The research suggests that high levels of youth unemployment can lead to alienation from society and democratic political processes, which may give rise to social unrest. This conclusion is also likely to apply to urban youth with few schooling and job opportunities in developing countries. Young, disaffected men have played a significant part in recent conflicts in Fiji, Solomon Islands and Sierra Leone.

A World Bank study of the economic causes of armed conflict around the world found that the risk of civil war is systematically related to a small number of economic conditions, such as a low national income and dependence on primary commodity exports. The study analysed 47 civil wars in 161 countries over the period 1965–99. One important finding was that conflict is concentrated in countries with relatively few young people in education: the average country experiencing civil conflict had only 45 per cent of its young males in secondary education. The study also found that a country with 10 per cent more of its youths in school (say, 55 per cent instead of 45 per cent) cuts its risk of conflict from 14 per cent to around 10 per cent (Collier 2000:7, 132–3).

The **importance of the economic transition**

Clearly, these different transitions do not take place independently of each other. The prior condition for leaving the parental home, setting up a new household and entering into close, stable personal relationships outside the family of origin, in most cases, is obtaining a secure form of livelihood. Sustained employment (waged or self-employment), therefore, is often a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for young people to make the transition to adulthood.

The macroeconomic dimension comes into play through the importance to many young people of first establishing a stable source of livelihood before making the other personal transitions. They are likely to postpone marriage or forming stable personal relationships and/or the begetting of children when faced with uncertain employment prospects and insecure financial conditions.

Overall employment growth has the strongest influence on the ease or difficulty with which young people eventually move into sustained employment (OECD 1998:81, 1999:8). However, institutional differences between countries are also important in determining how long the transition takes and whether it is relatively smooth or rough. Although two countries may have similar economic growth rates, the type and degree of coordination between educational institutions and employers makes for markedly different outcomes.

From the perspective of this economic transition, it is difficult to define what the outer bounds are of the age groups affected. OECD evidence suggests that men even up to the age of 28 may have problems in settling into stable work; for some who are early school leavers, the transition can last to age 35 (OECD 1996:132–3). The wide age span used in many African countries to define youth for policy purposes, as noted above, is likely to reflect the difficulties that most young people in these countries have in becoming economically independent.

**Existing employment programmes and initiatives**

Public policies in relation to youth, including programmes run by international non-government organisations (NGOs), usually adopt one of three starting points. Young people are perceived as passive clients of government services, passing through a series of developmental stages, as autonomous agents able to shape their own destinies or as constrained decision makers (White and Wyn 1998). The assumption that they are passive clients is often the most common operating principle. However, this is contrary to evidence that consensual, participatory and transparent processes achieve more effective outcomes (World Bank 1999).

The International Center for Research on Women conducted a survey in 1994 of more than 100 programmes working with adolescents worldwide. Actively involving youth in all stages of programme design and implementation (21 per cent), putting an emphasis on education (21 per cent), and being responsive to their concerns were the strategies most frequently cited by programme staff as having been successful (Esim et al. 1999).

Other evidence is available of the shortcomings of existing efforts by governments and NGOs to provide employment opportunities for young people in developing countries. A survey of over 200 relevant organisations for a report on sub-Saharan Africa received a response rate of only 15 per cent (Bennell 2000).
Direct contact was also made with British NGOs believed to have youth projects and programmes, and 25 interviews were conducted with relevant staff. These two sources of information showed a general lack of interest among NGOs in youth employment and related issues.

**Microcredit and limited access for youth**

Microcredit has achieved considerable success worldwide in reaching the poor and disadvantaged. The movement has shown clearly that lack of access to capital through restrictive institutional practices is a major obstacle to giving the poor greater capacity to improve their own standard of living. Microcredit has been successful because it has worked from the bottom up to link together in new ways individuals, NGOs, governments and businesses (Remenyi and Quinones 2000).

However, youth appear to be underrepresented as a target group of microcredit programmes. A search of the 902 organisations in 96 countries listed under the Microcredit Summit’s Council of Practitioners reveals only 21 organisations with ‘youth’ in their title. There are, of course, programmes directed at youth by the mainstream microcredit organisations but a check with several experts confirms that youth is an underrepresented group.

A number of reasons for this neglect can be identified, including the common requirement that, to sign a legal contract, clients need to be at least 18 years old. Many programmes, at least in Asia, are more likely to target married than unmarried women, on the assumption that they are less likely to default on loans. Some programmes also have minimum asset requirements to qualify for participation, and this excludes adolescents for the most part (Esim et al 1999:7).

**Lack of user control**

The lack of real user control or influence in youth-oriented programmes as well as evidence that few of them take into account the characteristics of youth, their values or specific needs are the major findings of a report on youth, enterprises, livelihoods and reproductive health in sub-Saharan Africa (Grierson 2000). The report noted that programmes show little evidence of using over-‘learning’ models to adapt to local needs. Instead, they commonly apply imported models in a limited and unimaginative way. In relation to youth programmes generally, the Commonwealth Secretariat (n.d.:1) has noted: ‘While the past two decades have seen the implementation of numerous youth development programmes, the level of economic enfranchisement achieved has remained relatively small’.

**Implications for public policy**

Several general conclusions with implications for public policy purposes can be drawn from the research on young people’s economic transition (Blanchflower 1999, Curtain 2000, OECD 1998). One is that their job prospects mostly depend on overall employment growth, but this alone often does not address the particular disadvantage that they may face in the labour market. Differences in education-to-work transition outcomes reflect also the effectiveness of a country’s institutional arrangements in facilitating or hindering the transition process. Where these institutional arrangements work well, mostly as a result of good coordination between major stakeholders, there is much less need for a specific focus on youth as a problem group in the labour market.

Another conclusion suggested by research is that a focus on employment generation needs also to be complemented by skills development, usually identified by level of educational attainment as a proxy indicator of skill. There is near-universal evidence of the link between educational attainment and employment rates. However, the extent to which education delivers the skills in demand also differs widely between countries. Much depends on the effectiveness of public policy levers in lifting the quality and responsiveness of education providers (Gill et al. 2000).

The link between education and employment also indicates an increasing bifurcation between young people with skills and those without. A new labour market dualism may be emerging where it is increasingly difficult for many young people to move from a cycle of low-skill and uncertain employment, unemployment or informal sector participation to a high-skill, relatively secure employment status. Leaving school early and not acquiring recognised skills may condemn a young person in OECD countries to a life of limited income-earning prospects. In developing countries, attainment of higher levels of education may not be sufficient to provide an entry point to a secure livelihood.

A youth employment strategy needs to address both the supply side and the demand side of the labour market, at both the macro­ and microeconomic levels. This means that, as well as emphasising the need to improve the quality of education, the strategy must promote close links to the growth sectors of the global economy. At a micro demand level, response to the specific skills requirements of employers is vital. This necessitates providing opportunities for young people to acquire and demonstrate the skills, both technical and social, required in high-performance workplaces. Mechanisms or processes are also needed to achieve better coordination between major stakeholders to meet the increasingly specific and individualised training needs of young people.

The strategy also needs to acknowledge the importance of risk taking in the growth sectors of the world economy. Research shows that young people have a strong preference for self-employment, where they can exercise a high degree of autonomy (Blanchflower and Oswald 1998). As already noted, an important barrier to youth entrepreneurship is likely to be the denial of access to credit.

**Conclusion**

The situation facing youth in relation to employment in OECD countries has been the subject of extensive research, policy recommendations and practical initiatives. However, in developing countries, youth employment is not on the political agenda to the
same degree. This is despite the major problems specifically facing these countries, such as youth involvement in armed conflict, crime, social exclusion, and the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Developing a comprehensive employment strategy for young people faces a number of obstacles, not least of which are the perceptions held by governments and international agencies about ‘youth’ as a high-risk group. Adults in positions of power and authority, from politicians to social workers, can perceive ‘youth’ variously as a threat to the established social order, unpredictable, volatile or, particularly in the case of adolescent females, vulnerable (Mkandawire 2000:15–19). These prejudices often result in policies that view young people as passive recipients of programmes and not as active agents able to participate in and respond to available opportunities. The challenge for governments and international agencies is to empower young people themselves to implement key aspects of a comprehensive employment strategy.

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Youth and political participation: Tuned in or tuned out?

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Introduction

The last decades of the twentieth century witnessed a myriad of political developments, notably the collapse of communist regimes and an upsurge in opposition to authoritarian rule worldwide. Young people have often been at the forefront of struggles for democracy and prominent in demonstrations, calling for an end to antidemocratic practices. The way in which new democracies develop, and consolidate, is of special relevance to young people, as they are directly affected by the nature of democratic institutions that are created and are key to sustaining and entrenching democracy. Similarly, young people have a stake in the political system in established democracies, by ensuring the continuity of fundamental rights and freedoms and by sustaining the representative political system. Democracy is a system of government based on the assumption that all citizens, both young and old, have the right to participate in shaping the face of the society in which they live.

In the post-Cold War era, elections have become the main theatre of political participation, whereby voters actively exercise their right to participate democratically by electing representatives in periodic, free and fair elections. While high voter turnout in elections is often viewed as a desirable indicator of participatory democracy, citizens are also free to express dissatisfaction with the status quo, or to demonstrate political apathy, by not voting. 1

The extent to which citizens do, or do not, participate in democracy has become an area of increased interest in recent years, particularly the degree of youth political participation. Recent research seems to point to a growing dissatisfaction and levels of apathy among young people in new and old democracies alike. This article will explore the seemingly low levels of youth participation, most notably in elections, and examine the varying reasons advanced to explain this. Are young people tuned out of traditional processes, or are they tuned into new and alternative political avenues?

Youth electoral turnout

Voter turnout – the extent to which those who are legally enfranchised exercise the most basic of democratic rights – has been an area of much debate in the recent past. While constituting one of many ways in which citizens may participate in political life, it is often seen as a telling indicator of the democratic robustness of a country, affording citizens a stake in the political process. Voter turnout worldwide rose steadily between 1945 and 1990: from 61 per cent in the 1940s to 68 per cent in the 1980s. However, the 1990s witnessed a decline in turnout, where on average 64 per cent of the voting age population voted, most evident in regions like Africa and Latin America (International IDEA 1997:9). A declining interest in voting among certain sectors of the population, particularly young people, may signal a weakening of the democratic culture of the political system. This is a cause for concern, given that the median age of the world’s population is 26.1 years and that half of the world’s population is under 30 years of age (International IDEA 1999a).

Determining the exact rate of participation by different sectors of the population is a difficult task in that turnout rates are often not disaggregated by age or gender today, let alone tracked over the past few decades. Surveys and polls therefore often present the most telling data in terms of turnout. In an effort to analyse the extent of the problem of low voter participation among young people, International IDEA published Youth Voter Participation in 1999. The study documents the scope and pervasiveness of the problem internationally, exploring its causes and identifying possible strategies to increase youth participation. Included in the study is a comparative analysis on the political participation of young people in 15 Western European democracies.

A key finding of the analysis is that voter turnout is indeed lowest among young voters (18–29 years) and gradually rises with age, the average for voters aged 60–96 being 93 per cent (Eva Anduiza Perea, in International IDEA 1999b:24). The average turnout rate for all citizens across the 15 nations is 88.6 per cent, while that for those aged 18–29 is 80 per cent. A further finding is that, in countries where overall voter participation is relatively low, the difference between youth turnout and the average turnout is greater than in countries with higher overall turnout rates. Furthermore, where voting is compulsory, the turnout of young voters is substantially higher than in countries with voluntary voting. For example, the average turnout in Switzerland (with voluntary voting) is around 63 per cent, while the 18–29 age cohort rate is over 13 per cent lower. This is in contrast to Belgium (with compulsory voting) with a turnout of 97 per cent and a youth rate less than a percentage point lower.

Other country surveys confirm lower levels of electoral turnout among young people. In Britain, age has been found to be a key determinant of involvement in formal politics, with widespread non-participation and political withdrawal apparent among young people. Young people are less likely to register to vote than other age groups: 20 per cent of 18–25 year olds were not registered in 1995. Up to 40 per cent of those aged 18–24 did not vote in the 1997 British elections (Fahmy 1999). Youth participation in the United States is also low. In the 1972 presidential election, nearly 50 per cent of voters aged 18–24 went to the polls, but by 1988 the rate had fallen to 38 per cent. Turnout rose in 1992 to 43 per
In 1999 the annual International IDEA Democracy Forum (What's So Great about Democracy? The Youth Speak Up!) gathered more than 100 young people in Stockholm to discuss the future of democracy and the challenges and opportunities that confront them. Participants noted several obstacles hindering youth participation in politics, from 'not understanding how the system works, to a growing distrust of political institutions and leaders, to a lack of time in today's competitive environment’. They also emphasised that they are not apathetic about politics but feel alienated from traditional political processes and not convinced their participation can make a difference.

Some participants said that they lacked confidence in the system and its leaders and felt that politicians only appeal to them during elections. 'This gap between those who govern and those being governed seems to be getting wider and appears to be a fundamental reason for low participation.' Other reasons cited include disinterest and disillusionment with the political and electoral system, doubts about the effectiveness of their votes, complaints about corruption in politics, being uninformed about where or how to vote, and not voting as a form of protest (International IDEA 1999c:8, 33). It is also possible that young people take time to develop an interest in politics, as they lack experience with political matters and are less socially and politically integrated.

**New forms of political expression?**

The apparent low levels of participation have prompted a concern that young people are tuning out of traditional party politics. In many developed democracies, membership in political parties has steadily declined: in the early 1980s in 15 Western European countries, 18.2 per cent of the electorate were party members, but by the mid-1990s membership had decreased to 5.2 per cent (International IDEA 1999c:16). The information function that party members used to fill has increasingly been taken over by the mass media and information communication technology, and politicians are often criticised for being removed from people and politics in the community. As one young person has articulated:

"Young people don't see the connection between the agendas of political parties and their own problems. This distance between how and where decisions are being made and the real life of average citizens is growing and this is the problem. Previously, political parties were the ones that connected up and down, politicians with citizens. This is no longer the case. Now we have NGOs and other groups that serve this function better." (Zhanna Naurysbayeva, in International IDEA 1999c:16)

While traditional party politics may be unappealing to many, this is not to say that young people are not politically active. They are interested in specific issues, such as education, the environment and health care, and are consequently joining interest groups, non-government organisations or other associations that address their
Education is possibly the most effective means of promoting a democratic culture from an early age. Learning democracy as a way of life, both at home and in schools, is an important endeavour. School-based programmes, as well as publicly sponsored voter or civic education programmes, provide young people with key information about the political system and the importance of voting in elections. Above all, they should be encouraged to inform themselves about political processes and the ways in which they are able to participate. Similarly, politicians need to start listening to young people and addressing their everyday concerns.

Developing strategies that reflect the needs and concerns of different groups are pivotal to increasing political participation by young people.

Notes

The views expressed in this article are attributable to the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of International IDEA.

1. However, some countries have mandatory or compulsory voting and sanctions may be imposed on citizens who do not turn out to vote in elections – for example, Australia, Belgium, Cyprus, Fiji, Luxemburg, Singapore and Uruguay (see http://www.idea.int/voter_turnout/Compulsory_Voting.htm).

2. Countries included in the study are Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

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Adolescent reproductive and sexual health in the developing world

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At the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo in 1994, a programme of action for the next 20 years was agreed upon. This programme attempted to shift the focus away from demography and targets and towards reproductive health, empowering women, education and choice. The definition of reproductive health, as agreed at the conference, is 'a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and its functions and processes'.

'Reproductive health' includes the ability to have a satisfying and safe sex life, and the freedom to have children if, when and as often as one decides. It therefore involves the right to be informed of, and have access to, safe, effective, affordable and acceptable family planning methods, as well as access to appropriate health care which will ensure safe pregnancy and childbirth, and healthy infants.

The Cairo programme acknowledged that particular attention needs to be given to the reproductive health needs of adolescents as a group, as previously their need for reproductive health services had largely been ignored. To rectify this situation, the programme called on governments to make accessible to young people information and services on sexuality and on how to protect themselves from unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases (UN 1994). The five-year review of the Cairo programme ('ICPD+5') states:

In order to protect and promote the rights of adolescents to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standards of health, provide appropriate, specific, user-friendly and accessible services to address effectively their reproductive and sexual health needs, including reproductive health education, information, counselling and health promotion strategies. These services should safeguard the rights of adolescents to privacy, confidentiality and informed consent, respecting their cultural values and religious beliefs and in conformity with relevant existing international agreements and conventions. (UNFPA website: paragraph 73a)

Adolescent reproductive health issues

There is a great diversity of challenges faced by young people in regard to their reproductive health, and the issues of critical importance to them vary greatly depending on their cultural and geographical backgrounds. These issues include forced early marriage, lack of opportunities, unwanted pregnancy, early childbearing, the spread of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmissible infections (STIs), and female genital mutilation. For all young people, however, the need for accurate information, non-judgmental counselling, and affordable and accessible services are paramount in overcoming these challenges and helping them to avoid unwanted pregnancies, care for their sexual health, and take advantage of education and other opportunities.

Early pregnancy

One in every ten births worldwide is to teenage mothers (Youth Coalition for ICPD). Decreasing the number of adolescent pregnancies is a priority for a number of reasons. Early pregnancy impacts on a girl’s education, economic well-being and health. Adolescent mothers often fail to complete their education, which in turn affects their future job prospects and their economic well-being and that of their child. Pregnancy before the age of 18 also carries greater medical risks for the mother. The risk of dying from complications related to pregnancy or childbirth is 25 times higher for girls under 15, and two times higher for those aged 15–19, than for women in their mid-twenties (UNFPA website). The combination of immature bodies, poverty, lack of education and lack of access to medical care carries grave risks. Over four million women aged 15–19 have abortions every year, 40 per cent of which are performed under unsafe conditions. Early pregnancy also has a global impact, as adolescent mothers will have more children than those who start childbearing later. The UNFPA (2001) estimates that raising the mother’s age at first birth from 18 to 23 could reduce population growth by over 40 per cent.

STIs and HIV/AIDS

Each day, 500,000 young people are infected with an STI. Half of all HIV infections (8,000 a day) occur in people under the age of 25. While most STIs are not fatal, they can lead to major pregnancy complications, infertility and general ill health, and they have also been identified as a predisposing factor in the transmission of HIV (Temin et al. 1999).

The high rates of infection among adolescents are largely due to lack of information or to myths about how STIs and HIV are spread, many young people receiving most of their information from friends, TV and magazines (Rwenge 2000). Society's attitudes and expectations also contribute to the high rates of infection. Studies have shown that girls are often socialised to be motivated to begin sexual activity for reasons of love, intimacy, commitment and to have a relationship, whereas they equate condoms with multiple sex partners, distrust and disease (Machel 2001). For young men, having multiple partners and being sexually experienced are important marks of masculinity, and lead to more risky behaviour (Nzioka 2001).
Women and girls

Socially accepted gender roles and the position of females in many societies have a strong impact on the needs of adolescent girls. The rate of HIV infection is 2.5 times higher among young women than among young men – 68.4 per cent of cases (Machel 2001). The executive director of the UNFPA, Thoraya A. Obaid, has stated:

"We know that girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are five to eight times more vulnerable to HIV transmission than boys of the same age. Part of this is due to the physiology of women. But the other part is exactly related to the socio-cultural context in which women, or little girls, are brought up. For example, women do not know anything about their body and how it functions and their sexuality. They’re not allowed to think about it. They’re not allowed to understand it. (UNFPA website: page 5)"

For some young women, sexual relationships are not entered into willingly but come about as the result of force or abuse, including incest. They may have no control over whether, whom or when they marry, sometimes before they have even reached puberty. In some countries, over 50 per cent of girls under the age of 18 are married, often in response to poverty or fear of out-of-wedlock pregnancy. For example, in the Democratic Republic of Congo 74 per cent, Niger 70 per cent, Afghanistan 54 per cent and Bangladesh 51 per cent.

Unwanted and violent sexual relations may also result from these early or forced marriages. Although the young and powerless of either sex may fall victim, young girls and women are most likely to encounter sexual exploitation and, with it, the risk of unwanted pregnancy and infection, including HIV/AIDS. In countries where it is practised, female genital mutilation, in addition to violating a woman’s right to bodily integrity and ability to ever experience sexual pleasure, can lead to severe health consequences, including infections, painful sexual relations, prolonged and obstructed labour, and even death. Two million young girls are at risk of female genital mutilation each year (see UNFPA website).

Adolescent reproductive health needs

Adolescents and youth face multiple barriers to accessing reproductive and sexual health services and maintaining their reproductive health. These include lack of information and education, lack of youth-specific services, concerns about confidentiality, affordability and access to services, and social pressures and taboos (see UNFPA website).

Education and information

Education programmes are recognised as an effective means of addressing the sexual and reproductive health needs of adolescents. Strong opposition to such programmes still remains in many parts of the world, particularly from religious leaders, decision makers, and the media (see UNESCO website). This can be partly attributed to the myth that sex education teaches young people to have sex, which globally is of particular concern in every religious or traditional society where premarital sex is prohibited. Many studies have debunked this myth, and a review commissioned by UNAIDS (1997), based on the analysis of 68 research reports on sexual health education from diverse countries, concluded that:

- education about sexual health and/or HIV does not encourage increased sexual activity;
- quality sexual health education either delayed the onset of sexual activity, reduced the number of sexual partners or reduced unplanned pregnancy and STD rates;
- responsible and safe behaviour can be learned; and
- sexual health education is best started before the onset of sexual activity.

The review, summarising a large body of evidence, concluded that effective education programmes share certain features. They work from a focused curriculum, give clear statements about behavioural aims, and clearly delineate the risks of unprotected sex and methods to avoid it. They use learning activities to address social and media influences and to enhance communication and negotiation skills. Effective education programmes also encourage openness in communicating about sex.

There is, however, a gap between the awareness raised by education programmes and the practice of safe sex, particularly because of the mixed messages sent by society. A study of adolescent boys in Kenya showed that definitions of male sexuality – social prescriptions of male prowess, early sexual experience and having more than one partner – mean that, although most boys know they should use condoms, in reality they often do not practise safe sex. Furthermore, some of the boys surveyed said that contracting a curable STI (such as gonorrhoea and syphilis) was acceptable as a mark of masculinity and sign of experience (Nzioka 2001). Thus, it is evident that, on their own, information and education on safe sexual behaviour are not enough; there is a need to change attitudes and beliefs about sexuality and gender relations in general, in order to effect change.

Appropriate services

Reproductive and sexual health services can play an important role in both health promotion and prevention. However, in many countries such services are inaccessible, inappropriate or unaffordable to young people. A study in South Africa showed that many such health services are either physically inaccessible or have opening times that prevent easy access for youth. Staff attitudes – ranging from judgemental, to treating adolescent requests for services with hostility, to denying them services – also impact on adolescents’ utilisation of services (Dickson-Tetteh et al. 2001).

A survey of adolescents in Nigeria showed that those who contracted an STI would go to a traditional healer rather than use reproductive health services. They were unlikely to seek treatment from doctors because of the high cost and slow service, with some stating that negative provider attitudes and a perceived lack of
confidentiality drove them away. Some feared being ridiculed by hospital staff, being asked too many questions, or even being put under house arrest for having an STI (Temin et al. 1999).

Services in countries where premarital sex is prohibited or frowned upon are also regularly denied to unmarried adolescents. A study of family planning providers in Ghana showed that service restrictions were enforced if the client was unmarried or could not demonstrate spousal consent, and for young people (Stanback and Twum-Baah 2001).

Social status of women and girls

A comparative study of safe sex practices among girls at a private school and a government school (indicative of socioeconomic status) in Mozambique showed that 56 per cent of the girls from the private school always used condoms, compared with just 32 per cent from the government school. In addition, fewer girls at the private school were sexually active (52 per cent), and those that were tended to have only one sexual partner, whereas at the government school 82 per cent were sexually active and were more likely to have had multiple partners. Girls at both schools had received information at school about HIV/AIDS. The study concluded that the reason for knowledge, skills and attitudes not being translated into safe behaviour could be attributed to the willingness and ability of the girls to challenge patriarchal behaviour and attitudes. The middle-class girls were more willing to do so (Machel 2001).

Girls who are married young face social and psychological barriers to accessing reproductive health services. A study of girls married before the age of 18 in Maharashtra state in India showed that many of them are confronted with such barriers because of their social position. They face great pressure to begin childbearing soon after marriage, and after taking up residence with their husband's family, and find themselves in a subordinate position as a stranger. As well, these girls are exposed to a range of reproductive health problems they would not have encountered prior to marriage. The study showed that the majority do not seek treatment for sexual/reproductive health problems, for several reasons: shame and embarrassment; not being taken seriously by those with influence (husband and mother-in-law); lack of influence; and lack of financial independence (Barua and Kurz 2001).

What programmes are being run for adolescents?

The UNFPA is working to address the reproductive health needs of adolescents through programmes in a wide range of countries.

Information and education

In Bangladesh, the UNFPA supports a programme for young couples and newlyweds, to encourage the use of family planning, spacing and timing of births. Young couples rarely seek any reproductive health services, as early childbearing is strongly encouraged, particularly to prove the woman's fertility. The programme provides orientation sessions, attended by the couple and close family members, as well as one-to-one counselling and education aimed at breaking down the social and psychological barriers to the use of modern contraceptive methods. Contraceptive use among newlyweds in this programme jumped from 19 per cent in 1993 to 39 per cent in 1997.

The use of peer educators is recognised as crucial to getting messages and correct information across to young people, so many programmes focus on training peer educators and peer counsellors, who provide information on sexual health and family planning in classrooms, on the radio, and through theatre and discussion groups. In Colombia, the UNFPA has supported a government programme to train educators as part of the National Project for Sexuality Education.

Youth-friendly health services

In Bolivia, Dominican Republic, and Malawi, programmes have been run to provide reproductive health services for adolescents, addressing the needs of specific groups, such as indigenous peoples and out-of-school adolescents (Bolivia and Malawi, respectively), and specific health needs such as prevention of teenage pregnancy (Dominican Republic).

Supportive Communities — enabling adults to help

Other programmes recognise the need for parents, teachers and service providers to be given the skills and knowledge to pass on to their young people. The UNFPA supports various such programmes: training of service providers in Algeria; sensitisation and dialogue with community leaders, youth, their parents and families in Cameroon to help the community understand and be supportive of the critical sexual and reproductive health needs of youth; research into and production of education booklets by the Iranian government and non-school-based classes on reproductive health; and addressing the needs of young Somali refugees in Kenya.

Adolescent girls

Recognising the particular disadvantages that girls experience in much of the world, many UNFPA programmes are targeted at empowering girls and promoting gender equality and equity. The aim is to increase girls' knowledge of modern contraceptive methods (for example, in Djibouti, where a 1995 survey showed that less than 1 per cent of adolescent girls knew of modern family planning methods); and to encourage them to make use of health care facilities, particularly for family planning and reproductive health services.

IPPF-supported programmes

Through its member organisations (family planning associations), the IPPF also supports a wide range of programmes aimed at addressing the reproductive and sexual health needs of young
people. In some countries, peer educator programmes, young leaders’ groups, and youth advocacy movements have been established. A peer educator programme run by the Bulgarian Family Planning and Sexual Health Association has targeted young people with special needs, including girls with a criminal record, and children with disabilities. In Thailand, young people run a counselling centre for adolescents with the support of the Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand. In Rwanda, where sex is still a taboo subject and many people did not know how to talk to young people about contraceptive methods, young people have talked to religious leaders to help them to understand their needs and to break down the barriers to talking about sexual and reproductive health.

Funding
The ICPD 1994 Programme of Action is a comprehensive strategy to improve the reproductive well-being of individuals. To achieve its goals, governments agreed that US$17 billion would be needed annually by the year 2000 for reproductive health services in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

Two-thirds of this cost was to be met by developing country governments, who today spend about two thirds of this (UNFPA 2001). The Programme of Action pledged donor governments to expand their share of funding for population and development activities to make up the other third; however they currently provide only $2 billion a year, which is one third of the required $5.7 billion. It was estimated that donors of population assistance would need to increase their contributions to US$5.7 billion in 2000, US$6.1 billion in 2005, US$6.8 billion in 2010 and US$7.2 billion in 2015 (all in 1993 dollars). The amounts needed for population assistance could be achieved by meeting two targets that have already been agreed internationally. The first is that official development assistance (ODA) donors should give at least 0.7 per cent of their gross national product (GNP) as ODA. The second is that population activities should be allocated 4 per cent of all ODA.

Despite recent initiatives to increase population assistance, Australia is far from the most generous of ODA donors. Australia’s ODA as a proportion of GNP is now 0.25 per cent - the lowest level ever and well below the UN target of 0.7 per cent (ACFOA, Overseas Aid Budget Analysis Overview). To respond to the many reproductive health needs and rights of young people outlined in this paper, more must be done in terms of both financial and political commitment.

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Non-formal education as an important strategy for youth empowerment

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While researching non-formal education and development in the South Pacific in the 1980s, I noticed that three main tendencies were holding back the effectiveness of non-formal education as a strategy for youth development. First was the tendency in many countries to make non-formal education a sub-sector of the education ministry, rather than seeing it as a strategy for human resource development in all sectors. The second was to view it as a second-rate, cheap, alternative formal system for those who fail within formal schooling with its rigid age-grading and examinations. This was often associated with a third unfortunate tendency: an assumption that non-formal education is lacking in form, rather than outside the system (always a trap when a term is defined negatively). Rarely did I see the term used in Pacific island countries to mean a complementary system for the learning of skills, attitudes and values, often inadequately taught through formal schooling.

Some years later, while working for the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) South Pacific Regional Centre in Fiji in the late 1980s, I developed and taught a diploma course in youth and development. The CYP was then putting great emphasis on small business courses. It always surprised me that these courses were taught mainly to those who were the least prepared to be able to successfully run a small business, namely those who had failed and dropped out of formal education. Running a small business in any society requires considerable courage, tenacity, literacy, numeracy, good financial skills, organising ability and interpersonal skills, as well as a knowledge of the subject matter of the business concerned. Where are these skills, attitudes and values taught? They cannot be picked up in a short course, although some useful tips can undoubtedly be passed on to others by a successful business person and stories shared on how to overcome problems.

I did notice, however, in the many workshops that we ran, that some young people who did have these skills and qualities, particularly as organisers, had acquired them through participation in organisations such as the Scouts, the Guides, the YMCA, the YWCA or sometimes church youth organisations. Yet, interestingly, none of these organisations refer to what they are doing as non-formal education. They make a very cogent case for rethinking its contribution to youth work, in a way which sidesteps the difficulties with this term which I have referred to above and which also makes a contribution to the debate about how civil society can be empowered in an era of globalisation.

Defining education

The Big 6's starting-point is the UNESCO definition of education: 'a life-long process which enables the continuous development of a person's capabilities as an individual and as a member of society'. In this broad definition, education throughout life is based on four pillars: learning to know, to do, to live together and to be. A variety of educational agents make a contribution to the full personal and social development of an individual. The UNESCO definition, generally accepted, distinguishes three types of education:

- **Formal education** is the hierarchically structured, chronologically graded educational system running from primary through to tertiary institutions.
- **Informal education** is the process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience, such as from family, friends, peer groups, the media, and other influences and factors in the person's environment.
- **Non-formal education** is organised educational activity outside the established formal system that is intended to serve an identifiable clientele with identifiable learning objectives. Each type plays a specific role which complements the other two, and all are necessary to produce the desired results. In broad terms:
  - knowledge and job skills are generally acquired through formal education;
  - a number of skills, both personal and social, are acquired through informal education; and
  - the acquisition of life skills and the development of attitudes based on an integrated value system are made possible through non-formal education (Casey et al. 1998a).

The impact of global trends on young people

The first 'Big 6' document – *The Education of Young People: A Statement at the Dawn of the 21st Century* – describes the qualities
the world needs of its citizens in this new century: autonomous (able to make choices and to control personal and social life as an individual and as a member of society), supportive (able to show concern for others, to act with them and for them, to share their concerns), responsible (able to take responsibility for actions, keep commitments and complete whatever is undertaken), and committed (able to assert themselves in respect of values, a cause or an ideal and to act accordingly).

Four global trends are affecting all people, whatever their age:
- the increasing and accelerated shifts in population;
- the evolution of family structure and the declining influence of family life;
- the development, on a global scale, of lifestyle models which often do not correspond to local realities; and
- a decreasing assurance that a young person will be able to assume a full and responsible adult life.

The context for these trends includes an accelerated pace of change, economic globalisation and social fragmentation, and a communication and technological revolution. Young people face the challenges of injustice and exclusion and there is a growing gap between the rich and the poor. They suffer from xenophobia and racism, homophobia, and exclusion from democratic participation.

Economic inequality is also seen as an important contributing factor: 'Within all communities and countries, there are growing disparities and inequalities. This increasing gap threatens social cohesion and is strongly related to youth mortality, violence and psychosocial stress.'

Major tasks to be addressed

The major tasks for all young people, regardless of culture or class, are:
- finding a secure starting-point for themselves based on values, self-awareness and self-confidence;
- coping with change, which requires flexibility, adaptability and mobility;
- gaining constructive control of technological progress through access to knowledge and skills;
- combating isolation by developing a sense of belonging and identity, gaining acceptance and being recognised;
- acquiring a sense of usefulness by making a contribution to the development of their community and beyond; and
- learning to recognise the value of cooperation and teamwork.

The youth movement CEOs then refer to a worldwide deficit in informal, formal and non-formal education.

Informal education

One deficit in informal education is that families often grant, or even impose, more independence on their children and at an earlier age but do not teach them how to manage their autonomy. With regard to informal education via the media, the common denominator everywhere is our 'consumer society' (even in poorer countries), which tends to teach children the cost of objects rather than transmitting life values and to promote lifestyles which are unsustainable in most parts of the world.

The peer group is also an important provider of informal education. Peers often play the most influential role in a young person's decisions and behaviour. Considering that young people are often marginalised and among the more frequent victims of poverty, this makes it easy for them to end up in groups which exert a negative rather than a positive influence. Thus, recognising the importance of peer groups is a key factor in successful national youth policies.

Formal education

The deficit in formal education is identified as many schools tend to teach more and more but educate less and less. While formal schooling is regarded as a good way to teach knowledge and professional skills, literacy and the common culture, school systems are often inflexible and exam-driven. Values, teamwork skills and other necessary learning tasks for producing autonomous, supportive, committed and responsible youth are seen as best taught through non-formal education.

Another problem is that success in formal education is no longer a necessary passport to a good job, and other skills are needed for self-employment, the creation of cooperatives, or some other form of livelihood.

Non-formal education

In identifying suitable non-formal educational programmes, the authors, not surprisingly, suggest organisations such as their own. The Big 6 now regard themselves as promoters of non-formal education (complementary to formal schooling) and some of them also use the term 'experiential learning'. Why are these programmes now so defined? They are voluntary; young people are not required to join but can choose to do so because they are attracted by the activities, the values, the peer group or sometimes because of parental encouragement. Most importantly, they learn within a context of social responsibility.

These are youth organisations set up with a broader purpose in mind, usually relating to some wider cause such as health, the environment, the status of women and girls, multiculturalism, world citizenship or world peace. While many of them have a long history, and some were even associated with colonialist movements, they now see themselves as an active part of international civil society in combating some of the ill effects of globalisation.

The role of organisations in non-formal education

The concept of non-formal education being most powerful within an organisation with a broader purpose accords with my
findings when studying non-formal education in Fiji, New Caledonia and Micronesia in the 1980s. The two most successful non-formal education projects, which I revisited ten years later, were still operating very successfully, having re-oriented themselves well to take account of new challenges, in particular the challenge of gender inclusion. They were the Maisons Familiales Rurales in New Caledonia and the Tutu Training Centre in Taveuni, Fiji.

Notable about both is the community input into decision making and the reluctance of both to become too reliant on government, particularly on ministries of education. Both were started by visionary leaders, who had a larger vision than just providing some training, yet neither remained dependent on those leaders. Most importantly, they were the ones which paid attention to the personal development needs of the participants, and not merely to the marketable skills developed.

Both illustrate the importance of having a responsive management structure if a local education programme is to be successful. Decision making about course content, the selection process for participants and the financial structure are often overlooked in non-formal education programmes, sometimes even being handed over to outside consultants or funding bodies. These two cases show how important it is to have transparent and democratic structures, and for such centres to be well enough known that prospective students will be aware of them and be able to join.

Similarly, the YMCA and YWCA of Fiji, while having suffered some reverses, were still able to produce some effectively trained young people, due in part to their membership base of older members to act as mentors. Other programmes that had looked promising for a while – the Methodist Handicraft and Farming School and the Navuso Young Farmers Scheme – faded away when difficulties hit the Methodist Church. Even the Multi-craft Program of the Fiji Government could not sustain itself.2

More recently, I have had the opportunity to spend time in East Timor and to hear of the very interesting role which youth organisations played there in the resistance against the Indonesian military occupation. During the occupation when the formal schooling system was massively expanded, the students eagerly accepted the 'professional' part of their education, while rejecting the value system and the political ideology embodied in it. They created their own student associations in the universities in order to gain knowledge that the Indonesian authorities did not want them to have: computing skills, the English language, the Portuguese language, Timorese history, Marxist theory, and so on. These were all non-formal education organisations and, after the UN Popular Consultation of 1999, many of them continued their educational role by helping other students who had not had access to education during the occupation.3

While these associations operated at the tertiary level, many of their members had been inspired by their earlier participation in the Catholic Scouts of East Timor, where they had learnt how to run such organisations. The Catholic Scouts are affiliated with the international organisation but, unlike the Indonesian Scouts, are not under the control of the Indonesians. According to many informants, this was a key organisation in training its members in bushcraft skills, organisational skills, and communications, which they later used to participate in the clandestine resistance.

**Conclusion**

In my view, therefore, the assertions of the Big 6 CEOs have considerable substance. Moreover, their promotion of non-formal education in a new and dynamic way may give it a new lease of life in the hands of youth workers, national and local level NGOs and others better able to put it into practice than education ministries.

Finally, it should be noted that the authors are not simply concerned with youth who are members of their own organisations. *National Youth Policies* concludes with a set of recommendations to governments, youth NGOs and other civil society players on how to go about devising youth policies which will really address these issues. While this part of the document may seem full of standard fare for many youth advocates, it nevertheless brings these ideas together in a useful framework for mobilising young people in the setting up and running of their own non-formal education organisations.

**Notes**

1. Casey et al. 1998a and b can be found (with some difficulty) on the websites of the World YMCA (www.ymca.org) and of the World Organization of the Scout Movement (www.wosm.org).

2. See Hill (1987:ch.4) for my early observations of these projects.

3. See de Araujo (2000:106–25) for a discussion of how these organisations cooperated in mounting the campaign for the independence vote at the UN Popular Consultation.

**References**


Securing our common future will require new energy and openness, fresh insights, and an ability to look beyond the narrow bounds of national frontiers and separate scientific disciplines. The young are better at such vision than we, who are too often constrained by the traditions of a former, more fragmented world. We must tap their energy, their openness, their ability to see the interdependence of issues... Our generation has too often been willing to use the resources of the future to meet our own short-term goals. It is a debt we can never repay. If we fail to change our ways, these young men and women will suffer more than we, and they and their children will be denied their fundamental right to a healthy, productive, life-enhancing environment. (Brundtland 1987)

**Introduction**

The concept of intergenerational equity and sustainable development rose to prominence with the launch of the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future* (WCED 1987). While the report and the subsequent work that policy makers around the globe have achieved are impressive, too often the vital contribution of youth and our responsibilities to them have received much less attention. Yet, as noted by Gro Brundtland when she launched the report, youth must be integral to the processes and programmes that aim to achieve sustainable development. It is youth who ultimately will inherit the environmental challenges of the future that we have been unable to resolve. Our investment in youth, and our inclusion of them in decision making affecting environment and development issues, are essential for the future.

The importance of this investment is explicitly recognised in the report of the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), otherwise known as the Earth Summit, which notes: 'The involvement of today's youth in the environment and development decision-making and in the implementation of programmes is critical to the long-term success of Agenda 21' (Quarrie 1992:193). Box 1 summarises the goal and objectives outlined in Agenda 21 which are directly related to youth. While these objectives are of direct benefit to youth and to the achievement of intergenerational equity, they will not produce significant outcomes unless the larger cultural, social and economic systems take into account contemporary youth issues.

### Inter- and intragenerational equity?

The concept of 'equity' is really more of an ideal than an achievable goal. In essence, it challenges us to consider not just the 'efficient' allocation of resources, but also the fairness of that allocation over space and time. 'Temporal inequities' occur when economic or other activities appropriate natural assets and transfer the associated costs to future generations (Clayton and Radcliffe 1996:169). Typical examples include environmental degradation of forests and other productive lands, diminishing investments in education and other forms of productive social capital, and inadequate management of persistent pollutants and waste. For youth globally, some key equity issues of direct and immediate importance are related to their access to quality and socially relevant education and employment, and the enhancement of services that directly support their health and well-being.
Table 1: Education for all: A 'temporal inequity' in the making?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conference</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>Key targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994 International Conference on Population and Development</td>
<td>Held by UNDP/UNFPA.</td>
<td>Universal access to quality education, with priority given to primary and technical education and job training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995 World Summit for Social Development</td>
<td>117 heads of state, with 185 governments represented.</td>
<td>To reduce by half the incidence of poverty by 2015. To achieve universal access to basic education and completion of primary education by at least 80 per cent of primary school-aged children, closing the gender gap in primary and secondary school education by 2001; and universal primary education in all countries by 2015.</td>
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</tbody>
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**Education**

The future will be characterised by rapid change. The next generation will need to be even more responsive to new and unexpected environmental and social changes than is currently the case. Appropriate and flexible education is one way in which we can develop a more responsive populace globally. The 1990 World Conference on Education for All noted that:

- education is the single most vital element in combating poverty, empowering women, protecting children from hazardous and exploitative labour and sexual exploitation, promoting human rights and democracy, protecting the environment and influencing population growth. (UNICEF1999)

- It is therefore disappointing to observe that global commitment to education for our youth appears to be one of those costs we keep putting off. Table 1 indicates that education may become another example of a socially imposed 'temporal inequity' that will cost the next generation dearly. In June 1996, a conference was held to assess progress since 1990. The report on the findings noted that, while primary school enrolment had increased significantly in developing countries, the increase only managed 'to keep pace with' the numbers of children entering the 6–11 age group over the same period (UNICEF998:15).

If expenditure on education remains consistent with present patterns, 855 million people will be illiterate by the end of this century – that is, more than the combined population of all the 'industrialised' countries (UNICEF1999). It is estimated that the additional annual expenditure needed to achieve universal primary enrolment by the year 2010 is $7 billion (Table 2). This is not unachievable, if there is a global commitment. But would this alone be enough? Probably not, although this amount is less than what Europeans spend annually on ice-cream ($11 billion) and Americans spend on cosmetics.

**Table 2: Investing in education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic region</th>
<th>Additional expenditure needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>$1.9 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>$1.6 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East and North Africa</td>
<td>$1.6 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia and the Pacific</td>
<td>$0.7 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
<td>$1.1 billion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Delamonica et al. (forthcoming). Estimates are based on UNESCO data; UN Population Division projections to the year 2010; and UNDP 1999:Table 1.12, p. 37. Required additional expenditure from UNICEF estimates, as quoted at <http://www.who.care.com/edu.html> (2000 Global Youth Network).

While there is no doubt that sustainable development requires a strong education base, attention and debate need to focus on issues which go beyond funding and begin to address the nature of the education itself. As noted by a Thai scholar during a workshop on communities, education and sustainability:

> The right to education is not just the right to any kind of education. It is fundamentally a question of appropriate education and learning. The adverse impact of mis-education on both individuals and rural communities points to a serious shortcoming in the current scheme of industrial development that looks at education merely as a means to production, like any other commodity. (Chamarik 1994:51)

Chamarik goes on to argue that education for our youth must address the realities of future needs within a given national and social context. Despite this, we tend to invest in uniform and unidimensional educational systems. For example, the educational needs of Thailand, where approximately 75 per cent of the working population are self-employed and a large proportion are rural, are different from those of a Western industrialised country. Furthermore, many nations rely on...
educational systems to achieve pluralistic objectives, including the promotion of national identity and culture.

This same issue was raised again in the most recent Pacific Human Development Report, where it was noted that the most urgent concern across the region is 'how to better meet the needs and aspirations of the upcoming generation of Pacific island people' (UNDP 1999:35). One of the core issues of concern is the 'inadequate' or 'inappropriate' education that is only well suited for the very few waged jobs, despite the majority of school leavers being absorbed by the rural sector, for which they have few relevant skills. While a focus on formal education for our youth is warranted, attention must also be given to informal education or alternative education that can be used to maintain productive rural industries and sustain the ecosystems on which they depend. Perhaps it is now time to move on from merely affirming the 'right' to education, to establishing a right to 'appropriate' education for sustainable development.

**Employment**

The mismatch between skills and employment opportunities makes the full employment of the 'energy' and 'vision' of our youth challenging, and can result in high levels of disillusionment and waste of human resources. Present trends towards the rationalisation of government services, the mechanisation of production processes, and the global integration of economies have made entry into formal employment more difficult for today's youth than it was for the previous generation for whom there was a rapid expansion of opportunities. The mobility of the global workforce, coupled with economic rationalisation, has meant that the competition for existing jobs is becoming tougher. The 1999 Pacific Human Development Report refers to this trend as 'poverty of opportunity'. Future development initiatives must deal directly with the need to create sustainable livelihoods for future generations.

The desire to find work for youth has led to programmes that subsidise youth training in the private sector or even their employment. An overview paper published by the International Labour Office (O'Higgins 1997) argues that the challenge of youth unemployment cannot be addressed in isolation from the wider macroeconomic and social problems; many countries are facing rising levels of unemployment and economic recessions. When unemployment rises, youth are often one of the groups most affected. To effectively deal with youth unemployment and achieve more sustainable outcomes over time, O'Higgins (1997:64–5) argues that:

1. Youth training programmes need to be carefully targeted to those young people who are in most need of help (rather than favouring those most easy to train).
2. Key stakeholder groups need to be engaged in the design and implementation of youth employment policy (that is youth, government and private sector) to ensure real needs are being met.
3. Evaluations of programmes need to assess more than mere reductions in employment, and consider the quality of work, and thus the likelihood of long-term benefits for the individual and the society.
4. The value of mandatory work schemes for youth should be critically considered given that evidence indicates that voluntary schemes are more effective.

Clearly, some innovative thinking is needed to reconceptualise youth unemployment so that it is not just a problem to be solved but, rather, an opportunity to be accessed. In Australia, a Young Entrepreneurs programme provides limited financial support and training to young entrepreneurs through a mentoring programme. It thus has the benefit of building supportive networks across the generations and creating employment opportunities for youth through building their skills. Many similar initiatives are being trialled around the world.

**Health**

The improvement in the accessibility of child health services internationally has benefited this generation of youth; most of them can look forward to longer lives with better health care services than their parents would ever have had. The rising incidence of 'lifestyle' diseases (such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, STDs/HIV, cancer) means that health education for today's youth will be essential for the creation of health improvements in the future. This education will have to address nutrition, safe sex, fitness maintenance, and so on. Health education is likely to become one of the most important 'inoculations' against future diseases – yet in many places around the globe it is considered an optional component of the formal curriculum.

Ironically, another important step in securing youth health will be achieved not by medical professions, but by environmental managers, urban planners and architects. Decisions made today about building design, urban planning, environmental regulations, water infrastructure and so on are crucial to youth health and the health of future generations. It is therefore essential that a long-term planning horizon is used, and that structural adjustment plans and other related economic planning exercises fully account for economic, social and ecological costs over time, as part of the strategic planning process.

As they enter the adult world, youth need to be able to find a niche where they can make a valuable contribution. The education and employment situation outlined above can make finding such a place challenging, and in many countries it is a contributing factor to the increasing level of youth suicide. This makes youth issues all the more pressing to resolve. The UNCED commitment to greater involvement by youth in decision making affecting education, employment, social planning and a range of other issues is not only practical and necessary, it is also occurring to an increasing extent and society is all the better for it.

**Nurturing the future**

To nourish youth is to provide them with opportunities for intellectual, spiritual and personal growth. There are many
Around the world, youth ambassador programmes are being promoted to strengthen mutual understanding between nations and to make a positive contribution to development. Young people from wealthy countries work in ‘developing’ countries to share their knowledge and to participate in projects. The programmes provide a wonderful opportunity for personal development through contributing to actions and strategies that will lead to sustainable development.

**AIESEC**

The International Association of Students in Economics and Management (AIESEC, from the group’s name in French) has had a long association with the development and implementation of sustainable development principles. It is the world’s largest student organisation, with a global network of 50,000 members across more than 83 countries and territories located at more than 800 universities worldwide.

This impressive network has been used to global benefit. Back in 1988, just one year after the launch of *Our Common Future*, this group organised a two-year seminar series, *Our Common Future: The Challenge of Cooperation*. The series of more than 100 seminars focused on sustainable development for business, in order to prepare ‘today’s students to be more responsible future managers’ (Starke 1990:72). AIESEC’s commitment to sustainable development and the training of tomorrow’s youth has continued to be strong. Importantly, the organisation has worked hard to create linkages and cooperative partnerships between its members and the wider corporate community, providing these corporations with an awareness of youth concerns and a catalyst for change.

The spirit of the AIESEC programme is reflected in other student forums, such as the Australian Students and Sustainability conferences that have been held since 1991 and which are sponsored by the government. It is now the largest annual student environment conference in the country, with an attendance of up to 700 students. Academics, industry and students work together in conferences like these to forge common understandings and enduring partnerships.

The fostering of our future leaders and the provision of learning opportunities which go beyond the formal educational process are likely to provide a vital building block for sustainable development. It is questionable whether the small amount of seed funding such initiatives are receiving is adequate. There is also an important question of intragenerational equity: are the youth of developing countries receiving adequate opportunities to build their own skills and to contribute their energy and ideas?

**Youth ambassadors**

Around the world, youth ambassador programmes are being promoted to strengthen mutual understanding between nations and to make a positive contribution to development. Young people from wealthy countries work in ‘developing’ countries to share their knowledge and to participate in projects. The programmes provide a wonderful opportunity for personal development through contributing to actions and strategies that will lead to sustainable development.

The Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development programme is sponsored by AusAID (Australian Agency for International Development). Youth are placed around the globe in countries such as Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Laos, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, and Vietnam, as well as in regional organisations. Their work is varied but all contribute to sustainable development.

The CARICOM (Caribbean Community) Youth Ambassadors work within their own countries and overseas, towards the greatest economic and social good of their country and region. They design, monitor and evaluate youth education programmes, as well as make submissions to regional forums.

The list could, of course, go on and on. We are all familiar with other programmes such as tree planting, water monitoring, aged care, and so on. Young people do, and will continue to, make a significant contribution to sustainable development. The real challenge for today’s generation is to ensure that we also make a significant contribution to youth and the services that they need. Too often we have neglected the needs of our youth while taking for granted the contributions they make. Just as we must invest in our natural and human-made capital, we must also invest in our youth — they are our most valuable asset for the future.

**References**

Brundtland, Gro Harlem (Chairperson, World Commission on Environment and Development) 1987, *speech at launch of Our Common Future*.


Issues of crime and community safety are of continuing and possibly increasing importance in the South Pacific island states. Within the more general concern about perceived increases in crime, there are particular concerns associated with the involvement of young people in crime and with the ability and appropriateness of the formal criminal justice system to deal effectively with the 'problem' of juvenile crime.

### The significance of the CRC

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is one of the most widely accepted UN treaties. As of 22 August 2001, it had been ratified to some degree or another by 191 countries. It has been widely accepted by the small island states of the South Pacific region. The first jurisdictions to sign were Vanuatu, Federated States of Micronesia, and Tokelau (by virtue of New Zealand's ratification) in 1993. The most recent signatories were Cook Islands in 1997.

The CRC establishes the 'best interests of the child' as a principle to guide states in all dealings with children and young people. Ratification creates obligations on ratifying parties to amend national laws and policies so that they comply with the standards contained in the convention. The convention is wide-ranging but some of its articles are of particular significance where young people come into conflict with the criminal law:

3. **State Parties shall seek to promote the establishment of laws, procedures, authorities and institutions specifically applicable to children alleged as, accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law, and, in particular:**
   - The establishment of a minimum age below which children shall be presumed not to have the capacity to infringe the penal law;
   - Whenever appropriate and desirable, measures for dealing with such children without resorting to judicial proceedings, providing human rights and legal safeguards are fully respected.

4. **A variety of dispositions, such as care, guidance and supervision orders; counselling; probation; foster care; educational and vocational training programmes and other alternatives to institutional care shall be available to ensure that children are dealt with in a manner appropriate to their well-being and proportionate both to their circumstances and the offence. (Art. 40(3) and (4))**

This provides an appropriate benchmark against which to examine both the legal provisions and other systems and processes that purport to deal with young people who come into conflict with the criminal law in the South Pacific region.

### Legal provisions relating to juvenile crime

The statutory law of the countries in the South Pacific island region usually makes very little provision specifically for how young persons who come into conflict with the law should be dealt with by the criminal justice system. Fiji is something of an exception in this regard, as it does have a piece of legislation that is particularly concerned with dealing with juvenile criminal offenders: the Juveniles Act.

The law of Vanuatu is much more typical of the region and is examined here as a basis for considering the state of the law more generally. In the Penal Code, the age of legal capacity is set at 10 and there is a rebuttable presumption of incapacity in relation to children aged 10–14. This twofold formulation as to the age of legal incapacity is common throughout the region, although the actual age ranges vary slightly between jurisdictions. It is also the case that certain offences, most notably rape, cannot be committed by (male) persons under a certain age as a result of the presumption that such persons are incapable of completing the *actus reus* of the offence. Recently, in Fiji, it has been suggested that this 'restriction' should be lifted; the Fiji Law Reform Commission has recommended abolishing the presumption that a male person under the age of 12 cannot be capable of having carnal knowledge (FLRC 1999:para 1.4; see also Jowitt and Newton Cain 2001).

In Vanuatu, the Penal Code states that convicted persons who are under the age of 16 should not be imprisoned unless there is no other form of punishment available to the court; that is, imprisonment should only be utilised as a measure of last resort. It also states that where a person under 16 is imprisoned, such person shall serve their sentence in a special establishment or, if none exists, shall be kept separate from older offenders. There is no special detention facility in Vanuatu for young offenders and the resources available within the correctional services are so limited that it would be very difficult for this stipulation to be complied with. This position is common throughout the region, although in Fiji there is a facility specifically for juvenile offenders who have been sentenced to a period of imprisonment by the courts.

The Criminal Procedure Code of Vanuatu makes no reference to any special procedures relating to when young people come into contact with the criminal justice system, whether as offenders or in...
some other capacity. This means that how young people are treated at such times is left up to the discretion of the courts or other actors in the system, rather than being circumscribed by the law.

The paucity of the legal provisions mentioned here is reflected elsewhere in terms of policy and practice. In Vanuatu, for example, police officers do not receive any specific training in dealing with young people who are or are alleged to be involved in criminal activity. Also, there are no social workers or other professionals available to support young people who come into conflict with the law, as is the case elsewhere. The situation is very similar in other parts of the region and also in relation to other 'vulnerable' groups (such as those with learning disabilities or those who are hearing-impaired) who are equally poorly serviced.

The resources of the developing South Pacific countries are insufficient to meet the demands that the 'mainstream' criminal justice system places on them, without attempting to make special provision for 'minority' groups such as young people. Therefore, it may be necessary to look to the 'informal justice sector' for assistance or even as the basis for policy and practice in relation to young people in conflict with the law. This is not to make some value judgement as to one system being better or worse than the other. Whichever sector it is, there must be due consideration given to the issue of justice — young people must be treated justly and must be seen to be treated justly.

**Alternative approaches**

Some approaches to justice are not sited within the mainstream criminal justice systems of the region, but they may provide some alternative or additional resources for dealing with young people in conflict with the law. This is not to say that changes to law and/or rules of procedure are not appropriate or significant in this area. Rather, it is a recognition of the difficulties associated with reforming law and procedure. It is also an acknowledgement that, even where legislative or procedural changes are effected, these are not necessarily the most significant changes in terms of practical effects on a day-to-day basis.

Elsewhere in the world, restorative justice practices have been widely advocated and adopted as particularly appropriate for dealing with young people who come into conflict with the law. In New Zealand, a system of family conferencing has been in existence for some years in relation to juvenile offenders and is now being extended to take in adult offenders as well, in certain circumstances. Advocates of restorative justice techniques point to the use of formal apologies, reparation, compensation and mediation as a key strength of this approach to dealing with criminal justice issues. It is considered particularly appropriate in relation to young people because it goes a long way to keeping them out of prison or other detention facilities, often considered to be more harmful than curative both to the individuals incarcerated and the communities from whence they come. This has been recognised in relation to Indigenous communities in Australia:

Indigenous communities see prison as part of the cycle of violence — stripping communities of their young men and returning them more damaged than when they left. They want interventions that stop violence but leave families intact and promote family and community 'healing'. (Blagg; 2001:16)

It is not always clear where the imperative for a movement towards (or back) to the use of restorative justice techniques in the Pacific Island region has come from. There is a general perception that crime is increasing as a result of a combination of urban drift, a movement towards market economies and a lack of employment in urban areas. And there is a particular concern about young people committing crime and behaving in other anti-social ways.

In Vanuatu recently, the Juvenile Justice Project (JJP) examined the possibility of using customary law and practice as the basis for dealing with young people in conflict with the law, in preference to 'state' law and its agencies, namely the police and the courts. The impetus for this research was one of the findings of a previous Young People's Project:

The importance of kastom in resolving problems and settling disputes was mentioned many times by young people in the research. Young people frequently mentioned that they would prefer to pass through traditional channels to resolve their problems with family or with the law when they are involved in some kind of trouble. One reason for this is that when they pass through kastom channels they are not left with a police record that will ruin their chances for future employment. Another reason young people gave for favoring the kastom or island court system is that they don't always understand the white man's court system and they find that the police are often brutal in their dealings with them. In kastom the chiefs try to 'straighten' young people by bringing them back to the notion of respect, instead of just punishing them. (Mitchell 1998:21)

In the 2000–01 period, the JJP undertook preliminary research to examine further the best way to deal with young people who come into conflict with law and authority within the particular context of Vanuatu society. The material that was collected was presented at a national summit in March 2001. There are several problems associated with this material that highlight some of the challenges that are presented by projects to develop alternative systems for dealing with young people in conflict with the law, particularly where they seek to draw on 'custom' or 'tradition'.

A significant issue is that the research (and the ensuing recommendations made by the summit) do not make clear what was/is envisaged by the term 'juvenile justice'. This in turn leads to a lack of distinction between young people who are involved in crime and young people who are involved in behaviour which is not approved of by other people in the community (parents, teachers, chiefs, church leaders). This latter behaviour may be disruptive, immoral and possibly anti-social but it is not necessarily criminal. When examining alternatives to the 'formal' criminal justice process, it is important to ensure that this does not lead to young people becoming subject to a regime that is more coercive or repressive than if they were dealt with by the police and the courts. In particular, care needs to be taken to avoid breaches of the constitutional rights of young people (such as their freedom of movement) that cannot be lawfully substantiated.
From the results of a questionnaire circulated by the JJP to chiefs on a number of islands in Vanuatu, two points can be noted. The first is that 79.4 per cent of the respondents indicated that their custom courts had dealt with cases involving young people (either as 'offender' or 'victim') during 'this year'. However, no further information was provided as to the number of cases involved or the sorts of offences that came before these courts. Second, 15.3 per cent stated that they thought that the police and chiefs should cooperate to make both systems - customary and state law - work together. It is likely that this sort of partnership is a possible way forward.

The role of the community and community elders in establishing and maintaining community security and safety continues to be recognised and reiterated. The role of the community in the particular issue of 'juvenile justice' is hard to overstate. Caution must be exercised, however, so that, in the spirit of the CRC, any actions or interventions are indeed in the 'best interests' of the young people concerned.

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Notes
2. Papua New Guinea also has specific legislation relating to juvenile criminal offenders but it will not be considered here.

References


Prevailing challenges for Pacific youth

Tangata Vainerere, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Noumea

It is indisputable that, given the appropriate enabling conditions, young people in any society can be both a major resource for development and key agents for social change. I constantly visualise the emergence of a new generation of young Pacific Islanders, well equipped with a clear sense of direction and purpose as they endeavour to maintain an even keel throughout the journey of transition from adolescence to adulthood. However, I am also mindful of the real and seemingly insurmountable challenges confronting them as they strive to come to terms with the many contemporary issues which are being ushered into the Pacific region by rapid socioeconomic change.

Growing concerns

The total population of the 22 member countries of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), formerly the South Pacific Commission, is over 8 million. Of this total, 1.5 million are young people aged 15–24 years (47 per cent females and 53 per cent males), collectively making up about 20 per cent of the Pacific population.

With a projected annual growth rate of 2.2 per cent for this age group in the region, it is anticipated that the short-term measures which need to be implemented in order to cater for the increased demand for essential social services (education, health, employment, and so on) will place more pressure on national government budgets and the meagre resources available in the private sector. Needless to say, the long-term implications if such measures are not quickly put in place will be catastrophic.

Given that scenario, the problems young people face today should be important considerations in the planning and implementation of national development policies, because the ways in which they are addressed will influence current social and economic conditions as well as the well-being and livelihood of future generations. Their problems are, after all, merely reflections of larger social issues. They should therefore be addressed within the broad framework of national social, economic and political structures and with the active cooperation of young people.

Retracing past steps

Global initiatives in youth development, led by the United Nations during the International Year of Youth in 1985, highlighted the importance of direct participation by young people in the development process. However, in 1989, the Vanini Report identified a number of constraints inhibiting the progress of youth development in the Pacific region (South Pacific Commission 1991).

The report found that youth needs were still being dealt with in isolation from wider community needs. It also expressed concern at the lack of a regionally approved set of development priorities for Pacific youth to guide policy, strategies, and resource requirements with a view to providing programme quality and sensitivity to the constantly changing youth needs of member countries.

Vanini stressed the need for immediate efforts towards developing appropriate strategies to address the rapidly changing circumstances of young people in the Pacific before they became an 'unmanageable problem'. He recommended that urgent steps be taken to facilitate new action, to experiment with new strategies, to encourage innovation, and to be more forward-looking in policy in order to keep pace with a rapidly shifting target population.

The third Pacific Youth Conference, in 1994, again acknowledged that young people are an important national resource and that their training and other forms of human resource development initiatives must be regarded as an investment. The urgency of the situation in the region led to a concerted call by young people and youth workers alike for appropriate national youth policies to be put in place in all Pacific countries.

A mandate for youth development

The SPC, with headquarters in Noumea and a regional office in Suva, is a regional technical development agency that works in partnership with its members, other organisations and donors to deliver priority programmes to its member countries and territories. Its work programmes aim to develop the technical, professional, scientific, research, planning and management capability of Pacific Island people, and to directly provide information and advice that will enable them to make informed decisions about their future development and well-being.

A key SPC objective is to 'enhance the integration of critical cross-sectoral issues such as economics, gender, youth, population, culture, rural energy, community education, food security and other social development concerns into the planning and policy formulation processes of SPC's member governments and administrations'.

The Pacific Youth Resource Bureau (PYRB), one of several SPC programmes, was officially launched on 1 June 1998 with the mandate of coordinating implementation of the Pacific Youth Strategy 2005 (PYS2005) and thereby advancing the SPC's commitment to taking a more proactive role in youth development in the region.
The Pacific Youth Strategy 2005

At its meeting held in French Polynesia from 30 June to 1 July 1998, the first Conference of Youth Ministers of the Pacific Community adopted the PYS2005 as a strategic framework for addressing the increasing challenges for Pacific youth into the new millennium. In adopting the strategy, Youth Ministers, senior government officials from SPC member countries and territories, and representatives from non-government organisations (NGOs) and regional and international agencies acknowledged the need for a more broad-based, integrated approach at both national and regional levels.

The PYS2005 provides such a comprehensive approach, yet is flexible enough to be responsive to emerging issues in the Pacific. It aims to create and maintain genuine opportunities for young people to play an active role in the economic, social, cultural and spiritual development of their societies. The strategy consists of six programmes, which form the platform for youth activities in the region towards the year 2005 and beyond: Pacifica Aspirations; Challenge Pacifica; Youth-Lead Pacifica; Pacifica Advocacy; Infoshare Pacifica; and Pacifica Empowerment.

Pacifika Aspirations

This programme focuses on encouraging the full participation of young people in development. Pacific Youth Ministers decided that appropriate, holistic and gender-inclusive national youth policies must be put in place and implemented by all countries in the region by the year 2005. Pacifika Aspirations promotes a multisectoral approach to youth-related issues through mainstreaming them into national development planning. It encourages the participation of young people at various levels of decision making because of the great importance of youth policy in shaping the present and future of society. This involves the establishment of supportive national frameworks and responsive programmes to cater for the increasing demands of young people, thereby contributing to the development of their full potential and the achievement of their life goals.

Challenge Pacifica

This programme calls for urgent action to implement positive and practical responses to common emerging issues in the region:

- Education – targeted on the basis that the formal education system cannot be the sole educator. Traditional family structure and life play an important role in socialising young people, thus making a significant contribution to the social goals in the development process.
- Employment – countries are urged to develop employment and training programmes (in addition to the creation of job opportunities where possible) that will enable their young people to participate more fully and meaningfully in both subsistence and cash economies and also encourage them to be involved in self-employment initiatives.
- Health – young people need to be enabled to take full responsibility for their own health by involving them in the planning, development and implementation of health education and promotional programmes aimed at addressing their major health concerns.
- Environment – introduced to provide young people with real opportunities to contribute positively to addressing environmental issues through widening initiatives and ongoing practical programmes, such as clean-up campaigns, tree planting and recycling projects, so that they learn the concept of sustainable development and increase their understanding of environmental management.
- Juvenile delinquency – aims to ensure that young people can be supported by purposeful and achievement-oriented programmes which promote the development of a healthy self-esteem and a sense of community spirit which will in turn help them to promote and uphold the values of a responsible family life, thus checking the influence of conflicting values which frequently come with development and modernisation.
- Promotion of peace – recognises the uniqueness of the cultures, values, religion and ethnicity of the Pacific region by promoting interactions that foster tolerance, understanding, acceptance, mutual concern and trust as the basis for peace.

In addition, countries are urged to address any other country-specific issues not listed above.

Youth-Lead Pacifica

This programme focuses on skills development and capacity building through appropriate training in leadership and management. It involves regular in-country courses for youth leaders in areas such as leadership; management and administration; policy development; organisational behaviour and development; team work; project planning, management and evaluation; self-motivation; personal development and efficiency programmes; managing change; problem solving; effective communication; negotiation; and interpersonal skills.

Pacifika Advocacy

This programme highlights the important role played by the private sector, churches, NGOs and youth organisations in youth development. It promotes close cooperation across all sectors in promoting the establishment of youth clubs and other interest groups where young people can share experiences and learn new skills. It also recognises the Pacific Youth Council (PYC), which is a regional, non-government, voluntary association established in 1996 to encourage and strengthen territorial and national youth organisations and to promote a regional identity for Pacific youth.
**Infoshare Pacifika**

This programme focuses on the collection, compilation and dissemination of information on youth development at global, regional and national levels. A resource unit within the PYRB houses information and materials on youth development, publishes the 'Youthlink' newsletter, and is developing an Internet home page for the PYRB.

**Pacifika Empowerment**

This programme provides assistance to the 12 SPC small island states (Kiribati, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Marshall Islands, Cook Islands, Palau, Wallis and Futuna, Nauru, Tuvalu, Niue, Tokelau, and Pitcairn) to support skills training opportunities and entrepreneurial initiatives for young people aged 15–24.

**Achieving unity in diversity**

In spite of regional diversity, some problems are universal, even though they may manifest themselves in ways that are unique to each nation or locality. Accordingly in 1998, Pacific Youth Ministers, recognising that different countries may require different approaches, commended the PYS2005 to their respective governments and administrations, and advocated a continuous political commitment to adequate allocation of resources for planning and implementing the strategy through country-specific initiatives. They also agreed that there is a need for concerted collective action, across all sectors, to more holistically address the problems affecting young people in the Pacific. An agreement was also reached by conference participants to collaborate more closely on assisting youth development in the region.

**Conclusion**

With limited funds available in small island nations to spend on the PYS2005 initiatives, the competition for 'donor dollars' continues to intensify as they look beyond their shores for additional resources. The PYRB continues to assist countries in securing such resources, so that the initiatives can be implemented.

In the meantime, the real test for youth development workers in the Pacific region is to ensure that our contributions to facilitating the transition of young people from adolescence to adulthood involve realistic and sound initiatives to better achieve their needs and aspirations and improve their quality of life.

The success of our efforts can only be measured by the degree of empowerment we can offer the young men and women of the Pacific, so they can make a strong connection between meeting their own needs and engaging productively in the vital task of nation building. This vision can be realised only through the willingness of young people themselves to become 'part of the solution'; through considerable political will in recognising and addressing youth issues; through the investment of adequate resources in youth programmes; and through ongoing back-up support from regional and international stakeholders in youth development.

**Reference**

Globalisation and the mental health of youth in Pacific island societies

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The available data suggest that youth suicide rates remained very high in many Pacific Island societies well into the 1990s. While previous studies found that young males were generally at higher risk than young females, more recent evidence suggests that this is not always the case. While alcoholism and other drug addictions still seem to be rare, substance abuse, notably problem drinking, appears to be widespread.

Rates of mental illness appear to be relatively low across Pacific Island societies, compared with rates in industrialised countries. This suggests that youth are at much greater risk for acute mental health problems than for chronic mental illnesses. Policy initiatives therefore need to be tailored to the diverse cultures of youth in the Pacific rather than simply imported from elsewhere. Further research might aid in the formulation of sensible policies and initiatives that can promote the health and well-being of youth in the region.

Suicide

Since Durkheim's (1951) classic study of suicide in Europe at the end of the nineteenth century, it has become widely accepted that suicide rates are an important indicator of how social change is associated with poorer mental health for some members of a society. The available data for Pacific Islands strongly suggest that the mental health and well-being of youth as a group have been severely compromised by recent social changes. Beginning in the 1960s, suicide rates in many of these societies increased sharply, peaking in the 1980s and, while falling slightly in some areas, remaining high well into the 1990s (Booth 1999, Rubinstein 1995).

The rates in Samoa, Guam, Micronesia (including the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Palau, and the Marshall Islands) and among Fijian Indians have been as high as 30 per 100,000. In comparison, the rates were only about 13 per 100,000 in Australia, 16 in New Zealand, and about 12 in the United States for a comparable time period. For those aged 15–24, suicide rates have been as high as 70 per 100,000 in Samoa for young females and 182 for young males in Chuuk State of the FSM (Booth 1999, WHO 2000).

Suicide in these societies is largely a problem that affects those between the ages of 15 and about 29, the period meaningfully designated as social adolescence in most of their cultural systems. Hezel (1987) found that 75 per cent of suicides in Chuuk State between 1970 and 1985 were committed by youth aged 15–29. The median age for suicide in many Pacific Island societies ranges from 22 to about 28 for males and from 18.5 to 25 for females (Booth 1999).

Some important differences in suicide rates by gender have been widely reported (Booth 1999, Hezel 1987, Macpherson and Macpherson 1987). The median age for female suicides is almost universally lower than that for male suicides. This might reflect women's earlier age at marriage and first childbirth, which generally mark the exit out of social adolescence in Pacific Island societies. Also, while it is often reported that young men are at disproportionately higher risk for suicide than are young women across the Pacific region (for example, Rubinstein 1992), recent comparative analyses suggest that this is not always the case. For example, while young men in Chuuk and Guam are at 5–13 times greater risk for suicide than young women, in Samoa and among Fijian Indians, young women are at equal to slightly greater risk for suicide than young men (Booth 1999).

The reasons for these differences in suicide rates are not well known. However, differences in methods of committing suicide, in levels of social support, in relations between peer and family groups, and in the ways male and female youth experience status inconsistencies have all been cited as possible contributing factors (Booth 1999, Hezel 1987, Lowe n.d., McDade in press, Rubinstein 1992).

Substance abuse

Young people's use and abuse of mind-altering substances (for example, alcohol, marijuana, and various other narcotics) across the Pacific Islands have been of ongoing concern in the past few decades (see Lindstrom 1987, Marshall 1987, McDonald et al. 1997, Micronesian Seminar 1997 for reviews). Research has examined both the health consequences as well as the implications of this substance abuse as an indicator of increased stress in the face of rapid social change.

The use of alcohol and drugs in most regions of the Pacific begins to increase for youth in their late teens and peaks in their late twenties to mid-thirties. Leaving aside mild psychoactive plants like betel nut and kava (sakau), by far the most widely consumed substance is alcohol. Substance use tends to be largely an activity engaged in by young men and is generally associated with irresponsibility and acts of social delinquency often expected of male youth in Pacific Island communities, however undeserved these expectations are (Marshall 1987).

This is not to say that young women never use or abuse drugs and alcohol, as is often implied in the literature, but the proportion doing so can vary greatly between, and even within, societies. For example, according to the Micronesian Seminar (1997), in the
While the experience of psychosocial stress through substance abuse, there is also no doubt that mental illness increases. Recent work by McDade (in press) demonstrates a similar approach, focusing on the areas of incongruence between family prestige and material wealth as a source of stress.

Mental illness

While the experience of psychosocial stress that many young people in Pacific Island societies struggle with can lead to sudden and severe outcomes like suicide, or attempts to numb the effects of stress through substance abuse, there is also no doubt that chronic stress can place them at increased risk for chronic depression, anxiety disorders, psychoses and other mental illnesses. However, the available data suggest that rates of psychosis are generally higher than the female rates — although there may be some regional variations (Foliaki 1997, Hezel 1993, Poinso and Vedie 1991).

Youth in Pacific Island societies seem to be at much greater risk for acute mental health problems (for example, suicide and substance abuse) and at much lower risk for chronic mental illness (for example, psychoses and other disorders) than youth in industrial societies. This suggests the need for both explanatory models and social policies to be built upon different foundations from those commonly accepted in Western and other industrial nations.

Some competing explanations

It is widely recognised that the growing incidence of youth stress results from their attempts to deal with the physical, mental and emotional tensions that are increasingly part of late adolescence in the rapidly developing Pacific region. Several models have been advocated to explain this increase in stress, some of which have been developed directly from those attempting to explain troubles among youth in Europe or North America. For example, Durkheim believed that stress is more likely in those societies undergoing rapid social change, when the norms and rules that once governed the society lose their practical value to those coming of age in the younger generations. As a result, individuals experience a sense of anomie, frustration and anger with their society because they have not been given unambiguous pathways into meaningful adult lives. The greater the experience of anomie, the higher the risk of suicide, substance abuse and other forms of delinquency.

Merton (1938) discusses anomie and in 1957 updated Durkheim's theory (Durkheim 1951) by suggesting that anomie results from a person's inability (because of lack of work, community support, money, and so on) to take advantage of the increased opportunities that are created through social change. Macpherson and Macpherson (1987) have applied a variant of the theory to explain the rise in suicide among youth in Samoa.

It has become apparent, however, that the theory of anomie does not seem to fit well with the Pacific situation (Hollan 1990, Tousignant 1998). Most cases of youth suicide in the Pacific seem to reflect a sense of indignant frustration, anger and shame on the part of young people over their attempts to establish meaningful adult reputations, as defined in the traditions of their communities, and also the failure of their elders to support their efforts to do so (for example, Rubinstein 1983, 1992).

My own research (Lowe 1999, n.d.) suggests that the experience of frustration and anger is often a result of young people's inability to meet the often conflicting and divergent values that are articulated by the family, the community and the peer group. Social change influences the demands and goals these three settings express for youth. When they become incongruent, the risk of anger, frustration and outcomes like suicide, substance abuse and mental illness increases. Recent work by McDade (in press) demonstrates a similar approach, focusing on the areas of incongruence between family prestige and material wealth as a source of stress.
Conclusion

Three points are relevant to youth policy and future research. First, precious little has been written to date about the various interventions and initiatives designed to support and enhance the well-being of young people in Pacific Island societies. Given the persistently high rates of social problems like suicide and substance abuse, it would be very useful to know what has been implemented. This knowledge would be invaluable to those communities trying to fashion new policies that will support and, if necessary, help improve the mental health of their young.

Second, much more could be done to track the incidence of these social problems, so that the ongoing impact of social change as well as the benefits of various interventions and state initiatives can be compared and assessed. While there are initial costs in doing this, they are likely to be offset by the long-term savings associated with reduced rates of delinquency, treatment, incarceration, and the productive economic contributions of youth to their families and communities.

Third, there is a need for more research that examines closely the everyday experiences of youth in Pacific Island societies and how the potentially harmful impact of the stressors can be worsened by social changes associated with globalisation. Certainly, not all youth are dealing with everyday stressors and the influence of globalisation by engaging in behaviours that place their health and well-being at risk. Research that compares youth who successfully negotiate stressful experiences with those who continue to struggle with tension and stress could be invaluable, particularly to those interested in designing strategies of intervention and education that are appropriate to the diverse cultures of youth in the Pacific. Such a research strategy might also reveal indicators of health and well-being that have gone unnoticed in the past.

One area of critical concern in this regard is to identify those indicators that might not have such inherent male bias as rates of substance abuse and suicide seem to have. The emphasis on these indicators is justified but might mask girls' and young women's struggles with the stressors that have accompanied social change in their communities. Uncovering the relationships among stress, behaviour and gender, and how they relate to mental health in Pacific Island societies, constitutes an important research agenda. These indicators might help correct the impression that social change in the Pacific is mostly associated with negative outcomes for male youth, when there is compelling evidence that this is not always the case.

Also, with so much movement of youth from their island homes to Australia, New Zealand and North America in the past two decades, it is surprising that there have been only a few studies on their health and well-being in migrant settings (for example, Folaki 1997, Kahn and Fua 1995). It would be very useful to learn more about these young people who have migrated out of their island communities.

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Pacific island courts and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

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A subculture of violence exists in most Pacific island states, conflicting with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Violence against anybody is a criminal offence. Violence against children is not only criminal but also contravenes the Pacific islands' obligations to the conventions.

The general principles of the CRC are contained in four articles:

- the best interest of the child (Article 3);
- participation in judicial and administrative proceedings (Article 12);
- non-discrimination (Article 2); and
- survival and development (Article 6).

This article will explore the extent to which Pacific Island courts have applied the CRC, citing a small but significant number of cases where UN conventions have been referred to either by counsel or by the court in relevant proceedings.

Application of the CRC in Pacific island courts

State v. Mark Lawrence Mutch (Fiji High Court)

This is a landmark case concerning paedophilia. Mutch lured primary school children to his home. He was convicted of two counts of rape and four counts of indecent assault and sentenced to seven years imprisonment.

The judge emphasised the importance of the CRC, highlighting Article 3: 'the best interest of the child shall be of primary consideration'. Reference was also made to Article 34, which gives the judiciary the jurisdiction to protect children from all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse.

In Fiji, the conventions can be applied through the interpretation provision in Article 43(2) of the Constitution. In doing so, the court adopted the human rights values of the CRC.

Semi Voliti v. Peni Seniloli and AG Fiji

On 28 March 1998, the police questioned the plaintiff's 14-year-old son, Poasa. A constable had thought that Poasa was walking in a suspicious manner. He then stopped and questioned him. Afterwards, Poasa was searched. Food items were found on him and were taken by the police. He was then handcuffed to a post inside the police station. He was released when one of the police officers requested that the handcuffs be taken off.

The magistrate found that Article 37 of the CRC had been breached, because the plaintiff had been subjected to cruel treatment and arbitrarily deprived of his liberty. His detention did not conform to the law and was not used 'only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest period of time'. The magistrate awarded $10,000 aggravated damages to the plaintiff because of the 'gross abuse of power' by the police. She also awarded punitive damages of $5,000.

'After having referred to the plaintiff's constitutional rights, the magistrate directly applied the facts of the case to the CRC: Article 37 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child . . . has also been breached by the defendants. Poasa was subjected to cruel treatment, contrary to Article 7(a).'

Patricia Molu v. Cidie Molu (Supreme Court of Vanuatu)

The petitioner/wife and respondent/husband were married in August 1992. In September 1996, the marriage was dissolved by decree nisi. The custody of the three children was disputed, along with child maintenance and matrimonial property.

In interpreting what was just with regard to custody matters, the court made reference to the CRC, to which Vanuatu is bound by virtue of having ratified it in 1992. Unlike in the Fiji Semi Voliti case, where the facts were directly applied to the CRC, the Vanuatu court referred to the CRC when exercising its discretion.

Louise Nauka v. Seth Kaurua (Supreme Court of Vanuatu)

In this custody case, the court used 'the best interest of the child' provision of the CRC in deciding which parent should be given custody of the children.

Analysis of decisions that disregarded the CRC

The 'Commonwealth Declarations and Strategies for Action' states that judges and lawyers have a duty to familiarise themselves with the growing international jurisprudence on human rights. Judicial officers should also be guided by the UN Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) when interpreting and applying the provisions of national constitutions and laws, including common law and customary laws. Fiji has adopted this in Article 43(2) of its current Constitution. However, not all courts have adopted the conventions.

Decisions based on wrong principles of law

It is possible that some Pacific island courts have not applied the CRC because of the principle of non-enforceability. There...
has been the tendency to see UN conventions as not directly enforceable domestically. Other courts could be trying to hold onto their sovereignty and refuse the intrusion of foreign laws and values. While this view may be appropriate for other public international laws, it is not in the application of human rights conventions.

**The State v. Peter Anthony Jenkins**

Jenkins was a New Zealand tourist holidaying in Fiji. While staying in a hotel, he was interrupted in his sleep by three children who knocked three times on his door at around 1 a.m. Jenkins was charged with assault, having admitted to banging the heads of two children and also kicking two of them in the posterior. The victims were Australian tourists whose ages were 6, 13 and 14 years.

The magistrate was 'of the opinion that the accused was somehow provoked into committing this offence' and that the children were not entirely blameless. The accused was discharged without conviction. The parents stated that they were going to appeal.

The magistrate in *State v. Jenkins* obviously did not consider Fiji's obligation to take into account the CRC, a convention it has ratified. Why he did not consider the CRC is unknown. Below are some considerations that could have been made:

- **Direct application:** In the *Semi Voliti* case, the court directly applied the facts to the CRC, whereas in this case it did not consider it at all.
- **Ratification:** In the *The State v. Bechu* (Fiji), the court referred to Fiji's obligation to the convention, which it saw as its duty to watch.
- **Discretion:** Under the common law, it was decided in *Yin v. The Director of Immigration* (Vanuatu) that, in the exercise of discretion, the obligation of ratifying a treaty has to be taken into account. Another persuasive authority is the *Molu v. Moia* case, in which reference was made to the CRC, which Vanuatu has ratified.

**Kini Uhila v. The Kingdom of Tonga (Supreme Court of Tonga)**

Kini 'Uhila (the Plaintiff'), a 9-year-old schoolboy at Nuku'alofa Primary School, did not attend a test so the teacher decided to administer corporal punishment.

Given the statutory provisions in Tonga, the Supreme Court held that 10 strokes inflicted upon a 9-year-old for gross disobedience and wilful misconduct might be excessive abroad but not in Tonga! However, to hit a child on the thighs with a solid object, as the teacher did, whether deliberately or negligently, is actionable if measurable injury results. It did in this case and the plaintiff was entitled to an award of damages in his favour.

This case was decided in 1990 when Tonga had not ratified the CRC but a Universal Declaration on Human Rights did exist. Article 9 of which states: 'The child shall be protected from all forms of cruelty and exploitation'. The words used by the Supreme Court tend to suggest that it was aware of the declaration and it wanted to make the point that it does not apply to Tonga. The Court could have been influenced by the old public international law of non-enforceability.

### Decisions based on wrong interpretations of facts

**Regina v. Rose (High Court of the Solomon Islands)**

A 10-year-old boy was involved in a disturbance at school assembly, so the headmaster caned him in sight of other children. At the trial in the magistrate's court, the Director of Public Prosecutions contended that punishment had been excessive. The headmaster was acquitted on the grounds of reasonable punishment. The DPP appealed to the High Court, arguing that the punishment was unreasonable. In allowing the appeal, the High Court held that:

- Corporal punishment does not constitute either torture or inhuman punishment per se; whether it is degrading is a matter of degree.
- Reasonable punishment is a possible defence under section 226(4) of the penal code and at common law.

The infliction of the caning in public rendered it degrading and thereby unreasonable, so the defence of reasonable punishment could not help the accused.

The point of interest in this decision is that, despite the injuries sustained by the victim, the court found in his favour only because the caning happened in public. Does this mean that teachers can inflict any form and amount of punishment as long as it is not done in public?

The High Court refused to consider the excessiveness, which amounted to bruising. Bruises indicate that the body has rejected the contact and as a consequence has been injured. The infliction of such punishments: amounts to physical assault, an actionable case in civil and criminal law.

Even though the CRC had not been drafted then, the court referred to and applied the European Court of Human Rights test to determine its position on inhuman and degrading treatment. However, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) states that children shall be protected 'from all forms of cruelty and exploitation'. Bruising may not be inhuman and degrading, but the way in which the punishment was applied indicates cruelty.

### International trends

In the UK, government has placed human rights at the heart of foreign and international development policy. It is making a serious effort to turn the principles of the UDHR into reality. It argues that this can only happen through a commitment by all others to human rights.
Canada's government policy is to encourage developing countries to respect the rights of children, women and men and to govern effectively and in a democratic manner. The New Zealand position is that the UDHR is the human rights standard of the international community, underpinning the philosophy and aims of international development assistance programmes.

Pacific island courts are aware of human rights standards. Some have applied them cautiously, while others have been reluctant. That some courts have applied them freely, even when the country is not a signatory to a convention, shows that Pacific island states are developing not only economically, politically and socially but legally as well.

Should there be a human rights charter for the Pacific? It is common knowledge that the Pacific lacks the intergovernmental structures to protect human rights. It would therefore be proper to use existing groups like the South Pacific Forum or the South Pacific Community to address these issues. The advantage of using such organisations would come from their closeness in terms of cultural affinity, a good degree of political understanding, historical involvement, trading relationships, and movement of people of a direct and continuous nature.

Conclusion

In regard to application of the CRC, the majority of Pacific Island courts are in line with international legal development. It is important for Pacific Island states to come to terms with human rights values as a potentially powerful tool for the promotion of social justice and the dignity of all people.

Notes

1. Citing 'the best interest of the child' provision of the CRC, the court added that, in determining questions concerning children, it did not consider whether the point of view of the father was superior to that of the mother or vice versa.

2. What some courts fail to realise is that the doctrine of non-enforceability of international treaties is inherited from Britain, a country that does not have any constitution or bill of rights. In the Pacific Islands, the constitution is the supreme law, whereas in the UK the parliament is supreme and fundamental rights are relegated to residual protection under the common law 'where parliament has no tread'. Under common law, the principle of non-enforceability should not be adopted in the Pacific Islands.
From chimera to chimaera: Changing the realities for youth in Solomon Islands

Christopher Chevalier

Introduction

The situation in Solomon Islands is an example to other Pacific countries of the dangers of failing to provide adequate opportunities for youth. The conflict that erupted in 1999–2000 was due to a complex of deep-seated issues, among which was the dissatisfaction of youth who played a key role in the fighting. Their militarisation is probably the deepest threat created by the crisis and will be among the most difficult to resolve (Chevalier 2000).

There has been no shortage of warnings and analysis of the plight of youth in the Pacific from governments, churches, non-government organisations (NGOs), and donors. Exhortations to increase education, employment and economic opportunities regularly appear in situation analyses, reports and documents (see, for example, UNICEF 1998). The reality of proposed solutions has sadly fallen far short of the rhetoric for fundamental reasons, not the least of which are the basic weaknesses in many Pacific economies and the rapidly expanding populations since World War II.

This article argues that underlying demographic, economic and political forces make it impossible for the needs and aspirations of youth to be met. In the context of globalisation and ever-increasing youth cohorts leaving school, the prospect of providing meaningful and viable futures for them is an ever-receding dream.

The chimera of youth

In classic mythology, a chimera was a fire-breathing mythical beast with a lion’s head, a goat’s body and a serpent’s tail. The word has come to mean an impossible or foolish fantasy. I suggest that the head of the youth ‘chimera’ represents universal education, the body represents full employment and the tail represents the new political economy, one with a poisonous bite. This beast is both mythical and foolish fantasy, one which is still being proposed as a solution to the ‘problem’ of youth. It is time for the myth to be replaced by a more realistic and culturally appropriate vision, from chimera to Chimaera. Chimaerae are families of fish related to sharks, which are more appropriate and relevant to an island nation than a creature of Western mythology.

The demographic reality

The demographic transition since World War II has seen gradually decreasing mortality and increasing life expectancy, creating a very young population structure. Since the 1970s, the population has grown at 3–3.5 per cent a year, which translates to a doubling every 20 years (Figure 1).

According to the 1999 national census, 42 per cent of the population were aged under 15 years and 21 per cent were 15–24 years, the age group used by UNICEF (1998) to define youth. In 2001, the youth population is estimated to be 90,000 and will exceed 100,000 within the next decade. Despite gradually declining fertility and family size, there is still considerable population momentum, with a large number of young women due to reach child-bearing age within the next two decades (McMurray 1993). This is the demographic reality that defines the scale of the problem and exceeds the means to deal with it.

Education – the lion’s head

Since 1986, the eligible primary school age population has increased by 23,000 and the secondary school population by 20,000 (McMurray 1993, Solomon Islands Government 1999). It is estimated that at least 20–25 per cent of school-aged children never attend primary school and an estimated 30 per cent drop out before completing primary school education (UNDP 1997).

Increases in enrolment ratios (from 63 per cent in 1985 to 74 per cent in 1995) have made it impossible to provide universal education and keep pace with the burgeoning youth population, particularly for secondary education. Only half of the children attending primary school can be placed in secondary school. Sixty per cent of secondary school students are ‘pushed out’ at the end of Form 3, and 85 per cent have been forced out by Form 5, leaving only a small minority going beyond five years of secondary school.

In the second half of the 1990s there were major improvements in the transition of children from primary to secondary school (from 26 per cent of the Standard 6 enrolment in 1992 to 55 per cent in 1999). The number of secondary schools increased from 35 to 90, due to the introduction of community secondary schools (UNICEF 1999). There have also been some improvements in transition to the higher levels of secondary education.
The rapid growth of primary and secondary schools has been achieved partly at the expense of quality and equity (ADB 1997:1380). An additional 500 teachers have been required to meet the expansion in secondary schools, with recruitment often from primary teacher ranks. There are problems of quality in teachers' training and educational background, and a shortage of learning materials in schools (UNICEF 1999). Although overall access was improving prior to 2000, disparities among provinces and between males and females continued, particularly because families favour the education of boys when income and school places are scarce.

The fragile economy, and especially the economic collapse following the coup in 2000, have resulted in serious problems in paying the salaries of teachers, let alone additional teachers. Geography also constrains access to education because many villages have small populations. Although all villages with a population of 200 or more now have a primary school, only 56 per cent with a population of 100 or more have one. There are considerable provincial disparities, with Choiseul and Makira having primary schools in more than 80 per cent of villages with 100 or more people, while Malaita, Temotu and Isabel have less than 50 per cent (UNICEF 1999).

The system of education inherited by an independent Solomon Islands was not designed for equitable and broad access but, rather, to train an indigenous elite to take over the reins of the country. The colonial legacy still remains and, in the 1990s, 20–30 per cent of the education budget was spent on fully subsidised students at the College of Higher Education, while school 'push-outs' received no subsidy at all. A disproportionate amount of the education budget has been allocated to upper and post-secondary elites, themselves the children of the ruling and educated elites.

A major priority for Solomon Islands over the next 10–15 years will be to increase the coverage and quality of basic education. Upper and post-secondary levels will remain important but, inevitably, an increased proportion of their revenue will need to come from user charges. This assumes that individuals and families will be able meet a greater share of the costs (ADB 1997). Given the economic meltdown after the 2000 coup, the ability of many people to pay school fees at all levels has been seriously undermined.

Presently, the education system produces a white-collar elite and a lumpenproletariat.1 The debate about different types of education and universality of employment has never been properly resolved. There are limited places for vocational training, particularly for urban youth. Churches and donors are playing a critical role in such training, but government support is very limited. A far greater investment is required to expand vocational schools and to articulate them with primary and secondary education. Education curricula need to be relevant and applicable to rural life and the semi-subsistence sector.

It will be absolutely critical to create more opportunities for education, income and recreation activities. For example, there are more than 40 rural and community based training centres throughout the country but many more centres and places are needed for youth to acquire vocational and leadership skills. Distance education centres are also needed in the provinces to allow youth to extend their education and qualifications. (ACFOA 2009:26).

**Employment – the goat's body**

The demographic reality since 1986 has meant that the number of young people has increased by 40 per cent, translating to an extra 25,000 seeking jobs. The economic reality is that prior to the coup there were only 600 new jobs a year, mainly in Honiara, for 8,000 school leavers from Standard 6, Form 3 and Form 5.

Unemployment creates demoralisation and has been identified by many observers as one of the underlying causes of the 1999-2000 armed conflict (ACFOA 2000). 'The bulk of Solomons youth has been schooled for non-existent urban jobs, effectively alienating them from their village resource base and branding them as failures in a system foreign to their lives' (Roughan 2000).

Young people bear the burden of unemployment, a mismanaged economy, and an education system that provides them with few skills for self-employment. Young people with Standard 6 or Form 3 qualifications have very limited chances of finding paid work. Non-formal vocational training is essential to assist development in rural areas and to offer opportunities to earn a livelihood. But there are currently only 1,200 student places available at vocational training schools. Many graduates of these schools also end up seeking waged employment in urban centres.

Short-term migration (wokaboard) to town in search of work and new experiences has long been a feature of young people's lives in Solomon Islands (UNICEF 1999). Urbanisation has increased the demand for waged employment and has fuelled migration from rural areas, particularly to Honiara which has doubled its population every 10 years. The majority of migrants are aged 15–40, the prime working and reproductive ages, which has created massive pressures on employment and declining quality in urban services. The ever-growing number of unemployed young people, known as masta liu, is a result of population growth and lack of development opportunities.

The growing labour force inevitably outstrips formal sector jobs, leaving the semi-subsistence and informal sectors to provide employment or income opportunities. The development of opportunities in rural areas and the decentralisation of resources to the provinces have been pitifully slow and small. No large-scale programmes have existed to date, ensuring that training and access to credit remain extremely limited. Increasing self-employment would require a major deployment of resources to provide training, credit and marketing. Entrepreneurial training and microcredit schemes to facilitate self-employment are regularly suggested, but the practical and cultural difficulties are often glossed over or not even acknowledged.

The logistical problems and costs of obtaining and providing training and credit are immense in scattered island populations. Implementing a scheme to reach a majority of youth in rural areas...
would be virtually impossible. Follow-up support from training centres or credit schemes is rare or non-existent. Many villagers do not have radios, and appropriate technology is needed to enlarge information and education possibilities for school leavers. Young people also require simple planning skills for starting projects and business. Transport and marketing structures are necessary to permit products to be sold. Until broader issues of rural development are addressed, it will be extremely unlikely that the prospects of employment for young people will improve (UNICEF 1999).

The banking system rarely invests in youth or rural sector ventures. Credit schemes need to be situated in the cultural context of exchange. In communitarian cultures, schemes that build on social networks and group work are more likely to be viable than those predicated on individuals. A credit scheme disbursed through rural training centres showed a poor rate of return on investments (partly due to few income-earning opportunities in rural areas) and high defaulter rates (due in part to poor support from credit managers).

There are also significant social and cultural barriers to youth starting micro-enterprises, even if they have received training at vocational training centres. Relatives may drain start-up funds or income by requesting jobs and money. Jealousy is a common barrier, making individuals unwilling to start or continue ventures because they attract envy or criticism. Careful study is needed of the barriers and the factors that have contributed to successful self-employment and income-generation projects.

**Political economy — the serpent’s tail**

As if the demographic, education and employment realities were not serious enough, the serpent’s tail has poisoned public morals and morale. Corrupt politicians, public servants and businessmen in alliance with foreign mining, logging and fishing companies now dominate the political economy of Solomon Islands (Bennett 2000). Logging, mining and fishing ventures have been welcomed because they provide desperately needed revenue, but at the cost of widespread ecological damage, poor working conditions and limited employment opportunities. The venality that characterised many government actions in the 1990s created widespread corruption of government ministers and officers, plus extensive granting of duty exemptions on imports and exports, at huge cost to a small and vulnerable economy. The independence of the public service was compromised by the Mamaloni governments in the 1990s, leading to the paralysis of institutional control and allowing poor decision making and corruption to flourish.

There has been a total failure to articulate a national vision for the youth of Solomon Islands (Roughan 2000:14). They are left with corrupt and cynical role models. Post-independence shifts in power and wealth have created a new political economy, linking the traditional *Bigman* system based on patronage and alliances with political control of state resources and illicit business practices. The ethnic tensions and fighting in 1999–2000 have added a fourth dimension, based on power and wealth derived from the gun, through violence, theft, looting and compensation claims. The attempt by government to settle peace through compensation payments has further entrenched the new political economy.

Armed conflict has given young men access to weapons and force, increasing their alienation and distance from older generations. Militarisation has revived a traditional role for young men as warriors, while simultaneously providing them with status, income, power and a sense of purpose previously denied them (ACFOA 2000). It will prove impossible to persuade them to surrender these advantages without, at the same time, offering them significant opportunities to engage in income and recreational activities, plus roles in decision making.

The vast majority of militants are village youth, bored, underutilised and devoid of hope or vision for the future. Simply asking them to lay down their weapons without giving them an option to better their lives through their own efforts should be counted as a waste of time. (Roughan 2000:16)

**Conclusion**

The chimera of youth needs to be replaced by Chimaera, fishes related to sharks and suited to the natural environment and cultural context of the Solomons. The underlying demographic, economic and educational realities of the situation of youth in Solomon Islands far exceed the resources allocated by or available from governments and donors. Universal education and employment are a fantasy that needs debunking, along with the idea that drip-feeding development aid will solve the problem. Previous models of education and employment must be challenged and their appropriateness to the long-term sustainability of the country questioned.

It is clear that decentralised rural development rather than industrial exploitation of raw materials by predatory foreign companies would provide a more inclusive and sustainable economy. An economic recovery plan, with a Marshall Plan for Youth, is probably required, with a major reorientation of development and educational priorities backed by adequate resources. Youth desperately require and deserve education and employment opportunities that keep them in contact with their village and cultural roots. Major investments must be made in village life, the heart and life source of Solomon Islands, and in youth who are its future.

**Notes**

1. 'Lumpenproletariat: 'the proletariat of rags', living on the margins of society, not in regular employment and outside the normal social relations of wage labour ... and gaining their subsistence mainly from crime' (Dictionary of Sociology, Collins, 1991).

2. The Marshall Plan was the name given to the European Recovery Project financed by the United States to rebuild European nations after World War II.
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Young people and sexual health in Fiji

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This article provides an overview of sexual health issues facing young people in Fiji and highlights some of the ways in which these are being addressed. The main source of information is research undertaken by the Reproductive Family Health Association of Fiji (RFHAF) with funding from the International Planned Parenthood Federation (Gibson 2001), and work done by the South Pacific Reproductive Health and Family Planning Training Program supported by Family Planning Australia and funded by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID).

Background

Fiji is an island nation of 332 islands and atolls, approximately half of which are inhabited. The largest island is Viti Levu where Suva, the capital, is located. At the last census, in 1996, there were 775,077 people in Fiji (50.8 per cent male and 49.2 per cent female). The median age is 21.6 years, with 336,700 people aged between 15 and 39 years (42.4 per cent). Approximately 60 per cent of young people live in rural areas.

The two main ethnic groups are indigenous Fijian (50.7 per cent) and Indo-Fijian (43.7 per cent). This ratio is expected to change over the next few years, with Indo-Fijians leaving the country because of the recent political unrest. The rest of the population consists of people of mixed race, other Pacific Islanders, Chinese and Europeans.

Religion is highly important. Most indigenous Fijians are practising Christians, while Indo-Fijians are divided between Hinduism (90 per cent) and Islam (8 per cent).

Sexual and reproductive health issues

Sexual behaviour in the community is demonstrated by indicators of unsafe sexual practices. These include rises in teenage pregnancies, unwanted pregnancies in both married and unmarried women, and increases in sexually transmissible infections (STIs) and HIV. However, such indicators still tend to underestimate the extent of unsafe sexual behaviour. Accurate figures are difficult to obtain because of inadequacies in reporting and recording systems, and because some people do not visit a health or medical centre to seek treatment.

STIs and HIV

Figures from the Ministry of Health (2001) show a steady increase in the number of people being diagnosed with either gonorrhoea or syphilis. Most cases are found in indigenous Fijian men. In 1999, 1,540 indigenous Fijian people were diagnosed with gonorrhoea, for example, compared with 167 Indo-Fijians and 56 people of other ethnic groups.\(^1\)

In 1999, the STI Clinic saw 3,133 people, an average of 300 a month. More than 70 per cent of STI cases were seen in young people aged 15–25 years. Ninety per cent of patients reported having more than one sexual partner, and the majority did not give any information about these partners.

As at the end of December 2000, 68 people (21 women and 47 men) had been diagnosed with HIV infection; 70.5 per cent are indigenous Fijian, 21.3 per cent Indo-Fijian and 8.2 per cent others. These are reported cases and are likely to be many less than the true number. Fifty people are believed to have been infected through heterosexual sexual intercourse, while eight men were infected through male-to-male sexual activity. There have also been six cases of mother-to-child transmission. Most people infected with HIV are young adults, with the highest proportion aged in their twenties—a time when they are most sexually active and often starting to have children—and the next highest aged 30–39.

Teenage pregnancy

The UN Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) estimates that there were 2,368 births to teenagers in Fiji in 2000.\(^2\) This represents a teen fertility rate of 54 per 1,000, higher than that in Samoa and Tonga but lower than in the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Marshall Islands.

A survey on teenage pregnancy conducted by the Ministry of Health in 1994–96 found that the rate for unmarried, indigenous Fijians had increased, while there was no apparent trend for the other ethnic groups. The actual number of pregnancies in teenage women is likely to be higher than reported, as some young women do not present at an antenatal clinic. Some of these young women commit suicide; others hide the birth of their baby, commit infanticide, abandon the baby or have an illegal abortion.

While abortion is illegal in Fiji unless there is a serious health risk to the mother, it does take place. Sometimes this is through private medical practitioners or through traditional healers. Some young women cause serious damage to their bodies in their attempts to terminate a pregnancy, and this can lead to serious health consequences and even death.

Sexual abuse and violence

Another major issue facing young people in Fiji is the extent of sexual abuse and violence. While accurate figures are unavailable,
health problems of young people in Fiji: status is still uncertain.

Contributing factors
families and community.

abrogated
attracted.
committed suicide because of their fear of the reaction from their community. A Sexual
in Fiji, some of whom live as women. These men mainly have
relationships with men who define themselves as heterosexual. Many of these young people experience discrimination from their families, service providers and religious institutions and receive little education on how to have healthy and safe relationships. As in other countries, it is likely that young people in Fiji have committed suicide because of their fear of the reaction from their families and community.

Same-sex-attracted young people
The proportion of young people in Fiji who are attracted to the same sex is not known, although studies around the world usually estimate it to be 10 per cent. While homosexuality is still illegal in Fiji, the 1997 constitution's bill of rights includes protection from discrimination on the grounds of sexuality. This constitution was abrogated during the May 2000 coup, however, and its legal status is still uncertain.

As in other Pacific countries, there are many effeminate men in Fiji, some of whom live as women. These men mainly have relationships with men who define themselves as heterosexual. Lesbians are much less visible, although they are also part of the community. A Sexual Minorities Project operates in Suva and tries to provide support to young people who are same-sex attracted.

Many of these young people experience discrimination from their families, service providers and religious institutions and receive little education on how to have healthy and safe relationships. As in other countries, it is likely that young people in Fiji have committed suicide because of their fear of the reaction from their families and community.

Contributing factors
There are several contributors to the sexual and reproductive health problems of young people in Fiji:

Reluctance to talk openly about sexuality: still a taboo for many in the Fijian community. This means that young people do not receive accurate information or education. Many still do not know how their bodies work and are unprepared for the sexual feelings they have from puberty onwards.

Rigidity of gender roles: young women are expected to be subservient to young men. This makes sexual decision making and negotiation particularly difficult for young women.

Lack of male participation in reproductive health decision making: this includes actual resistance to the use of condoms or other forms of contraception.

Lack of access to reproductive health care, particularly by single young people: some receive hostile treatment from service providers if they are not married. This stops them from using services and/or prevents them from accessing services in the first place.

Unavailability of condoms: the National HIV/AIDS and STI Strategic Plan for Fiji reports that condoms are simply not available in many parts of the country or else only through a nurse who is often known to the family of the young person.

Lack of education that builds skills in managing sexuality and relationships: there have been programmes to promote awareness of issues such as teenage pregnancy and STIs, but they have not focused on developing the skills necessary for healthy sexual decision making and relationships. Running this sort of educational programme requires highly skilled facilitators.

Most education/information is offered in the main centres and has not reached young people in the rural areas.

Most information is in English, with only some resources translated into Fijian and/or Hindi.

The response to the issues
The response to young people's sexual and reproductive health needs is shared among government agencies, NGOs, religious institutions, educational institutions, and international agencies such as UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO. The most active NGOs are the Reproductive and Family Health Association of Fiji, the Fiji Red Cross and the Community Education Association of Fiji.

The AIDS Task Force of Fiji, funded by AusAID, conducts peer education programmes on HIV/AIDS for young sexually active people, men who have sex with men, and sex workers, and also trains community educators and other workers.

The Ministry of Health employs six young people as peer educators based within health centres. The UNFPA recently funded an Adolescent Reproductive Health Project in the Pacific that includes the provision of a telephone information service for young people in Fiji.

Young people in schools receive education, mainly through Family Life Education, but this is often inadequate and is not currently compulsory. Some NGOs also run information sessions in schools, and some church groups have organised education on sexual and reproductive health or family life.

Tertiary institutions, particularly the University of the South Pacific (USP) and Fiji Institute of Technology, have been active in raising awareness of sexual health, particularly HIV/AIDS. A USP student diagnosed with HIV spoke publicly about her infection. The university ran a peer education programme through its counselling service, in conjunction with the AIDS Task Force, and also installed one of the first condom-vending machines in Fiji. But it was vandalised after one day.

October 2001
The Reproductive and Family Health Association of Fiji

This association is a voluntary organisation, affiliated with the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). The Pacific Project Officer for the Family Planning Australia (FPA) South Pacific Reproductive Health and Training Program, Sr Vika Tikinitabua, is based at RFHAF. The FPA supports capacity building in family planning associations in six Pacific island countries (including Fiji), and Sr Vika’s role is to train and support sexual and reproductive health educators across the region.

The RFHAF focuses much of its work on young people, mostly in the form of workshops and short educational sessions conducted through schools, church and youth groups, and villages. It has also produced information, education and communication (IEC) materials, including posters and brochures in English and Fijian. In 1999, it established a youth wing, with branches in three different parts of the country. These youth wings are run by young people who initiate activities to educate other young people about sexual health.

The association has up to five young people at any one time who work as volunteers. They participate in workshops and are later trained to run educational sessions with the support of paid staff and older volunteers. They are also members of the youth wing and can initiate activities to reach other young people. Because of the high unemployment rate among young people in Fiji, volunteering is very common. Volunteers work a full week and receive a small payment for running sessions.

Survey of young people involved with the RFHAF

As part of a research project funded by the IPPF in 2001, a survey was done of young people who had been involved with the RFHAF.1 To be part of the survey, a young person had to meet at least one of the following criteria (some met all three): completed at least a two-day workshop with the RFHAF; been a volunteer with the RFHAF; or be a member of the youth wing.

The survey, designed by a consultant, asked questions relating to family and social background, income and education, sexuality and relationships, knowledge and attitudes, and views of the work that the RFHAF is doing with young people. A total of 84 young people completed at least part of the survey. Most were aged 18-25, with slightly more males than females participating; 62 of the sample were indigenous Fijians.

There were several key findings:
- Of the 84 surveyed 58 were sexually active by the time they reached 20, despite strong cultural and religious messages against premarital sex. This was particularly true for young men and those from urban areas. The results also suggest that indigenous Fijians, in particular, are delaying marriage in favour of forming de facto relationships. This trend is likely to be linked to the education of women and to changes in aspirations.
- The reasons given for sexual activity were varied. Many young people reported having sex as part of a committed relationship. Others had it to satisfy curiosity and just for the experience. A few said they did not freely choose to have sex but were either forced or acted when they were drunk.
- Some young people in the survey had sexual partners of the same sex: 17 respondents did not identify as heterosexual.
- The majority of young people who were sexually active did not protect themselves from pregnancy or STIs. Many reported ignorance of the need to use condoms, while others expressed negative views towards them. Only three people had experience of contraception other than condoms, despite many being in long-term relationships. Of concern was the fact that more than half of the group believed that withdrawal was a reliable method of contraception.
- There was inconsistency between belief systems and behaviour. Most thought that men and women should not have sex before marriage. However, a significant number of those who said this had themselves had sex before marriage. It would appear that young people take on messages they are given through the church and their families, although these messages have little relevance to their own lives.

Conclusion

Fiji, like other Pacific countries, is experiencing increasing rates of sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancies, particularly among indigenous young women. Although the RFHAF research was conducted on a small sample, the results indicate that many young people are not protecting themselves against pregnancy and infections. This is particularly alarming given the small but growing number of people becoming infected with HIV.

Despite the work being done by many agencies, there are still many barriers to improving the sexual health of young people. Those in the survey group nominated cultural and religious taboos as the biggest barrier. They would like to see more workshops for young people, particularly at village level, and better education in schools. It will require continuing resources, effort and coordination among the many agencies working in the Pacific to address these issues.

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Notes

1. It is likely that Indo-Fijian men attend private practitioners, where data are not reported to the Ministry of Health.
References


3. For a copy of the report on this research, contact Family Planning Australia <international@fpa.net.au>.
fem'TALK: Young women's perspectives from the Fiji Islands

Sharon Bhagwan Rolls, fem'LINKpacific: Media Initiatives for Women

This article features excerpts from fem'TALK: Not Just Sweet Talk, a community video initiative produced by fem'LINKpacific: Media Initiatives for Women.

As young women celebrate the legacy of the women's movement, they are also looking for the freedom and the opportunity to be defined by their choices, their actions and their work, as Fiji's next generation. It is becoming clear that their role, within the context of the women's movement in Fiji and the wider sphere of development issues, is beginning to take shape, despite recent hurdles – maybe because hopes and aspirations generate action.

In the lead-up to the 2001 general elections, and as an initiative to document the views of a diverse range of women, fem'LINKpacific spoke to four young women, living in Suva, to share their experiences, their concerns and their vision for Fiji.

Four young women of Fiji

Tabua Salato works for the National Council of Women Fiji (NCWFiji) as a project assistant. She was involved in the Peace Vigil and Women's Action for Democracy and Peace initiative and recently revived the NCWFiji's Women in Politics project by organising and staging voter education programmes for women's groups across Fiji. These programmes were run in English as well as in Fijian and Hindustani languages. Tabua is also a founding member of fem'LINKpacific.

Tara Chetty is a journalist who works for the Sun Fiji newspaper. As a newcomer to the industry, Tara is energised to make her mark in the news media. She has been tagged 'the Hope of the Side' by her writer/journalist mother, Seona Smiles, and this tag probably exemplifies the important roles our daughters play in the future of our country and the women's movement.

Christine Goundar is a former journalist, now working as the communications officer for the Fiji Women's Rights Movement, a position she took up in April 2001. Christine grew up in rural Fiji, hailing from Tavua.

Tarusila Bradburgh is an active member of the Suva Young Women's Christian Association and is on the Fiji YWCA National Board. She is also a wife and a mother.

Their views on the issues

Current social, economic, political and cultural-based developments are critical for Fiji's next generation. Many are facing a life of uncertainty: unemployment and poverty are real-life issues. While they are passionate in their views, they are also struggling with the contradictions of twenty-first century Fiji and all the new contexts of life as Fiji Islanders. They cannot vote until they are 21 and, at a social level, they are also grappling with personal relationship issues, as they try to define themselves in a country which is trying to find a path forward out of the quagmire of social upheavals and political disruption, exacerbated by the May 2000 crisis:

[Tabua] Being a woman and being young, it's not easy having our concerns and issues taken seriously.

[Tara] The pop culture scene is there but it's not (just) what we're about ... probably older people don't see, they're clouded by their own judgments and they don't see the other things we're concerned about – we're deeply concerned about Fiji. We may not show [it], we get angry, we get upset, we get a bit apathetic sometimes and we don't want to know what's happening. But it's only because we care, so we don't want to see the bad things happening. Pop culture is just a part of our lives, it's not what we're [only] about.

[Christine] How can society say that young people are not concerned about politics or national issues when they don't ask young people? Maybe they should ask ... and then they'll get the answer.

[Tarusila] The young women are doing their own things – those that are educated, at universities ... at school and also bearing in mind the number of young women who are out there on the streets now. So young women are not in the bigger picture.

[Tara] We aren't given access to make big decisions – I'm thinking back to work again, because this is really new for me – we aren't given the scope to make decisions and our capacity as decision makers is ignored. I feel we're a whole ignored section of Fiji at the moment.

The political arena always seems alien, so intangible, to the younger generation. Parents and grandparents are the ones who usually actively participate in political discussions, whether through formal dialogue or around the ever-popular 'grog bowl'. These discussions, as well as the associated decision-making processes, also tend to be male dominated. After all, Fiji is a very patriarchal society, so what chance do young women have to articulate their concerns or vision? Coupled with that is the fact that, despite being legally able to drive a car or go to a club or bar when they are 18 years old, young people cannot vote until they turn 21, which seems a little ridiculous and disenchanting. But, as Tabua, Tara and Tarusila indicate, they do have an idea of what their capabilities are:
[Tabua] Young women in Fiji society today should take a more active role in decision making. You know, when it comes to taking up their issues to any level, whether it be at the rural setting, urban setting, national level, young women should know that they have every right to take up their concerns and their issues in whatever form, like ... through the NGOs or ... a relevant ministry – governmental arm. They can do that.

[Tara] We are idea generators, we should be coming up with new ideas, new ways forward, encouraging others, and we should be supporting each other.

[Tarusila] Women and young women must be allowed to take part in decisions, even in rural areas, ... at village level meetings or tikina or provincial level meetings and also in the urban areas. [Women] with good academic qualifications are often bypassed. They should be offered to sit in boards and be offered high positions in the government sector.

For the August 2001 elections, the first since the May 2000 crisis, it was estimated that 42,060 persons had turned 21 since the 1999 elections. Post-election analysis will be able to tell us how this 'new generation' of voters exercised their right to vote, but, in the lead-up, our young women were mindful of a few critical issues:

[Christine] Right now I don't have any faith in Fiji's government because an elected government was overthrown. When I read the news or whatever issues are coming out now, I lose faith and even I don't feel like voting because I think, what will happen to my vote. If I vote for a government and it is overthrown, what's the use?

[Tabua] You have to ensure that you make the right decision about the person that you're going to vote for, so that you won't regret later. But first and foremost, just make an informed decision and make sure that when you place that tick or ... list your preferences you are ensuring that the person who you want to see to represent you will listen to you.

[Tara] I am going to be looking at the political parties a lot more closely than I did before (now that I'm working in the media) and this is the way we can use our vote. Don't just go with who sounds good, who's saying what and see to represent you will listen to you.

[Tarusila] Don't let others to push you to vote for someone you know won't produce the quality of leadership and in that way we women, and young women we're helping ourselves to think for ourselves and choose for ourselves. The most important thing before we go and vote is to evaluate the candidate.

Amid the hope and expectations of rebuilding a new Fiji, one needs to also acknowledge the special needs of the younger population: reproductive health, violence against women, social assistance, family life, education and unemployment, the leadership issue, and their vision for Fiji.

**Reproductive health**

[Tara] Young women's reproductive health – this is an issue I feel strongly about, since my high school days because with my friends, with people around me, there's nothing you know.
The leadership issue

[Tabua] We'd like to see, when you're in parliament, that you take into consideration whatever you have promised us and you ensure that you have promised us, and that these are incorporated into policies and legislation and all that and that we are not neglected.

[Tara] I'm looking for someone who really cares about Fiji and not by handing out $5000 donations, but actually by caring about issues — speaking to us and starting to put in place promises. We want them to deal with the land issue, but there are other things also important to us and are being ignored as usual. We want to hear someone talking about these things — women in the workplace, reproductive health, and the environment is something I am concerned with.

[Tabusila] The qualities I look for in a good leader — one who is a role model, that when I look up to him or her I know that he or she is able to lead the country, to bring races together, someone who is a woman or a man of principle — just doesn't talk but does the actions, and is always there ready to serve the people, no matter what race or what religion. Someone who is just there to offer the best [they] can, the best quality service that [they] can provide for Fiji. And bearing in mind that this is a multiracial Fiji, we want a democratic country too — where everyone can voice their opinion and we are able to live happy and free just amongst each other.

[Christine] The leaders need to come together in unity. They need to realise that even if we are of different races, we are here to live together. There's no way that Indians are going to go back to India, Rotumans ... to Rotuma, Chinese to China. We all need to live together as a multicultural society. Nothing can be done to stop this and I think that's the main thing — unity.

Vision for Fiji

[Tabua] We have to live side by side. Some of us live together, we have to ensure that there is no misunderstanding, ... no resentment. I would love see that we first of all get together and understand each other's cultures and appreciate it — you know, the differences and the similarities — and work together from there, because no nation can work together if there is constant divide. First and foremost have that solid platform, that solid foundation, and I am sure our nation will flourish.

[Christine] Well, I hope that in the next five years we will have a stable government — and a government which will look into young people's issues, a government which will give security to young people, that they will have jobs when they graduate, when they finish off school.

[Tara] And my vision for Fiji is where young women can feel comfortable, where we can feel at home, where we don't have to feel we have to go to Australia or New Zealand, maybe the place we were heading for before the coup.

[Tabua] We are Fiji's tomorrow. We cannot progress anywhere if we don't resolve what's happening at the moment, with there being division and inadequate leadership. We, the young people, are feeling very disillusioned with this country. But, first and foremost in order for this country to progress, we have to come together and realise 'hey, we are the future,' we are the people of tomorrow, the Fiji of tomorrow. So we have to come together in terms of peace and multiculturalism.

Despite the current social, political and economic realities of the present time, our four young women are adamant that young women in Fiji today have an opportunity to share their perspective in shaping the future of their country. Unfortunately, not enough of them are talking, and those who are are often not being heard. fem'LINKpacific is hoping to be able to play an effective part in changing that.

fem’LINKpacific

fem’LINKpacific: Media Initiatives for Women, was born out of the May 2000 crisis. We are a multi-ethnic group of people who came together through the Peace Vigil initiative of the National Council of Women Fiji which was staged daily from 21 May to 24 July 2000 at the Holy Trinity Anglican Cathedral in Suva. All the members of the management board are under 40 years of age.

As a tangible and practical response to the lack of women-centred stories in the mainstream media, fem’LINKpacific works as a stand-alone women's non government organisation (NGO) specifically to ensure that women's voices are heard, by trying to balance the scales in pursuit of equality and social justice and by critically looking, through the eyes of women, at the current developments in our country.

Thus, fem’LINKpacific has undertaken to develop and produce community media initiatives, of which the fem’TALK Community Video Series is its first project activity. These community videos are an opportunity not only to document women's stories, but also to share the common values, concerns and visions of women — as mothers, sisters, daughters and wives of Fiji.
The issue of youth disaffiliation and marginalisation is one of the greatest challenges confronting Fiji. The existence of 'street kids', as they are known, has time and again created moral panic, generating a spectrum of responses from government departments, NGOs, religious organisations and concerned individuals. The problem, although not quantitatively alarming, is a concern in a society that prides itself on the care and protection of its children.

Definition

The term 'street kids' is loosely used to describe those young men and women who have made the streets their home. Three categories can be said to exist in Suva, Fiji's capital city. There are those who live permanently on the streets, having left home for various reasons. The second category relates to those who are unemployed but who commute from home each day to either roam around with the 'gang' or be engaged in menial work like shoe-shining and collecting bottles. The third group is seasonal. Their presence on the streets tends to be highly noticeable during the festive season or at the staging of big sporting events.

It is, however, the first category that is the focus here, with the emphasis on male Fijian youths. In particular, this is a group consisting of more than half of the estimated 60 kids who live on the streets, on the margins of society (Rika 2000). 'Social disaffiliation' can be defined as a situation where normal social links and emotional bonds to one's immediate family have been broken, disrupted or attenuated (Mills 1997). This forces a marginal existence, where young people are denied access to positions and symbols of economic, religious, political and cultural power and significance in society such as employment, education, peer groups and consumption.

Such youths are regarded as incapable of living 'up to the norm' and meeting the standards society expects from them: to go to school, to have a job, to be decent consumers, to participate in leisure time activities or to have a family of their own (Heikkinen 2000:391). It can be said, therefore, that their existence is a result of the interrelated factors of family disintegration, educational challenges and economic hardships.

Youth transition

A possible explanation for the existence of young people living on the edge lies in the transitions that have taken place as a result of globalisation, urbanisation and individualism. These changes contribute to the creation of a new transitional process for young people in their quest for an acceptable status and role, compared to the past when society guaranteed these for them.

In the traditional Fijian context, young people always had a special place and role and were socially distinguished in gender terms as either caurawon or gonyalewa, referring to those young males and females in between childhood and adulthood. Bounded by social norms, this transitional period was looked upon as a time of learning and a preparatory stage for adult life. It was a vital time in one's life, and for society as a whole, not only because youths were a great source of physical labour and skills in economic, social and ceremonial affairs, but also because their socialisation determined the reproduction of a normative social order.

Today, the weakening of the Fijian social structure, the decline in adherence to chiefly authority, the unpopularity of religion as a form of social cohesion and weak socialisation techniques have all contributed to confusion among young people (Davis 1986:133). Contemporary changes pose a challenge to a once-conservative society. The place, role and identity of our youths are under threat, and this makes it all the more interesting to note where they stand in the fast-changing socioeconomic environment. This is especially so when an acceptable social role is characterised by success in school, participation in the job market through meaningful employment, gaining acceptance in peer groups, and engaging in expected consumption and leisure activities.

It should be noted that most youths do not apparently face a problem of coming to terms with their identity and existence. Perhaps many have been brought up in environments where adaptation to modern changes is not a problem. They are viewed by society as functional individuals, who do well at school, obtain well-paid jobs or remain comfortable in the semi-subsistence rural economy and are 'successful' in life.

A new underclass

It is within this context of change that a new underclass has emerged: a group of youths whose existence and identity have been legitimised by dominant stereotypes, newspaper headlines, public conversations and media publicity. These are disaffiliated and marginalised youths, the street kids who, according to a 1999 Department of Social Welfare survey, roam and sleep around the corners of the city, working as child labourers, begging – they are unsuccessful migrants to the city, aimless school dropouts and the rejected, especially those who are victims of broken homes and unstable family relationships.

The family as safety net and ideal agent of socialisation is under intense threat from the rapid wave of social and economic change sweeping across Fijian society. Generational gap problems and strained social relations within the family, characterised by
parental separation, domestic violence, abuse and neglect, have been responsible for the high incidence of young people seeking company and acceptance outside the home.

Overt affection is not normally shown to young people in Fijian society nor are they acknowledged for their efforts and labour. In most cases, it is taken for granted that one's membership in a family is enough to guarantee being cared for. In reality, Fijians in particular spend much of their time away from home, attending church meetings and community and cultural gatherings, denying their children necessary supervision in activities such as homework. If no one cares at home, children no sense of belonging and may not come home. They become drawn to the wider society where they are influenced by their peers to try out drugs, alcohol and other deviant activities that characterise their daily lives (Cantwell 1980:193). Therefore, for many youths, emotional neglect becomes the main factor for venturing out into the streets.

Most Fijian youths exist in a state of dilemma, created by modern institutions. For example, they are plucked from their familiar and immediate environments, where they efficiently participate, and exposed to schools, which today replace the family and the community in preparing them for adult life. However, the promises of a good education and later good jobs and wages have become over-idealised. Formal education has reversed the role of youths: from one of active participation to one of prolonged dependence, with the promise of participation (not in the traditional sense) only once success has been attained.

However, our society is such that not all are destined to succeed or are chosen to participate. Employment opportunities are rare. The current unemployment rate is about 25 per cent, with many of those affected being youths. Out of the 14,000 school leavers each year, only about a thousand are absorbed into the labour market (Healey 1998:5). This contributes to the decrease in motivation to participate in school (Cashmore 1984:4). For many, attending school has become a meaningless activity and street life for many has become a common option.

The reality is that most Fijian youths are disadvantaged when it comes to formal education. According to Monsell Davis (1986:146, 147), 'the essence of academic success rests on the capacity to question and explore' and 'stresses individual competitiveness'. This contrasts with early Fijian childhood socialisation, which was rigid and where questioning those in authority was unacceptable. Doing things in a group instead of individually was the basis of social existence. School life has become an uninteresting form of activity and many tend to play truant or just to hang out with their mates, and are therefore bound to be unsuccessful later in life.

The sense of community which is the basis of Fijian society does not hold much appeal anymore. Most of our dissatisfied and unattached youths initially came from the rural areas to attend school and live with relatives in the urban areas, as is the common practice among Fijians. Some estimates from high schools in the Suva area put the number of children living with their extended family as greater than 10 per cent (Mills 1998). However, as time goes by and the demands of urban life become more urgent, these children are likely to be considered a financial burden by their host and family. They are not fully supported and are often exploited to justify their stay with relatives (Davis 1986:149). The feeling of rejection becomes so acute that they drop out of school and move from place to place in order to secure a living. For most of them, the streets become the next option. A recent situation analysis of street kids in Suva found that rejection was the main reason for taking to the streets (Rika 2000).

The infiltration of modern values and ideas into village life, and the promises of urban life, have greatly affected the aspirations, needs and identity of our young people. The growing number of youths living a marginal existence is the result, in part, of rural-to-urban drift. Most have dropped out of school and made their way into the urban centres in the hope of better things. Their ignorance and inability to adapt to a new environment place them in a no-win situation. Basically, they do not fit, become confused and are left with a problematic future.

Young people have also been affected, directly or indirectly, by the government's current economic policies pursued under IMF and World Bank guidelines. Low-income earners, who make up 23-25 per cent of the population and who are living in poverty, are greatly affected and suffer economic hardship. Most have seen their situation deteriorate further since the economic decline brought about by the political insurrection of 19 May 2000. As a result, many experience poor housing conditions and consume meals of poor nutritional value. In addition, the high cost of education, 'around $150-$200 a year' for a primary school student and about '$300-$400 a year' for a secondary school student (UNICEF 1996:43, 44), forces many children out of school (Bryant 1992), contributing to the increase in unemployed school leavers.

Given the difficulty of sustaining a reasonable standard of living, many children, especially school dropouts, are absorbed into the growing market of cheap labour. Here they are employed as bottle collectors, supermarket packers, and delivery boys, while others work in the informal sector as shoe shiners and wheelbarrow boys (Healey 1998:5). Various reasons drive children to take up such work and for many it is a necessity. With the traditional view being that children's work is a vital component of the socialisation process, this practice is often condemned because these children earn additional income for their families. The laxity of the government in inspecting these exploitative situations and enforcing the existing employment laws that deal with child labour places youths in a vulnerable situation, as they are working for survival instead of acquiring the skills necessary for a successful adult life.

The difficult circumstances these young people find themselves in make them prone to anti-social behaviour. Alcohol and substance abuse among these youths has been noted as a contributing factor to the increase in crime. Some 'smoke all day, becoming unresponsive and inclined to unpredictable behavior and violence' (UNICEF 1996:63).
A need for trained youth workers

Numerous efforts have been made to assist the disaffiliated and marginalised young people of Suva. Unfortunately, these efforts have been residual in nature and have encouraged youths to remain on the streets rather than assisting to alleviate their condition. What is needed is a coordinated effort to realistically begin addressing the root causes of a problem which is widely recognised but which needs to be substantiated by more research.

Disaffiliated and marginalised young people are a symptom of a society under immense socioeconomic and political pressure. New issues and conditions require a special response, one that existing policies and structures have not been able to cope with. Youth problems have easily developed in Fiji, and especially in urban centres like Suva, because of the strain felt by support mechanisms like the family and the absence of adequate forms of economic support. The welfare approach keeps youths on the streets because of the handout mentality it generates and because of the absence of qualified and trained youth workers. This last point is in part a result of the lack of professionalism and status accorded to youth work, as it is still widely regarded as a voluntary activity.

It is my belief that specialised youth work training will create a more systematic approach to addressing the plight of these young people. There is no better way to begin than to enrol present and aspiring youth workers in the recently developed Commonwealth Youth Programme Diploma in Youth in Development Work, offered exclusively by distance education through the University of the South Pacific. The applied nature of the programme in contextualised settings enables youth workers to assess and address the special needs, situations and circumstances of young people. It trains them to empower youths to advance themselves, reinforce positive values and build a stable environment, allowing young people to take their place and participate constructively in society.

Conclusion

The existence of young people on the margins of society clearly demonstrates structural inadequacies. We need to re-evaluate our society and engage in more research that will result in realistic strategies to empower and enable young people and to ensure that now and in the future they are able to respond and adjust to changing environments. We do not want to see them join the millions of young people throughout the world whose opportunities, visions, hopes and dreams have been dashed.

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Use of drama for youth employment and empowerment: Wan Smolbag, Vanuatu

Peter Walker and Jo Dorrit, Wan Smolbag, Vanuatu

An office worker once told us you could always spot a Wan Smolbag actor in town. They would be laughing loudly, checking some friend across the road or strutting their stuff. To some, this would show the lack of respect of the young today and be further evidence of the need to curtail the right to freedom of movement enshrined in the constitution. The office worker, to my relief, said how proud she was of them and their confidence.

Young people and traditional values

People are proud of the Wan Smolbag theatre group and its regional profile, but there is a vocal minority who wish to keep youth firmly in their place. The recent review of chiefly powers under the constitution saw chiefs committees from north to south putting revision of the right to freedom of movement at the top of their wish list. Again, at a juvenile justice summit, where chiefs outnumbered by three to one the number of youth participants, one of the final recommendations was that all youth wishing to leave their village should ask permission first from the chief and then have their movements monitored in town by the chief’s representative.

One can see the reasons. Urban drift breeds resentment, as families are asked to cope with one more young relative looking for work. Then there’s the lad who runs away to town because he has made a young girl pregnant back in the village and it is the chief to whom everyone complains. Still, it is worrying. Restricting the freedom of movement of the country’s youth is an act of victim blaming. Globalisation, corruption and lack of rural economic development might be targets more worthy of the chiefs’ ire. The tendency, too, of some chiefs to stop nurses giving condoms to young people is an alarming response to an impending HIV/AIDS epidemic in the Pacific.

Youth employment

It is against this background that Wan Smolbag employs over 40 youth in its various projects. In addition to the core group there are three more theatre groups based at Smolbag Haos and two on the outer islands. There is a research office and, for the last two years, a reproductive health clinic built onto the back of the theatre and staffed by three nurses and eight youth outreach workers – not forgetting, too, the voluntary network of some 100 turtle monitors around the country. The clinic and the monitors are the results of community responses to theatre projects where the reaction to a play has been ‘Hey, we must do something about that!’ and Smolbag has helped to facilitate the response. Moreover, Smolbag has now expanded into other media. Oxfam New Zealand funded the building of a radio studio and Smolbag now produces a weekly radio soap and, with European Union funding, a series of documentaries on the law called ‘Toksave long Lae’. It also now has its own video equipment, which should lead to more video production as local members gain skill in this area.

So, on any one day in Vila at the centre, you will find every corner of the building occupied: nurses running workshops for grade 6s on how their bodies will start changing over the next few years; finance staff trying to account to ten donors simultaneously as actors bellow out songs on the other side of the flimsy divide that separates the stage from the office and another group packing one of the smolbags to head off to a show or on tour.

Young people, knowledge and respect

It is in fact a little world of youth, freed from many of the conventions of village life or even some aspects of family life in town. This, in our opinion, is one of the most important elements of Wan Smolbag as a non government organisation. In a country where youth represent two-thirds of the population, there are so few spaces where they can make the rules and set the agenda, and learn values for themselves.

For example, there is much bemoaning of the fact that youth these days do not show respect, particularly for chiefs. It is true they have difficulty with this because it is very rarely expressed as a two­way thing. Respect is due to a chief solely because he is a chief. He can sell off land to developers or have an unsavoury private life, but should still be respected. Also, as youth gain knowledge through their work, for example in health and rights issues, they can see that someone who can say ‘Women are lucky; they get a regular release of sexual pressure through their period. Boys don’t, so you can’t blame them if they attack women who wear shorts’ is not really the right person to preside over domestic violence or rape cases. There are members of the judiciary anywhere who might say such things, and many chiefs play an invaluable role as dispute solvers in isolated villages, but young people need more freedom and forums to express their discontent with ‘the system’ and traditional leaders have to ease them if they attack women who wear shorts’ is not really the right person to preside over domestic violence or rape cases. There are members of the judiciary anywhere who might say such things, and many chiefs play an invaluable role as dispute solvers in isolated villages, but young people need more freedom and forums to express their discontent with ‘the system’ and traditional leaders have to ease up or be swept away, possibly violently.

Youth is a time of experimentation, with sex, with alcohol, and Smolbag has its share of casualties in this respect, but love of the work and the chance to express yourself creatively also often act as a controlling influence. You may still get blind drunk sometimes, but you are going to do it at a time and in a way that will not affect your...
work or bring shame on your colleagues. And, yes, we have had cases of women coming to Smolbag to claim that an actor is the father of her child and we have had to sit down, with much soul-searching about our role as community educators, and ask whether we are just a bunch of dabol fe (hypocrites). We don't think we are, or at least no more so than any other group of people. Part of the appeal of Smolbag is due to the fact that audiences do not believe they are watching a group of angels but people like themselves, grappling with issues that are not easy to solve.

Consultation and conversation

The daily meeting is central to the group's success. Very few mornings start without at least the core group sitting down together - for donor news, project news, plans, gossip - and then there are longer meetings where disciplinary and personal concerns get aired. When 40 people work together in a wild atmosphere of song, dance and theatre, it is vital that they feel free to say when they are not happy.

How many readers have sat through an hour-long meeting on the practice of brekem ane (moonning)? After a period of 'moonning' by some male actors around the building, a heated debate ensued. What if a visitor, perhaps a donor, arrived unannounced and swearing has to stop too because that is just as bad', came the words at Wan Smolbag Haos and the mixture of freedom and enjoyment of work, which is often a new experience.

Constructively together. This has an effect also on the hundreds of government. Just because we are a theatre group, these debates are often performed with great vigour. The power of drama is that it teaches a mixture of freedom and discipline, of showing off and teamwork, that can lead to true respect in real life. Most of the group do not have many formal qualifications, but in terms of their ability to motivate and encourage debate and action in communities they outstrip many of their more highly qualified counterparts in government.

This for us is the prime justification for Smolbag, that it provides creative employment for a large number of young people in an atmosphere that encourages them to take decisions and work constructively together. This has an effect also on the hundreds of people who have spent time at workshops we run at the centre. Participants from all over the Pacific say that, just as much as the drama skills they have acquired, they value the working atmosphere at Wan Smolbag Haos and the mixture of freedom and enjoyment of work, which is often a new experience.

Donor demands

Sadly, donors will not give funds for youth merely to be employed creatively. We would argue that they should, given that small island economies are never going to keep up with population growth rates. If Australia and others do not want to keep sending in the evacuation boats, it is vital that young people feel a sense of purpose. That can often mean paying them to make use of talents the school system will not find in order to foster a feeling that they have a voice in the community, which in turn might just make the elite a little more conscious of their accountability to those young people.

To employ the number of people that Wan Smolbag does, we have to prove that what we produce - the video or the radio or stage play - is having an impact. Cynically, I would say this is because to really experience the energy and effect of the way the organisation runs would mean spending more time with the group than any donor would be able to, even if they wanted to. It is easier to demand that the NGO supply proof of behavioural change in the communities they work with. And, of course, this has its place. It is also part of the confidence building that I have discussed above. Part of the worth the actors feel is generated by the sense that they have something important to say and that what they say is acted upon.

The impact of development theatre

Some donors are still sceptical about whether this kind of theatre can lead to action, but we would say that the evidence is mounting that it quite clearly can. Here are some examples from our own work:

- Recent research carried out for UNESCO on traditional conservation practices on some islands attributes turtle conservation taboos entirely to the work of the group and its village-based monitors. Some areas of the Maskelynne islands went from killing 150 turtles for the new yam festival to killing none. (This has proved a bit drastic and they will allow 20 or so purely for the festival next year.) Furthermore, all taking of eggs has stopped. Similar results were found on offshore islands near Vila where the network started.

- Our youth health clinic was built following a community play project with 80 people from the peri-urban settlement of Black sands and is run by a committee including community members, smolbag actors, clinic staff and the health department. It provides family planning, STI (sexually transmitted infection) testing, and treatment and counselling. In its two years of operation the number of patients has grown from 40 a month to over 200 (this figure excludes those youth who drop in to the general video-watching area). Most interestingly, nurses say that if we have been performing a piece on a reproductive health topic in town, the next morning we will usually see two or three people who were in the audience turn up at the clinic.

- Some clinic nurses tell us that they advise people to listen out for certain strands in the radio soap and have seen an increase in family planning take-up since the series started.

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• Our recent radio and stage campaign on electoral registration and electoral rights has, according to the electoral office, resulted in many people registering to vote. With regard to the illegal practice of candidates taking electoral cards, we know of voters who have gone to candidates and demanded they return their cards.

• Youth on Ambae who have trained to use our Drama in Reproductive Health manual (a project funded by UNFPA through AusAID funds) have formed their own committee and, in partnership with community leaders, are running their own reproductive health workshops around the island.

• Research done by the SPC vector-borne diseases project found that drama was the preferred medium for receiving information in many villages, and in the Young People's Project many youth cited Wan Smolbag as their source of knowledge about reproductive health issues.

Maybe these are small changes in small communities, but we never claimed to be able to change the world — although the constant push for instant examples of impact forces many NGOs to sound as though they can. We hope that, without denying the importance of the 'message', we have highlighted the importance of process as an important element of youth empowerment.
Unemployment in Vanuatu

Anita Jowitt, University of the South Pacific, Vanuatu

The problem of unemployment is increasingly becoming an issue of concern for Vanuatu. As the cash economy becomes more central to people's lives, so too are more people wishing to engage in paid labour instead of, or in addition to, engaging in traditional subsistence agriculture. It has been difficult to comment on this issue because of the paucity of reliable and comprehensive data on the labour market. In recent years, however, there have been several surveys or censuses that have collected data on employment. Of particular note are the 2000 Labour Market Survey (LMS), the 1999 Vanuatu National Population and Housing Census ('the census'), and the 1998 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) (NSO 1999a, 1999b, 2000). In 2001 the National Office of Statistics will also be releasing the 2000 informal sector survey report. This article draws on recent census and labour market survey reports in order to give an overview of labour and the growing problem of unemployment in Vanuatu.

It should be noted that, while these reports are the best sources on the Vanuatu labour force, their data are not entirely reliable. The census draws the labour force only from the pool of people aged 15–64 and, given the number of people who leave school before the age of 15, there is likely to be some participation in the labour force by those younger than 15. Further, the census categorisation of economically active and not economically active is problematic, as is the definition of unemployment. 'Unemployed' in the 1999 census means actively looking for work as a primary activity. If someone was engaged in subsistence farming and also looking for work, they would not fall into this category, which results in underrepresentation of unemployment in the census data. Because of the irregular or seasonal nature of some wage labour in Vanuatu, census data gathered in the period of a single week are unlikely to be entirely accurate.

The LMS records only data from a small sector of the labour market. The questionnaire also only asks employers to record employment on a single day, so is unlikely to accurately record irregular or seasonal workers in businesses that have a fluctuating labour supply. The HIES does not clearly define what is meant by employment but appears to be based on subjective assessments of employment status that do not coincide with definitions in other data sources and may not be consistent from respondent to respondent. Because of this methodological point, the HIES data are controversial. Despite these weaknesses in the data sources, they still reveal trends and are useful for providing a general overview of the labour market and unemployment in Vanuatu. As unemployment as a concept is linked to the cash economy and paid labour, this article provides only a brief discussion of the total labour force, including subsistence labour, before turning to examine wage labour in more detail. It concludes with some comments on how it may be possible to generate more opportunities for employment in Vanuatu.

The labour force and subsistence agriculture

Vanuatu census reports define the labour force as being people between the ages of 15 and 64 who are working for money, engaged in subsistence farming, helping in family businesses, doing voluntary community work, or actively seeking work. Using this definition, the 1999 census placed the labour force at 76,370, up from 66,597 in the 1989 census and 51,109 in the 1979 census.

This labour force is usually thought of as falling into three sectors: the subsistence sector; the formal sector, which comprises paid labour in the public service and in medium-to-large private sector enterprises; and the informal sector, which includes activities such as taxi driving, market gardening, handicrafts manufacture and other cottage industry, paid domestic labour, and employment within small private sector enterprises. Population censuses show that the vast majority of the labour force aged 15–64 is involved in subsistence agriculture, with the 1999 census placing 67 per cent in the category of subsistence farmers. It should be noted that about a quarter of these farmers maintain a garden for both subsistence and sale and thereby participate in the cash economy through the informal sector.

Wage labour in the formal and informal sectors

While the census, the LMS and the HIES have added to the statistics on paid employment in Vanuatu, they still do not allow for easy analysis, as each has produced different figures on the same topic, as Table 1 shows. Indeed, the data within the census and the HIES vary internally.

The variation between the LMS and the other data sources can be explained by differences in the surveys' sample frames. The LMS was a census of all businesses that are registered for the purposes of value added tax (VAT), as well as government, education and finance industry units that are not liable to pay VAT. Only businesses that earn 4 million vatu or more need to register, so the labour market survey excluded smaller enterprises and businesses that have failed to register for VAT. The smaller enterprises were, however, included in the data collection of the other two surveys.

The last reported survey on activity within smaller enterprises, in 1995, estimated that there were 8,820 workers engaged in work...
for smaller enterprises. These enterprises included trade, restaurants, kava selling, and taxis, buses and other public transport activities, but did not include paid agricultural work. Of these workers 5,404 were estimated to be paid employees. The remaining workers were either unpaid family members who engaged in at least two hours of work per day in the enterprise, or owner/operators. These figures, as well as excluding paid agricultural work, exclude people employed in small-scale manufacturing enterprises. It would appear, then, that employment within such enterprises largely accounts for the difference between the data from the LMS and the 1999 census figures as reported in the LMS.

Questions still remain, however. First, the 1999 census data give three different reports as to the number of people engaged in paid labour. In the census summary, the number is 19,448, whereas the data tables indicate 18,403 people, and the LMS total is different again. There are no clear explanations for these variations. Given these discrepancies, the data in the census can only be treated as an approximate indicator of the number of people engaged in paid labour as their primary activity.

Second, there is the discrepancy between the 1999 census and the HIES figures. One difference is that the HIES does not have any age limitation, so it is gathering data on a wider pool of people. Another difference is that the 1999 census examined people's current work status and the economic activity that they had undertaken in the previous seven days. It does not appear that the HIES took such a restrictive view. In this survey, household income and expenditure diaries were kept for a period of a month, and it seems that the questionnaires that were distributed took a more expansive, and possibly more subjective, view of people's average monthly economic activity.

In terms of the HIES finding that the main daily activity of 48,007 people was a paid job, a possible explanation is that respondents judged their main daily activity in terms of source of money, as opposed to main daily activity in terms of hours spent. This explanation is tenable, given that the survey was emphasising the importance of household incomes and identifying the different sources of these incomes, and given the survey's finding that salaries and wages make up 54 per cent of the national household income. In comparison, the production of fruits and vegetables, the next most significant income-generating activity, accounts for about 19 per cent of national household income.

These data, when read with the LMS and census data, suggest that while there are about 22,000 people who are engaged in wage labour on a regular, more or less full-time basis, there is a large pool of people who engage in part-time or irregular paid labour but who self-identify as employed. While they may be registered as engaged in subsistence agriculture for the purposes of the census, they are also engaged in paid work when possible.

With such tenuous data, it is impossible to draw firm conclusions, but a possible one is that there are a significant number of underemployed people in Vanuatu and/or a significant amount of hidden unemployment that is not identified within the existing data.

### Table 1: Paid employment by occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1999 census: number employed aged 15–64&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>1999 census: number employed aged 15&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>1999 census: total number working for pay&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>LMS 2000</th>
<th>HIES 1998: number employed</th>
<th>HIES 1998: total number working for pay as main activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legislators, senior officials, managers</td>
<td>678</td>
<td>842</td>
<td>1,315</td>
<td>1,768</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals, technicians, associated professionals</td>
<td>3,944</td>
<td>4,961</td>
<td>3,532</td>
<td>7,705</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerks</td>
<td>1,674</td>
<td>1,739</td>
<td>1,753</td>
<td>2,885</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service and sales workers</td>
<td>3,495</td>
<td>4,186</td>
<td>2,583</td>
<td>4,082</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled agriculture, forestry, fisheries workers</td>
<td>1,255</td>
<td>1,881</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>2,848</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft and related trades workers</td>
<td>2,979</td>
<td>3,486</td>
<td>1,495</td>
<td>2,667</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant and machine operators and assemblers</td>
<td>1,485</td>
<td>1,770</td>
<td>865</td>
<td>2,140</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary occupations</td>
<td>2,893</td>
<td>3,486</td>
<td>2,269</td>
<td>4,912</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18,403</td>
<td>22,351</td>
<td>19,448</td>
<td>29,007</td>
<td>48,007</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) As reported in census tables
(b) As reported in LMS
(c) As reported in census summary

The growth of the labour force and of wage labour

It must be remembered that Vanuatu's population is increasing very rapidly, with around 43 per cent of the current population under the age of 15. About 3,500 young people nationally are joining the labour force each year. If the labour market does not expand, both unemployment and underemployment are going to grow very fast. However, there have been few signs of expansion of demand for labour within the formal sector since independence. There is an increasing imbalance, therefore, between the number...
of regular paid jobs and population. As there is no current indication that either trend is likely to change in the near future, it would appear that the problem is rapidly going to grow worse unless action is taken to address this issue.

Future directions: generating employment

The first point to remember in considering how to generate jobs is that employment does not only include wage or salaried labour in the formal private or public sector. Opportunities for developing informal sector activities through micro-enterprises must also be considered. However, engagement in subsistence agriculture should not be treated as an employment opportunity.

The subsistence sector is the base of Vanuatu, on which people are reliant. However, as education and exposure are changing aspirations, employment policy that relies on subsistence agriculture to 'employ' youth who are entering the labour force is both unrealistic and dangerous. While the subsistence sector can expand (although land-use pressure limits this) and absorb more of the labour force, it is becoming increasingly unlikely that people will be happy to remain in this sector, particularly in urban areas where there is greater exposure to Westernised lifestyles. Employment policies, then, should focus on creating opportunities to engage in legitimate cash-earning enterprises, whether as an employee or self-employed. It should also be remembered that in order to minimise the possibility of underemployment, there must be opportunities for more than just piecemeal work.

The current focus of the government's economic policy is the concept of private sector led development. This has been closely tied to the goal of attracting direct foreign investment (DFI). In relation to employment, it is hoped that an influx of DFI will create demand for labour within the formal sector. In order to do this, a competitive incentive structure needs to be established. Policies affecting the costs of land, capital, telecommunications, power and labour need to be considered, as do policies relating to the creation and maintenance of infrastructure and the strengthening of the legal system so that it can protect investors' rights and property. Most importantly, investor confidence relies upon sound (uncorrupt) macroeconomic management and political stability.

Whatever the merits of generating demand for labour through the attraction of DFI, because of the fundamental nature and widespread reach of the policy initiatives required, developing the informal sector through local micro-enterprises seems to be a more readily achievable path to generating employment. The generation of labour through development of the local informal sector has other attractions as well. It is supply-led in the sense that it takes the existing supply of labour and resources and gradually transforms it into cash-earning employment. It is less likely to lead to a situation of cost-push inflation. It ensures that profits from enterprise remain with ni-Vanuatu, rather than being taken by foreign investors. Such an approach also requires the development of skills among ni-Vanuatu, whereas there is the danger that foreign investors may largely require unskilled labour and therefore will have no incentive to develop people's skills through workplace training.

To this end, training and support in operating small business enterprises needs to be provided. The responsible provision of credit is also important. As well as providing seed capital, credit providers can play an important role in assisting enterprises in developing and managing business plans. Although the Vanuatu Women's Development or Vanwoods scheme has provided some access to credit and business assistance, it is restricted to women and has fairly low membership. Similarly, credit unions are limited in their ability to provide credit for the establishment of micro-enterprises. These initiatives need to be supported and expanded in order to ensure that access to money to support such enterprises is available.

Most important, though, is ensuring that a market for goods and services exists and/or is accessible and regularly supplied. Currently, there is a large imbalance of trade. Local enterprise, in part, could supply the local market that is currently being supplied by imports. Export cooperatives, in which individual small enterprises produce goods that are then exported by a central body, allow small enterprises to reach international markets. Such an approach to export is being used in Samoa with considerable success, and the usefulness of the model for Vanuatu should be explored. Such a model is particularly useful because both urban and rural people can participate in such cooperatives (depending on the nature of the export good), thereby ensuring that urban areas do not become the sole focus or location of cash-earning enterprises.

Conclusion

From recent statistical data, it appears that unemployment is going to grow rapidly in Vanuatu in the near future. This poses a significant development problem, not least because the social unrest and law and order problems experienced in neighbouring Melanesian countries have been linked, in part, to unemployment. Policies for generating employment that do not solely focus on developing demand within the formal sector, but also consider how to generate opportunities within the informal sector, must become an immediate priority if Vanuatu is to succeed in its development goals.

References


Disentangling juvenile justice and kastom law in Vanuatu: issues arising from the Governing for the Future workshop

Michael Morgan, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University

As Vanuatu undergoes structural reform under the ambit of the Comprehensive Reform Programme, sponsored by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the pressing need to address issues relating to juvenile offenders has focused attention on the ambiguous role of customary practices and leadership in contemporary Vanuatu. The plight of juvenile offenders has highlighted the practical inadequacies of Vanuatu's legal system and brought into question the legitimacy of the state courts, the police and the government.

The public discourse has concentrated on giving greater powers to customary leaders, who in certain cases might be a better practical option for defaulting youngsters. Ironically, young people have voiced cogent reservations regarding the ability of chiefs to deliver justice better and ensure peaceful social relations. Tension is evident between nostalgic notions of kastom (customary practices, tradition) and the practical considerations of disparity between the priorities of customary leaders and those of young people, especially young women.

Customary law and youth preferences

Research carried out by the Vanuatu Young People's Project (Mitchell 1998) and the Juvenile Justice Project of the Vanuatu Cultural Centre (2000) suggested that young ni-Vanuatu prefer to face customary courts overseen by chiefs from their own community. Young people, especially young men, are most commonly arrested on minor charges, such as breaking-and-entering, shoplifting or drinking (Super 2000:26). The research documented their concern 'regarding the treatment they had received from police and the penalising rather than reconciliatory outcomes of the Western court system'. Moreover, it indicated that they were reluctant to utilise state law offices, had generally poor relations with the police and felt that state courts did not serve their interests.

The preliminary findings of the Juvenile Justice Project showed that most of those interviewed felt that young people should be dealt with through kastom law, although in what manner was not specified. They were echoed in comments made by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court that he would rather see young offenders placed under the care of a local chief than imprisoned (Super 2000:39).

The Juvenile Justice Project had investigated the main principles of kastom law in the islands of Tanna, Malakula, Ambrym and Ambae, how these practices were deployed in dealing with crimes committed by young people, and what areas of commonality existed between these practices and Western law. The research was consistent with the growing interest in restorative justice—a process aimed at achieving more effective resolutions to crime and conflict through reconciliation, probation and mediation—in Vanuatu and more broadly throughout the Pacific region, including Australia (see Braithwaite and Strang 2000, Dinnen 1998).

One of the main objectives of the National Summit on Juvenile Justice (in March 2001) was to come up with a system whereby 'ideas on governance from chiefs and the state law can be integrated in order to expose certain characteristics and ideas that would be useful to deal with juveniles who have breached the law'.

Background to the workshop

Certain key stakeholders viewed the summit as counterproductive to the various projects of advocating for and empowering young people. Several NGO representatives voiced their concern that recommendations focusing on the role of chiefs in the justice system might inadvertently counteract Vanuatu's obligations as a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and undermine the social justice initiatives currently being undertaken to empower young people. The most contentious recommendation stated: 'Only the chief should decide which cases are referred to the state courts' (Vanuatu Cultural Centre 2001:2-3).

At the Governing for the Future workshop in April 2001, 20 young people (including eight women) made forceful and articulate presentations (Morgan 2001). The majority emphasised experience, rather than universalist theories of governance, and focused on where and when young people's interests had been properly served, where they had not, and what options were available in light of that failure. While the workshop was not specifically designed around issues of juvenile justice, the fact that it was convened only a month after the National Summit meant that participants used the forum to question aspects of kastom law and the judicial system.

The workshop was unprecedented and especially timely, given that chiefs had dominated the Summit and the voice of youth had hardly been heard. Young people are generally not privileged participants in public forums in Vanuatu, much less those relating to governance. Although 60 per cent of Vanuatu's population is under 25 and the mean age is 17.5 (NSO 2000:17-18), young
people are consistently marginalised. National leaders rarely consult them, even on youth-specific issues. While local and international NGOs have placed increased importance on young people as a programming area, the Vanuatu Government has been slower to address issues affecting youth.

Capacity to deal with juvenile offenders

Vanuatu currently has little institutional capacity to deal with juvenile offenders. With the exception of an agreement between the courts, the Public Prosecutors’ Office and the Municipality of Port Vila and some provisions in island courts, there is little capacity for community service sentences to be handed down. Even these provisions are not formulated with juvenile offenders in mind and are unduly harsh in catering for young people (Super 2000:34).

This limitation is symptomatic of wider problems within the legal system. There is a shortage of lawyers, especially in rural areas, and of the six island courts convened by chiefs none is working as planned (Super 2000:30–1). Little formal monitoring takes place regarding conflicts with the law generally. AusAID and the ADB have both targeted the legal sector for complementary strengthening projects. The ADB has prioritised awareness-heightening for public sector officials, adherence to international standards on money laundering and international fiscal policy, capacity-building and training, and assistance to improve the quality of the legal system and to establish a public law information centre (Pori Vila Presse 2 June 2001:1). Former Ombudsman Marie-Noelle Ferrieux Patterson, who is now the secretary of the Vanuatu National Council of Women, blamed the ‘lack of financial and human resources support . . . including the public prosecutor, public solicitor and the courts’ for rising crime rates (Trading Post 22 February 2001:1). She also stated that the police are ineffective in major investigations.

The police force and the paramilitary Vanuatu Mobile Force have come under increased scrutiny because of recent charges of institutionalised brutality. Young People’s Project Research stated that it is an ongoing concern for young people (Mitchell 1998; see Super 2000:27). The Ombudsman Hannington Alatoa has noted that 60 per cent of claims filed in his office are against police (Super 2000:37). On the two occasions the police and the mobile force have mounted punitive raids after civil disturbances, charges of ‘intentional assault’ have been brought against officers.

Legal reform in general is a key priority, but juvenile justice in particular is a less visible issue for governments in the overall project of institutional reform.

Legal literacy

Under the existing judicial system, young people are isolated by poor legal literacy. Most young people are cognisant of ‘the basic law’ and know that criminal prosecution limits their employment prospects. Yet few young people have a solid understanding of their basic rights and most are unaware that a relationship of confidentiality exists between lawyer and client or do not trust that relationship (Morgan 2001). Many young people therefore do not provide relevant information to their legal counsel.

In other parts of the Pacific, state courts are defined as ‘superfluous and sometimes unwelcome’ because trial occurs after customary reconciliation has been enacted (Newton Cain 2001:59). In the case of Vanuatu, workshop participants noted that juvenile offenders prefer kastom court because they feel less intimidated. The chief is often known to the offender and having gone through an informal kastom court does not jeopardise future employment prospects.

Workshop participants affirmed many of the research findings on which the summit had been premised. Like most ni-Vanuatu, they appreciated the value of kastom and considered an ongoing role for kastom law appropriate. Kastom is considered stronger in rural areas because the influences of urbanisation and Westernisation are less pronounced there. Although reliable statistics are unavailable, rural areas appear to have lower crime rates than urban ones.

Relevance of customary law

The relevance of kastom in urban areas was questioned, however. Community dispersal in urban areas diluted the influence of chiefs. While kastom was the basis of identity for most ni-Vanuatu and therefore something to be cherished, many of its elements were contrary to contemporary notions of human rights. Tolerance of violence towards women and children, opposition to women in decision-making roles, arranged marriages and chiefs’ control of young people’s mobility are all elements of kastom that are no longer acceptable.

Several forms of crime, including murder, aggravated assault, sexual assault, and crimes against non-indigenous residents, were considered to be not within the competence of kastom courts to consider. Chiefs were most able to address minor crimes arising in their own communities, where they were familiar with the offenders and victims (Morgan 2001). This complements the initial premise of the Juvenile Justice Project: that to deal more effectively with young offenders under the current legal system, chiefs should undertake pastoral care or implement kastom reconciliation, thereby sparing juveniles costly and shameful court cases and potential imprisonment.

A recent UNICEF report (Super 2000:39–40) noted with concern that, in practice, there is often no right of appeal in kastom courts, and raised serious questions regarding the processes and practices of punishment. For example, despite freedom of movement being enshrined as a fundamental right of all ni-Vanuatu, chiefs claim the right to repatriate young offenders forcibly to their home islands in serious cases or where other deterrents have failed. This practice also raises questions for second- and third-generation Vila residents, who may not have a clearly defined home island, who may lack vernacular expertise and who may never have lived in the islands. Increasing numbers of urban
young people are from mixed marriages, between ni-Vanuatu from different regions or between ni-Vanuatu and other Pacific Islanders, Asians or Europeans.

Punishment meted out by chiefs is often for transgressions against undocumented moral assertions, formulated without widespread consultation. In customary courts, little distinction is made between civil and criminal ‘wrongs’ (Newton Cain 2001:67). While initiatives to improve the capacity of the legal system to handle young offenders are broadly supported, ‘informal systems are not necessarily better than formal ones unless human rights are properly safeguarded and there are adequate monitoring mechanisms in place’ (Super 2000:40).

According to Juvenile Justice Project research, most young people interviewed felt that young women were fairly treated by kastom law. Yet it noted that significant differences existed between the experiences of young men and young women, and a great deal more investigation of the issue needed to be undertaken, particularly for 13–18-year-old women. ‘In some Pacific islands societies rape is not considered serious enough to merit referral to the police’ and is considered something that should be dealt with by the community, without reference to the relevant legislation (Newton Cain 2001:65). It was felt that chiefs trivialise the interests of individual wronged women and give priority to community cohesion and reconciliation. Reconciliation, in this instance, entails the subversion of the human rights of the women involved. Chiefs have proved incapable of protecting young women when men consistently ‘make trouble’ towards them. There are valid concerns, therefore, that women’s rights are curtailed by kastom arbitration.

There is a growing body of research in the Southwest Pacific documenting the failure of both state law and customary law to dispense peace and justice in cases of rape and serious sexual assault (Jolly 2000; see also Garap 2000, Mason 2000). Women’s interests are best served under formal law because it offers recourse in the event that a victim is dissatisfied with an outcome, the legal system’s practical inadequacies notwithstanding.

**Policy issues**

The policy implications of these issues are transparent. The problems of dealing with juvenile offenders under the current system denote the institutional limitations of the legal system, a point supported by the fact that funding agencies have adopted legal sector strengthening as a key priority. The preponderance of young people facing court in the first instance, moreover, reflects the systemic limitations of national and provincial governments and the private sector in providing opportunities for young people.

Creeping urbanisation is recognised as a major factor. Crime has risen in urban areas because of increasing population and economic pressures. Young people throughout Vanuatu are trapped by the lack of opportunities. Family and community networks in urban areas are unable continually to absorb or support high numbers of under-skilled, unemployed island immigrants. National leaders are becoming more aware of the potential ramifications.

Young people are unable to access relevant information on a variety of key issues, including restorative justice and the law. More training opportunities for ni-Vanuatu and more effective dissemination of information regarding existing opportunities are needed. Despite their ability to organise in creative and effective ways, demonstrated particularly in the Vanuatu Young People’s Project, young people feel disenfranchised by national leaders and under-serviced by state institutions. The growing number of young under-skilled ni-Vanuatu will place increasing pressures on a government already straining to provide basic services.

Perceived state weakness, the perception of politicians as opportunistic and self-serving and politics generally as foreign and unduly divisive have intensified claims that the particular brand of democracy extant in Vanuatu does not work because it is culturally alien. In its most extreme form, this argument suggests that Vanuatu should abandon democracy and the Constitution and allow chiefs to govern in ‘the kastom way’. In light of concerns about kastom law, these sentiments are both potentially divisive and contrary to many of Vanuatu’s human rights obligations.

Tension is mounting between notions of reinvigorated kastom to compensate for perceived state weakness and awareness that this may curtail the human rights of individual ni-Vanuatu. The recommendation of the National Summit that only chiefs should decide which cases are referred to the state courts amounts to a significant priority change from the initiative that produced the summit, which had as its premise the desire to make the legal system more effective in dealing with young offenders, especially young men. Considering the weaknesses in the existing legal system, the involvement of chiefs in restorative justice initiatives is both timely and warranted, but their future role must be questioned more thoroughly.

The major inference to be made in light of these issues is the need for ongoing research and advocacy for and by young people. Many community leaders have resisted the right of women to speak on certain issues, as they do young people’s attempts. Self-advocacy is the first step to empowerment, but it is not the only one. The danger, that calls for appropriate and effective means of dealing with young offenders will be subsumed within a broader discourse of government reform or yoked to specific interests not directly related to issues of juvenile justice, remains salient.

**Note**

The Governing for the Future: Young People and Vanuatu’s Governance Agenda Workshop was held at the University of the South Pacific Emalus Campus in Port Vila, 23–24 April 2001. It was organised jointly by the Vanuatu Cultural Centre, the Vanuatu Young People’s Project and the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Project of the Australian National University, with funding from AusAID. The National Summit on Juvenile Justice, funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and UNICEF, was to be the penultimate activity of the Juvenile Justice Project of the Vanuatu Cultural Centre, the final act being the drafting of a national report (forthcoming).
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E tipu e rea: An indigenous theoretical framework for youth development

Teorongonui Josie Keelan, Auckland University of Technology

Introduction

This article sets out an indigenous theoretical framework for Maori youth development in Aotearoa New Zealand. It is built by expanding on a whakatauki (proverb), 'E tipu e rea', which is credited to Apirana Ngata, a famous Maori leader of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, who was writing to Rangi Bennett, daughter of Sir John Bennett. The proverb says:

E tipu e rea mo nga ra o tou ao.

Ko to ringa ki nga Rakau o te Pakeha he i ara mo to tinana.

Ko to ngakau ki nga taonga a o tipuna Maori he tikitiki mo to mahuna.

Ko to wairua ki to Atua, nana nei nga mea katoa.

Grow up and thrive for the days destined to you.

Your hands to the tools of the Pakeha to provide physical sustenance.

Your heart to the treasures of your ancestors as a diadem for your brow.

Your soul to God to whom all things belong.

(See Keelan 2001)

The E tipu e rea theory was developed simply because it was time to do so. It grew out of a project of the Ministry of Youth Affairs during which I was contracted to design a Rangatahi Maori Development Package. The package consists of a booklet of activities, with suggestions on how these can be done, an academic paper on Maori youth development, and a video presenting the theory in an audiovisual format. During the process of developing these materials, it became obvious that there was a need for a specific theoretical framework, rather than trying to 'fit' Maori activities, with suggestions on how these can be done, an academic theory in an audiovisual format. During the process of developing these materials, it became obvious that there was a need for a specific theoretical framework, rather than trying to 'fit' Maori activities, with suggestions on how these can be done, an academic theory in an audiovisual format.

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The context in which the theory is described here is that of whakapapa (genealogy) and whanaungatanga (relationships), with their boa-boare (companions), awhi (foster), manaaki (show respect to) and tiaki (guard). Each of these is linked to the others and yet can embrace external sources. It is also important to explain the use of 'taiohi', instead of the more recognised 'rangatahi', when referring to young Maori, and whether or not there is a Maori or tikanga (custom) definition of youth.

In recent times, the Maori word used to refer to youth in Aotearoa New Zealand, whether they are Maori or not, has been 'rangatahi'. This came from another proverb by Apirana Ngata: 'Ka pu te ruha, ka hao te rangatahi' ('the old net is set aside as the new net is cast'). Rangatahi is a type of fishing net and the allusion here is to Jesus' description of his disciples as 'fishers of men'. Ngata was visualising the members of the Young Maori Party, an organisation of which he was a member, as 'fishers of men', preaching a gospel tied to Maori survival in a changing environment. It is also possible that the word gained popularity through the works of Hoani Waititi, an educationist of the 1950s and 60s, whose Rangatahi 1 and Rangatahi 2 were the primary Maori-language texts of their time.

Interestingly, when the Ministry of Youth Affairs asked the Maori Language Commission to provide it with a Maori name, they were given 'Te Tari Taiohi'. 'Te Tari' means 'The Office' and Taiohi means 'Youthful'. The pronoun 'taiohinga' in fact means youth. The word 'taiohi' is enjoying a comeback and is now regularly used on television and radio. Accordingly, this article reclaims 'taiohi' for general usage in referring to Maori youth.

During the 1970s and 1980s there was much debate about how youth was defined within a Maori context. The tikanga perspective was that one was a child until one's parents or parents' siblings had died. I can remember attending rangatahi hui (youth gatherings) and listening to debates about who rangatahi were. The people who most vehemently argued from a tikanga perspective were those in their twenties and thirties. The same arguments do not surface when hui for taiohi are called these days, maybe because we have become accustomed to the official government definition of youth being only those aged 12–25 years. Now let us return to the contexts that add to understanding the theory.

The theoretical foundation

Whakapapa in its most simplistic sense means 'to lie flat'. However, it is most commonly understood to mean 'genealogy' or 'the history of something coming into being'. This meaning is usually used in reference to a person but can also be used for things and events, or, in other words, the historical perspective of something that has happened. It also means to place layers one upon another, which suggests a process by which something may be done or completed or analysed. Therefore, in applying this in the theory of E tipu e rea, I propose that it is useful to look at the historical positioning of the theory at any one time and the layering that occurs within it so that youth development can occur at its fullest.

Whanaungatanga is about relationships. It has its roots in the whanau or family, but in a modern context can also include friends...
and all the groups (school, clubs, social groups other than friends, work) that make up the community in which young people move. The word also implies how those relationships are maintained, in other words the level of reciprocity that is active in the relationship. These will be applied to the theory and added to the layering aspect of the analysis.

To add to the context, both whakapapa and whanaungatanga are extended by placing hoa-haere alongside them. Awhi is the first of the hoa-haere and means ‘to foster’, in the sense of supporting the development of an individual or group. Such a relationship implies that there are roles and responsibilities on both sides. It does not mean that one is superior to the other but that each must respect the time and place of the other.

A good area for examination and development here is the way in which programmes for young people are designed. In many cases, this is done without their input, on the assumption that they do not know what they want to do or how it can possibly be achieved. For example, I decided to use the logframe analysis when working with young people on designing the Taiohi Maori Development Framework. Most people I mentioned this to thought that the young people would not understand it because of the academic nature of the language used. However, the logframe is a process and I believed that, with good preparation, the young people and I would be able to work through it – which is what happened. In order to awhi young people, therefore, preparation is required.

The second hoa-haere is manaaki, defined here as ‘showing respect for’ – that is, how a relationship should be conducted, and that respect is mutual. It does not mean that young people should be mute in the presence of anyone older, which sometimes tends to happen, but, rather, that when and where there is interaction with young people the time and space of each person/group in the relationship are respected. The third hoa-haere is tiaki, ‘to guard’. Its extended meaning, kaitiakitanga, is ‘guardianship’. This has connotations of protection, in the sense both of preventing harm and of reinforcing the need to ensure that the time and place of young people are not undermined or ignored.

These words/meanings are all used to explain the theory of E tipu e rea, which will be done by analysing each line of the whakatauki and expanding on the meaning so that it can be applied in any given situation.

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Rea means ‘young plant’ or ‘tender shoot’. In design, it is usually depicted by the korus (coil). The connotations are of growth, new life, new beginnings, with their hoa-haere (companions) of fertilisation, propagation, nurturing, blooming and harvest. The metaphor of the young person being a ‘shoot’ therefore suggests that youth development is an ongoing organic process, for eventually the shoot grows into a mature plant that may or may not thrive, depending on the environment.

What are the conditions that will nurture and support a young person to full growth? It is useful to contextualise the theory using the concepts of awhi, manaaki and tiaki. The best environment is one in which the young person is fostered in her/his quest in life. In the process, the right elements of responsibility are established so that the time and place of the individuals/groups involved are respected. Some will think that this is completely logical, but the reality is that many who work with young people do not take the time to do this, often because they are too busy or they have hit on their own youth ‘formula’, and sometimes because it just seems too hard. However, just as the growth of an actual rea depends on an environment containing several necessary and interrelated elements, so time must be given to working out the right environment for young people before embarking on a programme.

The development that occurs must also be relevant. If the world of young people is the dot com, it is likely that their future will be smarter, smaller, more powerful versions of the same and the new. This aspect of the theory presents a challenge to every generation because the time and place change so often.

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Ko to ringa ki nga rakau o te Pakeha hei ara mo to tinana
Your hands to the tools of the Pakeha to provide physical sustenance

In this line, Ngata advised Rangi to take advantage of whatever was being offered by the Pakeha, the New Zealanders of European descent. This is a clear indication that, although he was raised to be fiercely Ngati Porou (the second largest Maori tribe or nation), he was not ethnocentric and saw value in what the other major ethnic group of his time was offering. To put the line into current context, young Maori should be encouraged to consider the very best of what is available from all cultures in order to promote their personal development (hei ara mo to tinana). This meaning can be expanded by juxtaposing this line with the next, which promotes a healthy respect for and participation in the culture of the ancestors. Therefore, the theory requires further interpretation within the contexts of whakapapa and whanaungatanga and their hoa-haere.

E tipu e rea mo nga ra o tou ao
Grow up and thrive for the days destined to you

When Apirana Ngata wrote his whakatauki for Rangi Bennett, he no doubt saw it as a blueprint for what was believed to be a well-rounded young person. Various interpretations can be made of this first line, including that a young person should try to take advantage of everything that is available. It would be useful, however, to examine aspects of the line with regard to the potential for youth development.

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provide sustenance for one's physical body. In this way, other layers are added to the ability of youth to fully participate in their time and space.

In reference to the hao-haere, not only do young people have to be fostered to access these resources but they also have to know that the resources are readily available and that in taking advantage of them they respect their source, for all resources have a whakapapa – that is, they were developed by someone who put time and energy into giving them a life-force. They have been or are being tested to assess their relevance and applicability. By showing respect for the source, it will be returned in the added value that the resource makes to the life of the young person.

**Ko to ngakau ki nga taonga a o tipuna**

*Maori hei tikitiki mo to mahuna*

**Your heart to the treasures of your ancestors as a diadem for your brow**

A simplistic interpretation of this third line of the whakatauki is that Ngata is encouraging young people to treat the culture of their ancestors as something for show – 'a diadem'. Another is that the culture of the ancestors is worn or displayed proudly at all times, hence his use of the term 'hei tikitiki' in the context of taonga. For this to happen, time and space must be given ki nga taonga a o tipuna.

'Ko to ngakau ki nga taonga a o tipuna Maori' has three aspects: ngakau, taonga and tipuna Maori. Ngakau has always been interpreted in relation to the whakatauki as meaning 'heart', but it also means 'inclination', 'desire' and 'spirit'. Within the context of the theory, therefore, reference is being made to the degree of passion with which young people participate in the culture of their ancestors. Taonga are highly prized possessions, treasures even, and tipuna Maori are Maori ancestors. This aspect of the theory focuses on those things that are important in the ancestry of the young Maori person. The interpretation here is iwi-focused because, when Ngata wrote this for Rangi, he was referring to her tipuna and not necessarily tipuna of other iwi (tribe or nation). This adds the whanau (extended family), hapu (sub-tribe) and iwi dimensions to taiohi development. In a wider context, then, there should be an emphasis on encouraging and supporting young people to discover, participate in and be proud of the culture that has been integral to their people.

'Hei tikitiki mo to mahuna'. A tikitiki is a 'topknot', even though the interpretation usually given is 'diadem', perhaps because it sounds grander. Traditionally, the topknot was a way in which the hair was dressed to draw attention to oneself, to show off one's beauty. So, in the context of the theory, it is about being proud of one's culture to the extent of displaying it at all times. This includes participating in rituals and ceremonies in such a way that they are part of one's daily life.

**Ko to wairua ki to atua, nana nei nga mea katoa**

**Your soul to God to whom all things belong**

Ngata believed firmly in a spiritual aspect of development. The word 'atua' embraces all higher beings of every belief. This line suggests the possibility of offering young people a world beyond what they can touch, feel, smell, hear and see. This part of the theory therefore adds the dimension of spiritual development.

'Nana nei nga mea katoa' has two elements: ownership and wholeness. Both are attributed to God and can be used in a Maori youth development framework because, like many other peoples, Maori believe in a higher being. However, another interpretation can be to seek that which one needs to feel complete as a person.

Spirituality is an important aspect of the theory, one that is absent in descriptions or core elements of other theories of youth development. It is not about religion but a sense of well-being. Maori believe that it is the awareness of an internal as well as an external self that creates the whole person, who is then able to fully contribute to her/his time and space.

**Conclusion**

The E tipu e rea theory focuses, therefore, on four areas of youth development: appropriate time and place; opportunities to maximise resources; cultural participation; and spiritual well-being. Although this theory has grown out of the culture of the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand, it can be applied in many different cultural settings. Currently it is being promoted in the country of its origin and many ask why it has taken so long for this to happen. The only answer I have is that we, both Maori and non-Maori, have not truly appreciated until recently the other major culture of our country: Maori. We are grateful for the work of all of those, like Apirana Ngata, who have paved the way for us. Their foundation stones have allowed me to develop this theory and thereby make a small contribution to youth development. It is hoped that other indigenous peoples will be encouraged to discover within the works and proverbs of their ancestors their own truths to share with others. In this way we can all make youth development relevant to the time and place of our young people.

**Notes**

My tribal affiliations are Ngati Porou, Ngati Awa and Tuhoe.

1. In its final form, the package was entitled 'E Tipu E Rea: A Taiohi Maori development package'.
2. The 'Logical Framework Analysis: A tool for project preparation and management' is an analytical tool to assist in the planning, design and management of projects.
3. The whakatauki has been interpreted by some to mean that Ngata was advocating assimilation (see McIntosh 2001).
References


Most adult smokers begin smoking when they are adolescents (USDHHS 1994). A key strategy for tobacco control programmes, therefore, is to prevent adolescents from becoming the next generation of adult smokers. Yet, while governments, the general public and even adult smokers profess support for this goal, over the past 20 years progress has been slow and the results inconsistent. Efforts to reduce the number of adolescents using tobacco are facilitated by an understanding of the patterns of adolescent tobacco use and their relationship to broader societal factors. In this article, data collected from a triennial survey of Australian secondary students that commenced in 1984 are used to identify trends and to highlight challenges for the new century.


Before the commencement of the Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria-led triennial surveys in 1984 (Hill et al. 1987), only two studies on the prevalence of smoking among Australian adolescents had been conducted: one in 1967 and another in 1973 (NHMRC 1969, 1979). A comparison of the data from these two surveys indicated that, between 1967 and 1973, the prevalence of smoking among adolescents increased in all age groups and among both males and females. In 1973, the prevalence of regular smoking among 15-year-olds was over 40 per cent for males and 30 per cent for females, similar to that found among adults in 1974 (Gray and Hill 1975).

In the 11 years between the surveys, several changes to the social environment regarding smoking had occurred. In 1976, direct television and radio advertising of cigarettes was banned, and the early 1980s saw the establishment of Quit programmes in New South Wales and Victoria, with other states soon following. A comparison of the data from a 1984 study (Hill et al. 1987) with that from the 1973 study suggested that the prevalence of smoking among adolescents increased in all age groups and among both males and females. In 1973, the prevalence of regular smoking among 15-year-olds was over 40 per cent for males and 30 per cent for females, similar to that found among adults in 1974 (Gray and Hill 1975).

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Table 1: Prevalence of past-month smoking in each survey year for males and females in Years 9 and 10 (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>p-value*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p-value for difference between male and female proportions.

Despite girls being more likely to smoke than boys, throughout the 1980s and 1990s boys have tended to be the heavier smokers. For instance, among smokers aged 12–15, males smoked an average of seven cigarettes per week more than females in 1984 and six cigarettes more in 1996. However, recent data suggest that this difference too has disappeared and that, in 1999, girls and boys were smoking about the same number of cigarettes per week.

Figure 1 also shows expenditure on tobacco control programmes for each year between 1984 and 1999, suggesting that the rise and fall in tobacco use among adolescents can be explained in part by changes in the level of funding to such programmes. Tobacco control programmes were funded at their highest levels in 1989 and 1990, and this coincided with the lowest rates of smoking among adolescents. After 1990, funding...
dropped dramatically and by 1996–97 was at levels similar to those seen in the early 1980s. Figure 1 is at least consistent with the proposition that, for smoking to continue to decline among adolescents, there needs to be sustained and adequate funding of tobacco control programmes.

While the changes in the prevalence of tobacco use among adolescents can be related to local factors, they must also be seen in the context of similar patterns seen in both the UK and the USA (Johnston et al. 2001, ONS 2000). The shared international trends suggest that elements in the global youth pop culture influence the smoking behaviours of adolescents and remind us that tobacco control does not operate in a vacuum. The 1990s saw a rise in the number of actors, musicians and models who were seen smoking in magazines, movies and music videos (Sutton 2000). The ‘celebrity’ smoker gave smoking a glamour that had not been associated with it in the previous decade. The decline in the prevalence of smoking between 1996 and 1999 coincided with publicity about increasing litigation against tobacco companies in the USA, with large sums being paid for damages caused by smoking. Understanding the factors in the global youth pop culture that influence adolescents to smoke or not should continue to be a fruitful field of investigation in the new millennium.

Circumventing the influence of price increases

Increasing the price of tobacco products by increasing taxation has been advocated as an effective tobacco control policy to help reduce smoking (Chaloupka and Weschler 1997). In the UK, adult cigarette consumption has been shown to vary inversely with the price of cigarettes: consumption increases when prices decrease and vice versa (Townsend 2001). Teenage smoking has also been shown to be highly responsive to cigarette prices. The effect of price changes on consumption patterns, known as ‘elasticity’, is estimated to be −1.4 among adolescents (Winstanley et al. 1995). This means that for every 10 per cent increase in the real price of cigarettes, a 14 per cent decline in demand is expected.

The theory behind these estimates is that, as adolescents have less disposable income and are less addicted to nicotine than adults, their smoking behaviours are more likely to be influenced by prices. Among adolescents, cigarette price increases are expected to reduce demand by reducing the number of adolescents who smoke.

In Australia, two factors have had a major influence on the relationship between cigarette prices and demand: the price range of products available and the amount of disposable income available to adolescents. These two factors have meant that increases in the price of cigarettes have failed to translate into reduced demand among Australian adolescents.

Despite apparent increases in the price of cigarettes in Australia during the 1980s, there was little change in the real price. During the 1990s, however, increases in the excise levy on tobacco meant that the real price of cigarettes began to increase. Until November 1999, the levy was calculated on a per-kilogram-of-manufactured-cigarettes basis, rather than on a per stick basis as is the case in most countries. This taxation policy enabled the tobacco industry to introduce ‘economy’ or ‘budget’ brands and pack sizes to circumvent the influence of price rises (Winstanley et al. 1995). These cigarettes were lighter in weight than ‘standard’ cigarettes and therefore attracted less tax. This, plus the marketing of these cigarettes in ‘economy’ packs, meant that the price per stick was much less than that for a cigarette in a standard pack of 20. For instance, before the tax changes in 1999, the average price per stick for a cigarette in a pack of 50 was 21 cents, while a single cigarette in a ‘standard’ pack of 20 cost 31 cents on average. By purchasing the larger packs, price-sensitive smokers were relatively insulated from price increases during the 1990s.

Adolescents, a price-sensitive market, have been quick to respond to the introduction of budget-priced cigarettes. Around the mid-1980s, Philip Morris introduced to Australia the budget pack of 15 for its brands Peter Jackson and Alpine. The introduction of this pack size was supported with advertising campaigns associating the brands with sexual attractiveness and concealability, campaigns that appealed to adolescents. The 1987 national survey of adolescents showed the success of these marketing campaigns, with 20 per cent of students who smoked obtaining their cigarettes from packs of 15 (Hill et al. 1990). The introduction of this pack size coincided with a doubling in the proportion of students smoking Peter Jackson and, in 1987, this brand was more popular with adolescent smokers than Winfield, the leading brand among adolescent smokers in 1984. The sale of packs containing fewer than 20 cigarettes was banned or phased out by the 1990s. However, Peter Jackson has remained the leading brand among adolescent smokers since 1987.

Price elasticity estimates suggest that, if cigarette prices rose in real terms during the 1990s, the proportion of adolescents smoking should decrease. As Figure 1 shows, this did not happen in Australia in the early to mid-1990s. The failure of price increases to translate into reduced demand may be explained by several factors. First, as indicated above, the introduction of budget pack sizes and brands has undermined the effect of price increases, as they provide a low-cost cigarette to the price-sensitive smoker. There is evidence that adolescent cigarette smokers have adopted the strategy of moving to the budget cigarette. In 1990, 17 per cent of 12–15-year-olds smoked cigarettes in packs of 40, the largest and most economical pack available at the time. By the mid-1990s, both Philip Morris and Rothman had a budget pack of 20 in their respective brands, Peter Jackson and Holiday. These cigarettes were lightweight and had a considerably lower price per stick and per pack than the more standard packs of 20 (that is, Marlboro). In the middle of 1999, a packet of Holiday 20s cost $4.45, compared with $6.20 for a pack of Marlboro 20s. The introduction of the cheap pack of 20 was associated with an increase in the proportion of students smoking cigarettes in this pack size, from 10 per cent in 1990 to 24 per cent in 1999.

Another factor influencing the relationship between cigarette prices and demand is affordability. During the 1990s, adolescents...
have had access to increasing levels of pocket money, with a larger discretionary component making up their weekly allowance (Scollo 1998). A study conducted in the early 1990s showed that, while cigarette prices had increased between 1992 and 1994, this increase was not as large as the increase in adolescents' pocket money over this time (Chikritzhs et al. 1997). The study suggested that, despite the increases in cigarette prices, increases in pocket money meant that cigarettes were more affordable in 1994 than in 1992. Our own work has shown a strong relationship between smoking and the amount of pocket money ('the amount of money you have to spend on yourself') that adolescents receive each week. In 1996, current smokers reported having at least 25 per cent more pocket money than non-smokers did, and this was roughly the same as the amount spent on cigarettes per week (Hill et al. 1999). Thus, compared with their non-smoking peers, smokers have not had to forgo other purchases as a consequence of their smoking habit.

Excise on tobacco in Australia is now levied on a per stick basis. Understanding how this change impacts on adolescent smoking behaviours, and identifying factors that might work to circumvent its possible impact, are areas for research.

Trends in the purchase of cigarettes

Controlling young people's access to cigarettes by age restrictions on the purchase of the product is an established strategy for reducing their tobacco consumption. In Western Australia, the sale of cigarettes to those under 18 has been banned since 1917. Until the early 1990s, the legal age for purchasing cigarettes in all other Australian states and territories was 16. The legal age was raised to 18 in Victoria, Australian Capital Territory, Northern Territory, New South Wales and South Australia between 1991 and 1994. However, it was another five years before the two remaining states (Queensland and Tasmania) also raised the age to 18.

When the legal age in the majority of Australian jurisdictions was 16, over half of the 14–15-year-olds who were current smokers were purchasing cigarettes illegally. By 1996, when five of the seven jurisdictions had raised the legal age to 18, around one-third of 14- and 15-year-olds were illegally purchasing cigarettes. By 1999, when the legal age across all of Australia was 18, 24 per cent of 14- and 15-year-old smokers were still purchasing cigarettes illegally.

While raising the legal age to 18 has reduced the illegal sale of cigarettes to minors, the data show that simply introducing this legislation is not enough to stop all trade to minors. For this strategy to have an impact on adolescents' use of tobacco, legislation restricting the sale of tobacco to those under the age of 18 must be enforced with strong penalties attached to breaking the law. As part of their 1990 Tobacco Control Act, Western Australia substantially increased the penalties for individuals and companies selling cigarettes to adolescents under the age of 18 and embarked on a sustained campaign to enforce this regulation. This campaign led to a 68 per cent reduction in the number of retailers willing to sell cigarettes to people under the age of 18 (Mawkes et al. 1997). However, while reducing the illegal sale of tobacco is an important strategy in tobacco control, as adolescents obtain cigarettes through a number of avenues (especially friends and family members), this strategy by itself may have only limited impact on the prevalence of smoking among adolescents.

Conclusion

Each year, approximately 260,000 young Australians enter their adolescence, with a corresponding number leaving this phase of life. These new adolescents will face the same developmental challenges as their predecessors, and it is the goal of tobacco control programmes to ensure that they do not use tobacco to help face these challenges as their predecessors have done. The dynamic nature of membership in the group 'adolescents' means that the goal of reducing adolescent smoking can never be allowed to drop off the agenda of the community, teachers or governments. It also means that adequate resources need to be committed to tobacco control programmes on an ongoing basis.

References


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Young people in Australia are a minority in an ageing population, those aged 15–24 comprising just over 14 per cent (a drop of over 3 per cent in the last 20 years). Those from birth to 14 add just another 20 per cent (ABS 2001a). Young people are therefore struggling to remain part of a social policy agenda. Instead of being key players in any programme of social development, they are seen as social problems, and responses often focus on the problem (drugs, homelessness, early school leaving and unemployment, and so on) rather than on the broader needs of young people. In contrast, policies and programmes of the 1970s took a more universal approach to the effective socialisation of young people as Australian citizens (Irving et al. 1995:200–21).

It can be argued that the social and political response to young people in Australia falls somewhere between the lack of a consistent commitment to youth at best and social exclusion at worst.

Exclusion: Indigenous young people

Indigenous Australians are fewer, poorer, less well educated and more likely to come into contact with police or the prison system than other Australians. They comprise only 2 per cent of Australians but more of them are young (68 per cent are under 30), compared with the population as a whole (44 per cent). More than half live in Queensland (QLD) or New South Wales (NSW) and, while most live in urban areas, they form a larger proportion of the population of rural and remote areas than other Australians (ABS 2001b).

Thirty-two per cent of Indigenous males aged 18–24 have been arrested more than once in five years and a further 14.5 per cent have been arrested once (ABS 1999). Offences are often disorderly conduct, drinking in public or drink-driving. Indigenous young people are disproportionately represented among the prison population. Offences frequently include assault (24.4 per cent) and breaking and entering (14.7 per cent) (ABS 2001b). In 1996, Western Australia (WA) passed legislation requiring an adult or young person convicted of a third home burglary offence to be imprisoned for 12 months. The following year, the Northern Territory (NT) provided for fixed jail terms of 20 days for a first offence, 90 days for a second offence and 12 months for a third offence. Proponents of the law claimed that it was not racist as it applied equally to any offender. However, in WA, three-quarters of cases involved Aboriginal people. In both WA and the NT, petty property crimes are disproportionately committed by Aborigines (Healy 2000).

Mandatory sentencing attracted international attention in February 2000 when a 15-year-old Aboriginal youth from Groote Eylandt committed suicide in a Darwin juvenile detention centre. The United Nations secretary-general asked for a report from the UN Human Rights Commission. Article 37 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that imprisonment 'shall only be used as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time'. Under pressure, the Northern Territory Government replaced mandatory sentencing for juveniles with a system of community-based diversionary programmes funded by a $20 million Commonwealth package (Schulz 2001). The end for mandatory sentencing was foreshadowed when the NT Labor Chief Minister, Claire Martin, elected in August 2001, announced that the legislation would be repealed.

Many Aboriginal people were alienated from their own culture when they were placed in missions which worked for protection and assimilation by preaching Christianity and by schooling. In the twentieth century, assimilation was also attempted by moving Indigenous children to white foster families. Many children were forcibly removed; others were taken with the consent of their parents who were persuaded that this would give the children better opportunities in life. The process of fostering was pursued with varying levels of zeal related to resources and personal commitment. Those fostered had no opportunity to maintain family contact and they suffered immeasurably in their personal, emotional, psychological and cultural development. These

### Table 1: Aboriginal prisoners, 1998, and Indigenous youth in corrective institutions, 1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State/Territory</th>
<th>Aboriginals as % of Australian population</th>
<th>Aboriginals as % of all prisoners</th>
<th>Indigenous youth as % of youth in corrective institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>28.65</td>
<td>72.60</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>32.23</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>17.55</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qld</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>23.13</td>
<td>61</td>
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<td>NSW</td>
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<td>Vic</td>
<td>0.53</td>
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<td>ACT</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>12.79</td>
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<td>Tas</td>
<td>3.87</td>
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<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>18.84</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

outcomes became widely known with the publication of Bringing Them Home, a report by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission in 1997, which told the personal stories of these ‘stolen children’ so graphically that many parliamentarians were moved to tears. Public apologies were offered by the Governor-General and many state premiers but, significantly, not by the Australian Prime Minister.

Forcible removal is no longer part of policy. Where it is necessary for Indigenous young people to be taken into state care, minimum standards and protocols require the involvement of Indigenous care agencies and the placement of young people with carers from their own community. Yet there is evidence that this does not always work in practice. Maunders and others (1999:39-40) found that some forced removal was still occurring, that Aboriginal care workers felt that there was too much intervention and that decisions were still made on the basis of colour. Placements were still made with non-Aboriginal families, and even those with Aboriginal families were not always successful. Many young people discharged from care graduated to the adult correctional system.

The process of reconciliation has not yet produced a formal treaty or apology for past wrongs. But, as Palmer (1995:22) concluded in relation to an ethnographic project in Perth, Indigenous young people ‘are far from totally powerless victims who are losing their culture’. Indigenous people have become wary of schemes of welfare or development offered by white people. For example, it took several months of discussion and deliberation before Koori communities agreed to support the Commonwealth Youth Programme Diploma in Youth in Development Work in Melbourne.

Refugee and ethnic minority young people

In the 1990s it was estimated that approximately one million young people in Australia came from ethnic minority backgrounds (Zelinka 1995). In the first half of that decade, over 13,000 young people entered as refugees, mainly from the Middle East (Iraq, Afghanistan), Asia (Indonesia, Vietnam), Africa (particularly the Horn of Africa) and the former Yugoslavia (Guerra and White 1995). The trend continues. Current policies for dealing with those who arrive without valid visas are the subject of controversy. Road accidents and suicide involve significantly higher numbers of young men than young women (table 2). Most state road traffic authorities have instigated programmes to lower the toll among young people. In Victoria, the Transport Accident Commission has produced a series of community service videos to raise awareness among young people of common risky behaviour. VicRoads has initiated community training projects and some pilot research on the effect of group training.

A range of strategies to combat suicide have been introduced through the Youth Suicide Task Force. Many of these focus on raising awareness among teachers, youth workers, parents and others of the signs that young people may be considering suicide and on how to counsel and support those who have been identified.

| Table 2: Major causes of death of young people, 1997–98 (per 100,000) |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                 | Suicide 1997 | Suicide 1998 | Road traffic accident 1997 | Road traffic accident 1998 |
| Young men 15–24 yrs | 31  27 | 29  27 |
| Young women 15–24 yrs | 7  6 | 10  9 |
| Total            | 38  33 | 39  36 |

The use of drugs by young people is another issue of concern. Opinion is divided between the advocates of zero tolerance and those of harm minimisation. The former want strong penalties, strict enforcement, and (in some cases) minimal education and rehabilitation. The latter accept the inevitability of drug use by young people and advocate strategies for minimising harm, including the legalisation of soft drugs, safe injecting rooms and needle exchange services. Abuse of alcohol through excessive or ‘binge’ drinking is a way of life for many young people, including those still at school. Farringdon and others (2000) identified a
fine line between using alcohol to help have fun and losing control, and argued that young people's perceptions had to be incorporated into harm minimisation strategies.

**Keeping young people off the streets**

Australian society has long been threatened by young people in the streets. Since the late 1990s, shopping has been relocated to enclosed precincts or malls, which provide sheltered and inviting places for young people to congregate. Significantly, the creators of such facilities had little knowledge or perception of the needs of young people (White 2001), and groups 'hanging out' and meeting friends are often moved on by police or security services. In Queensland, police powers were extended in 2000 to enable them to move on young people in public spaces if they were liable to cause 'anxiety' to someone else (Spooner 2001). In some cases, moves to exclude young people from shopping centres constituted a breach of basic rights. It has been argued that the planning, design and management of public space needs to recognise the needs of young people and involve them (Crane and Dee 2001).

Homeless youth became a matter of human rights with the Burdekin Inquiry, conducted under the auspices of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC 1989). However, the number of homeless young people has continued to rise in the 1990s. Chamberlain and MacKenzie (1998:110) argued that, between 1991 and 1994, numbers doubled: from 40,000–55,000 to over 100,000. Factors promoting youth homelessness include family breakdown, economic hardship, physical or sexual abuse, and drug or alcohol dependency. State public housing policies often make it difficult for young homeless people to gain access to public housing, and programmes often rely on emergency shelters and community (family) placement. Strategies for early intervention and prevention focus on maintaining contact with schools

**Lack of commitment: Education, employment and obligation**

From the early 1980s to the early 1990s, the number of young people completing Year 12 of secondary school rose steadily, to peak at 77 per cent by 1992. Since then, the rate has declined (Dusseldorp Skills Forum 1999). The increased level of school retention was driven by high levels of unemployment among early school leavers (up to 23 per cent in 1983), the reduction of employment benefits for those under 18, means-tested educational allowances for those aged 16 and over, and revised curriculum and assessment in Year 12 (Irving et al. 1995).

Australia appears to be the only OECD country where school participation rates have fallen in the 1990s (Spearing 1999:8). This may be due to dissatisfaction with the school environment (teachers, peers or both), the desirability of technical college or apprenticeship options, the lack of customised opportunities, or family, financial or emotional difficulties. Some groups are more at risk of early leaving than others: Indigenous young people, refugees and recent arrivals, young mothers, offenders, people with learning difficulties, the disabled, the homeless, and those in the care of the state. The Dusseldorp Skills Forum (1999) argues that early school leaving results in a loss to individual, government and society and argues for a national youth commitment which would offer an entitlement of two or three years of fee-exempt education to the level of Year 12 or a TAFE certificate or trade qualification. This idea is based on policy options and pathways established in countries such as Denmark and Norway (Spearing 1999).

Lack of commitment to young people is further demonstrated by the fact that the idea of a 'youth guarantee' had found at least partial acceptance by a number of Australian governments by the late 1970s and early 1980s, only to be discarded with changes of government (Irving et al. 1995:244ff). This point was taken up once more by the Prime Minister's Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce (2001), which strongly recommended a national commitment including the completion of 12 years of schooling or equivalent.

Contemporary policy focuses not so much on guarantee as on obligation. The concept of 'mutual obligation' is interpreted by the Australian Government as a requirement that unemployed people show that they are actively seeking work, participating in an activity to improve their employability or making a contribution to the community in return for the payment of benefits. There are a number of options through which mutual obligation may be met: Intensive Assistance, Work for the Dole, and Community Development Employment are the most significant. Intensive assistance is restricted to those actually or potentially unemployed in the long term and is barred to those taking part in Work for the Dole or CDEP until they have completed the programme. They are still required to actively seek work. Dusseldorp (2001) noted that community-based jobs were mainly low skilled with little opportunity for on-the-job training.

**Youth rights, advocacy and participation**

Argument has been advanced for a Children and Young People's Commission, led by a commissioner with responsibility to protect and promote the rights, well-being and interests of children and young people (YACVic 2001). In fact, government rarely responds to young people as citizens in their own right, even though they may have passed the age of majority and obtained the right to vote. Benefits such as Youth Allowance, for study or job-seeking, are allocated in relation to a means test of parental income for people up to the age of 25 (raised from 22 by the current government).

The idea of setting up a commission is especially necessary because of the demise of peak bodies for youth at the federal and state levels. The termination of funding for the Australian Youth Policy Action Coalition (previously the Youth Affairs Council of Australia) ended almost 40 years of government support for a peak body which could research and advocate youth issues. The National Youth Round Table is an inadequate replacement, as its
members are selected by the minister and pursue only those topics supported by the minister and the servicing bureaucracy. In Victoria, the termination of almost 60 years of service by the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria and its predecessors was avoided only by a change of government in 1999.

Conclusion

Australian youth work strategies have a problem focus. Universities engaged in the professional preparation of youth workers impart values of development and empowerment to graduates who will work in problem-related contexts. It is encouraging to see the Commonwealth Youth Programme maintain a commitment to the inclusion and empowerment of young people and make development values central to its professional education programme, offered in partnership with over 26 universities and colleges. While young Australians will remain a minority, they do need policies to engage them and prepare them for a role in our future society.

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At the mercy of strangers: Ambiguous alliances between children and adults in Africa

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This article broadly suggests a framework that may be used to explain and address the root causes of child abuse and mistreatment in such activities as forced participation in adult-generated wars, labour, prostitution and forced early marriages occurring in many African communities. The outcome from the traumatising abuse of children is absence of peace and the planting of seeds of violence and conflict in the continent of Africa.

On the basis of personal observations and interactions with abused and traumatised children in East and Central African communities, it is argued here that child mistreatment is a multidimensional and interactive problem involving the multiple, rapidly changing social, cultural, political and economic environments in which the African child exists today.

Many effects and impacts become visible only in the long term, when abused children grow up and become the perpetrators of the same, if not worse, forms of abuse of their own or other children. Unless the root causes are addressed, and abused children allowed to be children again, initiatives for conflict prevention, development and peace building end up feeding into and strengthening the abusive systems.

Furthermore, if the resources and energy expended by the tens of thousands of child soldiers currently being used in wars across Africa could be harnessed to 'fight' for peace, Africa within no time could shift into a path of healing, recovery and development. We need a concerted effort to begin training and 'arming' children in Africa to fight for peace.

There is an urgent need for adults of goodwill, child-care agencies and the UN to rethink and devise new approaches that will ensure long-term peace and positive child growth and development.

Root causes of child mistreatment

In East and Central Africa, child mistreatment may be viewed as a multidimensional and interactive problem involving the child and the multiple environments in which the child lives. It is in these environments that child abuse is rooted. Depending on the needs of the adult population at given times, children are variously provided with the conditions for healthy positive growth and development or have their lives abused and destroyed. At present, war, civil conflicts, natural disasters and unprocessed trauma, hopelessness and anger are common in Angola, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Somalia, the Sudan and Uganda. Childhood has been denied to a majority of children and will eventually be destroyed unless African adults — and indeed the world — wake up to this reality.

Let us consider the two main environments that influence child growth and development in East and Central Africa.

The primary environment

The child's primary environment is composed of individuals or structures with whom or which the child has daily and ongoing contact: the people he or she lives with, home, school, church, and routine daily activities. Child development knowledge tells us that the most significant factor in a child's life is his or her relationship (attachment) to parents and/or guardians.

Within emerging African societies, the observable attachment is the mother—child relationship, because many fathers have not taken responsibility for the care of their children. On the contrary, in the cash economy the father's role of income earner seems to have played a role in turning children into labourers to supplement and/or bring income home, and in some cases into instruments of war. More and more people are striving — some greedily — to increase their share of economies that are providing less and less. In the past, the extended family or community would usually intervene when an adult at the primary level was incapable of caring for a child. But, for families in transition today, this option is less readily available.

When primary caregivers are abusive, especially while the child is developing predictable patterns of behaviour that will influence later aspects of life, the consequences are long-lasting. Poverty, competition for resources, suppression of women, loss of family support networks, and ethnic differences in rural and urban economies have led to a range of both physical and psychological abuses of children by their primary caregivers or 'protectors'. Our work with abused children in Central and East Africa has taught us that many of those seeking or needing psychosocial assistance have developed enormous anger, hatred, fear, guilt, hopelessness or confusion, and indeed feel very bad about their situation in the world.

For example, thousands of street children in the cities and towns have developed a pattern of expecting pain or injury. There is also a clear pattern of older abused children, in their desire to keep the needed primary attachment, developing the confusing tendency of wanting to care for the abusive parents and/or guardians and engaging in activities that serve to meet those adults' needs. Providing care for younger siblings within the family also demonstrates secondary assistance to parents. However, for many such children it is only a matter of time before a breaking-point is reached and they become ready recruits for crime or rebel groups — most of which are led by formerly abused children — and the cycle continues.
The secondary environment

This larger environment consists of the broad ideological, institutional, religious, ethnic and economic patterns and systems in a given culture or sub-culture. Though the main driving forces are many and may be difficult to determine, they are important because they inform the attitudes and perceptions that individuals hold towards children.

One of the most disturbing phenomena in this category is the current widespread use of children in Africa as instruments of war and civil conflicts. This takes place despite the various UN-backed conventions, agreements, laws, charters and protocols for preventing the military recruitment of children. Why do adults continue to use children in these wars? Could the same reasons explain why, in the last 10-15 years in Africa, not a single rebel war has been fought without using children? Evidently, for rebels and other fighting groups and governments, the stakes for not using child soldiers are high. The ready availability of small arms and light weapons clearly increases the likelihood of warring factions using children.

But, at the same time, the majority of child soldiers are emotionally and physically deprived children, who are easy and inexpensive to program and manipulate. In addition to deprivation, such children carry unprocessed anger, confusion and need for revenge – the latter in easier reach now that they can carry a gun – all emanating from mistreatment by caregivers in the primary environment.

We can certainly assert that, unless civil conflicts and the accompanying shipment and stockpiling of small arms are stopped, children already frustrated by abuse and mistreatment will be psychologically prepared for recruitment by the warring factions. At this stage and for this generation of children, peace becomes elusive.

When reference is made to ‘children and war’ in Africa, the image is usually one of child soldiers or child victims of armed conflict. Yes, it is shocking that children are fighting on the front lines, blown up by mines or falling victim to famine or disease in refugee camps. But open warfare is only part of a much broader picture of violence against children at the secondary environment level. Thousands of other children, many of them orphaned, struggle to survive in close-to-battlefield conditions on the streets of Africa’s cities – from Nairobi to Monrovia to Luanda – begging, cleaning car windows, selling their bodies, and numbing their inner pain by inhaling chemical solvents or glue. Guns, knives and fights are chilling parts of daily life, compounded by drug addiction, drug-related crime and HIV/AIDS, drawing in ever-younger children.

These violent environments contain the seeds of future conflict. All of what are now termed ‘complex human emergencies’ have their roots deep in long-running psychological, cultural, social, political and economic crises. Even those disputes that appear most surprising have clear antecedents. For instance, the outbreak of violence and genocide in Rwanda in 1994 came as less of a surprise to those who lived there, or who have since been patient enough to listen to the internally wounded survivors and perpetrators, given the sharp psychic trans-generational divide between the Hutu and the Tutsi. As rehabilitation takes place, the underlying issues are yet to be addressed.

Such pressures built up over generations are more often than not passed on to children, leading to a volatile situation in which underlying tensions erupt to the surface and the seeds of the next cycle of violence are planted. At times, what goes on in the name of reconstruction and development does not deal with the invisible destruction.

Pointing out the chronic nature of many crises is not a counsel of despair. Rather, what it does suggest is that these underlying issues need to be identified and processed so that children are not further harmed in the context of policies or programmes designed to provide peace, care and protection – and so that children of future generations will not live in a constant state of war.

Rescuing at-risk, abused and traumatised children

Can foster parents, sponsors or local and international humanitarian agencies help our children? From the foregoing we can conclude that abused and mistreated children live at the mercy of adults holding misguided values about children or very little knowledge of what children need for appropriate growth and development.

Children who survive wars and other forms of abuse are likely to be suffering trauma, resulting in severe psychosocial problems. However, it is clear that not all children are affected in the same way or to the same degree. The factors that determine the extent to which children are traumatised include their resilience, family support, the types and duration of the traumatising event(s), and the nature of the abuser or oppressor.

To break this cycle of violence and bring about healing, conflict transformation and sustainable peace and reconciliation, we need community-based interventions that address the identified problems at both primary and secondary levels. The bottom line is that each and every child deserves a safe and supportive environment. To achieve this, intervention must include legal, psychological, economic, political and spiritual aspects.

Suggested interventions

Incorporating some of the following suggestions in programmes by local and international agencies would go a long way in reducing negative impacts:

- Trauma processing and counselling – a first and significant step for children, and one that we believe also has positive effects on adults.
- Strengthened procedures to monitor and prosecute war crimes – current international standards for protecting children must be vigorously enforced, adult offenders punished and other action taken to stall the momentum of violence.
- A ban on the manufacture, use, stockpiling and sale of anti-personnel landmines, and stronger
restrictions on small arms sale/acquisition – in many cases, beneficiaries of the trade in these items could be approached with alternative trade activities which are profitable but have a positive impact.

- A clearer, stronger focus on policies that will address the primary causes of conflict, such as poverty, destitution and human distress – this will require support for long-term economic development and empowerment for peace among adults and children.
- Educating children and nurturing their energy to promote a culture of peace, dialogue and understanding within and between families, different ethnic groups and communities in transition.
- A positive, restorative approach in dealing with at-risk and abusive families – the focus here is on enlisting greater cooperation from parents and caregivers (who themselves may have been abused children), in order to develop desirable, effective strategies of child-rearing and to promote an optimal balance between the child's needs and the parents' child-rearing abilities.
- Initiatives to provide substitute 'family' or 'community' units for children who need them – different children and communities will have different needs that may be supported differently. For example, establishment of community-run group homes to take care of the thousands of child heads of household who may have lost their roots as result of war, HIV/AIDS or other disasters; or encouraging adoption where the child needs a more permanent, stable family arrangement (there are still many capable and caring couples in Africa looking for children to nurture; new efforts, policies and laws are needed to facilitate their coming together).

**Conclusion**

In attempting to rescue our children from violence and abuse and to create peace for them, we must understand that the breakdown of the family system in Africa at the primary level is the starting point for their being mistreated and/or abused. Without proper interventions and treatment where necessary, such children are susceptible to growing up as criminals or combatants, to mistreating others. Governments and adults of goodwill, with support from the UN and other agencies, must be compelled to formulate laws and policies that will ensure that children grow up in non-abusive environments, despite the challenges of poverty and changing family systems.

The international community may indeed wish to consider whether, in the future global village, it wants to do business with 'damaged' adults and hoodlums, or with a healed and forward-looking African leadership. It is our hope that African children can once again start to dream of the day when they will become teachers, doctors, farmers – in a word, leaders or citizens supporting their communities and the Africa of the future.

**Note**

The opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily represent World Vision policy.
Early marriage of girls in Niger

Sarah Lendon, UNICEF Australia

Niger has the third-highest rate of infant mortality in the world and it is the worst place in the world to be a mother, with 12 out of 1,000 women losing their lives during childbirth. One of the major contributing factors is early marriage. I heard one girl's story during a recent visit to UNICEF Australia/AusAID's project in Niger.

Sadi's story

I met many extraordinary people in Niger, but the person who sticks in my mind was a 15-year-old wife and mother in Maradi. I will call her Sadi. When I met Sadi in her village, she had her one-year-old baby tied to her back. The little baby was unhappy and kept crying, despite Sadi's rocking. I held the baby and looked into her little eyes. They were red and clogged with infection.

With the help of a translator, Sadi told us her story. She was married at the age of 13 to a man she had never met and who was much older than her. Every night she would run away to the bush to hide from her husband. But each time his friends would find her and force her to return. She was her husband's property and there was no escape. By the age of 14 she was pregnant; luckily, she was one of the few girls to survive the birth without injury. I asked Sadi about her sisters and friends. She said that, like her, they had all left school to get married at the age of 13 or 14. And that Sunday, her youngest sister, at the age of 12, was also getting married.

The case of Sadi is just one example of the practice of early marriage, which is common across the world, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. In Niger, 70 per cent of girls aged 15-19 are married (UN Population Division 2000). Early marriage often results in early motherhood and half the girls in Niger have their first child by the age of 16.

Early marriage: Cause and context

Poverty is one of the major factors underpinning early marriage. Where poverty is acute, a young girl may be regarded as an economic burden and her marriage to a much older man is a family survival strategy. In West Africa, a recent UNICEF study shows that economic hardship is encouraging a rise in early marriage, even among some population groups that do not usually practise it (Assani 2000). Men are postponing marriage because of lack of resources, and parents have become anxious about the danger of their daughters becoming pregnant outside marriage. Thus, any early opportunity for marriage may be seized upon.

Early marriage is seen as one way to ensure that a girl is 'protected', or placed firmly under male control; that she is submissive to her husband and works hard for her in-laws' household; that the children she bears are 'legitimate'; and that bonds of affection between couples do not undermine the family unit (Caldwell and Caldwell 1977). Parents may genuinely feel that their daughter will be better off and safer with a regular male guardian. In conflict-torn northern Uganda, for example, some families marry their young daughters to militia members in order to defend family honour or secure 'protection' for themselves and the girl (Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International 1997).

Every year, around 40 million births – one-third of the world's total – go unregistered (Dow 1998). Without a birth certificate, a child has no defence against age-related rights abuses. In countries where the law on legal minimum age at marriage is ignored, the inadequacy of birth registration systems reinforces early marriages. Similarly, thousands of marriages go unregistered, depriving women of their rights in marriage, including their rights over property.

Impact of early marriage on children

It is clear that the impact on girls is wide-ranging. Within the context of UNICEF's framework for action – the Convention on the Rights of the Child – the key concerns are the denial of childhood and youth, the loss of freedom, and the denial of psychosocial and emotional well-being, reproductive health and educational opportunity.

Early marriage also has implications for the well-being of families and for society as a whole. Where girls are uneducated and ill-prepared for their roles as mothers and contributors to society, there are costs to be borne at every level: from the individual household to the nation as a whole. Three key areas of impact are pregnancy and childbirth; infant and early childhood care; and denial of education.

Pregnancy and childbirth

The risks of early pregnancy and childbirth are well documented: increased risk of dying, increased risk of premature labour, complications during delivery, low birthweight, and a higher chance that the newborn will not survive (Senderowitz 1995). Pregnancy-related deaths are the leading cause of mortality for 15-19-year-old girls worldwide. Mothers in this age group are at least twice as likely to die in pregnancy as women aged 20-24. Girls under age 15 are five times as likely to die as women in their twenties (WHO 2000). The main causes are haemorrhaging, sepsis, pre-eclampsia and obstructed labour.

For every woman who dies in childbirth, 30 more suffer injuries, infection and disabilities, which usually go untreated and...
some of which are lifelong. High rates of vesico-vaginal fistula are clearly identified with marriage and childbearing in the 10-15 age group. In one study in Niger, 88 per cent of women with fistula were in this age group at marriage (UNICEF 1998). Mothers whose pelvis and birth canal are not fully developed often endure very prolonged labour (WHO 2000). Unless the mother receives emergency obstetric care, relentless pressure from the baby’s skull can damage the birth canal, causing breakages in the wall, allowing uncontrollable leakage from the bladder into the vagina. Fistula conditions are permanent without surgical interventions to re-seal tissues (Adamson 1996). Such intervention may not be sought and may be hard to access. The prevalence of fistula disabilities is not fully known, but WHO estimates that there are two million women living with fistula and an additional 50,000–100,000 cases every year, many of which go untreated (UNFPA 2000). A girl with the fistula condition is usually ostracised as unclean, and is often divorced. In Niger, fistula is the reason for 63.3 per cent of all divorces (Assani 2000).

Infant and early childhood care

The health problems linked to early marriage not only affect the pregnant mother and unborn child, but also continue after childbirth. Evidence shows that infant mortality among very young mothers is higher – sometimes two times higher – than among older mothers (UN 1989). There is also a stronger likelihood of low infant birthweight among adolescent mothers. This is mainly associated with poor maternal nutrition, reinforcing the point that adolescents are 'unready' for childbirth. If a mother is under 18, her baby's chance of dying in the first year of life is 60 per cent higher than that of a baby born to a mother older than 19 (UNICEF 1994). The immaturity and lack of education of a young mother undermines her capacity for nurture. In a forum conducted by Save the Children Fund, this issue was one of the main reasons given by Nepali children for avoiding early marriage (Save the Children UK 2000).

Denial of education

Early marriage seriously denies girls of school age their right to education. The connection between the number of years of a girl’s schooling and the postponement of marriage is firmly established by demographic and fertility studies. On average, women with seven or more years of education marry four years later and have two fewer children than those with no education (UNFPA 1990).

Taking action on early marriage

A range of policies and programmes is needed to reduce early marriage and its impact. Actions to fulfil or restore the rights of those already married need to go hand in hand with preventive actions aimed at the wider community. The scope of UNICEF activities is wide and includes: support for the physical well-being of girls; education for empowerment and intellectual development; support for psychological well-being and emergency assistance; support for improved economic status; legal change; and advocacy (UNICEF 2001). One example of programmes that focus on prevention is UNICEF Australia’s project in Niger.

The Early Marriage of Girls Project

The UNICEF Australia Early Marriage of Girls Project in Niger began in December 1999, with support from the Australian Government’s overseas aid program. It aims to increase the average age of marriage of girls and to increase the number of girls receiving an education. These goals are being achieved by working with traditional chiefs and religious leaders, who organise large gatherings in the villages to discuss early marriage and its serious consequences. The plays, songs, debates and speeches are broadcast over national radio and filmed by a video crew. Two videos have been produced: one for government officials and other decision makers, the other to promote discussions at the community level. The project also advocates a change of the practice and law within the government.

Progress to date

- A memorandum of understanding was signed in April 2000 between 220 traditional chiefs of Niger and UNICEF, whereby the chiefs agreed to use all of the communication resources given to them to inform, sensitize and stimulate behavioural change in order to reduce the practice of early marriage of girls. The chiefs now understand the benefits of marriage postponement for girls and use their leadership and influence to encourage a change in practice.
- Twenty social mobilisation gatherings have been held in key villages, bringing together a total of 300 villages. These sessions included plays, songs and debates performed by schoolchildren, and speeches by the high chief of the region, a religious leader representing an association of 70 religious leaders, a representative of a human rights NGO, and the director of the Ministry of Social Development. These gatherings were broadcast on national radio and filmed by a local video crew. The gatherings inform parents and young people currently complicit in the practice of early marriage so that they are aware of its true implications and are empowered to resist it.
- Two videos have been produced showing the traditional chiefs' campaign to prevent the early marriage of girls and to encourage their education. These videos are now being shown in the villages which the campaign has not yet reached.
- The Minister of Justice has started an inter-ministerial committee which will address the problem and make recommendations to the Prime Minister of Niger. This committee will promote legal reform in line with internationally agreed human rights standards on marriage.
Conclusions

The situation in Niger highlights the problem of early marriage, an issue faced by girls across the world and one that impairs the realisation and enjoyment of many of their basic human rights. Through projects like the one described here, girls such as Sadi and their families can be empowered to postpone marriage until they are physically and mentally ready.

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Developing democratic consciousness among children in Bangladesh

Akiko Fraval, Save the Children Australia

In Tangail district in Bangladesh, 33,993 children recently set an example to adults when they participated in the Union Child Council Election in February 2001. This child-oriented event, supported by Save the Children Australia (SCA) in collaboration with local NGOs, is formed by children aged 6–14 and is a fully fledged election, similar to those for the local or national government.

Unlike the country's general elections, which often involve conflict and violence among rival political parties, the children demonstrated themselves capable of challenging the status quo and creating an open, fair and democratic election in an atmosphere of tolerance and respect for others. The participation of children in such an activity at grassroots level can be a valuable resource that contributes to positive energy and enthusiasm to improve the lives of people in Bangladesh.

How did SCA come to support child elections?

The world in which children in Bangladesh live is not always friendly or safe. A relatively high number of them are living in especially difficult circumstances, which involve not only lack of basic health and education services but also additional forms of deprivation, including abuse, neglect and discrimination, particularly among girls given in early marriage, working children and commercial sex workers. There is still a lack of widespread understanding and awareness of child rights, and children are expected to follow adults in absolute obedience (Shishu Adhikar Sangiog 2001).

In recent years, SCA has been active in developing its advocacy focus, following the standards set by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The programme has become increasingly child-focused, in the sense that children's needs and interests are central and problems are considered from their perspective. Their participation in community-based development activities has been particularly encouraged, becoming a key element in creating greater freedom of expression and association, and a great influence on the decision-making process among children.

The Union Child Council Election, an integral part of the Child Access to Rights through Development (CARD) Project, is one example of the effort to provide more open and stable environments in which all children can foster curiosity, freedom and democratic values through a process of learning by doing. Their integration into the democratic system is a precondition for human resource development - today's children are tomorrow's adults.

The CARD Project

The CARD Project, in collaboration with eight partner NGOs, started in July 1999 in five sub-districts of Tangail. Its purpose is to provide children with more opportunities to build on their own abilities. Through organising a wide variety of groups and activities, they gain an awareness of their rights and learn about democracy.

The overall goal of the project is to influence community attitudes and activities through children's participation in children's institutions, in such a way as to improve the lives of about 42,000 children aged 6–14 years. In particular, the formation of Shishu Parishads (Child Councils) has been encouraged, giving children more opportunities to learn about their rights, to play and to develop their talents, confidence and skills in leadership and democratic decision making.

At the end of 2000, there were 1,400 Shishu Parishads (700 for boys and 700 for girls), with a total membership of 38,340 (18,686 girls and 19,654 boys). Interested children from the nearby villages are constantly seeking support to form new parishads. Six local NGOs have also asked for help in expanding the CARD Project activities in their working areas. As a consequence of the children's involvement, the participation of their families, institutions and communities has also gradually increased. This in turn provides adults with opportunities to play a part in encouraging public discussion, and to learn about leadership, social responsibility and civil duty.

There are four separate, but very much interdependent, components of planning and implementation. Each is essential to the holistic approach on which the project is premised.

Political and social involvement

Children develop solidarity, leadership and negotiation skills through participation in the Shishu Parishads, and SCA promotes leadership training that helps them to become more active, competent and confident. For example, the children of FRIDAY (a partner NGO) organised an innovative event during Child Rights Week 2000 called Face to Face Program between Children and Local Leaders, in which local leaders, government officials, school headmasters, and leaders of the ruling and opposition political parties were invited to discuss with children various child rights issues. Children acted as volunteers, referees and even judges, expressing freely and spontaneously their opinions in the presence of adults.
Sports, recreation and cultural pursuits

All activities ensure that children better enjoy their rights to leisure, recreation and access to information through participation in various activities, including sporting tournaments and cultural competitions, using libraries and publishing children's magazines. Tangible achievements include: the successful introduction of girls cricket, with 28 regular teams now operating; the provision of sports materials by AusAID, including footballs and accessories for cricket as well as indoor games; the establishment of libraries in 118 primary schools, supported by the Canadian High Commission; and training for child journalists.

With enthusiasm in generating new ideas and planning, trained child journalists are now regularly publishing newsletters which include such topics as local news, poems and interviews with freedom fighters. They have also established child press clubs, with the support of local journalists from the national dailies, and submit their news items to the local dailies and a weekly magazine.

These types of CARD Project activities have become models for other organisations. For example, Grameen Bank, the world's leading micro-credit organisation, has shown great interest in introducing similar activities among the children of its clients.

Health and child development awareness raising

Children and adults, including parents, local teachers and selected community leaders, are given opportunities to learn about the UNCRC in relation to the specific health and development needs of children. Regular workshops discuss such issues as: health and nutrition for mothers; psychology; adolescent family life education; UNCRC for mothers; health and nutrition for children; and UNCRC for children. Modules developed by SCA have been used for conducting the workshops, and are regularly updated in accordance with learning from the ongoing activities.

Some children of the CARD Project were also able to participate in and contribute to the People's Health Assembly 2000, held near Dhaka City in December 2000 with 3,000 delegates from 94 countries. In concurrent workshops, the children had the opportunity to discuss child health problems with participants from different countries as well as with ministers of the Bangladesh Government. For instance, at a workshop on Children Access to Health Rights, a child leader of the Zila Shishu Parishad read case studies that had been developed with other child leaders. Thirty-four participants from different countries analysed these case studies and later accepted some of the recommendations of the workshop, in which the Shishu Parishad leaders actively participated. One of the child leaders was also selected on behalf of Bangladesh to plant trees on the premises on the concluding day of the assembly.

Identity and education rights

Children are encouraged to learn about the UNCRC through activities such as organising a school-based debate on child rights issues; organising rallies and campaigns to lessen early marriage as well as to encourage parents to enable their children to remain at school; and coordinating meetings between Union Shishu Parishads and local elected bodies (LEBs). Since the name and reputation of the Shishu Parishads have become widely known, community leaders and LEB representatives have been keen to provide necessary support. Shishu Parishads and LEBs are working together to develop programmes motivating parents to register the birth of their children, and to make lists of drop out students and children not attending school that are utilised by partner NGO staff to meet those children, their guardians and the school authorities. These programmes have been successful and school enrolment in the year 2000 was 30 per cent higher than in the previous year.

The CARD Project, which will continue until the end of June 2002, has been an effective way to make children more vocal in their rights and to teach them leadership qualities and democratic values. Children have welcomed the project and the Child Councils because, through them, they are encouraged to go to school, to learn about nutrition, hygiene, and early child marriage, and to develop friendships through playing various games. They strongly agree that the participation of parents and communities should be encouraged so that adults can also learn about child rights issues, including the effects of early child marriage and corporal punishment.

Union Shishu Parishad election: February 2001

One of the highlights, and perhaps the most exciting event, of the CARD Project is the Union Shishu Parishad (Child Council) Election, which takes place every two years. The 1996 parliamentary elections in Bangladesh and the local government elections generated such enthusiasm among the children that they began playing election games, acting as chairperson, giving speeches and casting votes. SCA decided to institutionalise this process as a social activity that would encourage respect for others' opinions and nourish civic values and democratic practice among and by children. It has also created an opportunity for children to voice their needs to the adult community and to contribute their ideas to developing a just society.

The last Union Child Council Election was held on 16 February 2001, when the leaders of nine child councils were elected through direct voting by a total of 33,993 members. The media, including CNN, BBC, daily newspapers and international news agencies, were invited to cover the election, and they observed enthusiastic children lining up for hours to cast their votes. Using 47 schools and colleges with 194 booths as voting centres, all activities were conducted by members of the Election Commission, including polling officers who are often graduates of previous child councils.

What is unique about this election is that the children manage the whole process. For example, the 'Election Norms' published by the Election Commission state that no trouble should be allowed during a candidate's election campaign. In addition, no political, religious, family, economic or social influence is permitted; no posters or gates are allowed; no candidates are to receive help from any adults or graduates of the Child Council; no monetary
subscription can be accepted; candidates must not entertain any persons involved in the electioneering process; and only bicycles can be used for election canvassing. The children also invite the Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA), a nationwide, non-partisan citizens coalition, to monitor the election. Prior to the last election, FEMA nominated graduates of child councils as an invigilator group and provided 94 boys and girls with training. By following a code of rules, the children are able to learn about democratic elections without bullets, bombs and black money, and without following the example of national elections that often mean violence, chaos and vote rigging.

During the last election campaign, candidates showed their motivation in developing core council activities (education, health and environment, sports, literature and culture, and information and communication). In particular, they expressed their commitment to preventing child marriage. Furthermore, 83 children's theatre groups held 540 performances on the eve of the election, to raise awareness of democracy and the participation of children. At Sthalokashi village, the children of the 'Blooming Rose' Child Council performed a drama on 'early marriage, child's opinion and its bad effects on the child', demonstrating to adults the disadvantages of early marriage.

Through the Union Child Council Election, the children showed how democratic, free, fair and violence-free elections, which all citizens deserve, can be possible. It may also have been a timely event, since a general election in Bangladesh will be held in October 2001.

Conclusion

There are outstanding development challenges in Bangladesh. Its population of 127 million (the eighth largest in the world) shoulders immense problems, characterised by poverty, over population and frequent natural disasters. Islam (1999) states that the political system is unstable and that the army has a significant direct and indirect role in preserving and protecting an authoritarian regime. Establishing well-functioning, democratic political systems seems a critical challenge.

Children in Bangladesh have started learning about democratic freedoms and taking more social opportunities. It is hoped that this will contribute substantially to more equitable development and become a model to encourage the participation of all citizens, including women, children, and disabled, indigenous and religious minority people. Indeed, this kind of child-organised democratic and participatory governance has many lessons for adults.

References


Lifeskills and HIV/AIDS education for Mekong youth

Robert Bennoun and Prudence Borthwick, UNICEF-EAPRO, Bangkok

Mekong school kids skill up in Kunming

Picture a generic conference room in a generic hotel in downtown Kunming. Tables have been pushed back to leave the centre of the room free for a bunch of excited teenage kids, who are forming a circle, then leaning back, then leaning back some more, then getting into a sitting position, then forming themselves into a big sitting circle, each sitting on the knee of the person behind them who is sitting on the knee of the person behind them who is sitting on the - then 25 kids collapse in laughter on the floor. You got it - it's an energiser activity, feared by adults, loved by kids. But it's not all fun and games at the Mekong Regional Children's Forum. The kids are getting ready to put in some hard work.

What's the Vietnamese for lifeskills? What's the Lao? What's the Chinese? What's the Thai? The young people repeat the phrases loudly. 'Lifeskills' is an instructional approach to behavioural change that combines social and thinking skills, developed by social scientists over the last three decades. This approach has been widely promoted by UNICEF and other agencies as an alternative to the knowledge-based educational programmes used in the early years of the AIDS epidemic. The knowledge-based approach was demonstrated to be ineffective in changing risk behaviour, while lifeskills had been used successfully in a number of areas, such as youth violence and substance abuse. Over the past few years, a great deal of work has gone into using lifeskills in HIV prevention programmes, often in combination with peer education.

Lifeskills training programmes

In Southeast Asia, lifeskills training has been widely used by organisations like the Thai Red Cross and observed to have a positive effect on young people engaging in risk activities. Through UNICEF support, lifeskills programmes have been developed in many of the Mekong countries, like Vietnam, Myanmar and Lao People's Democratic Republic. In Thailand, the Ministry of Education maintains that a lifeskills approach has now been integrated across curricula as part of educational reforms aimed at bringing about child-centred learning. As the forum revealed, scaling up lifeskills programmes is not without problems. Lifeskills training may be affected by the attitudes and beliefs of the trainers and of the organisations within which they work. Timing, duration and follow-up of instruction are also an issue. Education departments in developing countries are naturally concerned to address basic issues of literacy and numeracy before psychosocial skills. One of the challenges in scaling-up is to retain quality and depth in instruction. And, while it is important to move beyond reciting AIDS facts parrot-style, it is also important to retain a focus on HIV/AIDS.

In an alcove at the back is an exhibition of the peer education work from each of the four participating countries. The Chinese kids have done a lot of health promotion around smoking, the Vietnamese have drawn large scary posters on AIDS, and the Lao kids display their drawings and the UNICEF Lao textbooks and posters on HIV/AIDS and lifeskills. The Thai kids have a fine photo display of school activities on drugs and HIV: stage performances, marches, sporting events, visiting people with HIV, and participating in overnight camps on drug prevention themes.

Mekong Forum

The Mekong Regional Children’s Forum for Students in Border Areas has been organised by the Yunnan School-based Health Education Programme Office with the Health Minority Group, Yunnan PRA Network, funded by AusAID with assistance from UNICEF. Participants are from China, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam. Each country team has a leader from the national/provincial education department, a resource person, two core teachers and/or trainers and six middle-school students, selected by the education department from schools in border areas. Mandarin interpreters accompany each delegation.

The aim of the forum is for student peer educators and core trainers to share, learn and exchange strategies, methods and activities developed in various school health education environments, particularly in areas of HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and drug prevention. Drugs emerge as a major theme for the forum, but whether this is because of personal experience or omnipresent media campaigns on drug abuse is not clear. HIV is there too, usually rated second in importance to drugs. Over the duration of the workshop I try to assess the level of their understanding of HIV. On the first day, the kids do an information, education and communication (IEC) workshop with me. Their homework is to write or illustrate stories on HIV or drugs.

The Chinese kids tend to dramatic love stories where plots develop with rapidity: 'Melin became depressed [after her boyfriend dumps her for no reason]. She began to drink and smoke and use drugs. She contracted HIV. Her boyfriend met her again: "I will always love you and want to be your friend." ' In their stories, truanting leads to drug use, waitressing leads to sex work and any kind of sex leads to HIV.

The Lao kids are into relationships and are very strong on realistic dialogue.
Another is one of the few verging on autobiographical, with a AIDS. Care parents or other family members situations- getting drunk, commercial sex- but anyone depicted While health departments tend to be in the forefront in recognising transmission but the moment of testing. They show the risk want to be tested too.

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counselling training for teachers (including grief and loss counselling for kids). HIV/AIDS prevalence, such as camps for HIV-affected families, interactive Cambodian video for young men, is a good example after a 13 years, when he was briefly launched on Australian television screens. Fear tactics of this sort have been abandoned throughout the region as policy makers have come to understand the negative impact of such campaigns on both prevention and care goals. Unfortunately, everyone from ad campaign directors to village headmen seems to fall into the fear trap initially. Again, lessons learnt need to be shared between government ministries as much as anywhere else. While health departments tend to be in the forefront in recognising and implementing effective health promotion strategies, education departments can lag behind in this area.

It is not surprising that the Thai kids have the deepest understanding of HIV. For some of them, HIV has been lived, not learnt. Two of them are from Thailand’s most heavily affected areas, where nearly one in three of their school friends have lost parents or other family members to AIDS. One Year 9 student describes herself as ‘HIV affected’: she has lost both parents to AIDS. Care and support of people with HIV is an issue to which they are all deeply committed, but the impact of living through the epidemic shows in their understanding of prevention. As well, the schools they attended were part of UNICEF’s Child Friendly Schools Program, with specially targeted activities for areas of high HIV/AIDS prevalence, such as camps for HIV-affected families, counselling training for teachers (including grief and loss counselling) and lifeskills training for kids.

In the Thai stories, the focus is not on the moment of transmission but the moment of testing. They show the risk situations - getting drunk, commercial sex - but anyone depicted as testing positive is noted to have had this behaviour for a long time, for years. One story is about payday for construction workers. Another is one of the few verging on autobiographical, with a bunch of teenagers sneaking off to go to a karaoke bar behind their parent’s backs. The girls are spotted at the last minute by relatives and have to go home but the two boys go in. Later, one of the boys’ best friends tests positive and he is scared enough to want to be tested too.

The interesting thing about this story is that it posits the kids as potentially sexually active themselves, with their peers, just school kids, village kids together. What if they had not been interrupted? What if they had gone to the pub together as a foursome? Might they have had sex? This is certainly the current trend in the sexual behaviour of Thai youth. Casual sex now is with friends, not sex workers. HIV education has to reorient itself to this new reality.

The forum programme is intense: the kids go from sessions on determinants for behaviour change to how to carry out peer education on drugs, HIV and STIs. One problem is that, in most of their schools, sex education is still not completely accepted. The children can learn how to discuss condom use with their friends, but back in school they will not be able to distribute condoms and may have difficulty even in ‘promoting’ condom use without being seen as encouraging promiscuity.

Schools in the region (and beyond) generally employ a ‘moralistic’ approach to sexual activity in school-aged children. Morality was a problem in the workshop in terms of pre­empting the lifeskills approach. Instead of weighing up the pros and cons of certain behaviours and making a rational decision, a ‘just say no’ attitude prevailed. This meant that the lifeskills ‘package’ being offered did not fully incorporate harm reduction strategies.

One resource team considered it unacceptable to do a transmission exercise listing various forms of sexual activities, in order to select the ones in which body fluids containing HIV were transmitted. They could only accept an exercise where all body fluids were listed and the fluids that transmitted HIV identified. Another person thought that passing round a condom for the boys’ best friends tests positive and he is scared enough to want to be tested too.

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Components of lifeskills training programmes

For lifeskills education to have an impact in reducing HIV infection among young people, it must incorporate practical harm reduction measures regarding condom use and safe needle/ drug/substance use. This needs to be addressed in the future, in terms of advocating the acceptance of a minimum level of harm reduction (for example, teachers supporting kids knowing at least where and how to get condoms, what they look like and how they are used), possibly through involvement of national AIDS committees.

Another feature of the training given by teachers was that they used scenarios which pitted the individual student against his/her friends, which, given the importance of peers to adolescents, may be difficult to sustain. A greater focus on exercises for changing students’ collective group behaviour/thinking/norms would be helpful for the future. Snooker, the interactive Cambodian video for young men, is a good example of this group approach.
Future challenges

Much of the running on HIV has been done by health departments. It is only recently that education departments have shown a similar level of interest and investigation. Yunnan Provincial Education Commission has taken a big step forward in organising the forum. More work needs to be done to bring education departments and schools on board, to make sure that the lifeskills they teach really are the ones that save lives. It is to be hoped that the forum is a step in that direction, one supported by the advocacy efforts of national AIDS committees, health departments and multilateral agencies.

Another challenge is that, for the kids from Laos, Vietnam and China, knowledge of real people with HIV is extremely limited, due to the low visibility of the epidemic in their communities. The resourceful Dr Liu Wei managed to secure four video players so that the kids could watch 'With Hope and Help' videos from Laos, Vietnam, Thailand and China. This meant that each kid was able to watch and hear HIV-positive people from his/her own country speak about their experiences. The preliminary evaluation results suggest that the videos' message was one of the most memorable: that people with HIV/AIDS are not bad people, they're just people.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the young people learnt a lot. They were skilled up as lifeskills peer educators. Many of them appeared to gain in confidence during the course of the workshop. While initially only a few took part and the teachers and resource people ran many of the games and exercises, by the end of the forum many more young people were leading group activities. By the end, they were able to design peer education projects for their schools. The Thai students designed one on truancy reduction, while the Lao, Chinese and Vietnamese students designed HIV and drug use prevention projects. The sophistication of their approach was apparent in that the projects began with risk assessment of their schoolmates' behaviour in relation to drugs and HIV.

But the proof of the pudding is in the eating. On their return home, they are to implement projects: to assess needs and conduct one-to-one 'counselling' and learning activities to educate their peers. In some cases, they may need more training themselves, on reproductive health and the details of HIV transmission and progression. To do this, they need the support of their schools and their education departments. They may also benefit from continuing to exchange ideas and share problems with their new friends across the borders.

All sorts of ideas were shared in the final sessions, including a small grants programme for local student-run school activities, supported by a regional network of schools with bilateral country cooperation (Laos/Thailand, China/Vietnam) and with, eventually, maybe another regional meeting to review progress. So, if you live in Udomxay, Bo Keo, Chiangrai, Chiangmai, Sipsong Panna, Quang Ha or Lang Son, look for signs of activity at your local school. Peer educators will be at large in the neighbourhood.
Creating space for children's participation: Planning with street children in Myanmar

Karl Dorning, World Vision Myanmar
Tim O'Shaughnessy, World Vision Australia

Children's right to participate

States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. (Article 12, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

Article 12 of the CRC acknowledges children's right to participate in the decisions that affect them, so that they can share in the process of decision making that shapes their lives and their communities. Active and meaningful participation in community life enables children to develop their skills and sense of responsibility and it builds their self-confidence. Participation also requires that communities work to develop a culture of respect for children's views.

For development NGOs, the challenge is how best to develop a practice of meaningful participation within project design, monitoring and evaluation. This process is still very much at an experimental stage.

The Street and Working Children Program

In April 2001, World Vision Myanmar (WVM), with assistance from World Vision Australia (WVA), conducted a two-week 'empowerment' evaluation of its Street and Working Children (SWC) Program. The key objective was to provide capacity for the participants (especially the 'users' or 'beneficiaries' - the children) to evaluate and improve the project, and to find a useful mechanism for increasing future participation in the project.

The notion of 'street children' in Myanmar is something of an anomaly. The traditional term, Lan Paw Kale, literally means 'children who are happy on the street'. And, indeed, there are many seemingly happy children roaming the streets, lanes and paddy fields, always ready to share a wave and a smile. Yet, as with any culture and society, some children fall through the cracks: children whose natural parents divorce, those who are badly treated by step-parents, children who are orphaned, children who have to work to help support their families, and children who just cannot fit in at home. For many reasons, such children end up surviving from day to day, with no fixed shelter or effective guardian or parent figure - vulnerable and on the street.

The SWC Program commenced in April 1997 and has two main components:

- A 'curative' component, which aims to improve the quality of life and status of street and working children and, where possible, to reintegrate them into mainstream society. Drop-in centres provide any such children aged 4–16 with the opportunity for shelter, a place to sleep, meals, non-formal education, clothing, bathroom facilities, health care, and so on. These centres are known locally as Lan Paw Kale (LPK). Two of them, one in Mandalay and one in Yangon, service approximately 500 children, with around 150 using the centres each day and 70 sleeping overnight.
The Development Studies Network

- The Network offers a forum for discussion and debate of development issues.
- It provides members with up-to-date information and notices of forthcoming events.
- It helps members to inform each other about their work.
- It gives extensive, often annotated, listings of written and other information and education resources.
- Membership is open to anyone interested. Members come from fields as diverse as health, economics, agriculture, administration and human rights.

Membership includes subscription to the Development Bulletin. A year’s subscription entitles you to: four copies of the Development Bulletin—news from the field—work in progress reports—international summaries—latest literature—conference reports—conference calendar.

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• A 'preventative' component, which seeks to address the underlying factors pushing children onto the street in a number of poorer communities around Yangon. Community-based programmes offer assistance to children at risk of becoming street children, seeking strategies to resolve their problems and to enable them to stay with their families or communities. These programmes include non-formal education for children and illiterate adults, and provision of micro-enterprise development loans.

The evaluation described in this article focused on the drop-in centres.

Evaluation of the SWC Program

Preliminary meetings were held with staff and children and the proposal put that the evaluation could be led by the children. As this idea became more understood, local staff and the children took the lead and the two authors moved into support roles. This triggered several meetings that passed on the news that an evaluation was being held and that the children would be having their say. These meetings discussed the evaluation: what it was, why it was being conducted, and so on.

Election to the evaluation team

A group of children was needed to be the full-time members of the evaluation team which would do the survey work. Selection was done over a few days and involved all children from the centre. They defined their election method and then chose their representatives. There were two guidelines: there needed to be a proportionate representation of both boys and girls, and it would be best if elected members were able to read and write. The children elected 15 representatives. In addition, four WVM staff were asked to be part of the team, along with the two lead evaluators and the three project staff.

Refinement of questions

Primary stakeholder groups were identified and meetings established with children using the drop-in centres; staff; and the steering committee. It was clear that the main issues for the children were related to their future: ‘What is our future?’ ‘What will happen …?’ From the lists drawn up by the different stakeholder groups, eight major questions were compiled:

1. How long will we keep the centre open?
2. Why did we open the LPK Centre?
3. What do we want to have happen to the children through the LPK centre?
4. What are the differences between street and LPK children?
5. How can we help other children like us?
6. How far can we go?
7. What will happen to us if the centre closes?
8. Do you have a plan to open more centres?

Identification of informant groups

The evaluation team expanded the list of stakeholders to be approached for their opinions to include children using the drop-in centres; staff (both WVM management and project staff); the steering committee; other NGOs; parents of the children; children who had never come to the centre; children who no longer came to the centre; the Department of Social Welfare; donors; shop owners in the market; and street families.

Detailed planning considered who would be interviewed and how many people were needed from each stakeholder group, how the informants would be located and contacted, who would do the interviews, and when the interviews would be carried out. Interviews were to be conducted as focus groups. Below is an example of a question guide.

Guide for LPK children's interviews

Place:  
Date:  
Time:  
Participants:  
Facilitator:  
Note-taker:  

The questions to ask the children are as follows:

1. What do you like about living on the street?
2. What do you dislike about living on the street?
3. What do you like about living in the LPK?
4. What do you dislike about living in the LPK?
5. Where are you happier, in LPK or on the street?
6. Do you think that your situation is getting better since you have been in LPK?
7. What can the children do to have a better program?
8. What can the staff do to have a better program?
9. Is there anything else the LPK scheme can do to help you?
10. What other programs are LPK doing apart from the centre?
11. How can you help other children facing the same situation as yours?
12. What do the children from the centre want to do when they grow up?
13. What will happen to the children when the centre is closed?
14. What is the purpose of opening this centre?
15. Do you have a home?
16. What do you dislike at your home?
17. What do you like at your home?

Training for focus group interviewing

Some children volunteered to become interviewers, while others opted to be note-takers. A series of practice exercises taking a number of days were used to provide the children with the opportunity to...
develop the necessary skills. At first, they were reluctant to ask follow-up questions to clarify answers. With practice, they developed their communication and survey skills and were able to have a sense of the questions and the possible answers.

Implementation

The children (supported by WVM staff) decided that, rather than try to complete the evaluation in two weeks, they would lay the groundwork for a much more thorough process, which would continue for another four months. The longer timeframe would allow the children to develop their roles as the primary evaluators. Over this period, the evaluation process became incorporated as one of many activities in the busy and complex life of the project and was completely directed by the children.

To form interview teams, the children broke into groups of three or four. A staff member joined each of the teams. At first, the teams were a mix of girls and boys and this was not successful. There may have been a number of reasons for this, including general Myanmar culture of male confidence and female docility, the greater number of boys than girls, and the concern expressed later that the girls felt the project staff favoured the boys.

An interview schedule was drawn up outlining which teams would interview which informants and when. The schedule was busy and aimed to finish all interviews within a two-month period. Question guides were finalised within team groups.

The children then set about conducting interviews with informant groups. Unfortunately, the Department of Social Welfare was unable to participate. The children took themselves into the community to interview other children, parents, authority figures and people in the markets. Over 50 interviews were conducted. The quantity of information collected was astonishing. As the children were collecting the interview data, staff in the evaluation team looked through records that already existed in the project files to address the same eight primary questions. This provided a 'triangulation' check for the evaluation data.

Evaluation team recommendations

The culmination of the focus group interview schedule and the staff data collection was a three-day workshop in which findings and recommendations were presented. The workshop was conducted in a highly participatory manner, with 15 boys and 3 girls (the initial evaluation team), 18 staff and 6 parents taking part.

The key recommendation was to move to a children's empowerment philosophy, and seek to further develop the children's capacities to be the central actors in shaping their own futures.

The children could and should be involved to a greater degree as active participants in project planning, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation. The project should refocus from its current service-delivery approach (expressed in the design and practice of the project) where children are beneficiaries of 'adult-dominated' services. It should focus on promoting the principle that children be allowed the opportunity to speak for themselves, rather than having others (usually adults) speaking on their behalf. Possible steps in this direction could include:

- Creation of a committee (6–10 members), elected by the children, to suggest initiatives and seek feedback from other children. This sub-committee would sit on the project steering committee and take part in regular staff meetings.
- Continued involvement of the children evaluators team in the monitoring of the Yangon LPK Centre and in training of other project participants.
- Children's participation in all forums that focus on children's issues, such as the recently formed International NGO Theme Group on the CRC that meets regularly in Yangon.
- Training of children to become project implementers, such as outreach street-life skills educators, street children advocates, and literacy trainers of other street children.
- Formation of a 'pen pal' relationship with donor representatives and other potential donors and stakeholders, such as UNICEF.
- Future funding proposals to reflect the 'children's empowerment philosophy' as a central theme.

Lessons learned in working with children

- Participatory empowerment evaluations take time. Time is required for children and staff to become accustomed to interacting and relating in collegial ways. (This was WVM's first participatory evaluation.).
- A new concept of childhood is needed in which children are regarded as being capable of speaking for themselves.
- Children should be involved in the ongoing monitoring of LPK project activities.
- The children were able to design their own methods if given the opportunity and motivation to do so.
- Given enough time, children can produce very valuable results.
- It is useful to have a full-time documenter/translator.
- When working with children, it is essential to mix work with games.
- Children of different age groups can work together, with older children leading younger ones.
- Explanations to the children about the goals, design and funding source of the programme instilled in them a greater sense of responsibility.
- The children were enthusiastic workers and had great access to the community, so working with them meant more could be done.
• Relationships between staff and children and among children themselves improved as a result of the process.
• Special attention needs to be paid to girls (particularly if they are outnumbered by boys) to ensure that their voices are heard. (It may be useful to separate them for some activities, but to bring them together to share their opinions.)
• It was often difficult to talk with the girls, who were often frightened and shy.
• Presentation with visual aids is more effective than just verbal presentation in stimulating involvement. The use of pictures enhances participation. Children enjoy writing and drawing.
• Games, energisers and singing are necessary to motivate participation and maintain interest.
• Staff need to monitor and support the children's participation to see they have understood the methods and are doing the activity correctly.
• Evaluation facilitators and staff should try to make children feel more comfortable and confident about their own ideas and more free to do things in their own way.
• One of the most important issues diminishing children's participation is poverty. Poverty disempowers everyone, especially children.
• True participation depends on provision for children, and protection of children and childhood.
• The provision of material and social resources is crucial, so that children are healthy and well educated enough to participate.
• It is important to give all children the chance to be active participants, not just those perceived by staff to be the 'smarter' kids.

• Often the children who have attended school will dominate the discussions. Training is needed for the others to support them with skills to understand and participate in evaluations and project planning discussions.
• Special efforts should be made to promote active and equal participation of all types of children, such as the creation of groups in which less confident children feel comfortable.
• It may be helpful to use recording equipment if interviewers are weak in literacy skills.

Conclusion

The key aim of this evaluation was to improve the capacity of programme participants, especially children, to evaluate and improve the programme. The process was, for all involved, an exhausting yet exhilarating experience. The adults who took part were particularly privileged. Project staff were surprised, even amazed, at what the children were capable of.

The evaluation process brought about a fundamental shift in the way the staff viewed the children and, equally importantly, in the way the children viewed themselves. A unity and mutual respect developed, establishing a knowledge of being 'in this together', not as benefactors and beneficiaries, but as partners.

However, there are many challenges ahead. Solutions to the problems facing children living on the street, cut off from family and community support, are not simple. Perhaps the greatest challenge (and opportunity for change) is for adults to reconstruct their understanding of childhood and, with children themselves, to seek avenues that will not only allow their voices to be heard but also allow them the space and the security to become social actors in their own right.

An extended publication on this project is available from World Vision Australia's Resource Centre, GPO Box 399C, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, Tel: +61 (0)3 9287 2299, E-mail: info@wva.org.au
Governing for the future: young people and Vanuatu’s governance agenda, 23-24 April 2001

Report by Michael Morgan, State Society and Governance in Melanesia Project, Australian National University (also see paper on juvenile justice in this issue)

The Governing for the Future workshop, organised by the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia (SSGM) Project and the Young People’s Project (YPP) of the Vanuatu Cultural Centre, offered young people the chance to reflect on their place in contemporary Vanuatu. Twenty speakers (including eight women) made forceful and articulate presentations on wide-ranging topics. Although ni-Vanuatu with greater age and seniority are generally privileged contributors in public forums, by providing young people with the platform to speak they set the agenda for discussion. The eight major sessions of the workshop covered: urban migration and identity; young people and leadership; young people and the law; young people and kastom; young people and politics; education; young people and governance; perspectives on the economy and perspectives on employment.

Urban migration and identity

Increasing urbanisation is a major influence on the changing nature of custom and Vanuatu society. It affects development, economics and religion. The lack of opportunity in rural areas is pushing more young people towards urban areas. Rural areas suffer from poor provincial government infrastructure, while town attracts young people because of its braetnes (brightness) – its educational and professional opportunities, discos and videos. The need for money for education, housing or marriage payments also forces people to urban areas in search of work. Others leave rural communities to escape the stifling power of chiefs, or to avoid paying custom fines or arranged marriages. Young ni-Vanuatu arriving from the islands often feel dislocated and lose a sense of place, culture and custom, and family and community networks are unable to continually absorb or support high numbers of unemployed island immigrants.

The rise in crime

The government does not provide support or infrastructure for inter-island immigrants, who are forced to see other means of income, sometimes by criminal means. The claimed right of chiefs to send young people back to the islands is contrary to the Constitution. As many urban youth have never lived in the islands and may not speak the local language, when chiefs threaten to send them to the islands as punishment, they may not have the language, agricultural skills or materials support for adequate survival. Pierre Chanel Paolo maintained that a rural upbringing ensures a stronger appreciation of custom, which in turn fosters ‘respect’ and helps to limit criminal activities.

Young people and leadership

Two rural youth leaders, Simon Lili and Eric Yaukelo, made presentations on their independent initiatives in North Pentecost and Tanna where parents and chiefs often resisted attempts to form youth groups because they would detract from family or community projects. Regional youth groups raised money through sporting competitions, concerts, and limited cash-cropping and farming endeavours. Fundraising activities include choir groups, custom groups, a string band and sports teams and, funds raised are then used to support group members or fund community projects. A major obstacle to the effective organisation of rural youth people has been the difficulty of establishing an effective organisational structure. Young people are reluctant to take orders from their peers and reluctant to approach the government for support because it would limit their autonomy and because they often distrusted politicians’ motives.
Young people and the law
This issue is thoroughly dealt with in Morgan's paper.

Young people and politics
Workshop discussion indicated that politicians fail to fulfil their role as national leaders. Participants found it difficult to trust politicians when they grant benefits to themselves, while failing to provide opportunities for grassroots people, especially youth. Unfulfilled election promises of development projects, training centres, new schools, or funds undermine politicians' credibility. Government business is conducted without due process and care, and the young people of Vanuatu will be the ones to suffer in the future. More focus should be put on the performance and policies of political parties rather than on family or regional linkages.

It is wrong to subscribe to a party because it provides 'sweeteners' on election day, but forgets its constituents as soon as it gets in to power. If you hide under a tree when it rains and you still get wet, you keep moving; you try to find some dry space. If a political party will not help you with a project that you are doing, but looks only to its own priorities, you should not stay with it forever (David Huri).

National leaders do not consult young people, even on youth-specific issues. They make assumptions about young people and formulate policies that impact on them. Politicians appear only to court social groups like youth groups for numerical support.

Education
As most young people complete their formal education at age 12 or 13 years, they are ill equipped to fully participate in the urban economy. Further education is necessary for the pursuit of careers, but, because of limited employment opportunities for young people, education is routinely considered a waste of time and money, as students are often unable to pursue further education because of the expense and lack of high school places.

An appropriate curriculum
The education system should focus more on transferable life skills to cater for young people who are not educated past Year 10. More vocational training schools are needed. Because of the lack of wage labour opportunities, non-formal education, including occupational skills, carving and basket/mat weaving, is of continuing importance. The workshop discussed the importance of a holistic approach to education, highlighting the need for moral education (custom, church) as well as greater opportunities in vocational education.

Perspectives on the economy/employment issues
The Juvenile Justice Project found unemployment and underemployment to be the central problems identified by young people in Port Vila. The mentality of previous generations - that class 6 is enough schooling for girls because whether they returned to the islands or stayed in town they would be engaged in domestic chores - is no longer viable. To reverse a situation where expatriates dominate the urban economy, a better-educated ni-Vanuatu population is needed. Greater cooperation is needed between ministries and the Vanuatu Foreign Investment Board to increase the focus on investment aimed at youth and employment.

Outcomes and conclusions
Leias Cullwick from the Vanuatu National Council of Women (VNCW) noted that, since its inception, VNCW has continually fought to be heard. Community leaders had resisted the right of women to speak on certain issues. Self-advocacy was the first step to empowerment, but it was not the only one. To conclude the workshop, the participants were asked to assess and prioritise their needs. Young people, they noted, are unable to access relevant information regarding a variety of key issues, including restorative justice, education, employment, the law and politics. There are few opportunities for young people in either rural or urban areas. Yet young people are capable of implementing their own strategies of organisation and empowerment and of ordering their worlds in critical and creative ways.

The Millennium Summit (New York, 6-8 September 2000) reaffirmed the emphasis the Secretary-General placed on the employment of young people. There, Heads of State and Government resolved to 'develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work' (United Nations Millennium Declaration, resolution A/RES/ 55/2 of 8 September 2000). The world leaders adopted the 'United Nations Millennium Declaration' at the conclusion of the three day summit. This declaration contains a statement of values, principles and objectives for the international agenda for the twenty first century. It also sets deadlines for many collective actions. In an address delivered at the concluding meeting of the conference, United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan told the Summit that it had sketched out clear directions for adapting the organisation to its role in the new century. The document (A/55/L.2) reaffirms members states' faith in the United Nations and its charter as indispensable for a more peaceful, prosperous and just world. The collective responsibility of the governments of the world to uphold human dignity, equality and equity is recognized, as is the duty of world leaders to all people, and especially children and the most vulnerable. The leaders declare that the central challenge of today is to ensure that globalisation becomes a positive force for all, acknowledging that at present both its benefits and its costs are unequally shared. The declaration calls for global policies and measures, corresponding to the needs of developing countries and economies in transition. Citing freedom, equality (of individuals and nations), solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility as six values fundamental to international relations for the twenty first century, the Summit Declaration also identifies concrete objectives under broad headings that participants believe would lead to the desired outcomes. Among the objectives with the declared aim of promoting peace, security and disarmament, world leaders resolve to strengthen the rule of law and ensure compliance with decisions of the International Court of Justice, to provide the United Nations with the resources it needs for conflict prevention and peaceful resolution of
disputes, and to take action against the international drug problem and terrorism. World leaders also made commitments to minimize the adverse effects of economic sanctions on innocent populations and to subject sanctions regimes to regular review, to urge constructive action on disarmament and to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional organisations. The document also calls on Member States to eliminate weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, and to keep all options open for this aim, including the possibility of convening an international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers. Among the steps aimed at development and poverty eradication, the Declaration contains commitments to make the right to development a reality for everyone.

Concerned about the obstacles developing countries face in mobilizing the resources to finance their sustained development, the participants agree to make every effort to ensure the success of the High-level International and Intergovernmental Event on Financing for Development and of the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, both to be held next year. The document calls for adoption of a policy of duty-free and quota-free access for essentially all exports from the least developed countries and an enhanced programme of debt relief for the heavily indebted poor countries. By the year 2015, world leaders also resolve to halve the proportion of people with income of less than one dollar a day and of those suffering from hunger and lack of safe drinking water; to ensure equal access to all levels of education for girls and boys and primary schooling for all children everywhere; to reduce maternal mortality by three quarters; and to begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other major diseases. By the year 2020, they resolve to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.

Report of the IPPF Youth Parliament

Congress Hall, Hilton Airrium, Prague, Czech Republic, 27 November 1998, produced by IPPF Global Advocacy

Division, Regent’s College, Inner Circle,
London NW1 4NS, Tel: +44 (0)171 487 7866, Fax: +44 (0)171 487 7865, Email: kfaulkner@ippf.org or jnouit@ippf.org, available online at: http://www.ippf.org/resources/ippflyouth/about/index.htm

The ippflyouth manifesto was written at the end of 1998 by 16 members of the IPPF Youth Committee, young people from all regions of the world, who are involved in sexual and reproductive health programmes. It was debated and approved by 43 young people from 38 countries worldwide, all under the age of 25, at the world at the IPPF Youth Parliament, and endorsed by the IPPF’s Members Assembly. Based on their ideas and experiences, the participants in the Youth Parliament debated and presented to IPPF’s Members Assembly the ippflyouth manifesto - a five year youth-developed strategy and plan of action for IPPF, developed by IPPF’s Youth Committee. Participation and Citizenship, Services and Education, and Pleasure and Confidence were the three key areas to be addressed according to the recommendations of the manifesto. The Youth Parliament endorsed the manifesto and urged IPPF and FPAs to adopt it as a vital instrument for better understanding and better meeting the range of sexual and reproductive health needs of young people in the 21st century. After the Youth Parliament, IPPF’s Central Council passed resolutions committing both ideological and practical support to the manifesto. Important work already achieved by the IPPF Youth Committee includes the research and development of international publications such as Mezzo, Generation 97, Sexual Rights of Young People Charter. The outcomes of the Youth Parliament fed into the preparation of a Background Paper on the Sexual and Reproductive Health of Young People, presented at the ICPD+5 International Forum in The Hague. The Youth Parliament had three key outcomes: the ippflyouth manifesto was fully endorsed by all the members of the Youth Parliament; IPPF’s Central Council passed resolutions committing human, financial and technical support to promote the goals of the ippflyouth manifesto throughout the Federation; an international and dynamic network of young people working in the field of sexual and reproductive health has now been set in place. This will enable them to share information and resources, improve their position as negotiators, and gain strength as advocates for their own issues. In addition, the governance structure of IPPF has been revised so that at least 20% of the members of the Governing Council, the main decision and policy-making body of IPPF, will be young people under the age of 25.


Food Security for Papua New Guinea is the published proceedings of the Papua New Guinea Food and Nutrition 2000 Conference. This was held at the Papua New Guinea University of Technology in Lae between 26th and 30th June 2000. The conference attracted speakers and participants from around the world, including Australia, France, Switzerland, Holland, Japan, the Solomon Islands and New Zealand, as well as from all provinces of PNG. The conference was the fourth in a series devoted to food and nutrition in PNG over the past 25 years, although the titles of the conferences has varied somewhat. However, the most recent previous conference was held in 1983 (and published in 1992). Hence, the 2000 conference was organised in response to a very real need to update knowledge in the areas of food and nutrition. The conference drew on both development and research experience from a broad range of people in many PNG and some overseas institutions.

The theme of the conference was food security for Papua New Guinea. Given the large gap in time since the last conference, coupled with the fact that there has been little agricultural research published in PNG over the past 15 years, the conference provided the opportunity for a broad range
of topics to be presented and discussed. Some of these broader topics include the impact of the emerging HIV/AIDS epidemic in PNG on food production; the possible impact of global climate change on PNG agriculture; and population movements and changes in land use over a 21 year period. A common theme that emerges in a number of the policy papers is that food security would be enhanced by better maintenance of rural infrastructure (especially roads), better access to information by rural villagers and research on a number of key subsistence and cash crops.

The conference was one of the largest ever to be held in PNG, if not the largest. The proceedings contain 115 papers, is over 900 pages long and weighs 1.6 kg. Collectively, the papers contained in the proceedings make a significant contribution to the literature on food security, agriculture and human nutrition in PNG. Over the 20 year period 1980 to 1999, there were 142 papers published in the Papua New Guinea Journal of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, the main vehicle for publishing papers on agriculture in PNG. The proceedings are divided into two parts, food security and food production. Between them these parts cover 11 sections. The numbers of papers are as follows: food security (36 papers); renewable resource management (14 papers); human nutrition (7 papers); information and extension (9 papers); food production: general (13 papers); animal production (10 papers); crop production (26 papers). In addition to papers, the proceedings also contain a conference summary, with recommendations for policy and programs, a list of other relevant conferences and workshops held in PNG over the past 30 years, a list of useful web sites, introductory remarks from the Deputy Prime Minister (and Minister for Agriculture); an introduction from the Chairman of the Conference Organising Committee and an obituary to a leading PNG land use expert who died just before the conference was held. Food Security for Papua New Guinea can be obtained free-of-charge from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research. The contact at ACIAR is Maureen Kenning (E-mail: kenning@aciar.gov.au), GPO Box 1571, Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia.

The International Youth Parliament 2000, October 2000, Sydney


The International Youth Parliament (IYP2000) brought together 250 delegates aged between 15 and 28 from more than 150 countries, including a number of Indigenous people from around the world. Together, the delegates created a diverse reflection of the world's youth. They spoke as advocates for significant issues affecting their communities and regions. The agenda of IYP2000 focused on three significant areas: breaking the cycle of poverty; youth in conflict; and cultural activism. The goal of the IYP 2000 was to create a forum where young leaders and activists could meet and exchange views and information on global issues, in order to establish an international network promoting an increased participation of young people in decision-making processes. The outcomes of IYP2000 have been and will be taken into other forums including: the UN's World Youth Forum, Dakar, Senegal, August 2001; the World Conference Against Racism, the International Young Professional Summit, Gold Coast, 2-6 October 2001; the Alliance World Assembly, Lille, France, December 2001. In Australia findings were brought to the attention of the Australian government through the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. The real outcome of the IYP2000 however, has been in the ongoing action it has inspired and informed. Delegates were required to formulate individual and collective action plans for positive social change which they would then implement in their communities. Over 400 action plans were formulated, including: organise a seminar with young women's group to start an information campaign about HIV/AIDS (Florence, Benin); enlarge and enrich campaigns against homophobia (Milan, Serbia) and create two classes to promote literacy in a rural area (Amady, Senegal).
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Books

Crime, violence and minority youths: interdisciplinary research series in ethnic, gender and class relations

Becky Tatum, Southern University at New Orleans, USA, 1999, ISBN: 1 84014 962 0 144 pp, £32.50, Hardback, Interdisciplinary Research Series in Ethnic, Gender and Class Relations

Mainstream criminology has devoted little attention to minority perspectives in crime and violence. Criminologists who have examined minority perspectives have addressed the issue in a cursory manner, providing only brief summaries of the propositions of the perspective. Crime, Violence and Minority Youths provides a comprehensive examination of one minority perspective on crime: the colonial model. Specifically, the book discusses how the colonial model applies to African and Hispanic Americans and what the perspective adds to mainstream theorizing. It further discusses the limitations of the perspective, revises the perspective to improve theoretical validity and subjects the revised perspective to empirical validation. Preliminary findings suggest that the colonial model is more effective in explaining African American delinquency.

Youth crime, deviance and delinquency, (Volumes I and II)


Contents of Volume I include: theories and debates; Volume II: Empirical studies and comparative perspectives

Youth, citizenship and empowerment

Edited by Helena Helve and Claire Wallace, Helena Helve, Professor, University of Helsinki, Finland and Claire Wallace, Professor, Institute for Advanced Studies, Vienna, Austria and University of Derby, UK, May 2001, ISBN: 0 75461646 0, 346 pp, £45.00, Hardback

This book brings together a range of perspectives about citizenship and empowerment from around the globe. It thus approaches these important topics from a wide variety of directions, including different geopolitical contexts, empirical studies, theoretical approaches and examples of actual projects to empower youth and how they have worked. The book addresses issues of importance for contemporary young people as well as for social policy and will be of relevance to practitioners, youth leaders and academics.

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sociological interpretations of gang; delinquency theory and research; community reactions to juvenile delinquency; youth crime in postindustrial societies; a network approach to the explanation of delinquent behaviour; the invisibility of the female delinquent peer group; drugs, crime, masculinities and consumption. Contents of Volume II include: the 'delinquent' and the 'gang' in history; youth crime, deviance and delinquency in western liberal society; gangs and delinquent gangs in London; the social integration of queers and peers; religion and delinquency; crime, youth unemployment and the black urban underclass; case study of Cordoba delinquent gangs in cross-cultural perspective; a comparative study of white black and Japanese high school boys; a comparison of the cultural context of American gangs and British subcultures; narratives on adolescent dissent in Japan; images and reality of street children; a 1990s perspective on youth gangs; girls, gangs and violence; violent racism, localism and pacism among Asian and white young people.

Youth: unemployment, identity and policy


According to the OECD Jobs Study unemployment is the most widely feared phenomenon in our society. It implies considerable economic, social and individual waste. In particular youth unemployment is worrisome. This book sets out to meet the challenges posed by the causes and consequences of youth unemployment from both a scientific and a policy point of view. It departs from a multi-disciplinarian perspective, combining insights from economic and social sciences and it presents experiences built up in various parts of Western Europe. Training programmes are a crucial part of combating youth unemployment. However, the results of policy studies into the effects of youth training programmes do not make one optimistic as to the chances of resisting youth unemployment and of reducing the huge economic, social and personal waste involved. Countries with large numbers of unemployed youth are confronted with the challenge to prevent a new underclass by creating jobs because a demanding paid job is the best guarantee of social integration. If such jobs are not made available, the following question becomes relevant: to what identity may long-term unemployed youngsters transfer? This debate has only just begun.

Muslim European youth: reproducing ethnicity, religion, culture

Steven Vertovec and Alisdair Rogers (eds), 1998, Research in Ethnic Relations Series, Steven Vertovec, University of Warwick, UK and Alisdair Rogers, Oxford University, UK, ISBN: 1 84014 341 X, 224 pp, £39.00, Hardback

The contributions to Muslim European Youth come from five European countries: Denmark. France, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. They combine national overviews of the position of Muslim youths with detailed and local case studies. Together with the introduction, the chapters draw upon a range of anthropological and sociological theory, but are united in their rejection of essential ideas and approaches. Many draw upon ethnographic research with young Muslims and the institutions within which they are often found, including local government, political and religious associations, hostels and schools as well as community and family. The research points to some of the wide variety of responses to the European contexts within which the research subjects have grown up in as Muslims. Such responses may be grounded in anti-racism and overtly political responses, may involve a rejection or a reinterpretation of the views and practices of their parents, may represent the maintenance of a largely symbolic allegiance to the wider Islamic world, or may demonstrate forms of increased piety and religious observance. In any case, the material in this volume demonstrates how Muslim European Youth are not embodying some sort of 'clash of civilisations,' but rather how they are often constructing and living creatively hybrid and complex identities and establishing new modes of religious and cultural expression.

Youth and policy, contexts and consequences: young men, transition and social exclusion

Howard Williamson, Cardiff Papers in Qualitative Research, School of Social and Administrative Studies, Cardiff University, UK, 1997, ISBN: 1 85972 677 1, 264 pp, £47.50, Hardback

For the past twenty years, the author has been involved in practice, policy, and research on young people. In this collection of papers, written over that period, he conveys the lines of continuity and change in different contexts of youth policy. Youth and Policy draws attention to the increasing polarization of opportunity for young people, the result of the promotion of policies which have taken little account of the perspectives and aspirations of young people themselves. Each section contains both papers which have made 'measured' contributions to the academic debate and more 'passionate' publications directed at practitioners and policy makers. All derive from empirical qualitative work which sought to secure and assess the views and experiences of young people. The book emphasises the need for a qualitative understanding of young people's perspectives if effective youth policy is to be developed.

Youth justice: contemporary policy and practice

Barry Goldson (ed), 1999, Department of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work Studies, University of Liverpool, UK, ISBN: 1 84014 381 9, 40 pp, £42.00, Hardback

In recent years few social issues have attracted as much attention from politicians, the media and the public as juvenile crime. At a time of radical reform of the youth justice system in England and Wales this book provides the most up-to-date critical examination of contemporary state responses to children and young people in trouble. By combining theoretical conceptualizations, policy analyses and practice developments, the contributors investigate the key issues in
youth justice. *Youth Justice: Contemporary Policy and Practice* provides a critique of a system which is increasingly pre-occupied with the punishment of children and shows the way towards more humane and effective practices. The book will appeal to students of sociology, social policy, social work, criminology and law; academics from similar disciplines; professionals including social workers, probation officers, solicitors, barristers, magistrates, justices' clerks, teachers and youth workers; and general readers with an interest in childhood, youth, crime, welfare and justice.

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Urban girls: empowerment in especially difficult circumstances

Gary Barker, Felicia Knaul, with Neide Cassaniga and Anita Schrader, 2000, ISBN: 1 85339 475 0, £12.95/US$19.95, Paperback, 144pp

This book offers practical approaches to improve and empower the lives of at-risk, low-income, urban-based girls and young women. It does this by presenting successful projects from around the world which clearly demonstrate what can be done on a broad range of fronts, and answers the two key questions: what do at-risk urban girls and young women need; and what kind of programmes have been successful in meeting those needs? The book begins with a comprehensive overview of the plight of young disadvantaged women and defines who they are, why they need special attention and, most importantly, the four main contributing factors working against these women: poverty, age, gender and ethnicity. In the rest of the book, the authors use real case studies and models based on projects from Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, South Africa and the USA, illustrating how they have been successful in combating these four factors and empowering young women against them. Examples include income generation and vocational training schemes, formal and non-formal education programmes and health and mental well-being programmes. The final chapter looks at how boys and men can become involved in the efforts to improve girls' and young women's lives. The book concludes with important and authoritative recommendations for both advocacy and service delivery work, essential reading for all agencies working with young women.

Power, process, and participation: tools for change

Rachel Slouc, Lori Wichhart, Dianne Rocheleau, and Barbara Thomas-Slayter (eds), 1995, ISBN: 1 85339 303 7, £10.95/US$19.95, Paperback, 272pp

The aim of this book is to enable facilitators from inside, as well as outside, communities to empower those people who are frequently omitted from the decision-making process. The book explores participatory approaches to development and offers innovative, collaborative tools for working with local groups and communities. The tools described are sensitive to cultural and social differences and have been designed to increase the capacities of local communities, NGOs, and public sector agencies by integrating applied and analytical methods for consciousness-raising, data-gathering, community decision-making, advocacy, and development activities. The book focuses on participatory capacity-building in ways that address the practical needs and strategic interests of the disadvantaged and disempowered, paying particular attention to gender issues. Other issues examined by this book include how differences in class, ethnicity, race, caste, religion, age and status may also lead to the 'politics of exclusion'. In addition to being a 'tool book', the contributors also address some of the issues raised through working in a participatory way, such as: the ends and means of participation, uneven relations of power among participants, temporal context, spatial scale, and the array of organisations involved.

The 2000 Progress of Nations

*UNICEF*, 2000, 9280635956, 44pp, AUD$22.95

*The Progress of Nations* describes what becomes possible when nations invest in children's well being and protect their rights. It covers both positive outcomes (such as polio being on the verge of eradication) and things which need to be improved (such as children made virtually invisible because they are not registered at birth).

All together now: Community participation for children and young people

Madeleine Tearse and Andrew West, 1997, *Save the Children*, 189912953X, 48pp, AUD$34.95

This new publication outlines a genuinely ethical approach to child labour, where children's best interests are the key consideration in business decisions. It answers common questions to which business people are seeking answers, and suggests measures that a socially responsible company and its suppliers can take to address child labour.

Big business, small hands: Responsible approaches to child labour

*Save the Children*, 2000, 88pp, AUD$39.95

This new publication outlines a genuinely ethical approach to child labour, where children's best interests are the key consideration in business decisions. It answers common questions to which business people are seeking answers, and suggests measures that a socially responsible company and its suppliers can take to address child labour.
But that’s not love: Training materials on domestic violence for work with young people
Nicola Chapman, Julie Clapson and Michelle Plaistead, 1999, Save the Children, 53pp book plus 35 min video, AUD$198.95
Based on children and young people’s experiences and perceptions of domestic violence. It covers: relationships, rights and responsibilities, and power and control within young people’s definitions of domestic violence, and will enable them to begin to identify how they can make changes in their relationships others.

Can you hear us? Including the views of disabled children and young people in decision-making
Sue Whittles, 1998, Save the Children, 93pp, AUD$39.95
Identifies key issues that local authorities, health authorities and other agencies currently face nationally to ensure that disabled children and young people’s voices are heard. It makes recommendations which can support active participation, including changes to structures, improved communication methods and advocacy services.

Carrying the can: Children and their water environment
Alan Nicol, 1998, Save the Children, 1899120688, 50pp, AUD$17.95
The aim of this paper is to make accessible to a wider audience SCF’s experience of working with children and water and sanitation projects worldwide. It seeks to integrate policy analysis in the water and sanitation sector, with field-based experience and core themes such as environment, gender, education, health and disability. The key element will be their impact on children.

Children’s participation: The theory and practice of involving young citizens in community development and environmental care.
Roger Hart, 1997, Earthscan, 1853833223, 224pp, AUD$59.95
All children can play a central and lasting role in sustainable development if their participation is taken seriously and if communities recognise their developing competencies and unique strengths. Children must be involved in the definition of environmental problems and become representative, critical voices within their communities.

Communicating with children: helping children in distress
Naomi Richman, Save the Children, 2000, 1841870269, 118pp, AUD$21.95
The effects of conflict and emergencies on children can be devastating, both physically and psychologically. They need special understanding and support to help them through the crisis and deal with the future. This book is an invaluable tool in developing listening and communication skills to help children with special needs.

Creating better cities with children and youth: A manual for participation
David Driscoll, 2001, Earthscan, 1853838535, 128pp, AUD$59.95
A practical manual on how to promote the participation of young people in urban planning, design and implementation. The manual uses case studies to demonstrate methods in action and show how they can be customised to local needs.

Empowering children and young people: Training manual
Children’s Rights Office, 1997, Save the Children, 1899120455, 95pp, spiral-bound, AUD$67.05
This training manual aims to help professionals such as community workers and school teachers empower all children so that they can contribute to the decisions, which affect them as individuals and as a group, at unit, local and national levels. Ages 11-18.

Growing up in an urbanizing world
Louise Chaula, Earthscan, 2001, 1853838284, 260pp, AUD$57.95
This book explores and analyses the relationship of young people and their urban surroundings focusing on low-income neighbourhoods. Chapters are enlivened with examples, maps, photographs and drawings. It will be invaluable to people involved in education, community development, geography, architecture and urban planning.

The human rights of street and working children: A practical manual for advocates
Iain Byrne, Intermediate Technology (ITDG), 1998, 1853394491, 278pp, AUD$87.95
Despite the Convention on the Rights of the Child, children who live and work on the streets or in commercial situations at young ages are subjected to gross injustices and are frequently neglected by national law. This volume is a one-stop guide on how to use regional and international treaties and mechanisms for the protection and defence of street and working children when national law fails.

Involving young researchers: How to enable young people to design and conduct research
Perpetua Kirby, Save the Children/Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 1999, 137pp, AUD$39.95
This publication demonstrates how young people can be competently and usefully involved in designing and conducting research. With plenty of case studies and examples, it explores the issues surrounding whether to involve young people as researchers, and the ways in which they can participate in the different stages of the research process (See also Young People as Researchers)

Local and vocal: Promoting young people’s involvement in local decision-making, an overview and planning guide
Peter White, Save the Children, 2001, 56pp, AUD$29.95
Based on the experiences of hundreds of local projects, it sets out the key issues and questions that must be addressed in developing a project or piece of work to enable young people’s
voices to be heard. The report offers inspirational case studies and guidance to anyone who wants to involve young people in local decision-making.

Pride and prejudice: Working with lesbian and gay young people
Sophie Laws (ed), Save the Children, 1999, 70pp, AUD$29.95
This book shows how lesbian and gay young people can be heard and their needs met. In this booklet, the young people themselves explain why these groups are important, and give advice to others planning to set one up. Key aspects of good practice in youth work with lesbian and gay young people are identified.

Revisiting children's rights: 10 years of the UN convention on the rights of the child
The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, passed in 1989, was the first universal treaty dedicated solely to the promotion and protection of the interests of children. This book provides the first comprehensive overview of the first decade of the Convention.

Right directions
Save the Children/The Guide Association, 1999, 64pp, AUD$21.95
A peer education resource on the UN convention on the rights of the child and a guide to help young people think about their rights through a range of fun and lively activities based around the UN CRC. The activities cover a wide range of important youth issues such as bullying, discrimination, poverty, homelessness, health, and expressing an opinion. In all it provides around 40 activities.

Stepping forward: Children and young people's participation in the development process
Vicky Johnson et al. (ed), 1998, Intermediate Technology (ITDG), 1853394483, 332pp, AUD$29.95

Presents the key issues and challenges involved in facilitating children and young people's participation. The contributors to this book come from a range of backgrounds including NGOs in development, children's agencies, academic institutions and governments, bringing a multidisciplinary approach to children's participation.

Street and working children: A guide to planning
Judith Ennew, Save the Children, 2000, 1841870323, A5, 226 pages, AUD$37.95
A guide for those who want to start or improve a project working with homeless and working children. Rather than citing rules and regulations, this manual offers different ways of approaching work with street children that would be effective in any context. It is a tool to think with, providing ideas and examples of methods that have worked elsewhere.

Time to listen: Young people's experience of mental health services
Sophie Laws, Save the Children/Mental Health Foundation, 1999, 60pp, AUD$29.95
Young people themselves planned the research and carried out the interviews for this report. It draws on young people's experiences, from their first attempts to seek help, through to hospital treatment, to support in the community. Through focused group discussions, young people were able to generate strong recommendations for change.

The two faces of education in ethnic conflict: Towards a peace building education for children
UNICEF, 2001, 8885401678, 56pp, AUD$17.95
This publication challenges a widely held assumption—that education is inevitably a force for good. It emphasizes the need for peace building education that goes further than the "add good education and stir" approach, aiming to transform the very foundation of intolerance.

Urban girls: Four times exploited four times empowered
Gary Barker and Felicia Knaul with Neide Casaniga, Intermediate Technology (ITDG), 2000, 1853394750, 144pp, AUD$44.95
This book offers practical approaches to improve and empower the lives of at-risk, low-income, urban-based girls and young women. It does this by presenting successful projects from around the world which clearly demonstrate what can be done on a broad range of fronts. It examines the four main contributing factors working against these women: poverty, age, gender and ethnicity and includes case studies.

Working for change in education: A handbook for planning advocacy
Save the Children, 2000, 184187034X, 94pp, AUD$27.95
This is a practical guide on how to 'do' advocacy on education from local through to national and international levels. While this handbook focuses on education, it is a valuable resource that is relevant for anyone interested in advocacy work in any sector.

World's web: The global education pack for work with young people
Peter White, Save the Children, 1997, 1899120289, A4 spiral bound 48 pp, AUD$34.95
Many young people are appalled at the injustices in the world. They want to take action. Yet they - and adults - can be baffled by the complexities of issues. They need simple, but not simplistic, introductions to the issues confronting today's global citizens. World's Web provides an excellent start.

You're on your own: Young people's research on leaving care
Andrew West et al., 1995, Save the Children, 48pp, AUD$27.95
Examines the needs of young people leaving care. Having carried out interviews with social services staff and young people who had recently left care, the researchers found that many such young people encountered...
poverty, poor health, inadequate housing and a lack of support.

Young people as researchers: A learning resource pack

Steve Worrall, Save the Children, 2000, 110pp, AUD$39.95

This companion to Involving young researchers provides adaptable training exercises and handouts for workers training young people to undertake social research. Topics covered include: setting aims and objectives; choosing and designing research methods; ethical issues; taking part in analysis and report writing; and learner needs, support and evaluation.

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Dealing with human rights: Asian and Western views on the value of human rights


Adopted by the UN more than fifty years ago, the practical application of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights remains far from complete. Violations continue while politicians engage in heated debates about the definition of human rights and their universal applicability. Dealing with Human Rights features stimulating essays by scholars and world leaders such as the President of South Korea and Nobel Peace Prize winner, Kim Dae Jung, reflecting different cultural perspectives and current thinking on enforcing human rights in international relations. This book is an important and timely contribution focusing on an area of the world where the issues have been argued most strongly.

Future positive: international cooperation in the 21st century


In an increasingly interdependent world, no one has a future unless we learn to work together. We are co-creators of the world we live in, and must take responsibility for doing what we can to make it worthy of ourselves and a fitting legacy for generations still to come. At a time when values of cooperation and community seem ever more at risk, Future Positive provides a refreshing and optimistic assessment of the prospects for a new international order – a direct counter blast to the doom-mongering views of writers and politicians whose voices dominate the debate. For those in search of politics and economics that are more humane and less destructive, this book will be both an inspiration and an essential, practical resource. Covering an enormous amount of ground in clear, lively and non-technical language, the book explains how the international system operates, the pressures it faces, and the changes it must undergo, and offers concrete new ideas to re-frame international relations, foreign aid, and humanitarian intervention. Future Positive tackles the big questions of globalisation and the national interest head on, without jargon and with no simplistic judgements. This groundbreaking book is a must-read for anyone concerned with where the world is heading.

Available from ACIAR:
Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), Canberra, free of charge, available from ACIAR
Maureen Kenning
GPO Box 1572
Canberra ACT 2601
Australia
Email: kenning@aciar.gov.au

Food security for Papua New Guinea: ACIAR proceedings No.99


This book will be of great value to those interested in Papua New Guinean agriculture, land use, climate change, health, food and nutrition. The book contains 115 papers which were given at the Papua New Guinea Food and Nutrition 2000 conference. In addition to the papers, the book includes a summary, recommendations for policy and programs, a list of relevant conferences and workshops held in PNG over the last 30 years and a list of useful web sites.
Speaking Out! Voices of children and adolescents in East Asia and Pacific

Available from UNICEF Australia, AUD$16.50 (incl. GST, postage and handling). Tel: +61 (0)8 8212 9011, Email: unicef@unicef.org.au, Website: http://www.unicef.org

Speaking Out! is the first-ever survey in the East Asia and Pacific region to seek the opinion of children on some of the fundamental issues shaping their lives. The survey involved interviews with 10,073 children between the ages of 9 and 17 who were asked to give their candid views on a wide range of subjects related to their day-to-day lives. A major goal of the survey was to uphold one of the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child: that children's voices should be heard and that they should be active participants in the formulation of the policies and decisions that affect their lives. The release of the survey's preliminary findings in May 2001 at the Fifth Ministerial Consultation in East Asia and the Pacific on Shaping the Future for Children, held in Beijing, resulted in a great deal of international media coverage and even lively discussion in some of the region's capitals. It is hoped that the release of the survey's full results will promote even greater debate and serve to inform governments and policy makers, as well as parents and community leaders, and encourage them to give their children more active roles in decision-making processes.

Given the diversity of East Asia and the Pacific, it is difficult to generalise the survey's results across the many countries and territories in which it was carried out. These include Macau (with a population of about 500,000), the People's Republic of China (with 1.3 billion), and countries with per capita gross national products ranging from less than US$300 (Myanmar, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Cambodia) to more than US$20,000 (Australia and Singapore). The survey does, however, provide a range of children's opinions and views across this most heterogeneous of regions, as well as some common patterns within this great diversity.

Participation

One of the major cross-regional findings illustrates how important such a survey is. Children were asked how much free expression was valued within their home and how much their views mattered in decisions taken at the community level. In both instances, the responses were disappointing: less than half of respondents said that free expression is highly valued in their home, and a similar proportion thought that their and their friends' opinions are not considered in community matters that affect them.

Moreover, when children were asked how much they knew about their specific rights, knowledge about free expression and access to information is lower than for other rights. Sixty-one per cent said they knew "a lot" or "something" about the right to free expression, and only 50 per cent gave this same answer in regard to the right to information. These percentages are much lower than the average of 72 per cent of children who said they knew about the rights to education, play, love, health care and adequate food. This finding is reinforced by responses to another survey question on values given priority in children's homes. Freedom to "express whatever you think" was reported by only 2 out of 5 children to have "a lot" of importance in the family, while the values of not stealing, telling the truth, respecting and helping others were strongly promoted in 60 to 85 per cent of households.

The family

The survey confirmed, perhaps unsurprisingly to those familiar with this region, the importance of the family to children's security and well-being. The vast majority of children reported a good relationship with both parents: 95 per cent said their relationship with their mother was 'good' or 'very good', and the comparable figure for fathers was 89 per cent. Moreover, when asked whom they most admired, two of five children named one or the other parent. In addition, when asked what makes them happy, nearly half of all respondents answered 'when I am with my family'. Similarly, respect for the elderly, which is often considered to be characteristic of East Asian cultures, was reinforced by the survey respondents (almost three-quarters say that respect for the elderly is an important value they adhere to in their own lives). However, in several countries considered to have a strong Confucian influence, support for this concept was lower than average — most notably in the Republic of Korea, where only 13 per cent of respondents said this value is consistently applied by them.

School

After the family, the other main source of influence, satisfaction and stimulation for children was clearly the school. Lessons, teachers and doing well in school were identified as the topics most talked about with friends — by three-quarters of all respondents and by half or more in all countries or territories except Australia, Macau, Philippines and the Republic of Korea. Furthermore, about one quarter of respondents said getting good grades or doing well in school are sources of happiness or unhappiness. Around 15 per cent of children say they would like to become teachers, which was the most frequent response to the question: 'what type of profession/job would you like to have?'

Beyond home and school

Children's views of their world beyond home and school were much less clear. In most countries (with the notable exception of East Timor), religious or political figures were not among the people children most admire. In several countries (China, Viet Nam, Mongolia, Australia and Philippines) music
Danger of drugs and HIV/AIDS

Children were asked if they knew of friends or acquaintances about their own age who have experimented with tobacco, alcohol, glue sniffing, illegal drugs or other dangerous substances. They were also asked if they knew of friends or acquaintances who have become addicted to any of these substances. Smoking tobacco is the most commonly observed, both for experimentation (two out of five children) and for addiction (one in five). For alcohol, more than one quarter knew children who have tried it, but only 7 per cent of respondents reported knowing of addiction. Glue sniffing, illegal and other drugs were generally much less commonly observed, though there are some exceptions. In Australia, for example, about a quarter of respondents said they knew of children who have tried illegal drugs, and almost one in five reported being aware of glue sniffing among friends or acquaintances. All respondents were asked how much they knew about basic hygiene, the environment, sexual relations, HIV/AIDS and the danger of drugs. Nearly six out of ten older children in the region (younger ones were not asked) said they knew what a condom is, and less than half of them said they can get a condom if they needed one. Of those who knew what a condom was, only 6 per cent said they have ever used one.

Manmade disaster in the Solomon: report of the NG mission to Solomon Islands August—September 2000

This report describes the finding and conclusions of an Australian NGO mission to Solomon Islands in August and September 2000. The mission was organised by the Australian Council for Overseas Aid (ACFOA) and Development Services Exchange (DSE), the umbrella organisations for Australian and Solomon Islands NGOs, and funded by the agencies who provided the team members (APACE, APHEDA, AVI and NCCA). The purpose of the mission was to listen and discuss reconciliation and rehabilitation issues throughout the provinces and to make a rapid assessment of the need for Australian and international support. The team of four visited all nine provinces in the Solomons and held meetings with community groups, women and youth, church leaders, government representatives as well as representatives of displaced people. The report assesses the causes and impact of the conflict in the Solomon Islands that has brought the country to the brink of political and economic collapse. Following the signing of the Townsville Peace Agreement in October 2000, there are serious dangers of further disintegration but also opportunities for positive transformations. The report is intended to serve as a situation analysis to help guide a coordinated Australian NGO response in the short term.

Pacific Youth Strategy 2005

This is the first of what will become an annual report by the Dusseldorp Skills Forum on the situation of young Australians. It provides a national perspective on developments that have affected 15 to 19 year olds during the 1990s. Its scope is broad, encompassing schools, income support, public expenditure, vocational education, the labour market, and higher education. It aims to put credible and comprehensive information before policy makers as a basis for debate and decision making. The production of this volume has been a cooperative effort, undertaken in voluntary partnership with seven national research organisations. In addition, this collection of research papers has an unusual degree of coherence as the authors conducted their analyses against agreed briefs using a common analytical framework. Six national sectoral organisations have also provided reactions to the seven papers: the Australian Youth Policy and Action Coalition, the Australian Council of Social Service, the Evatt Foundation, the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Business Council of Australia. The report offers a more integrated understanding of the situation faced by young people making
the transition from full-time education to full-time work. It makes clear that conventional unemployment measures are too narrow as an indication of the scale and nature of the problems now facing youth. Similarly, it reveals that existing national targets are focused more on participation than outcomes, and are less than transparent in their interpretation. It is proposed that additional indicators be included in future reports, that focus on outcomes for young people and are readily comparable to international data produced by the OECD.

Two reports, the Depeeling Divide (1999) and its companion volume, Australia's Youth: Reality and Risk, directly and comprehensively address learning and work circumstances of young Australians. Reality and Risk laid the foundations with its focus on 15-19 year olds while The Depeeling Divide takes up the story with extended emphasis on young adults 20-24 years of age. Together, these reports represent an informed and challenging portrait of Australian 'youth' and are of fundamental significance to the principal millennium themes of nationhood and identity; economic standing and prospects of future prosperity; and personal and collective visions for future generations. These reports lay no claim to exclusive possession of the 'right answers' but offer that informed policy will always be better policy and endeavour to put informed policy options on the table.

Australia's Youth: Reality and Risk proposes several significant public policy responses to the realities and risks confronting young Australians. It presents a strong case for a fundamental shift in policy from youth management to youth development. Recommendations include: an absolute priority for all marginalised young people, not only the unemployed, but also those who are outside the labour force but not studying, and those in precarious part-time work; recognition of the pressing need to better address the problem of early school leavers and a commitment of resources needed to make it work; reform of upper secondary schooling, based on the needs of the majority of students who are not university-bound; a shift in priorities of vocational education towards strengthening school-industry programs by giving greater recognition and incentives to participating employers. In Reality and Risk the Dusseldorf Skills Forum outlines policy suggestions including a common entitlement for early school leavers: reforms to increase the holding power of schools and the creation of employment umbrellas for secure employment.

The State of the World's Children 2001: Childhood

UNICEF, ISBN 92 806 3633 2, UNICEF House, 3 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA, Email: address@unicef.org, Available online at: http://www.unicef.org/sowc01/

Drawing on reports from the world over, The State of the World's Children 2001 details the daily lives of parents and other caregivers who are striving in the face of war, poverty and the HIV/AIDS epidemic to protect the rights and meet the needs of these young children.

In addition, UNICEF annually publishes The Progress of Nations (ISBN: 92 806 3170 5), which ranks the nations of the world according to their performance in child health, nutrition, education, family planning, and progress for women.

The State of Pacific Youth 1998

Further information about this report is available from: The Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Pacific Youth Resource Bureau, BP DS, 98848, Noumea Cedex, New Caledonia, Tel: 687 260178, Fax: 687 263818, Email: Tanguay@spc.int, Website: http://www.spc.int/ youth

This report by UNICEF reveals a broad range of youth concerns including education, employment, unemployment, child labour, urban stress and crime, youth health, sexual and physical abuse, mental health and suicide, alcohol, drugs and risk, and youth rights. In addition, one of the key issues highlighted by the report that cuts across all areas is that of youth calling out to be heard, to be understood and to be supported through the difficult and changing times which surround them. Many young people in the Pacific see their opportunities decreasing rather than increasing. The rhetoric of rights and choices is increasingly frustrating to the growing numbers of Pacific Island youth as they hear about their rights to education and are 'pushed out' because there are not enough spaces in schools; they hear about their rights to information and health while they have little or no access to sexual health information and health information and services critical to their health and life; they hear about rights to participation and yet they feel that they are methodically excluded from important decisions that affect their lives. The State of Pacific Youth suggests some areas of intervention such as: moving beyond the 'talk' of the youth 'problem' and assessing the nature and degree of issues affecting young people at country and local levels; rethinking youth concerns not as the making of youth themselves, but as a consequence of the socio-economic, cultural and political context which surrounds them; considering what can be changed to create a more supportive environment to foster a productive youth work force rather than one where frustration and despair leads to suicide; collect and disaggregate data according to age and gender, and to try to assess the relevance and impact of various development concerns to the youth population; rethink existing programmes to make them more appropriate to the needs of young people; provide rehabilitation and counselling support for those who do commit crimes to give them the opportunity to not become repeat offenders because of lack of options; counselling on personal issues such as sexual health and learning to express and manage emotions critical to youth health; encourage the media to research and report on positive youth initiatives as well as bringing attention to the problematic issues they face and interview youth as 'key informants' of their own situation. These interventions can be seen as the beginning of a strategy for youth, based on the findings of the State of Pacific Youth.
A regular communique from the Pacific Youth Resource Bureau with information, updates and monitoring of Pacific youth development activities around the region. Also included are: messages from the UN; updates on progress of PSC Small Island States Fund activities; regional news; regular columns on education, leadership and promoting young achievers; the Bureau’s activities; announcements of forthcoming conferences and seminars and work with donors to secure resources supporting youth development.

Youthlink
Secretariat of the Pacific Community, ISSN 0294 7579/1021 0024, Pacific Youth Resource Bureau. BP D5, 98848 Noumea Cedex, New Caledonia, Tel: 687 260178, Fax: 687 263818, Email: TangataV@spc.int, http://www.spc.int/youth

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Real Lives
Published by Dr Indira Kapoor, Regional Director, South Asia Region, International Planned Parenthood Federation, Regent’s College, Inner Circle, Regent’s Park, London, NW1 4NS, UK, Tel: +44 020 7487 7977, Fax: +44 020 7487 7970, ISSN 1367-5486, Email: mperera@ippf.org, also available online at: http://www.ippf.org/regions/sar/html/index.htm

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Journal of Youth Studies
Editor: Andy Furlong, Department of Sociology, University of Glasgow, UK, published quarterly, ISSN 1367-6261, 2001 Subscription Rates: Institutional US$234/£142, Individual US$61/£38

Journal of Youth Studies is an international scholarly journal devoted to a theoretical and empirical understanding of young people’s experiences and life contexts. Over the last decade, changing socio-economic circumstances have had important implications for young people: new opportunities have been created, but the risks of marginalisation and exclusion have also become significant. This is the background against which Journal of Youth Studies has been launched, with the aim of becoming the key multidisciplinary journal for academics with interests relating to youth and adolescence. Journal of Youth Studies is focused upon young people within a range of contexts, such as education, the labour market and the family, and highlights key research themes such as the construction of identity, the use of leisure time, involvement in crime, consumption and political behaviour. The journal particularly encourages the submission of behaviour. The journal particularly encourages the submission of articles which highlight interconnections between the different spheres of young people’s lives (such the transition from school to work) and articles which offer a critical perspective on social policies which affect young people.

Network

This issue of Network addresses the following topics: sex education and other services for young adults to help reduce their risks of an unplanned pregnancy or infection from a sexually transmitted disease, with examples of programs for adolescents in Jamaica, Mali, Uganda, Zambia, Egypt, South Africa and India; ‘many youth face grim STD risks’ about adolescents needing skills and self confidence to abstain from sexual activity or to reduce their risks, with successful STD programs for adolescents listed; the success of reproductive health education in a variety of settings, including schools and community centers as sex education can delay first intercourse and encourage condom use among adolescents who are already sexually active; ‘do youth need information?’ summarises surveys among youth to evaluate their level of knowledge; ‘reproductive health web sites for youth’ provides a description of websites that specialise in adolescent reproductive health information; better services can reduce abortion risks.

Action News
Available from Action Network Australia, part of WVA, free of charge1 Vision Drive, Burwood East 3151, Mailing Address: GPO Box 399C, Melbourne 3001, contact Kerrie Engel. Tel: 03 92987251, Email: Engkel@wva.org.au

Quarterly newsletter of the World Vision Action Network, for people concerned for justice (suitable for senior students). Themes have included slavery, child labour and debt. Suggestions for reading and taking action are included.
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Organisations

The Commonwealth Secretariat

The Commonwealth Secretariat is the principal inter-governmental organisation of the Commonwealth. Together with its sister organisations, the Commonwealth Foundation (in London) and the Commonwealth of Learning (in Canada), the Secretariat is the Commonwealth's own civil service, effectively serving its 54 member governments.

The Commonwealth Secretariat is located in Marlborough House in London. It was established by Commonwealth Heads of Government in 1965. The Secretariat’s 306 employees in London are drawn from over 30 member countries and represent the Commonwealth collectively. Many are seconded from their respective governments.

The Secretariat’s work programme reflects the priorities of member governments. The three main areas are advancing fundamental political values; promoting sustainable development and gender and equality of opportunities.

Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP)

Special Advisor (Youth Affairs), Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House, Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HE, United Kingdom, Email: j.foster@commonwealth.int,
The Director CYP South Pacific Centre, PO Box 612, Tewantin, Qld 4565, Australia, Email: cypsp@campac.net.au

All Commonwealth countries are members of the CYP (membership is not automatic; countries opt to join). The CYP, whose activities are carried out through the Secretariat’s Gender and Youth Affairs Division and four CYP regional centres, is governed by Commonwealth ministers responsible for youth affairs who meet every three years. The CYP annual budget is approximately A$6 million. The plan within which all of CYP’s work takes place is The Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth

Empowerment (PAYE). It stems from the Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting in 1998 and Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 1999. Commonwealth Youth Ministers have agreed that ‘youth empowerment’ is the way forward for young people and their societies. Youth empowerment is something young people must achieve themselves. If it is ‘done for them’, it is not done at all. There is a difference between power handed down and power given. But the ‘enabling conditions’, the things needed to make the whole process possible, are very much the responsibility of governments and stakeholders.

CYP has helped develop ten objectives for governments to consider. CYP’s job is to support governments that are trying to develop and implement measures to promote the enfranchisement of young people and their participation in the economy; strengthen social support systems and collaboration between key stakeholders in youth empowerment; develop and strengthen youth ministries/departments, national youth policies, and legislative and constitutional provisions directed at youth affairs; promote positive role models and self-images for young people, and foster their sense of responsibility and self-esteem; promote the full participation of young people in decision making at all levels, including communities, and local, provincial and national governments; take positive and affirmative action to establish gender equality for girls and young women, and equality of treatment and outcomes for youth in special circumstances; promote a democratic, stable and peaceful environment in which the human rights of young people as defined in international covenants are fully implemented and in which they can fully accept their responsibilities; take action for the development and maintenance of human resources and intellectual capital; take measures to improve access to information and communications technology (ICT) and to provide young people with the skills to make use of it and take measures to broaden youth participation in sporting and cultural activities as a means of promoting positive
values and advancing human development.

All CYP’s activities are carried out under the PAYE, which says: ‘To support and complement the efforts of member governments, the CYP will seek to undertake the following actions, subject to resource availability: provide advice and technical assistance to governments on the implementation of the Plan of Action and assist governments in mainstreaming youth issues across a broad range of policies and programmes; support the formulation, updating and implementation of national youth policies through technical assistance and capacity building; promote the establishment of youth networks such as national youth councils at national and regional levels; promote the participation of young people in economic activity through the implementation of such programmes as the Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative, micro-credit management systems, and entrepreneurial training; include young people in programmes to promote such fundamental Commonwealth values as democracy, human rights, peace and gender equality; promote the use of distance learning as a means of national and regional capacity-building in youth development; strengthen sporting contacts throughout the Commonwealth and promote the use of sport and cultural activities to empower young people; increase awareness of youth issues through the development of information and communications systems, especially using new technologies such as the Internet, and the production of training materials and other publications; assist governments in the ratification and implementation of international human rights agreements pertaining to the rights of young women and men, including youth in special circumstances; develop and implement programmes to support young women and young people in special circumstances, including refugees, street children, and young women and men living with HIV/AIDS.’

fem’LINKpacific: media initiatives for women

Coordinator, Sharon Bhagwan Rold, PO Box 2439, Government Building, Suva, Fiji, Tel: +679 307207/Mobile 24871, Fax: +679 308059 Att A Patalatau or M Dutta +679 305099, Email: femLINKpacific@i.com. fj, femlinkpac@i.com.fj

fem’LINKpacific: Media Initiatives for Women is a Suva based women’s NGO committed to ‘linking women with the media’, bringing the stories of women and their communities to the forefront, and sharing these stories with the rest of the society.

fem’LINKpacific hopes that this community centered initiative will not only increase awareness of critical social, political and economic issues, but also serve as a means to promote reconciliation and peace in Fiji.

Policy network on youth employment (see also electronic fora)

Steven Miller, Secretary, Joint Secretariat to the Secretary-General’s Youth Employment Policy Network, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, Two United Nations Plaza, Room DC2-1384, New York, NY 10017, USA, Tel: +1 212 963 7535, Email: millers@un.org, http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/youthemployment/index.html

The Youth Employment Network was created in recognition of the urgency to address youth unemployment, particularly in developing countries. It has its roots in the Secretary-General’s Millennium Summit Report, in which he stated that: ‘together with the heads of the World Bank and the International Labour Organisation, I am convening a high-level policy network on youth employment—drawing on the most

Commonwealth Institute

David French, Chief executive, Commonwealth Institute, Kensington High Street, London W8 6NQ, United Kingdom, Tel: +44 (0)20-7602 7374, Email: information@commonwealth.org.uk, Website: http://www.commonwealth.org.uk

The Commonwealth is an international voluntary association of independent states, which includes over a quarter of the world’s population and land surface. The Commonwealth Institute is an independent pan-Commonwealth agency based in London. Its mission is to promote and celebrate the modern Commonwealth through programmes in education, business, arts, culture and public affairs. It is funded by public support, sponsorship and by revenue from its businesses and is a registered charity in the United Kingdom. The Commonwealth Institute’s vision is to work with young people across the Commonwealth so that they grow up inquisitive about other cultures as well as their own, at ease with diversity and confident as global citizens.

fem’LINKpacific’s current community video initiatives include fem’TALK, a community video project which is distributed through women’s organisations and other civil society partners, and UpLINK, a regular e-news update. The video ‘fem’ TALK’ has been distributed to over 50 women’s groups, their civil society partners and political parties, to assist women to highlight and share their common concerns. The community video, titled ‘Not Just Sweet Talk’ features more than 20 women and young women addressing topics such as how a woman can best use her vote, poverty, hunger, housing, health, education, unemployment, young women’s issues, violence against women / women against rape, developing people-centered policies, leadership qualities and a common vision for Fiji. The pilot video production was supported by the people of Australia through the International Women’s Development Agency and AusAID.

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The Human Rights Council of Australia Inc

PO Box L23, South Maroubra, NSW 2035, Australia, Tel/Fax: +61 (0)2 9311 0159 Email: andre@mpx.com.au, (André Frankovits), Website: http://www.hrca.org.au/

The Human Rights Council of Australia Inc is a private non-government organisation which promotes understanding of and respect for human rights for all persons without discrimination through adherence to the International Bill of Rights, and other human rights instruments, internationally and within Australia. The Council was established in 1978 and has for many years, under the leadership of James Dunn, been an important link between the Australian human rights movement and human rights activists in other parts of the world. The council is affiliated with the International League of Human Rights and has special consultative status with ECOSOC. The Human Rights Council of Australia Inc is incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1984 (NSW) and is a non-profit organisation. The membership of the council remains small by intention, so that it can play a significant catalytic role as a human rights think tank but with an activist bent.

The Foundation for Young Australians

Level 12, Bourke Place, 600 Bourke Street, Melbourne, Victoria 3000, GPO Box 239E, Melbourne Victoria 3001, Tel: +61 (0)3 9670 5436, Fax: +61 (0)3 9609 3246, Email: headoffice@youngaustralians.org, Website: http://www.youngaustralians.org/

The Foundation for Young Australians was formed in June 2000 when The Australian Youth Foundation and The Queen's Trust for Young Australians merged. The new foundation was launched by the Prime Minister, The Hon John Howard MP The Foundation for Young Australians is a not-for-profit organisation committed to investing in excess of AUD$3 million each year on providing opportunities for young people. Fifty per cent of funding is committed to programmes to benefit disadvantaged young people and 50 per cent spent on programmes to develop leadership potential and promote the pursuit of excellence. At least 20 per cent of the foundation’s total funding is committed to programmes that benefit Indigenous young people. The principal aims of the foundation centre on three objectives: the development of programmes to assist disadvantaged young people; the promotion of the pursuit of excellence in young people and the development of leadership potential in young people.

Dusseldorp Skills Forum (DSF)

Level 2, 13-15 Smail St, Ultimo, NSW, 2007, Australia, Tel: +61 (0)2 9212 5800, Fax: +61 (0)2 9212 1533/9699 8377, Email: info@dsf.org.au, Website: http://www.dsf.org.au/

The Dusseldorp Skills Forum (DSF) is an independent, non-profit association with a charter to stimulate innovative educational developments, to focus upon the importance of the workforce in the continuing development of Australia, and to reach out to the wider community to promote the formation of skills and personal effectiveness, particularly in young people. Established in 1988 on the retirement of Mr G.J. Dusseldorp, founder of the Lend Lease Group of Companies, by 1989 the forum was up and running. The forum is about innovation and change and active engagement with the contemporary worlds of learning and work. It is not a grant-giving body or simply a think tank that has no connection to practice, although the forum is certainly interested in better ideas.
The Institute for Development of Educational Activities, Inc. (IDEA) was created in 1965 for the continuous improvement of elementary and secondary schools in the United States. IDEA is a private, non-profit foundation dedicated to improving education. IDEA fulfills its mission in three ways: by providing educators with a broader perspective; by empowering schools to change; and by working hands-on with individual schools. IDEA continues to explore life-long learning opportunities that will promote the long-term educational excellence of schools and communities. The educators at IDEA are committed to the empowerment of schools for continuous improvement. As administrators, teachers and communities face the educational challenges of a changing and increasingly complex world, IDEA provides leadership, encouragement, and support through a full range of programmes, activities, and processes. IDEA's goal is to help school districts articulate the possibilities, apply the best practices, and create the vision that will deliver real value to their own school systems. IDEA works within the context of the community, involving parents and other stakeholders, to capture diverse points of view and to maximise the contributions of the community for learning. Education and its issues will continue to change with the world, so IDEA will continue its pioneering tradition, remaining a learning group that seeks out new knowledge, new solutions, new ideas, which are fundamental to continuous improvement.

Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG)

The Schumacher Centre for Technology and Development, Bourton Hall, Bourton-on-Dunsmore, Rugby, CV23 9QZ, UK, Tel: +44 (0)1788 661100, Fax: +44 (0)1788 661101, Email: idg@itdg.org.uk, Website: http://www.itdg.org

Intermediate Technology Development Group is an international non-government organisation which specialises in helping people to use technology for practical answers to poverty. It was founded in 1966 by the radical economist Dr E.F. Schumacher to prove that his philosophy of 'small is beautiful' could bring real and sustainable improvements to people's lives. ITDG is a charity registered in the United Kingdom which works directly in four regions of the developing world – Latin America, East Africa, Southern Africa and South Asia, with particular concentration on Peru, Kenya, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal. In these countries, ITDG works with poor communities to develop appropriate technologies in food production, agriprocessing, energy, transport, small enterprise development, shelter, small-scale mining and disaster mitigation. Lessons from ITDG's grassroots experience are spread through consultancy services, publishing activities, education, policy and research, and through an international technical enquires service.

International Labour Organisation (ILO)

ILO, 4 route des Morillons, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland, Email: bib@ilo.org, Website: http://www.ilo.org, Bureau of Public Information (PRESSE), Tel: +41 22 799 7940, Fax: +41 22 799 8577

Since its creation in 1919, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) has always attached particular importance to its standard-setting activities. Its 174 conventions, and 181 recommendations cover areas that include basic human rights, employment, social policy, labour relations, labour administration, working conditions and social protection.

South Centre

17-19 chemin du Champ d'Anier, 1209 Petit Sion, Geneva, Switzerland, CP 228, 1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland, Tel: +41 22 791 80 50, Fax: +41 22 798 85 31, Email: south@southcentre.org, Website: http://www.southcentre.org

The South Centre is an inter-governmental organisation of developing countries that started with formation of the South Commission in 1987. It is intended to meet
the need for analysis of development problems and experience, as well as to provide intellectual and policy support required by developing countries for collective and individual action in the international arena. The South Centre came formally into being as an inter-governmental body of developing countries on 31 July 1995, when the Intergovernmental Agreement to establish the centre came into force. Currently, 46 countries are members of the South Centre. The centre, however, works for the benefit of the South as a whole, making efforts to ensure that all developing countries and interested groups and persons have access to its publications and the results of its work, irrespective of membership. The South Centre has grown out of the work and experience of the South Commission and its follow-up office, and from recognition of the need for enhanced South-South cooperation. It is intended to meet the need for analysis of development problems and experience, as well as to provide intellectual and policy support required by developing countries for collective and individual action in the international arena. The South Centre publishes a quarterly newsletter and a fortnightly bulletin.

Save the Children Australia (SCA)

PO Box 767, Hawthorn, Victoria, 3122, Australia, Tel: +61 (0)3 9819 4722, Fax: +61 (0)3 9819 4733, Email: scja@scfa.asn.au, Website: http://www.savethechildrenaustralia.com/

Save the Children branches were established in Australia in 1919 to support victims of the first world war. In 1985, the state divisions agreed to form a national organisation of Save the Children Australia (SCA) whose primary objective was to implement development programmes overseas, while state offices undertook local programmes in Australia. SCA national and state offices formally came together as one organisation on 1st July 2001. Save the Children Australia is registered under the Companies’ Act: has the Governor-General of Australia as national patron; has an voluntary board overseeing its operations; is independent and with no political or religious affiliations; is recognised by the taxation authorities as a charitable body; is a member of the Australian Council for Overseas Aid (ACFOA); and is a subscriber to the ACFOA Code of Conduct. Save the Children Australia is a member of the International Save the Children Alliance, which is an association of some 26 Save the Children organisations around the world. Through the alliance, Save the Children promotes the shared commitment to the betterment of children, their families and their environment. Save the Children Australia has specific responsibility for making a reality of children’s rights in the Asia-Pacific region through community-based Australian programmes and overseas development projects, by providing long-term support working within four principal children’s rights-to survival, development, protection and participation. Save the Children Australia is based in Melbourne, Victoria and runs projects in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Vietnam, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. Its programmese receive funding from the community, the Australian government aid programme (AusAID), Save the Children alliance partners and other sources.

The Australian Reproductive Health Alliance (ARHA)

PO Box 3937, Weston, ACT 2611, Australia, Tel: +61 (0)2 62874422, Email: arha@arha.org.au , Website: http://www.arha.org.au/

The Australian Reproductive Health Alliance aims to promote public support, both within Australia and internationally, for the improvement in the well-being and status of women and the development of reproductive health in families and individuals. To achieve this, ARHA activities include production of educational materials; organisation of seminars and workshops; preparation of briefing materials for members of the press; networking with parliamentarians, government departments and other interested parties and support and promotion of alliances of opinion makers with comparable aims and objectives. ARHA also promotes knowledge, education and research relating to the development of family planning and other reproductive health services, particularly the needs of indigenous and young people in Australia and internationally. ARHA identifies and supports, either independently or with partner organisations, specific development projects which promote reproductive health and enhance the status of women and girls and promotes, maintains and extends the interest of ARHA members in a broad range of issues concerning reproductive health and its role in development. ARHA is currently developing an international programme to further the aims of the ICPD by working in partnership with Pacific island NGOs on public education programmes on reproductive health, reproductive rights and sexuality education.

Family Health International (FHI)

PO Box 13950, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709, USA, Tel: +1 919 5447040, Fax: +1 919 5447261, Website: http://www.fhi.org/

Established in 1971, Family Health International is a non-profit organisation with 500 employees serving clients in more than 40 countries. Through its global reach, FHI is committed to helping women and men obtain access to safe, effective, and affordable family planning services and methods; to preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases; and to improving the health of women and children. FHI Corporate Report 2000, available online at: http://www.fhi.org/en/g en/c orpre p/ corpre p2000/ corp repintro.html provides examples of work in these areas. FHI operates in collaboration with a worldwide network of government agencies, research institutions, non-government organisations, and private sector entities, offering a broad spectrum of technical services ranging from clinical services to advising governments on national health policy. FHI contributes to significant advances in public health through research, training and information to improve family planning and reproductive health service
delivery and HIV/AIDS and STD prevention and care programmes. More than 1,500 materials are available as full text on FHI's website, including books, reports, case studies, research summaries, periodicals and training materials. Limited quantities of some FHI publications are available at no cost to developing country health professionals and institutions, or at cost to others. FHI publishes Network, in English, French, Spanish and Arabic, a quarterly bulletin on family planning and reproductive health.

UNICEF

3 United Nations Plaza, 44th Street between 1st and 2nd Avenues, New York, NY, USA, Tel: +1 212 3267000, Fax: +1 212 8877465, Website: www.unicef.org

UNICEF Australia: Email: unicef@unicef.org.au

For more than 53 years UNICEF has been helping governments, communities and families make the world a better place for children. UNICEF is part of the United Nations system, with a mandate and mission to advocate for children's rights and help meet their needs. In 1996 the UNICEF Executive Board reaffirmed the mission, saying that UNICEF is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and strives to establish children's rights as enduring ethical principles and international standards of behaviour towards children. UNICEF now works in 161 countries, areas and territories on solutions to the problems plaguing poor children and their families and on ways to realise their rights. Its activities are as varied as the challenges it faces, encouraging the care and stimulation that offer the best possible start in life, helping prevent childhood illness and death, making pregnancy and childbirth safe, combating discrimination and cooperating with communities to ensure that girls as well as boys attend school. UNICEF was created at the end of World War II to relieve the suffering of children in war-torn Europe and it continues today to respond rapidly in crises, helping recreate a sense of stability and normalcy, re-opening schools and establishing safe spaces for children when armed conflict and war, flood and other disruptions occur. The current Executive Director is Carol Bellamy of the USA.

UNICEF Australia works to make a difference for women and children on the basis of need, without discrimination. Under the framework of the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF Australia assists children and adolescents to improve their health and education status, be protected from abuse and neglect and express their opinions freely. Currently UNICEF Australia supports 31 overseas projects that promote and protect the rights of children throughout the world. Early in 2001, UNICEF Australia provided financial assistance to conduct the first-ever survey in the East Asia and Pacific Region to seek the opinions of children on some of the fundamental issues shaping their lives (see Speaking Out! in reports and monographs section in this issue).

World Vision Australia (WVA)

1 Vision Drive, Burwood East 3151, GPO Box 399C, Melbourne 3001, Australia, Tel: +61 (0)3 9287 2299, Fax: +61 (0)3 9287 2427, Email: Customer Service Centre (csc@wva.org.au), resources available from WVA's Resource Centre, Email: info@wva.org.au

World Vision is an international Christian relief and development organisation working worldwide to promote the well-being of all people, especially children. World Vision seeks to serve people who are poor, regardless of race, religion, or ethnic origin. Established in 1950 to care for orphans in Asia, World Vision has grown to embrace the larger issues of community development and advocacy for the poor in its mission to help children and their families build sustainable futures. Working on six continents, World Vision is one of the largest Christian relief and development organisations in the world. The heart of World Vision's work is helping communities build stronger and healthier relationships. The absence of such relationships impoverishes communities.

World Vision functions as a partnership of inter-dependent national entities, which have their own boards or advisory councils to oversee their operations. A common mission statement and shared core values bind the partnership. By signing the Covenant of Partnership, each partner agrees to abide by common policies and standards. Partners hold each other accountable through an ongoing system of peer review. The partnership office, located in Geneva, Bangkok, Nairobi, Vienna, Los Angeles, Melbourne, and San Jose, coordinate the strategic and global operations of the organisation and represent World Vision in the international arena. WVA is part of World Vision's international partnership with offices in many countries, dedicated to improving the lives of children, families and communities living in poverty. As well as providing relief in emergency situations, WVA works on long-term development projects that address the causes of poverty and help communities move to a level of self-sufficiency. WVA resources are supplied by the Australian Government, individuals, corporations, charitable foundations and churches. Over 70 cents in every dollar raised goes to overseas projects in 56 countries. The rest stays in Australia, to help improve the lives of Indigenous Australians, for administration and fundraising costs and to contribute to public education. WVA's education resources include resource packs for high school students: Learning to be global citizens, AUD$8.00, with the topics of children of war, child labour, children's rights, land mines, overseas aid, 'trash or treasure, the way the world treats its children' and; Behind the smiles, a resource kit exploring poverty issues through case studies from Australia, Ecuador, Malawi, Rwanda, Romania, India and Thailand and including various activities such as a webbing game and forced choice exercises, cost AUD$11.00.

Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA): youth action

200 Promenade du Portage, Hull, Quebec, Canada K1A 0G4, Tel: 819 994 5399, Fax: 819 953 2845, for the hearing and speech impaired: 819953-5023, Email: info@acdi-
This division of the Canadian Partnership Branch focuses on youth (15 to 30). It has three major functions. The first function is operational in nature and consists of managing the International Youth Internship Program, which is part of the Government of Canada's Youth Employment Strategy; this program gives young Canadian graduates aged 19 to 30 the opportunity to spend several months overseas on a shared-cost professional internship. The Youth Action Unit is a member of the inter-departmental committee that manages all international internship programmes available as part of the Government of Canada's Youth Employment Strategy [http://www.youth.gc.ca]. The second function is more strategic and political in nature, it aims to involve young adults in international cooperation, in Canada, in developing countries, and in countries in transition. Our World Too, published in 1999, discusses the Canadian component of this involvement. Youth Action Division takes advantage of the International Cooperation Days to raise the issue of youth and international cooperation. In June 2001, a panel on this issue was organised to discuss ‘innovative community development with and for youth’. In 1999, another panel on youth and development was presented: Youth: The Future of International Cooperation. The third and more recent function is to manage special CIDA projects that have a significant youth component, but do not fall under the Youth Employment Strategy. These projects offer a great variety of projects both for Canadian youth and for youth from developing countries or in transition. CIDA has many other initiatives for young people from Canada or from developing countries. These initiatives often form part of development programmes or projects executed by CIDA’s partners.

World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS)

WAGGGS aims to ensure personal development through community service activities. WAGGGS believes it is just as important that a young woman leading a beach clean-up campaign, or HIV/AIDS awareness training in her school, gains personally from the experience as well as helping others. The WAGGGS mission encapsulates this dual role, aiming to enable girls and young women to develop their fullest potential as responsible citizens of the world. WAGGGS runs a project called the ‘Health of Adolescent Refugees Project’ (HARP) in Uganda and Zambia, with partner organisations UNFPA and Family Health International. WAGGGS also provides training and development which ensure meaningful participation on an equal basis. WAGGGS held an international leadership training seminar for young leaders in Taiwan in 2000, with over 30 young leaders attending from around the region, joined by other representatives from other NGOs.

Youth programmes

The Pacific Youth Resource Bureau

The Pacific Youth Resource Bureau (the PYRB) is a programme within the Socio-Economic Resources Division of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community based in New Caledonia. Email: Tangata Vainerere TangataV@spc.int (see article by Tangata Vainerere in this issue)

Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development Program (AYAD)

The Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development program (AYAD) aims to strengthen mutual understanding between Australia and the countries of the Asia Pacific and make a positive contribution to development in the region. AYAD places skilled young Australians, aged 18–30, on short-term assignments (3–12 months) in developing countries throughout Asia and the Pacific. It is anticipated that youth ambassadors will exchange skills with local counterparts and bring back to Australia a practical appreciation of the cultures, economies and development needs of countries in the region. There are two AYAD departures every year, one in March and one in August. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon Alexander Downer, launched AYAD in 1998 after the Prime Minister announced the initiative in the same year. AYAD has placed a total of 457 young Australians overseas and plans to place 240 overseas each year.

Further information is available on the AYAD website: www.ausaid.gov.au/AYAD

Wan Smolbag

Wan Smolbag Theatre, PO Box 1024, Port Vila, Vanuatu, Tel: +678 27119 124397, Fax: +678 25308, Email: Smolbag@vanuatu.com.vu or jopet@vanuatu.com.vu (see article by Peter Walker and Jo Dorrit in this issue)

This programme was commenced in Vanuatu with funding and technical support from the British Aid Programme. Today, Wan Smolbag, a community theatre group, employs over 40 young people in its various projects in Vanuatu. In addition to the core group in Vila, there are three theatre groups based at Smolbag Haos and two on the outer islands. There is a research office and, for the last two years, a reproductive health clinic built onto the back of the theatre and staffed by three nurses and eight youth-outreach workers, plus a voluntary network of some 100 turtle monitors around the country. The clinic and the monitors are the results of community responses to theatre projects. Oxfam New Zealand funded the building of a radio studio and Wan Smolbag now produces a weekly radio soap and, with EU funding, a series of documentaries on the law called ‘Tolsave long Loo’. Wan Smolbag provides creative employment for a large number of young people in an atmosphere that encourages them to take decisions and work constructively together. This also has
an effect on the hundreds of people who have spent time at workshops run by Wan Smolbag at their Vila centre. Wan Smolbag produces educational videos on topical themes such as HIV/AIDS, reproductive health, teenage pregnancy, disability, environmental sustainability, domestic violence and other issues affecting and involving young people in the Pacific.

The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)

Tel: +41 22 799 8181, Fax: +41 22 799 8771, Email: ipec@ilo.org. Website: http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipec/index.htm

IPEC’s aim is to work towards the progressive elimination of child labour by strengthening national capacities to address child labour problems, and by creating a worldwide movement to combat it. IPEC’s priority target groups are bonded child labourers, children in hazardous working conditions and occupations and children who are particularly vulnerable, i.e. very young working children (below 12 years of age), and working girls. The political will and commitment of individual governments to address child labour in cooperation with employers’ and workers’ organisations, other NGOs and relevant parties in society — such as universities and the media — is the starting point for all IPEC action. Sustainability is built in from the start through an emphasis on in-country ownership. Support is given to partner organisations to develop and implement measures which aim at preventing child labour, withdrawing children from hazardous work and providing alternatives, and improving working conditions as a transitional measure towards the elimination of child labour. A phased and multi-sectoral strategy is applied, consisting of the following steps: motivating a broad alliance of partners to acknowledge and act against child labour; carrying out a situational analysis to find out about child labour problems in a country; assisting with developing and implementing national policies on child labour problems; strengthening existing organisations and setting up institutional mechanisms; creating awareness on the problem nation-wide, in communities and workplaces; promoting the development and application of protective legislation; supporting direct action with (potential) child workers for demonstration purposes; replicating and expanding successful projects into the programmes of partners; and mainstreaming child labour issues into socioeconomic policies, programmes and budgets.

Child-to-Child programme

The concept of Child-to-Child was developed in the late seventies. It was based on the observation that older children in developing countries play an important role in the rearing and care of their younger siblings. The Child-to-Child programme rests on the assumption that children have the will, the skill and the motivation to help educate one another and can be trusted to do so. The Child-to-Child Trust (London) believes that children can be partners in promoting and preserving the health of themselves and their families. This is done by encouraging and enabling children to play an active and responsible role in all the aspects of planning implementation and evaluation of health promotion activities. The Child-to-Child approach asks children to be fully involved (alongside adults) in health promotion, the process of learning health promotion, and putting into practice what they have learned. As a result they are more knowledgeable, responsible and better placed to contribute fully to community and school-based health initiatives. Child-to-Child represents a variety of strategies but consistently emphasises the role of children as partners in health promotion. Child-to-Child does not imply the use of children in adult roles or as vehicles of information and treatment. The children are expected to internalise the knowledge and enjoy the experience of sharing it with others. The child is seen as a participant in the educational process and not just a passive learner. The Child-to-Child philosophy enables easy transmission of health education and practices by children: to their parents; to their extended families; to other children; and to the community at large.

Oxfam Community Aid Abroad Youth Programme: The International Youth Parliament (IYP)

Oxfam Community Aid Abroad (OCAA) focuses on economic, social and cultural rights within the context of a rights approach to development. The International Youth Parliament (IYP) is a network linking young people around the world, supporting young leaders and activists and listening to their perspectives on grass-roots, local, regional and international development. The IYP is run by young people, in response to issues that young people are facing in our world and is a human face of globalisation, connecting people to each other to create positive action. The IYP programme follows six key goals: promotion of youth participation and advocacy; network facilitation, to promote the exchange of ideas, strategies and best practice on youth initiatives for sustainable development, participation and advocacy for human rights; support for individual action plans in the form of advice, information and referrals; establishment of an information clearing house; contribution to Oxfam's work with young people internationally and preparation for a second IYP event within the next four years. Supported by the IYP Secretariat and Staff based in OCAA's Sydney office, the IYP network of action partners is implementing innovative action plans worldwide, such as: hosting a regional African youth parliament, Kenya, 2002; campaign for peace education programmes in Malawi and HIV/AIDS awareness and treatment programmes in Honduras. The IYP provides opportunity for young activists to communicate together, exchange information, strategies and skills. Action partners are linked electronically by regional and thematic lists established by OCAA, and receive a fortnightly newsletter which reports on progress of various actions and shares knowledge and experiences. IYP is creating online and offline training modules in areas such as advocacy, networking or fundraising in order to assist the implementation of action plans promoting positive social change. IYP believes young people have a crucial role in building an equitable, sustainable and peaceful world.
Voices of Youth
http://www.unicef.org/voices

Voices of Youth is an electronic discussion forum about the future and has been developed as part of UNICEF's 50th Anniversary celebration. Contributions are invited to discuss how this world can become a place where the rights of every child are protected, that is, the right to live in peace, to have decent shelter, to be healthy and well-nourished, to have clean water, to play, to go to school, and to be protected from violence, abuse and exploitation. There are three forums on the website: 'the meeting place' - to share ideas about important world issues; 'the learning place' - to learn about activities to do and problems to solve, and 'the teachers' place' - where teachers (and others) can discuss rights education and global issues.

Global Youth Network
http://youthwhocare.com/about.html

Global Youth Network is a non profit organisation composed of a team of young people who strive to improve the world. It is maintained by a group of young volunteers from all over the world who share the mission of encouraging others to help make the world a better place; helping others with problems via email advice; educating youth on problems in the world; providing a meeting place for youth and allowing a meeting place where young people can express themselves freely. Global Youth Network was founded in March 1999 by a 17 year old called Areta W. With support, Global Youth Network has been successful in reaching out to other individuals around the world.

Gender, Science and Technology Gateway List
WIGSAT at shuyer@wigsat.org

The GST Gateway List is an announcement list for additions and updates to the Gender, Science and Technology Gateway. The Gateway is a clearing house of resources, information, activities and partners in gender, science and technology for development. It is maintained by Women in Global Science and Technology on behalf of the Gender Advisory Board, UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development. Topics covered include gender equity in science and technology, gender disaggregated data and indicators. The GST Gateway List is used exclusively for announcements and updates on new links and resources added to the Gateway and related activities. It is not a discussion list. To subscribe, send a message to GSTGateway-announce@list.wigsat.org with "subscribe" in the subject line of your message.

Policy network on youth employment

The Youth Employment Network was created in recognition of the urgency to address youth unemployment, particularly in developing countries. It has its roots in the Secretary-General's Millennium Summit Report, in which he stated that: 'Together with the heads of the World Bank and the International Labour Organization, I am convening a high-level policy network on youth employment drawing on the most creative leaders in private industry, civil society and economic policy to explore imaginative approaches to this difficult challenge. I will ask this policy network to propose a set of recommendations that I can convey to world leaders within a year. The possible sources of solutions will include the Internet and the informal sector, especially the contribution that small enterprises can make to employment generation.' ("We the Peoples: The Role of the United Nations in the Twenty-First Century")

Youth Forum Online
http://yacvic.org.au/youth_forum/, Email: julian@df.org.au, Tel: +61 (0)3 9639 6611

An online community for researchers, practitioners, policy makers and young people interested in the learning and work circumstances of young Australians. The Youth Forum Online has a searchable archive of the discussion that takes place on the online mailing list, regular guests who provide short issues papers, a library of resources contributed by participants on the discussion list, and a 'real time' facilitated chat room to create an interactive space for individuals and organisations to build a growing body of knowledge about the key themes of the Reality and Risk and Deepening Divide reports.

Voice
http://www.ippf.org/youth/voicelintro.htm

Voice introduces the IPPF youth manifesto and gives people ideas on how it can work for them. The IPPF/youth manifesto highlights the actions young people see as important for meeting their needs for reproductive and sexual health, and ensuring their rights. The manifesto is not only young people's vision for the future; it has been adopted by IPPF at its highest decision making levels. IPPF and its member family planning associations are working hard to ensure that this vision becomes a reality. The IPPF youth manifesto was written at the end of 1998 by 16 members of the IPPF Youth Committee, young people from all regions of the world involved in sexual and reproductive health programmes. It was debated and approved by 43 young people from around the world at the IPPF Youth Parliament, and endorsed by the IPPF's Members Assembly.

The Global Movement for Children
http://www.gmfc.org/
The Global Movement for Children is a force for change, calling for people throughout the world to take action and protect the rights of children. The core of the movement will be adults and children, working together. Young people have important things to contribute, and they must be given every opportunity to speak. The movement realises that the decisions it makes will affect the lives of children. Children, therefore, must participate at every step of the decision-making processes. The Movement has two international champions of human rights, Nelson Mandela and Graca Machel, heading the Leadership Initiative, reaching out to leaders from all parts of the world and all sectors of society to jump-start the Global Movement. In March 2001, the movement asked the world to 'Say Yes for Children'. Through this campaign, children and adults from around the world will be able to speak out on ten imperative actions which must be undertaken in order to improve the lives of children. The results of the campaign will be presented in September 2001 at the Special Session on Children, held by the United Nations General Assembly in New York. The movement will then take the message of the Special Session to the world, and hold leaders accountable for the agreements they have made.

ReliefGuide: The Online Gateway to Global Aid

PO. Box 13089, 3507 LB Utrecht, The Netherlands, Tel: +31 30 658 64 57, Fax: +31 30 658 64 58, Website http://www.reliefguide.com or email: mail to:info@reliefguide.com

ReliefGuide serves as an independent intermediary bringing demand and supply in the aid sector together via an Internet platform. ReliefGuide focuses on the aid community (NGO's, UN, governments etc.) and the commercial sector (suppliers, consultants, researchers) as it believes that both aid agencies and the commercial sector can benefit from the intermediary function of its website. Website services include tender pages; free access to ReliefGuide's database; disaster pages containing aid related information about operations, logistics and country information within 24 hours of a disaster occurring; assistance and consultancy services; aid-related information (links, news, information and vacancies); a 24 hour online global network and a bi-weekly newsletter about aid operations and new supplier updates. ReliefGuide's services are free of charge.

The Asia Pacific Research Network (APRN)

APRN Secretariat, 3/F SCC Bldg., 4427 Int. Old Sta. Mesa, Manila, 1016 Philippines, Tel: 632 713 2729/632 713 2737, Fax: 632 716 0108, e-mail: secretariat@aprn.org/Website http://www.aprn.org/

APRN is a network leading research NGO center from across Asia and the Pacific, based in Manila, with the main purpose of exchanging information on international issues, as well as experiences, technologies, and methods in research. APRN currently has 27 member organisations from 14 countries and convenes a yearly conference on a central theme. An APRN newsletter is available online.

AIDWATCH

PO Box 652 Woollahra, NSW 2025, Australia, Tel: +61 2 9387 5210, Fax: +61 2 9386 1497, e-mail: aidwatch@mpx.com.au, Website http://www.aidwatch.org

AIDWATCH is a community-based, not for profit, activist group that campaigns on Australian involvement in overseas aid and development projects, programmes and policies. AIDWATCH works to ensure that aid money reaches the right people, communities and their environments, in conjunction with support partner groups and communities in low-income countries, predominantly in Asia Pacific. While AIDWATCH supports communities overseas, it also aims to inform the Australian community of how their aid dollar is being spent and what impact it is having. AIDWATCH believes that increased awareness of the reality of international aid will lead to aid programmes that truly benefit the local population.

The Global Development Briefing

http://www.developmentex.com/defer

The Global Development Briefing is a free weekly service that publishes an independent email newsletter dedicated to bringing together people from around the world to focus on development.

Anti-Slavery International

Thomas Clarkson House, The Stableyard, Broomgrove Road, London SW9 9TL UK. Tel: +44(0)20 7501 8920 Fax: +44(0)20 7738 4110, e-mail:info@antislavery.org

Website: http://www.antislavery.org

Anti-Slavery International is the world’s oldest international human rights organisation, set up in 1839. Anti-Slavery is committed to eliminating slavery through research, raising awareness and campaigning. It works with local organisations to put pressure on governments to acknowledge slavery and to take action to abolish its practice. The website has links to resources on action against child labour and related issues.
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Style
Quotation marks should be single; double within single. Spelling: English (OED with ‘-ise’ endings).

Notes
(a) Simple references without accompanying comments to be inserted in brackets at appropriate place in text, e.g. (Yang 1989).
(b) References with comments should be kept to a minimum and appear as endnotes, indicated consecutively through the article by numerals in superscript.

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If references are used, a reference list should appear at the end of the text. It should contain all the works referred to, listed alphabetically by author’s surname (or name of sponsoring body where there is no identifiable author). Authors should make sure that there is a strict correspondence between the names and years in the text and those on the reference list. Book titles and names of journals should be italicised or underlined; titles of articles should be in single inverted commas. Style should follow: author’s surname, forename and/or initials, date, title of publication, publisher and place of publication. Journal references should include volume, number (in brackets), date and page numbers. Examples:


Publication/resource listings
An important function of the Network is to keep members up-to-date with the latest literature and other resources dealing with development-related topics. To make it as easy as possible for readers to obtain the publications listed, please include price information (including postage) and the source from which materials can be obtained.