



# INTERCOM

A Newsletter for students and others contributing to the  
Commonwealth Youth Programme

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July 2006

## From the Editor

Hallo to you all, I hope this CYP Intercom find you safe and well. There has been a lot happening. The most important event on the CYP calendar however is the Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting that was held earlier this year. The CYMM is responsible for not only the strategic direction and funding of the CYP Diploma, but influences direction on youth policy and initiatives in Commonwealth countries. I have devoted much of this issue to the outcomes of the CYMM. It will give you an insight into a very important event. You can download the terrific papers that were produced for CYMM on the CYP website and I urge you to do so. This very powerful quote from Henry Charles, the Regional Director for the Caribbean, underpins some of the key values of CYP and reflects much of the material;

CYP, youth development is more than risk aversion programmes for young people, Youth development encompasses dynamic and sustainable patterns of programme development and delivery that reflect the

needs and aspirations of young people.

In May I visited PNG for the first time. The programme has been renewed in PNG with a partnership with the Institute for Public Administration. I met a very enthusiastic bunch of students who had started their course mid 2005. We spent two days discussing good practice, new initiatives, youth development in PNG and sharing ideas and knowledge. I enjoyed my time with these students very much and as with each group I learnt much more than I could have possibly shared in the time. Our interesting fact is on PNG this edition and a big hallo to the students in PNG that made me feel so welcome on my visit to them.

Thanks to students who have contributed. I look forward to chatting with you in the near future. Remember our final edition will be in October this year, so please send me your notes, poems, CYP experiences and adventures. I can't wait.

Especially to Chandrika and Raijmonie who share with us their CYP experience. In particular their experience of how CYP

crossed the racial and cultural divide in their classroom, a most important insight.

Finally, I have the opportunity to say farewell to Irene Paulsen on your behalf. It is also an opportunity to welcome Irene to Australia in a new role. Irene has been the senior program officer at the Pacific Regional Office then Programme Manager in the South Pacific for the past 6 years. Irene has recently left that position and is soon to take up a new position in the School of Education at Victoria University. I will be working directly with Irene. My colleagues at VU and myself are looking forward to Irene starting her new role, particularly someone of Irene's skills and experience.

I promise there will be more in our final edition of 07.

Peace be with you and your families

Warmest Regards

**Robyn Broadbent**  
CYP Newsletter Editor

## Interesting Facts—Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea is richly endowed with natural resources. Agriculture provides a subsistence livelihood for 85% of the population. Mineral deposits, including oil, copper, and gold, account for nearly two-thirds of export earnings. The economy has improved over the past three years because of high commodity prices.

**Quotable Quote:** "Trust is what stands the test of experience."

Albert Einstein.

## FAREWELL TO IRENE PAULSEN



Irene Paulsen held the position of senior program officer for the Pacific Regional Office then Programme Manager in the South Pacific for six years. Irene regenerated the Commonwealth Diploma in the Pacific evidencing her commitment to the provision of Distance Education to some of the smallest countries in the world. Irene was very well respected for her work in the Pacific and is already being sorely missed from the Regional Office based in the Solomons. Previous to her appointment to the position in the Regional Office Irene was the Head of the Distance Education Centre at Solomon Islands College of Higher Education establishing the Commonwealth Youth Program Diploma for the Solomon Islands.

In the midst of all of this important work Irene completed her Masters degree from the Indira Gandhi National Open University in India for which she won an award from the Commonwealth of Learning.

Irene is going to take up a new position in Australia at Victoria University in Melbourne. Irene has promised to work with me on an article for the next CYP edition so that we can have the opportunity to highlight her achievements, her contribution to CYP and take the time to say Farewell Irene and Welcome to the community in Australia. Irene will have a VU address for those who would like to connect with Irene in the second half of this year.

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## Message to CHOGM 2007 from Commonwealth Youth Ministers

We, Commonwealth Youth Ministers at our Sixth Meeting in Nassau, The Bahamas, from 24 to 26 May 2006, reaffirm the development and empowerment of young people as a fundamental Commonwealth goal. We acknowledge that our youth have a lot in common and that they are our commonwealth.

We recognise that young women and men in the 15-29 age group constitute over of half the population of the Commonwealth, and reaffirm our commitment to youth development through a rights-based approach, and to promoting the role of young people in national development, democracy and good governance. We agree that the Commonwealth needs to create a democratic, stable and peaceful enabling environment and conditions in which young people can both benefit from and share the responsibilities of national development.

### **Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE) 2006-2015**

We recommend that CHOGM endorse the new Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment 2006-2015 (PAYE), which is aligned to Commonwealth and international mandates such as the MDGs and provides the framework for all Commonwealth youth development work in the areas of poverty eradication, and economic empowerment, democracy and good governance, HIV/AIDS and gender equality.

We also recommend the Strategic Plan for the period 2006-2008 to CHOGM, which plan is focused on three priority areas: Youth Enterprise and Sustainable Livelihoods; Governance, Development and Youth Networks; and Youth Work, Education and Training.

### **Youth Development Index (YDI)**

We recognise that the monitoring of the performance of youth development programmes and (their impact on young peoples' lives and their communities has been inadequate and inconsis-

tent. We endorse the Youth Development Index as a Commonwealth-led global monitoring mechanism for measuring youth development in member countries, in collaboration with international partners.

### **Youth Mainstreaming**

We endorse youth mainstreaming as the core approach for implementing the PAYE and Strategic Plan. We agree that governments should mainstream youth development and empowerment in all policy making, planning and programme delivery in the political, legal, economic and social spheres.

We recognize that family structures underpin CYP's strategic plan and priority areas, and that there is need to strengthen them within our societies.

We also recognise that some Youth Ministries are under-resourced and not optimally placed in government. We therefore call on Heads of Government to, where appropriate, increase resource allocations for youth development to enable the Ministries to more effectively lead the multi-sectoral, youth mainstreaming approach to youth development and empowerment.

We submit the attached Communiqué to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Kampala, Uganda in November 2007 for their endorsement.

***Sixth Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting (6CYMM)  
Nassau, The Bahamas***

## CYP South Pacific Regional Director Talks About CYMM

By **TAHANI KARRAR**



The Commonwealth Youth Programme's Regional Director for the South Pacific, Tony Coghlan, hopes member governments will endorse the CYP Strategic and Operational Plan as well as take into account the Regional Advisory Board (RAB) priorities across the Commonwealth, in this month's CYMM.

Mr Coghlan is Australian and has been working for CYP South Pacific for ten months. He oversees a small office of two professional staff and six support staff and is based in Honiara, in the Solomon Islands. This will be his first CYMM.

He said: "I am looking forward to the upcoming CYMM meeting and I am certain that the new CYP 2006-2008 plan will address some of the South Pacific region priorities of youth health/well-being, strengthening family structures, youth work education and training, youth enterprise development and youth networks and governance.

"I also hope that CYMM will provide clear guidance on what the CYP can do to strengthen Commonwealth member states over the next two years."

Mr Coghlan said the best way

for CYP to persuade policymakers to implement its initiatives over the next strategic cycle would be by ensuring that CYP adds value to national youth development policies and programmes.

He said: "CYP needs to be clear on what our initiatives are and what we are going to achieve through benchmarking activities. This must be done so that we are clear on how these initiatives will complement policies in member states."

In the case of CYP South Pacific Centre, Mr Coghlan is positive that the regional centre will be able to implement its activities with a full complement of staff over the next two years.

He said: "In the last 18 months of our strategic cycle, CYP South Pacific have had to concentrate on re-establishing the centre in Honiara. We have been recruiting a new team of professional and local staff to run the centre and this should strengthen the programme implementation."

Mr Coghlan added that differences in youth issues in the South Pacific are presenting challenges on how CYP will go about addressing priority issues, especially the case in small isolated island states.

"In the 14 Commonwealth member states in the South Pacific region, we have countries varying in size from Australia (20 million people) to Tokelau (around 1,500 people).

"Some issues are widespread, such as the lack of meaningful employment opportunities as an issue affecting youth in many of the island countries, and in certain groups in the larger more developed countries in the region.

"Furthermore, there are clashes between traditional and modern family structures and relationships in the region."

HIV and AIDS are also issues for youth in Papua New Guinea and are becoming an issue in other parts of the

South Pacific, for example in transient populations such as seafarers.

Mr Coghlan also noted the important role the Regional Youth Caucus is playing in mobilising and sensitising youth in the South Pacific region.

He said: "We have a strong and vigorous Regional Youth Caucus in the South Pacific, which can be a key player in youth issues in the region over the next two years.

"In the past, RYC's recommendations to the September 2005 RAB meeting were the basis for the South Pacific priorities for the new strategic planning period. The CYP South Pacific Centre includes the RYC members in consultation and uses them as additional resources. The centre is also funding RYC-related activities, such as attendance by members at the forthcoming Pacific Youth Festival in Tahiti."

# Head of Youth Affairs Discusses His Final CYMM

By **TAHANI KARRAR**



Mr Ignatius Takawira is the Head of Youth Affairs of the Commonwealth Youth Programme Pan Commonwealth Office in London, UK. He is Zimbabwean and has been working as the Head of Youth Affairs since September 2002.

His placement with CYP will end this year and this month's CYMM will be his final. In this interview Mr Takawira shares his views and feelings towards the up-coming meeting, the vital role of the Regional Youth Caucus and the importance of youth development in the Commonwealth.

**CYP: How many Youth Ministers Meetings have you attended? Is this your first? What are your feelings/ hopes towards it?**

**Mr Takawira:** I have attended two CYMMs. One was in 2000, in the Solomon Islands, and the other was in 2003, in Botswana.

In my view, CYMMs are becoming more and more significant. The issues they discuss and the outcomes of their discussions are becoming of great interest because governments are beginning to appreciate that youth issues have a

direct effect across the Commonwealth. Furthermore, the youth issues within the Commonwealth are similar, issues such as common poverty, common crime, and common HIV/AIDS and governments want to work together and share common best practices to tackle these issues.

**CYP: What do you think of CYP's Respect and Understanding initiative? Is it achievable and realistic? Does it apply to the Commonwealth? If so how does it apply?**

**Mr Takawira:** The Commonwealth Respect and Understanding is at the core of the Commonwealth way of doing business. It is based on tolerance, respect and understanding for diversity of language, culture, religion, social and economic differences. All the member countries sit together and discuss as equals and find common solutions to their problems.

Respect and understanding therefore have to go down to the level of communities and individuals. More so with today's problems that are forcing young people to be foot soldiers in many conflicts, be they wars, terrorism or other forms of intolerance.

Respect and Understanding is at the heart of these issues and by dealing with them we are dealing with the fundamental causes of conflicts rather than just the signs and symptoms.

**CYP: What do you want to see happen in the meeting?**

**Mr Takawira:** I would like the meeting to fully integrate young people into the Commonwealth Development Agenda, with their full genuine participation, with commitment for the resources and the political will to achieve this on the part of all stakeholders.

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**CYP: What are your hopes for the coming strategic cycle? What issues do you hope will be endorsed in the CYMM with regards to CYP?**

**Mr Takawira:** Investing in youth development sooner rather than later is the message we need to get through. By doing this we will significantly reduce the problems that arise as a result of the lack of investment.

There are many examples of this when dealing with social and financial resources in policing the streets, looking after the HIV/AIDS people and its impact on economic and social development for a country.

**CYP: Can you give us examples of the various youth development issues facing the Commonwealth as a whole? Which ones do you think are the most important?**

**Mr Takawira:** The CYP Strategic Plan 2006-2008 has the focus on Youth Enterprise and sustainable livelihoods. It aims to eradicate poverty among the youth, enhance policy development as well as implementation through the active participation of youth. Furthermore, it aims to enhance human resource development through Youth Work Education and Training.

**CYP: How will you persuade policymakers to implement CYP initiatives? How do you think CYP staff and RYC members can best influence policy makers?**

**Mr Takawira:** Youth across the Commonwealth are faced with the twin challenges of poverty, hunger and disease. These are worsened by the lack of educational opportunities in many Commonwealth countries. CYP will tackle these issues.

**CYP: What role have RYCs been playing since you joined?**

**Mr Takawira:** The RYC has grown in its participation and policy influencing roles at national, regional and Pan-Commonwealth level. This development is a long process that must be sustained by ensuring young people do not only attend meetings, but see the policies, programmes and their participation translating into meaningful projects that impact on their condition as individual and collective citizens of their respective countries.

**CYP: How have RYC members helped/ contributed to CYP?**

**Mr Takawira:** RYC has kept policy makers tuned to the ground on the issues affecting young people like poverty, HIV/AIDS crime and violence and how these can be addressed by all stakeholders.

**CYP: How do you see RYC helping CYP in the next two years?**

**Mr Takawira:** The CYP Youth development Agenda will not be complete without active youth participation because young people have a first-hand knowledge of what the real issues are and how best to implement strategies that will be successful.

## Reflections on the CYP Diploma by Chandrika Persaud Mohanlall and Rajmonie Mohanlall (Trained Teachers - Guyana)

The Commonwealth Diploma in Youth Development Work commenced in May, 2003 and concluded in September, 2005. We started this programme with nostalgia and much optimism. Being teachers for over twenty five years, we have developed a great love for children and young people as a whole. We have seen a great number of our country's young people getting themselves involved in activities that are detrimental to their proper growth and development. This pained us deeply for we know that they have the potential to play meaningful roles in our country.

We believe that if all these young people can be productively occupied and their creative energies harnessed and developed, our country will be a far better, safer and wonderful place to live. We recognise that our vocation of teaching and occasionally giving guidance and counselling to some of our young people were not enough. These approaches were insufficient to create a positive impact in the lives of our young people. There was a need to get a more systematic approach to youth development in our community. To do this we saw the need for specialised training which will equip us with the necessary skills and knowledge to deal with youth development per se objectively and productively.

The Commonwealth Diploma in Youth Development Work provided this opportunity. We first learnt about this programme when nine students of the Pilot programme graduated in November, 2002. We were overjoyed to be accepted to this programme, our acceptance was a real achievement for us. We now will be able to develop the skills and knowledge to help our many young people who figuratively are crying out for help and not find-

ing it. Secondly, we will be fulfilling our dream of attending classes at the University of Guyana for we were unable to do this before because of serious financial constraints.

The course of study demanded that we successfully complete thirteen modules. The training modules were compiled by persons who work with young people from different Commonwealth countries. Even though we had to do research and supplementary reading during our studies, the training modules were of a great help to us in doing our assignments, journals and examinations.

The preparation of a learning contract was new to us. At the beginning we had difficulty in understanding how it was done. Fortunately for us, our tutors were supportive and very helpful and we were able to overcome this difficulty. The first two modules that we did were done by Miss Paulette Henry. Ms. Henry was a remarkable lecturer and teacher. Her strategies and methodology were wonderful. She made us feel comfortable and created an atmosphere that was conducive to learning. This wonderful voyage of youth development that she started was ably supported by Ms. Barbra Thomas Holder, Professor Allan Persico and other lecturers who were very patient, considerate and understanding with all the students. Additionally, it was a refreshing experience to know a person like Ms. Elaine Thomas. She was very helpful and supportive to all students. She provided us with handouts, booklets and supplementary information which helped us tremendously in our studies. She was always ready to encourage us and did her utmost to ensure we successfully complete the course.

The camaraderie in our class was amazing. We did not see our ethnicity, rather we saw ourselves, first

and foremost as Guyanese, working together to the successful completion of our course of study; working together to prepare ourselves to help our young people and our country.

This course of study was very interesting and informative. It was well planned and effectively executed. We are now more equipped and well prepared to deal with the challenges of youth work. This diploma is a worthwhile investment and we would recommend that the course be ongoing and developed into a Degree programme. Efforts must be made to involve all youth workers and those who are concerned about youth development.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Commonwealth Youth Programme, Caribbean Centre, the Ministry of Youth and Sport and Institute of Distance and Continuing Education for providing us with this wonderful learning experience.

**Chandrika Persaud Mohanlall and Rajmonie Mohanlall (husband and wife) are Trained Teachers employed with the Ministry of Education, Guyana.**



## CYP YOUTH WORKER – TODAY



Hello my fellow youth workers. Do you know that young people are interesting characters and are very interesting to work with! I personally enjoy working with them.

I have been a teacher for ten years and have been working with young children. I have always wanted to work with the youth. My interest grew so much that when I saw an advertisement in the newspaper for CYP Diploma and for a youth career, I applied immediately. Fortunately I was one of the few lucky ones who were selected to do the course at the University of Malawi.

It wasn't easy as it was a different field from teaching. I was doing my studies while still working as a teacher. I had to do my assignments, district visits and attend tutorials after work. It was difficult for me but I worked very hard because I wanted to succeed. After two years of study, I got my Diploma in Youth Studies. I now intend to continue my studies up to a degree level if I can get sponsorship.

Look here my fellow youth workers, we have to work together to address young people's needs. We should ask ourselves, why are the youths of today so vulnerable? What can we do to assist them?

We shouldn't just take it as a means of earning income, but a way helping them to solve their problems. For example, in Africa there are a lot of young people who are dying of AIDS. The reason is not that they like indulging in pre-marital sex, but they take it as a means of reducing poverty. As youth workers, what can we do a lot to help them? Let's advise them that poverty does not kill but AIDS kills. So it's better for them to work hard in school for a better future than to indulge themselves in early sex just for the sake of money.

Young people in developing countries, such as Malawi where I come from, are really suffering. They have no education, no medical assistance, no clothes and no food. They need encouragement from us. They need people who can assist them both psychologically and financially. Please lend a hand.

This is a very important field which needs a lot of people who care. You can start now. Remember the proverb that goes, "better late than never".

Lastly but not least, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Cristal de Saldanha (Advisor Youth Development) of Commonwealth Secretariat for making it possible to write my exams while I was in London, and to Mr James Odit at the CYP Africa office. I would also like to thank Dr Charles Masangano (my Personal Tutor) of the University of Malawi for encouraging me throughout the course. My special thanks to my loving husband, Lloyd, for encouraging me to acquire this diploma.

Let's join hands to build today and tomorrow's nation.

**By Mrs Felia Malola  
CYP Diploma Graduate, March 2006  
University of Malawi**

## CYPCC launches quarterly e-journal

The Commonwealth Youth Programme Caribbean Centre is pleased to announce the launching of its latest publication, 'Caribbean Youth Development' - a quarterly e-journal.

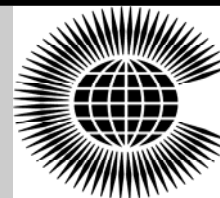
This e-journal comes on the heels of a monthly newsletter, 'Caribbean Youth Vibes' which CYPCC began producing about three months ago.

"Caribbean Youth Development is intended to serve as a medium to disseminate research findings, academic studies, emerging theories, concepts, ideas and opinions on youth and youth development issues," CYPCC Regional Director, Mr. Henry Charles said as the journal was released.

We also take the opportunity to invite our partners and other youth development stakeholders to assist with the circulation of the e-journal as it is our firm belief that information assumes real value only when it is disseminated, shared and becomes communal property.

*For further information please contact Regional Director, Mr. Henry Charles at [hcharles@cypcaribbean.org](mailto:hcharles@cypcaribbean.org).*

*Yours Sincerely,  
ROBERT BAZIL,*



**A NEWSLETTER FOR STUDENTS AND OTHERS CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMMONWEALTH YOUTH PROGRAMME DIPLOMA IN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT WORK**

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Make time to hang out with friends