

Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting 2008  
Colombo, Sri Lanka

# Investing in Young People

Commonwealth Youth Programme  
Biennial Report 2006 — 2008



COMMONWEALTH YOUTH PROGRAMME  
COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT

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## Foreword from the Director



Welcome to *Investing in Young People*, CYP's programme report for 2006-2008. This is our opportunity to share our ambitions and achievements with Ministers of Youth and other key stakeholders.

The first part of the report gives important background about our guiding framework (the Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment) and our 2006-2008 strategic plan. We then give a progress report for 2006-2008 in each of our three strategic programme areas:

- Youth Enterprise and Sustainable Livelihoods;
- Governance, Development and Youth Networks; and
- Youth Work Education and Training.

The third part looks at emerging areas of work such as the CYP Centres of Excellence, including the Northern Uganda Youth Development Centre.

In the period under review we have also revitalized some of our longer standing projects such as the Youth Ambassadors for Positive Living, (with new groups and schools-based interventions in the Caribbean) the Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative (expanding in Africa and South Asia) and the Diploma in Youth Development Work – which has new partners coming on board in Swaziland, Mauritius, Brunei, Maldives, New Zealand, Samoa, and Tonga.

For a moment, though, let us put that history to one side. If it were “year zero” and we as the Commonwealth, or member governments, had no mandate in youth affairs, where would we start? Would we:

- a) design a stand-alone youth department and youth budget? Or also
- b) make work with young people an aspect of everything the organisation does, through all its various departments and budgets?

In most countries and in the Commonwealth Secretariat, the current reality is that we have option a); to aim to supplement this with option b) is to aim for what we call “youth mainstreaming”.

Whatever our goals in youth affairs, be they Peacebuilding; the Respect and Understanding agenda that came out of CHOGM 2005 and 2007; or this year's Commonwealth Day theme - The Environment: Our Future – mainstreaming is fundamental to making a lasting impact. In 2006-2008 we made youth mainstreaming one of our four strategic goals, and a central part of our work on youth policy and planning. We also conducted training in Africa and the Caribbean, and discussed with our colleagues how to mainstream youth across the work of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Mainstreaming is also about measurement. For us in the Commonwealth that means a renewed focus on the Youth Development Index. According to the UN World Youth Report 2007: “assessing the impact of interventions and investments made in youth development remains difficult because youth-related age-disaggregated data are not always available. Where these data do exist, they are often part of a larger compilation on other population groups and youth-specific issues and trends remain hidden or are glossed over...Many gaps remain that need to be filled

through new data collection. Further, even existing data are often not fully reliable." So there is still a long way to go. But there are many reasons to feel up-beat:

- Despite its funding difficulties (declining pledge collection), the future and focus of CYP is no longer in question and the organisation is therefore looking outward rather than remaining in "self-defence mode".
- The Secretariat as a whole is attempting, through its next strategic plan, to mainstream youth, gender and human rights. All departments are determined that collaboration should be on a systematic rather than a piecemeal footing.
- CYP's regional centres are set to become more dynamic, more coordinated internally and more focused on mainstreaming through their becoming "Centres of Excellence" in research (including in areas of local governance, HIV/AIDS) and youth work education and training.
- We in the CYP and the Social Transformation Programmes Division have a wealth of experience in gender mainstreaming.
- A recent stakeholders meeting on youth mainstreaming (April 2008) showed real determination among Commonwealth partners.
- By extending the Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment to 2015, Ministers of Youth and Heads of Government have declared their commitment to mainstream youth as a crucial part of achieving the Millennium Development Goals.
- In recent years the status of youth affairs has risen considerably among international development organisations and NGOs, presenting new opportunities for partnership. However, the Commonwealth, if it chooses to do so, can be a world leader in youth mainstreaming.

We look forward to receiving your feedback on this report, and to working with you to mainstream youth development work in 2008-2012.

# 1 **Background:** CYP and the Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment

Founded in 1973, CYP is a unique international development agency: a decentralised structure with youth representation at all levels and stages of decision-making.

## **CYP Vision**

A Commonwealth where young women and men have realised their potential individually and collectively and are effectively integrated as agents of change for development and transformation. CYP is the leader and innovator in driving this process.

## **CYP Mission**

CYP works to engage and empower young people (aged 15-29) to enhance their contribution to development. We do this in partnership with young people, governments and other key stakeholders.

Our mission is grounded within a rights-based approach, guided by the realities facing young people in the Commonwealth, and anchored in the belief that young people are:

- A force for peace, democracy, equality and good governance
- A catalyst for global consensus building; and
- An essential resource for poverty eradication and sustainable development

## **Guiding Principles**

CYP advocates the effective participation of young women and men in the development process and for social transformation. We value the full engagement at all levels of decision-making.

Within this framework, our work is guided by the following principles:

- Respecting diversity and human dignity and opposing all forms of discrimination whether based on age, gender, political affiliation, social status, marital status, race, creed, ethnicity or sexual orientation;
- Adhering to democracy, the rule of law, good governance, freedom of expression and the protection of human rights;
- Supporting the elimination of poverty and the promotion of people-centred development, and the progressive removal of disparities in living standards and equity;
- Upholding international agreements on peace and security, the rule of international law and opposing terrorism and all forms of extremism;
- Strengthening, enhancing and supporting the role of young people in conflict management and the promotion of a Commonwealth culture of peace enshrined in mutual respect and understanding;
- Promoting a supportive environment including family, kinship and community networks as core contributors to youth well being and development.

## The Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment, 2007-2015

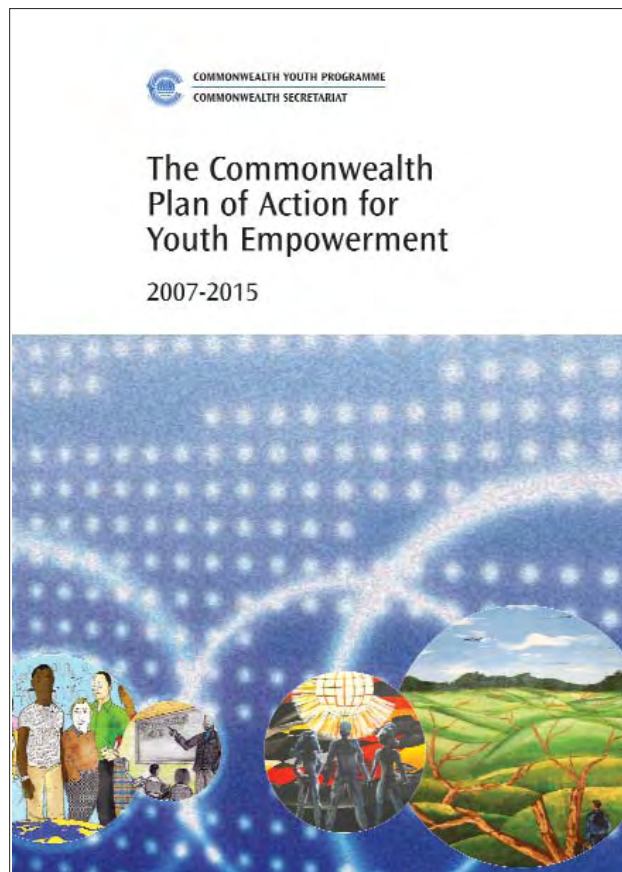
The Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE) is the guiding framework for Commonwealth cooperation on youth affairs. It was launched by Commonwealth Secretary-General The Rt Hon Don McKinnon in September 2007. The Plan of Action underpins the work of the CYP, and is offered as a model strategic plan for ministries of youth affairs. The PAYE is a framework document for governmental, inter-governmental and civil society action for and with young people (aged 15-29). Its indicators are integrated with the Millennium Development Goals. Among other policy frameworks the PAYE's specific contribution is to stimulate an assets-based approach to youth development.

The Commonwealth Secretariat is grateful to Ministers of Youth, and to Commonwealth youth representatives, for their assistance in redrafting the PAYE.

The PAYE encourages youth mainstreaming and contains thirteen action points for governments. The first of these is: "Develop and implement measures to promote the economic enfranchisement of young people" through a range of measures ranging from micro-credit and entrepreneurship education through to reviewing macro-economic planning and trade regimes and how they affect young people. Other action points address gender equality, HIV/AIDS, education, the environment, youth participation in decision-making, and democracy and human rights.

The PAYE is being given intense publicity throughout the Caribbean with support from the Commonwealth Youth Programme Caribbean Centre's Information Department. Articles on the PAYE emphasising the Action Points and the objectives of the plan, have been published in several newspapers and internet publications in the Caribbean and all categories of youth development stakeholder are reportedly showing keen interest in the document.

There have already been official PAYE launches in Anguilla, Guyana, Barbados, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Vanuatu and Cook Islands.



The Commonwealth Secretariat is mandated to undertake the following actions in support of member governments implementing the PAYE:

Secretariat Action Points	What have we done?
Develop models for promotion of youth employment, for example by supporting the replication of the Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative, providing Enterprise Development training and providing ICT training.	See section 2.1 on Youth Enterprise and Sustainable Livelihoods (YESL) and the YESL results summary.
Provide technical assistance on mainstreaming youth issues in national development.	See section 3.1, "Youth mainstreaming"
Provide technical assistance and capacity-building for the research, formulation and implementation of national youth policies and implementation plans.	See section 2.2 on Governance, Development and Youth Networks (GDYN) and GDYN results summary
Promote the establishment and inter-linking of youth networks (such as National Youth Councils; Commonwealth Youth Forum) at national, regional and pan-Commonwealth levels, including through the use of IT platforms and including youth in special circumstances.	See section 2.2
Promote the convening of regional fora for policy-making on youth affairs.	See section 2.2
Strengthen sporting contacts throughout the Commonwealth and promote the use of sport and cultural activities to empower young people.	"Bonding Beyond Boundries Through Sports" project, Chandigarh, India. Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport commissioned to write a strategy paper for CYMM 2008. Sports for development to feature in Northern Uganda Youth Development Centre
Partner with other relevant organisations on creative public information projects including on Commonwealth values, human rights and the PAYE.	See previous section and Northern Uganda Youth Development Centre, under section 3.2
Mainstream youth affairs within the Secretariat, impacting on a range of CFTC-funded projects.	Youth mainstreaming factored into new Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Plan
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.	Work has not yet started in this area
Assist participating countries with development of the Youth Development Index (YDI) as a monitoring and evaluation tool for work done under the PAYE.	YDI was due for completion by March 2008 (See GDYN results summary, objective 4.1, but this has not been achieved.

## Anguilla Government gives PAYE full support

(From the Commonwealth website, 1 February 2008)

"Young people should be seen as the most valuable assets in a country and need to be involved in all decisions that are made."

The Government of Anguilla has endorsed the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE) promising full assistance in making the financial, technical and physical resources available for its implementation through the Ministry of Social Development.

This was revealed by Permanent Secretary responsible for Youth Affairs, Mr. Rodney Rey at the launching of the PAYE in Anguilla on January 22.

Mr. Rey, who was presented with copies of the PAYE by Regional Director of the Commonwealth Youth Programme Caribbean Centre (CYPCC), Mr. Henry Charles, promised to use the Plan as a guide and framework for the Ministry's own development strategy.

The Permanent Secretary noted two key aspects of

the document that he felt were paramount. These are: Recognition of young people as assets; and the need to involve all stakeholders in a genuine approach to youth empowerment.

The CYPCC Regional Director, explaining the necessity for the PAYE, pointed out that when one assesses what is happening in the Commonwealth in terms of the many challenges faced, the impact on youth is quite disproportionate. "Young people must be involved in a very intimate way with the development process in all developing nations," he urged.

Mr. Charles emphasised that young people should be seen as the most valuable assets in a country and need to be involved in all decisions that are made.

The launching, which was attended by a wide cross section of the public and private sectors, was chaired by Regional Youth Caucus Representative, Keira Hughes and included a poem by Anthea Roach entitled 'Deepest Fear' and a calypso by Roxanne Webster entitled 'I'm Concerned'.

## CYP Strategic Plan 2006-2008

In late 2005, CYP engaged in consultative processes involving youth practitioners, governments and young people across the Commonwealth. The highly interactive and participatory process which culminated in the 2006-2008 Strategic Plan served for all of us at CYP as the reaffirmation of our commitment to youth development. That process identified the main priorities to be addressed by the 2006-2008 Strategic Plan as a function of the current and emerging youth development landscape and mindful of our core focus and organisational competencies. The strategic programme areas identified were:

- Governance, Development and Youth Networks;
- Youth Enterprise and Sustainable Livelihoods;
- Youth Work Education and Training.

Work in these three strategic programme areas was geared to four goals:

1. To empower young people to ensure that they are provided with and have access to opportunities that enable them to achieve sustainable livelihoods, and for them to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from good governance and development processes at national, regional and international levels.
2. To work with governments, young people and other key stakeholders to mainstream a youth perspective into development planning.
3. To advocate for the professionalisation of youth work in collaboration with educational institutions, governments and other stakeholders.
4. To promote the use of applied and participatory research in youth development in order to contribute to the creation of a credible body of knowledge.

In this report the objectives flowing from these goals, and the progress made against them, are to be found in the Results Summary Tables for each of the strategic programme areas.

# 2 Progress report, 2006-2008

## 2.1 Strategic Programme Area 1: Youth Enterprise and Sustainable Livelihoods

*"Youth unemployment is a serious development challenge among the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. It contributes to widespread poverty and desperation among our young people, contributing to their disempowerment and weak participation in the economic affairs of the state. It is therefore important for policy makers to come up with initiatives to address the challenge. In this connection, I wish to pay tribute to the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) for driving the process that came up with the Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative (CYCI)."*

Namibian Deputy Minister of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture, Hon. Pohamba Shifeta.

### The Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative (CYCI)

The CYP's flagship programme for sustainable livelihoods is the Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative (CYCI), an integrated package of micro-credit, enterprise training and business mentorship targeted at young people with the potential for self-employment. The CYCI has been designed with the aims of:

- Building economic self-sufficiency;
- Widening economic participation; and
- Contributing to national economic and development goals.

*"Self-employment is the quickest and easiest way to create employment for the poor...a big step towards eliminating poverty is to make sure that we offer financial services even to the poorest person, that no one is rejected by a bank on the ground that he/she is a poor person."*

- Muhammad Yunus, founder and Managing Director of the Grameen Bank



Rohan Kemai John, CYCI participant in Dominica

When lending institutions demand collateral to support loan applications, this excludes the poor, the young and especially young women. Such people may face additional formal barriers such as a minimum age limit for borrowing. Compared with older people, young entrepreneurs may also lack social status and social networks – the social capital that forms part of any livelihood. They may also lack the skills to prepare a business plan and communicate it to others, even if they do have a viable business idea. It is for these reasons that the CYCI goes beyond the provision of credit and has a training and business support component.



Abiola Bennett, CYCI participant, Guyana

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BELFund beneficiary Amelia Goddard (St Lucia) at her digital photography and imaging business.

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The CYCI works by lending at commercial interest rates to small self-help groups. The self-help group applies the peer pressure needed for repayment of the loan. The CYCI is implemented in partnership with an NGO responsible for programme delivery, and government contacts responsible for providing an enabling environment. The enabling environment includes the necessary legal infrastructure, as well as the necessary political will and political stability.

*“We used to stay with our parents, uncles etc but now most of us are staying in our own rented houses. If you come to visit our homes, you may think they are not ours but those of our parents or uncles because we have most of the basic facilities there. One of us is now a landlord because he built a house which he is renting out.”*

- CYCI Malawi beneficiaries

CYCI was first implemented in 1996-7 in India, Zambia, Guyana and Solomon Islands. The lessons learned have been incorporated into a training resource, the CYCI Toolkit. CYCI is an important model that is youth-oriented and provides proven responses to the factors faced by young people who want to start up a business. The model has been successfully adapted to suit varying social, political and economic circumstances across Commonwealth member countries, while still maintaining focus on the particular needs of youth entrepreneurship and micro-credit.

In the period under review, CYCI was launched in Botswana, Cameroon, Tanzania and Meghalaya State, North East India. The project continued in Chandigarh and Gujarat (India) and Sri Lanka. CYP has collaborated with Commonwealth Service Abroad Programme (CSAP) in the implementation of the CYCI in Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Dominica, and St. Lucia. CSAP extends volunteering opportunities to high calibre mid-career professionals, irrespective of age.

## Achievements in Youth Enterprise and Sustainable Livelihoods

### *Africa*

- Creation of 680 businesses and 1,006 jobs.
- Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative (CYCI) reviewed and launched in Botswana, Cameroon, Tanzania. Commonwealth Service Abroad Programme (CSAP) volunteers placed in Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania
- 872 Youth Enterprise trainees
- Support to youth employment strategy in Zambia.
- 270 ICT trainees
- New Young Ambassadors of Positive Living (YAPL, see below) groups in Swaziland, Zambia (School Health Education Programme with SPW)
- HIV/AIDS/YAPL training in South Africa, Zambia. New HIV/AIDS Advocacy Toolkit
- CYP Africa to become Centre of Excellence in HIV/AIDS work. School interventions to be replicated in Lesotho and Swaziland. Foundation laid for livelihoods creation and positive behaviour change in target communities of Northern Uganda
- Commonwealth Youth Development Award
- Partnership framework with UNFPA
- Youth Business Incubator, Brunei
- Manual on Youth Entrepreneurship Development in Tourism.
- Nature Discovery Camps (8,000 participants). Phase II of Nature discovery project in Leh; Asia Regional Workshop on young people and sustainable development; review of Asia Youth Environment Network
- Asia Regional consultation on Youth at Risk
- Asia Regional Training of Trainers for Women Entrepreneurs.
- YAPL refresher training and review

### *Asia*

- Creation of 1178 businesses.
- CYCI India: implementation in Chandigarh; institutionalisation in Gujarat; launch in Meghalaya State
- CYCI re-strategising in Sri Lanka.
- 1120 ICT trainees. CYP Technology Empowerment Centre replicated in Pakistan
- Creation of 59 businesses.
- 197 Youth Enterprise trainees. CYCI trainings in Bahamas. Youth Enterprise Development Fund established in the Bahamas.
- Responsibility for rolling out the youth entrepreneurship and enterprise development component of a \$6 million IDB US project for Guyana.
- Interest in further CYP entrepreneurship training from Dominica, St Kitts and Nevis.
- Guyana: Empowering Youth Living with Disabilities; Bringing ICTs and life skills to Amerindian youth; Grass-root youth-on-the-block (high-risk youth) outreach project (also in Jamaica). Partnership framework with UNFPA
- Youth at Risk project tested in St. Lucia. DVD on Caribbean youth at risk.
- Caribbean Youth Enterprise Development Training of Trainers Manual.
- Business Plan Innovation Award
- Caribbean enterprise education strategy; new enterprise education programme for schools piloted in Dominica.

- Contribution to issue-networks and development discourse in the Caribbean e.g. partnership initiated with Caribbean trade unions, sharing of PAYE framework.
- New YAPL groups in Guyana, St Lucia, Bahamas, Guyana. 59 new Young Ambassadors for Positive Living, plus 325+ trainees.
- Behaviour change, greater self-esteem and confidence among school pupils attributed to YAPL programme, including greater participation in extra-curricular activities

### *Pacific*

- 120 Youth Enterprise trainees (Vanuatu, Cook Islands, Samoa)
- Interest in further CYP entrepreneurship training from Australia, Cook Islands, New Zealand, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu.
- Formation of the Cook Islands Young Entrepreneurs Association.
- Exploratory CYP/RYP visit to Uttermost Rural Development Foundation, Solomon Islands.
- Training of careers trainers for school students in Solomon Islands.
- Commonwealth Youth Development Award

### *Pan-Commonwealth*

- Initiation and monitoring of the North Uganda Youth Development Centre project
- “Investing In Youth” conference (see below); demonstration that young people are “bankable”
- Building alliances and collaborations with ILO and other International development NGOs, civil society organisations and corporate sector
- New promotional material for the YESL programme

## Youth Enterprise and Sustainable Livelihoods: Combating HIV/AIDS



Young Ambassador for Positive Living in India

CYP has been revitalizing its youth driven HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness network, the Young Ambassadors of Positive Living. New groups have been set up in Swaziland, Zambia, Guyana and St Lucia. In Swaziland and Guyana schools-based interventions have been made. Trainings have also taken place in South Africa and Bahamas, and the Asian and Caribbean programmes have been reviewed.\*

The Young Ambassadors are HIV-positive young people who have volunteered their time to educate others about the epidemic, as well as to press for appropriate policy responses and treatment regimes in civil society and government. Young Ambassadors have spread their message of hope and de-stigmatization to people in church groups, the media, the military, youth clubs and elsewhere. Their activities are living testimony to the fact that people living with HIV can nevertheless contribute actively in society and play leadership roles.

*“You know the ABC prevention strategy: Abstinence, Be faithful or use a Condom. Well, we are not selective, we just promote every aspect of prevention and people must choose which is appropriate for them. You will find that there are these youth groups promoting abstinence and condemning condom use. But, you know, the messages they preach are often contrary to their own behaviour. There is this gulf between behaviour and knowledge. Today, everyone knows about HIV, but it’s just as if they can’t connect what they know to their behaviour. It’s like this medical doctor who is a secret smoker... So our stories are there to bridge that gulf; our stories are the solution.”*

- Chama Musoka (Zambia), Vice-President, YAPL

*“After being selected and trained in 2003 for 13 days, I learned the art, objectives and the goals of becoming a Commonwealth Youth for Positive Living. The impact it has made on my life has been remarkable. As a young person living with HIV/AIDS, I have learnt to eat healthy, exercise regularly and practise safe sex with one partner. This programme has changed my life completely; I am living positively, my thinking is positive, and so is the lifestyle I have adopted. I feel a sense of fulfillment when I participate in outreaches organized by the group. This gives me the opportunity to share my experience and knowledge with young people. In reaching out to others, I gain strength and the will to go on living positively is strengthened.”*

Peter, Guyana

\* CYP Caribbean, having reviewed the responses of youths who participated in the outreach programmes recognized that, in addition to training youths in positive living, there is need for parenting programmes and counselling services in communities. CYP has therefore consulted with a number of stakeholders who provide these services and is assisting a few member countries with their implementation plans for greater community involvement in youth development.

## Playing with fire: A Young Ambassador for Positive Living (YAPL) in Bangladesh

Dr. Ashique Selim graduated from medical school in Dhaka in 2003. The same year in April, he joined the Youth Ambassadors for Positive Living (YAPL) programme at Chandigarh, India. "I feel that we have a large responsibility towards the more under privileged people of our country," he says. "As a doctor I have an even greater responsibility to society. It is a big decision for a doctor to not practice medicine and go into social work."

"At present, the drug of choice amongst children who are experimenting is street heroin and with this drug there is no such thing as experimentation. As a result it is having a devastating effect on the youth of the country... My first goal is to organise awareness trips to different schools within Dhaka. Then I want to establish a rehabilitation centre where I could refer people and simultaneously run an HIV/AIDS awareness campaign, although my main focus will be on drugs."

Ashique uses an innovative and exciting method to spread awareness among young people. He learnt fire-spinning and began doing it with a group of friends, they formed a group called 'Naur', which is the word for fire in Elvish, the language spoken by the elves in JRR Tolkien's Lord of the Rings. "Fire Spinning is a relatively new art, derived from the art of Poi, which originated amongst the Maori people of New Zealand. It involves spinning 2 pieces of chain, with fire at the ends – 'fire poi'. The dance is done with various different rhythms and is becoming very popular among the youth around the world," he explains. Naur now does shows all over Dhaka and gives awareness talks during the shows on drug/substance abuse. In the past year, they have had a number of public performances, with speeches and posters, trying to spread the message of positive living. They have also performed in various fundraisers and awareness campaigns.

"I would like to target children specifically between the ages of 13 and 16 years of age because in Bangladesh, about 40% of heroin users have begun using before the age of 15, 40% began before the age of 20 and the rest after 20 years. So if I target the 13 to 16 age group, I will be getting to the heart of the problem. Initially I want to target private schools, which means the higher socio-economic strata. Once I have the experience I can gain the credibility of the government schools."

Ashique could foresee some challenges that he would face in his campaign, "Overcoming the stigma of talking about drug abuse, adolescence and HIV/AIDS will be one of the major problems. I will need to begin with a soft message and then build up my strategy. Preparing a programme that will be acceptable to the school management and other target audiences will be another challenge."

Personally, the YAPL programme has helped him gain in different ways, "The training that I received as a YAPL has been invaluable as far as developing my communication skills and self-improvement is concerned. Also the exposure I've had has been phenomenal. Being a YAPL has changed my life a great deal, for one I see myself as a role model and hence I don't want to do things that would set a bad example. Also the opportunity to do the work that I'm doing has increased my level of self-confidence a great deal. I now know that anything can be arranged, with the right levels of motivation and commitment." Ashique's ambition is to participate in policy-making in Bangladesh.

## Investing In Youth

In September 2007, as part of enhancing the profile of CYP in the UK, the Commonwealth Secretariat was host to 170 young entrepreneurs, business leaders, lawyers and policy-makers. The conference, "Investing In Youth" was a unique opportunity for delegates and speakers to share best practices and learn from some of the most successful young names in business.

Ravi Gehlot, a 24 year-old self-made millionaire from the UK described how his interest in business started at the age of 15, when he set up a disco at his local Scout's Hall. Now, he is CEO of OneOffice, a virtual online office company which provides a useful and cost-friendly tool for young entrepreneurs who can't afford the overheads of office rental or spare the time needed to tend to correspondence. In his concluding remarks Ravi said, "People don't plan to fail in terms of their business, they fail to plan." David Ssegawa a young entrepreneur from Uganda, and winner of the Faidika Na BBC (Prosper with the BBC) competition shared his experience of starting up a company to manufacture candles locally.

The conference was opened by Deputy Secretary-General Mrs Florence Mugasha, and the steel magnate Lord Paul of Marylebone. HRH, The Prince of Wales addressed the conference in a video message. He has been closely involved in youth affairs and business through his charity, the Prince's Trust.

The Secretary-General Don McKinnon used the occasion to launch the Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment. He was joined by the Secretary-General of La Francophonie, and former Senegalese President, Abdou Diouf. Addressing the conference, Mr McKinnon said: "We take an asset-based approach to youth issues. Because young people are assets not liabilities, and because in the years leading up to 2015 they constitute a new generation of unprecedented size. Our prosperity, and the stability of our societies, depends on the life-chances of these young people."



Secretary-General Don McKinnon greeting Abdou Diouf, Secretary-General of La Francophonie at "Investing In Youth"

In their closing Declaration, participants called for investment in enterprise skills in addition to formal education, with a view to prepare students for the world of work. They highlighted a need for investment in healthcare, alongside greater access to credit and agreement on fair trade and debt relief to enable serious inroads into unemployment in the developing world. "We welcome today's launch of the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment 2007-2015, agreeing that young people have the right to participate in the decision-making that affects their lives....We affirm that to invest in young people is to invest in political stability, peace and democracy".

## Bridging the digital divide: CYP Technology Empowerment Centre on Wheels

CYP is using information and communications technologies (ICT) as a mechanism to bridge the digital divide so that young people have access to ICT, irrespective of where they live or their socio-economic status. Improving young people's ICT skills is also another way to reduce poverty and enhance their marketability and employability.

## Into Pakistan

CYP's mobile information and communication technology (ICT) learning centre - a van that travels from village to village delivering computer training to young and disadvantaged people - was launched in Islamabad, Pakistan, on 16 November 2006.

"Computer training at doorsteps will add a new dimension to the empowerment of rural children," said Dr G Abbas, Chairman of the Evergreen Organisation - an NGO working to provide quality education in rural Pakistan. "This will be one of the most exciting things that the village would have seen," added computer trainer Waqar-ul-Hassan.

The van, equipped with state-of-the-art computer systems, mobile internet facilities and training aids like liquid crystal display multimedia projectors, screens and audio systems, is the third such vehicle to roll out from the CYP Asia Centre under its Technology Empowerment Centre on Wheels project. The US\$25,000 mobile centre was handed over to Pakistan through its High Commission in New Delhi, India, by Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General Florence Mugasha on 1 October 2006. The van is aimed at providing computer education to 48 young people every month. A website is being developed to monitor the progress of the project online.

In the past, two mobile ICT learning projects have been carried out successfully by the CYP Asia Centre. In 2003, about 3,000 young people in 16 villages were trained in the north Indian city of Chandigarh. In December 2005, an integrated satellite communication antennae dish was mounted on an ICT van to deliver education programmes in Nashik, west India, in collaboration with the Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University.

## Behind Bars

CYPTEC on Wheels has crossed over state and country borders. It has reached the skies through satellite and now it has even crossed walls of a jail. It completed one month of computer fundamentals programmes for 46 students including inmates and officers.

"I could never dream of getting computer literacy, even outside jail but it has been made a reality" said Manjeet, a young offender who has already served 3 years in Chandigarh Model Jail.

"This is a Model Jail and we want to pioneer many innovative things and CYPTEC on Wheels presented a golden opportunity to prepare these young inmates for a meaningful life out of jail", said Inspector General of Prisons, Mr. Dinesh Bhatt at the closing function of the one month programme on Sept 26, 2007, which featured music by the inmates.

Computer literacy for jail inmates was only possible through a tripartite arrangement of CYP along with the Jail Authorities and a local NGO called 'Noor' working for rehabilitation and reform of young offenders. The next launch of CYPTEC will be in Bangladesh.

## Results summary: Strategic Programme Area 1 Youth Enterprise and Sustainable Livelihoods

Strategic Objectives	Outputs	Outcomes	Emerging Impact
<p>(Objective 1.3) Contribute to the creation of opportunities for young people, including those infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS as well as other at-risk youth, to enhance their social and economic well-being and their capacity to lead healthy lives through initiatives such as cultural/sports exchanges;</p>	<p>North Uganda Youth Development Centre</p> <p>Young Ambassadors of Positive Living (YAPL) network: new groups in Swaziland, Zambia (School Health Education Programme with SPW), Guyana (including school-based interventions), St Lucia.</p> <p>HIV/AIDS/YAPL training in South Africa, Zambia, Bahamas, Guyana.</p> <p>New HIV/AIDS Advocacy Toolkit for Africa. Refresher training and review in Asia, in collaboration with Government of India, UNAIDS, UNDP, Constella Futures and other NGOs.</p>	<p>Foundation laid for livelihoods creation and positive behaviour change.</p> <p>59 new YAPL in Caribbean, plus 325+ trainees. Behaviour change, greater self-esteem and confidence among pupils attributed to YAPL programme, including greater participation in extra-curricular activities</p>	<p>Contribution to normalisation of economic and political conditions in northern Uganda</p> <p>Reduced stigma and greater awareness of HIV/AIDS among young people. Greater social inclusion of PLWHA. 72,000 school students to be targeted in Zambia alone</p>
<p>(Objective 1.5) Advocate for and contribute to the creation of opportunities for young people, including those who are socially excluded, to enhance and sustain their socio-economic status, and coping mechanisms through enterprise development</p>	<p>“Bonding Beyond Boundaries Through Sports”, Chandigarh</p> <p>Empowering Youth Living with Disabilities (Guyana); Bringing ICTs and life skills to Amerindian youth in the interior of Guyana; Youth at Risk project tested in St. Lucia; Grass-root youth-on-the-block (high-risk youth) outreach project (Guyana and Jamaica). Training workshop in BVI on parenting, counseling and positive living. DVD on Caribbean youth at risk. Business Plan Innovation Award (Caribbean)</p> <p>Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative (CYCI): Launch in Botswana, Cameroon, Tanzania, Meghalaya State, North East India. Review of CYCI in Africa; trainings in Lesotho, Bahamas; CYCI mentorship tool guide; Commonwealth Service Abroad Programme (CSAP) volunteers placed in Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania; CYCI implementation in Chandigarh, India; institutionalisation in Gujarat; re-strategising in Sri Lanka.</p> <p>Youth Business Incubator, Brunei; Asia Forum of Junior Chambers 4th meeting; Manual on Youth Entrepreneurship Development in Tourism.</p>	<p>CYP Africa to become Centre of Excellence in HIV/AIDS work. School interventions to be replicated in Lesotho and Swaziland</p> <p>Africa: creation of 680 businesses and 1,006 jobs. Asia: creation of 1178 businesses. Caribbean: creation of 59 businesses.</p> <p>YED Fund, Bahamas.</p> <p>Enhanced knowledge and revised framework for CYCI</p>	<p>CYP models of micro-credit and enterprise development training taken up by governments and other partners</p> <p>Demonstration that young people are “bankable”; better targeted interventions for poverty reduction</p> <p>Increased pool of skilled young entrepreneurs in target communities</p>

Strategic Objectives	Outputs	Outcomes	Emerging Impact
programmes, technology, and innovations throughout the planning period;	Youth Enterprise Development Workshops: 872 trainees in Africa; 197 in Caribbean; 120 in the Pacific (Vanuatu, Cook Islands, Samoa)	implementation; Management Information System for CYCI. Interest in CYCI from Nigeria	
(Objective 1.4) Liaise with Commonwealth Secretariat Divisions and other stakeholders to implement at least one project per region to improve young people's access to technology and to provide them with the skills to make use of it;	CYP Technology Empowerment Centres (replicated in Pakistan) 270 ICT trainees in Africa; 1120 in Asia. Phase II of Nature discovery project in Leh; Asia Regional Workshop on young people and sustainable development; review of Asia Youth Environment Network; Asia Regional consultation on Youth at Risk; Nature Discovery Camps (8,000 participants) Asia Regional Training of Trainers for Women Entrepreneurs.	Interest in further CYP entrepreneurship training from Dominica, St Kitts and Nevis, Australia, Cook Islands, New Zealand, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu. CSAP to review Pacific programme	Increased pool of ICT-literate young people in target communities and raised awareness
	Support to youth employment strategy in Zambia. Lusaka regional preparatory meeting for the Tokyo International Conference on African Development.	Input to African agenda at G8 meeting 2008	Contribution to environmental awareness in India
	Caribbean enterprise education strategy; new enterprise education programme for schools piloted in Dominica. Caribbean Youth Enterprise Development Training of Trainers Manual. Training of careers trainers for school students in Solomon Islands. Partnership initiated with Caribbean trade unions, sharing of PAYE framework.	CYP's track record in the Caribbean has led to responsibility for rolling out the youth entrepreneurship and enterprise development component of a \$6 million IDB US project for Guyana.	Skilled leaders among at-risk and socially excluded young people  Contribution to issue-networks and development discourse in the Caribbean

Strategic Objectives	Outputs	Outcomes	Emerging Impact
<p>Climate change and business development workshop, St Vincent.</p> <p>Formation of the Cook Islands Young Entrepreneurs Association.</p> <p>Exploratory CYP/RYP visit to Uttermost Rural Development Foundation, Solomon Islands.</p>	<p>Awareness of youth investment agenda, sharing of good practices</p>	<p>Contribution to institution-building and culture of enterprise in the Pacific</p>	
<p>“Investing In Youth” conference on Youth Enterprise and Sustainable Livelihoods, London.</p>	<p>Partnership framework with UNFPA in Africa and Guyana.</p>	<p>Foundation laid for strategic partnerships that can scale up CYP impact on youth unemployment in target communities</p>	
<p>New promotional material for the YESL programme. Advocacy with e.g. Youth Business International, UK; The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award International Association Street Kids International, Toronto; African Children’s Club; AusAID, Australia; Youth Build International; Kaiser Family Foundations, USA; ILO, Geneva</p>			



## 2.2 Strategic Programme Area 2: Governance, Development and Youth Networks



### 6th Commonwealth Youth Forum

Commonwealth Youth Forum (CYF) provides an independent platform for youth representatives of member countries to consider their agenda at the same time as Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). Each CYF addresses young people's concerns and builds on the work of previous youth fora. Each forum works to formulate a statement of recommendations and action plans which are shared with Heads of Government and disseminated Commonwealth-wide. CYP Regional Youth Caucus (RYC) members play a prominent role in the Forum as delegates, speakers, facilitators and resource persons.

The 6th CYF took place from 14th to 21st November 2007 in Entebbe, Uganda. It was officially opened by HE Yoweri Museveni, President of Uganda. Also present were Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General Florence Mugasha and Uganda's Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, the Hon Syda Bbumba. Dr Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka, UN Under Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN Habitat, delivered the keynote address on how young people are now better equipped and educated to address

the challenges and opportunities that urbanisation and globalisation present. Entebbe 2007 marked the 10th anniversary of the CYF which began in Edinburgh, UK in 1997.

Over 150 youth from 49 Commonwealth countries participated; visiting delegations were made up of one woman and one man aged 18-25. Discussion was organised around the theme of 'Breaking Barriers: Unleashing Young People's Potential for Development' and covered:

- Sustainable Development and Climate Change;
- Conflict Management; and Social Transformation; and
- Health, including HIV/AIDS and Substance Abuse.

6th Commonwealth Youth Forum 2007 was organised by the Ugandan Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development in partnership with the Uganda National Youth Council, with technical support from the Commonwealth Youth Programme and the Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council (CYEC).

### Mainstreaming at the highest level: the CHOGM Youth Dialogue

On 23 November 2007, an unprecedented dialogue took place between Heads of States and young people at Munyonyo, Kampala. Held before the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) retreat, the dialogue involved nine Heads of Government, eight CYF delegates from across the Commonwealth, the Commonwealth Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General, the Director of the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) and the Regional Director of the CYP Caribbean Centre.

The one hour long session was chaired by the President of Uganda, and included the leaders



CHOGM Youth Dialogue

of Dominica, Guyana, India, Malaysia, New Zealand, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka and Zambia. The young people warmed to the Heads, especially to Roosevelt Skerrit, Prime Minister of Dominica at just 35 and Bharrat Jagdeo of Guyana not much older at 43.

The young people reaffirmed their commitment to work with Governments and leaders to develop their nations and societies. They put forward a three point plan stressing the centrality of youth participation to national development; the importance of technologies and developmental processes geared towards fighting poverty, unemployment and environmental degradation; the need for trade policies which are fair, equitable and provide a level playing field for all countries; and the need for investment in young people (and Commonwealth youth agencies such as CYP and CYEC) in line with the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment.

The nine Heads conveyed the dialogue's conclusions in the ensuing CHOGM retreat, and this had an impact on the final CHOGM communiqué, which

- *“reaffirmed the Commonwealth’s commitment to young people and recognised the Commonwealth Youth Programme as a longstanding and unique instrument for promoting youth empowerment and development”.*
- *Heads “noted with concern the severe shortfall in funding for the CYP which is seriously constraining its capacity to deliver its current mandates and therefore*

*agreed that countries should live up to their financial commitments to the budget to the CYP”.*

- *They “endorsed efforts to strengthen the CYP’s four Regional Centres to become centres of excellence, and in this regard, they appreciated India’s support to develop the CYP Asia Centre as a focal point for cooperation and learning in the field of youth and local governance”.*

*Heads “endorsed the Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE) adopted by the 6th Youth Ministers’ Meeting, and took note with appreciation of the communiqué of the sixth Commonwealth Youth Forum held in Entebbe in November 2007. Heads noted the importance of developing national youth policies and also of including young people in all possible aspects of national planning and budgeting”.*

### Spin-off in the Solomons

Inspired by the CYF, delegate Andre Tipoki organised a successful National Youth Forum in Honiara, Solomon Islands in December 2007. It was attended by 60 young people representing national youth stakeholders including churches, government ministries, local, and regional and international NGOs. The CYP South Pacific Centre assisted with the organising of the forum as well as availing its conference centre for the forum to be hosted.

Mr Tipoki was concerned that often times young people return from international and regional fora without passing on the knowledge and experience they gained from these meetings. He had found the CYF workshop on conflict resolution to be very useful, relevant not only to wars and armed situations but also to personal conflicts and those experienced in one’s work environment. Another topic of interest to him was Social Transformation in Leadership. During this workshop session, Mr. Tipoki said he learnt about the different leadership styles and how to lead in light of the constantly changing youth culture.

Attending the Solomon Islands forum, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Mr. Fred

Fakari'i acknowledged Mr. Tipoki's role in organising it. He also welcomed the CYP Pacific Centre's presentation on the Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE). Mr. Fakari'i said that the PAYE was vital to youth development in Solomon Islands and called for government representatives and non-government youth stakeholders to adopt it and implement it through their programmes.

was matched with a high level of representation from all delegates attending the forum.

"One of the biggest problems right now [in the Caribbean] is the lack of youth involvement in the formal governance structures of organisations at all levels of policy making. Two of the major issues that young people are facing right now are HIV and AIDS – we have the second highest prevalence in the world – and climate change: most of our countries in are low lying areas and most of us are island nations.

## Talking with a Youth Forum participant

CYP caught up with Justin Missick (20) of Turks and Caicos to ask him about his experience of CYF6. Justin pointed out that being a RYC member doesn't guarantee your participation in a CYF. "I was selected by the department of Youth Affairs because of my active participation and involvement within my community through different youth led initiatives and groups. I made it my duty to get involved and try to effect change on issues that were important to me and other young people in my country and it carried me all the way to Entebbe".

"My expectations going into CYF 6 were very high. This was partly because of the unity and eagerness of my fellow RYCs to participate and make their voices heard. I expected it to be a trying process to which it was, but I believe that

"As a RYC, building your knowledge base and being well informed on the issues are very important, training in the fields of advocacy and lobbying, the principles of a debate and democracy go a long way and will at one point or the other during your RYC tenure be needed. Forums like these give young people a chance to experience each other's culture and learn from our differences and diversity. I believe this can be used as a strength, also to network with each other and share best practice solutions. My participation in CYF 6 has been a truly rewarding experience, I believe now that I have had a chance to participate in an initiative on this pan-commonwealth level I am better equipped to handle a lot more of the situations on a national level."

## Commonwealth Youth Forum 6 Communique to Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting

...We urge the Commonwealth and member governments to support and facilitate developing member countries to adopt technologies and development processes geared towards fighting poverty, unemployment and environmental degradation. We are concerned by the recent lack of meetings of the Commonwealth Environment Ministers that previously occurred in the lead up to CHOGM. We believe that such meetings provide an important opportunity to ensure CHOGM continually focuses on environmental issues. In order to ensure the relevance of the Commonwealth's work on environmental matters into the future, we, the young people of the Commonwealth strongly commend to you our full participation within future CEMMs leading up to the 2009 CHOGM.

We urge the Commonwealth to work together with international bodies to promote trade policies which are fair, equitable and provide a level playing field for all countries especially developing countries, by removing trade barriers and encouraging a stronger lobbying presence for the Commonwealth at international organisations like the World Trade Organisation.

As young people we do not have the same social, political and economic power as other demographics. Many of us are disproportionately affected by disease, hunger, poor sanitation and inaccessible health care. We feel that a high-level panel focusing on young people's health issues in the Commonwealth, that is made up of young people,

and reports directly to the Commonwealth Health Ministers Meeting would provide us with the opportunity to ensure that health policies are informed by grassroots input from young people and would assist us in mitigating the growing disparities in disease burden across the Commonwealth.

Young people are an integral part of peace building as well as peaceful social transformation. Violence and conflict has often come about when young people feel socially, economically and politically disenfranchised. In order to promote peace and understanding, structured facilitation between groups of dis-enfranchised young people must be supported. Further, young people should be encouraged to participate in peace building processes such as conflict and alternative dispute resolution initiatives and election observation.

In order to ensure the relevance of the Commonwealth to the future, we urge the Commonwealth to provide financial support to youth policies in line with the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment, the Commonwealth Youth Programme and the Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council. Also, to include young people meaningfully at all levels, especially in the Commonwealth Ministers Meetings. We would ask you to create meaningful and constructive mechanisms to engage us in policy making at national and global levels, for example through National Youth Councils...

## Commonwealth Youth Caucus

As an organisation that promotes the participation of youth networks in the governance process, the Commonwealth has its own youth consultative body, the Commonwealth Youth Caucus.

The Commonwealth Youth Caucus operates at national, regional and Pan-Commonwealth levels, representing young people's interests to the Commonwealth Youth Programme, youth ministries and other partners. Members come from National Youth Councils and other youth bodies. The chair of the Youth Caucus has full speaking rights at Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting. At the Commonwealth Youth Programme, we recognise that Youth Caucus members and other youth leaders

- Have enthusiasm, skills and fresh ideas to offer
- Have a beneficial impact on communication styles within the organisation
- Improve the Commonwealth's accountability to its younger citizens

*“Youth engagement is not just about recruiting young people as volunteers, interns and junior staff members. It is about a deeper transformation that makes them central in the work of the organisation. An organisation that has engaged in the process of mainstreaming youth will recognise that young people are not just an add-on to programmes and social interventions. Young people stop being just a target group or beneficiaries, they become integral to the process of finding solutions and become part of implementing solutions. By accepting this formulation, we must also accept that our organisations cannot stay the same. This requires us to develop creative strategies and be open to learning new ways of doing things. This may be particularly difficult because many organisations have established histories, cultures and leadership styles. In most cases, even in the most forward-looking organisations, adults have all the power. Adults control the resources and make the final decisions, as they have been doing for a long time, without young people.”*

- Steve Mokwena, writing in a 2006 CYP publication, “Putting Youth Engagement Into Practice.”

## CYP governance: a launch pad for national youth initiatives

*“We, in this ministry, considered the whole experience of being the hosts for the three meetings to be a real privilege. Our young team learnt so much more not only about the commonality of the major youth challenges across the region which placed our own national challenges in a better perspective, but they have also learnt so much more about what it means to be hosts for a regional event. I sincerely hope that, amongst other things, our team will begin to develop their network of contacts across the region and with yourselves in our Pacific Centre. Certainly I am happy to see that they have already had their first meeting with the wider local group that was mandated to realise the revival of our National youth Council.”*

- Response of Cook Islands youth ministry to the Regional Advisory Board meeting, September 2007

### The Commonwealth and UNICEF

The Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) and UNICEF are working together to realise youth participation in various development projects worldwide.

UNICEF/CYP training materials have been designed with the aim of involving adolescents and young people in

- Situation analysis (finding out what needs to be done in a given location)
- Project planning
- Project implementation
- Project monitoring and evaluation



## Achievements in Governance, Development and Youth Networks

### *Africa*

- Contribution to the body of knowledge through e.g. study on “Building a Culture of Peace among Young People in Commonwealth Africa”; discussion paper study on the democratic governance and peace building
- Enhanced leadership and project management among youth workers and young people e.g. through training in Seychelles (34 participants); support for the review of the Uganda National Youth Council (NYC); training for NYCs and ministries of youth officials from Swaziland and Zambia; leadership training for 13 Regional Youth Caucus members and 25 youth parliamentarians
- RYC country action plans
- Increased awareness of International Youth week issues through e.g. support to the Copperbelt Province Youth Forum
- Initiated partnership with UNFPA to foster synergy in youth development
- Recognition for 31 youth development projects from 11 countries through participation in Commonwealth Development Youth Awards
- Enhanced networking through the production of the Directory of Youth Organisations in the Commonwealth Africa Region
- Zambia national youth symposium (one week) and dissemination of Zambian National Youth Policy – youth mainstreaming initiated
- Namibia/Zambia youth officials’ study visit
- Governments and young people input to CYP governance and planning through e.g. Regional Advisory Boards (62 participants) including two day RYC capacity building

### *Asia*

- Enhanced capacity and leadership among Regional Youth Caucus and National Youth Councils
- Sharing of knowledge and best practices on youth policies and programmes through e.g. Regional consultations; regional workshop on Youth and Local Self-Governance; revival of the quarterly publication “Young Asia.”
- Launch of the Centre of Excellence
- Training of Trainers on conflict resolution in Sri Lanka
- Asia Youth Environment Network meeting and regional workshop on Youth and Sustainable Development
- Recognition of youth-led development through Commonwealth Development Youth Awards
- Increased awareness of Commonwealth issues through Commonwealth Day celebrations e.g. in Sri Lanka.
- Governments and young people input to CYP governance and planning through e.g. Regional Advisory Boards.

### *Caribbean*

- Awareness and commitment to PAYE framework e.g. integration of PAYE into Anguilla Social Security Board’s strategic plan; formation of volunteer corps and National Youth Policy Forum in Turks and Caicos; detailed request for mainstreaming pilot, Antigua and Barbuda (achieved through publicity work including with Directors of Youth, diplomats and journalists; official launches in Guyana and Barbados; keynote address to Antigua and Barbuda National Youth Awards and Anguilla National Conference on Youth Development)

- CYP Caribbean Centre identified as implanting/advisory partner for the specific youth initiative on crime and violence mandated by the OECS Heads of Government. Caribbean Development Bank seeking assistance with revitalizing Caribbean Federation of Youth
- Support to Strategic Action Planning for youth policy undertaken in six member countries (Antigua and Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Guyana, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos, St Lucia). Audit Tools developed with a view to assess capacity of youth ministries and youth governance structures
- Investments in youth leadership: over 50 youth leaders trained in Anguilla and Montserrat; at least 12 Regional Youth Caucus members participated in various programming interventions regionally and internationally. Support to Turks and Caicos Youth Forum
- “Youth Writes” project in partnership with CARICOM and the CARICOM Commission for Youth Development: young people aged 17-24 to gain a greater voice in policy-making.
- New strategic partnerships for youth mainstreaming. Youth mainstreaming orientation workshops in St Lucia and Trinidad attracting over 100 stakeholders. Capacity building and support to restructuring of Trinidad and Tobago’s Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs
- Symposium on Youth Development, Antigua and Barbuda (100+ participants)
- Training workshop for journalists covering Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meeting
- Training of trainers parenting workshop, Guyana
- Recognition for youth-led development through Commonwealth Development Youth Awards
- Governments and young people input to CYP governance and planning through e.g. Regional Advisory Boards (involving all countries except Canada)

## *Pacific*

- Awareness and commitment to PAYE framework through launches in Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Tonga and Vanuatu, Cook Islands – evidenced by formation of Interim National Youth Council Working Group, Cook Islands; Tonga National Youth Stakeholders Committee.
- CYP and young people influenced National Youth Policies, Strategic Plans and donor programmes through e.g. Joint Pacific UN Agencies Country Planning and Consultation Meetings in Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Kiribati; technical assistance to Tuvalu, Solomon Islands and Tonga for development of Corporate Plans and project proposals. Interest from Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat to collaborate on National Youth Policy development.
- Active Regional Youth Caucus: meeting in Samoa followed by 5 RYC members’ participation at a Pacific Parliamentarian and Speaker’s Consultation; participation of in the Pacific Youth Council (PYC), Tahiti; participation in the 2nd Conference of the Pacific Parliamentary Assembly on Population and Development
- Recognition of youth-led development through the Commonwealth Youth Development Awards (winners from Fiji and Samoa)
- Partnership and training with Regional Rights Resource Team, Suva
- Technical support to new ministry of Women, Youth and Children's Affairs, Solomon Islands
- Developing the CYP’s Youth Empowerment Resource and Research Centre, Honiara
- Support to Cook Islands, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands youth fora (national and Isabel Province)
- Increased awareness of Commonwealth and International Youth Day themes through technical and financial support to

celebrations in Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Cook Islands Kiribati, Samoa and Tuvalu involving several thousand youths. Commonwealth Day Celebration in Honiara attended by the Governor General and the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands

- Renewal of relations in Pacific after period of under-staffing; awareness of Pacific Youth Mapping Exercise findings. CYP Pacific to become Centre of Excellence in youth-led research
- Governments and young people input to CYP governance and planning through e.g. Regional Advisory Boards. (Preceded by a Stakeholders Meeting in partnership with Secretariat of the Pacific Community to discuss partnership in an SPC led youth mapping exercise in the South Pacific region)

### *Pan-Commonwealth*

- Governments and young people input to CYP's strategic direction through consultation on and revision of the Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment
- Influence on CHOGM 2007 outcomes, and increased visibility of youth leadership through the CHOGM Youth Dialogue and Commonwealth Youth Forum
- Influence on youth findings of the Commission on Respect and Understanding
- Contribution of youth mainstreaming component to Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Plan

- Increased visibility for youth role in democracy through RYC participation in election observer missions
- Greater dialogue among Youth Caucus members through revamped CYP website
- RYC (Regional Youth Caucus) framework developed in close consultation with Regional centres
- Revision of Regional Youth Caucus handbook in close consultation with CYP Regional centers and RYC representatives.
- Development of guidelines framework for the Regional Advisory Boards (RAB) Meeting
- Enhanced capacity of RYC and programme contribution to CYP through internship of the Pan-Commonwealth Youth Caucus Chair
- Coordination and monitoring work with Indian High Commission, London, Government of India and ComSec for Asia Centre of Excellence in youth and self governance
- Review of Commonwealth Youth Development Award
- New promotional material for the GDYN programme
- Research into political theory for young people (publication forthcoming)
- Support to the Royal Commonwealth Society's UK Youth CHOGM

## A role for young people in Commonwealth democratic processes

Together with the Political Affairs Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat, CYP placed the following young people as members of Commonwealth election observation missions:

Ms Barbara Soetan (UK)	Kenya, December 2007
Mr Ahmed Mahloof (Maldives)	Sierra Leone, July/August 2007
Ms Kareem Payne (Antigua/Barbuda)	Nigeria April 2007
Ms Phyllis Andoh (Ghana)	Zambia, September 2006
Mr John Bennett (Australia),	Zambia, September 2006
Ms Hajra Mungulla (Tanzania)	The Gambia, September 2006
Mr Alberto Vellos (Belize)	Guyana, August 2006
Ms Elaine Howard (Tonga)	Solomon Islands, April 2006
Ms Mulako Mwanamwalye (Zambia)	Uganda, February 2006
Ms Fipe Tuitubou (Fiji)	Mozambique, December 2004
Mr Dev Sindhu (India)	Cameroon, October 2004
Ms Nicolette Balcombe (St Vincent & The Grenadines)	Malawi, May 2004
Dr Ashique Selim (Bangladesh)	Sri Lanka, April 2004
Ms Emmaline Pierre (Grenada)	Nigeria, April 2003
Mr Norman Sigalla (Tanzania)	Nigeria, April 2003
Ms Segametsi Moathaping (Botswana)	Kenya, December 2002
Mr Joe Billy Oge (Solomon Islands)	Pakistan, October 2002
Ms Mulako Mwanamwalye (Zambia)	Zimbabwe, Feb/March 2002
Mr Asram Soleyn (St Vincent & Grenadines)	Zimbabwe, Feb/March 2002



Left: Barbara Soetan (21, British Youth Council) observing the election in Kenya, December 2007

## Young people take active role in Sierra Leone elections

*(From the Commonwealth Secretariat website, 21 August 2007)*

*Sierra Leone's youth have demonstrated a passion for the democratic process and for peace, says Dr Kenny Anthony, Chairperson of the Commonwealth Observer Group*

*Before sunrise on Saturday, 11 August 2007, Mulku Sulaiman Bangura arrived at the Aberdeen Community Centre in Freetown, to start work as a Presiding Officer in Sierra Leone's presidential and parliamentary elections.*

*Whilst walking to the polling station, as the country prepared for the historic day, the 21-year-old passed football pitches he plays on every weekend. Mr Bangura, who recently graduated from Fourah Bay College where he achieved a degree in Library and Information Science, supervised four other young men for 16 hours. Names were checked on the voter register, ballot papers were issued and the voting process was explained to people.*

*After years of civil war in Sierra Leone, Mr Bangura felt compelled to approach the National Electoral Commission and involve himself in the process of strengthening democracy.*

*"When I went for training and realised how serious my responsibilities were, I had butterflies in my stomach. I was really afraid because I knew I would have agents watching*

*me and I couldn't afford to make mistakes. But I took my time and documented everything."*

*Young people like Mr Bangura worked as polling staff, party observers or civil society observers across the country on election day. Ngolo Katta, National Co-ordinator at the Centre for Youth Activities, an NGO which works with young people in Sierra Leone, noted in the build up to the elections that there were a number of groups involving youth in the political process.*

*Over 9,000 young people were trained around the country to inform their peers about voting.*

*"These young people want peace and to be a part of charting a new course for Sierra Leone. I believe the political culture of Sierra Leone is in the midst of change and our young people will be at the forefront of that change," stated Mr Katta.*

*Chairperson of the Commonwealth Observer Group, Dr Kenny Anthony, said the Group was struck by the outstanding role young people in Sierra Leone played in the elections. "The young people of Sierra Leone should be proud of themselves. We have seen them involved in this election as party activists, at the polling stations. All over the country youths have demonstrated a passion for the democratic process and for peace."*

- Youth Caucus representative for Sierra Leone, Bockarie Enssah, was voted national youth of the year 2006, for his exemplary work in promoting youth development.

## Young People Going Places

Regional and Pan-Commonwealth youth representatives undertake internships at CYP Regional Centres and Secretariat headquarters respectively. This promotes mutual learning: both the young people and the CYP gain hands-on experience and skills. Internships empower young people and ensure that CYP "walks the talk" when it comes to youth participation in decision-making.

*"My work as a RYC has really entailed information sharing, advocacy and lobbying. Since my tenure a number of young people have benefited; for the first time a youth organisation (in Botswana) won the Commonwealth Youth Development award, and a young person nominated for a nine month internship in the UNFPA New York office. My term in office was characterised initially with an era of excitement of the unknown and hoping to do more for young people. The RYC capacity building workshop, almost 12 months into the office facilitated understanding of our roles and responsibilities as RYC representatives"*

- Batsho Nthoi, Coordinator, RYC, Africa Region.

### Meeting the Secretary General



Mobafa Baker

As part of his internship Mobafa Baker, Chair of the Pan-Commonwealth Youth Caucus, had discussions with Commonwealth Secretary-General Don McKinnon. During his visit, they discussed the possibility of further strengthening the role of young people in the Secretariat's programme and structure; the role of young people in Commonwealth Youth Forum; as well as the potential of having a direct interface between young people and representatives at CHOGM (which later took place); how the Commonwealth Secretariat can help to ensure youth development remains a priority for national government; and guidance from the Don McKinnon in support of Mobafa's role as a chair of the youth caucus. The Secretary-General had welcomed and congratulated Mr Baker on being elected as the chair of the Youth Caucus in May 2006 in The Bahamas. Don McKinnon, who is in his last year as Secretary-General said he "wants to leave youth in a good shape" before he departs. "I will make sure there is an interface between youth and heads at CHOGM, however this is not enough in itself. Youth Ministers tend to

be at the bottom of the equation. We must engage with leaders for them to recognise the importance of youth" said McKinnon.

Mobafa asked the Secretary-General for advice about how he can make an impact in his final year as chairperson of the youth caucus; "maintain your enthusiasm - as it is very infectious. Keep your radar spinning and don't get bogged down into details - look at the bigger picture" advised McKinnon. "I am glad we have a Secretary-General who wants youth profiles to be raised" Mr Baker said.

## Commonwealth Youth Development Awards

Through the Commonwealth Youth Development Awards the CYP recognises and rewards outstanding youth-led development initiatives. Many of the award winners are focused on sustainable livelihoods. In addition CYP's Caribbean Centre makes a Business Plan Innovation Award (BPIA), providing start-up grants for innovative and sustainable business projects with the potential to benefit the host community and country. In 2008 CYP will undertake an assessment of performance of past 4 winners of the BPIA to judge how they have performed relative to other randomly selected businesses started up over a similar period. This will also help to measure whether the BPIAs or some other incentive will be most beneficial to the young entrepreneurs.

In their 2006 communiqué Youth Ministers "noted constraints facing the [Commonwealth Youth Development] Awards and endorsed recommendations for the improvement of the Programme. Among measures identified were for greater support from Governments and youth networks in the promotion of the programme within their respective countries, for the linkage of the programme with ongoing national developments awards and schemes, and for the enhanced involvement of the Youth Caucus in the overall delivery and implementation of the Awards. Ministers agreed to extend the judging of the 2006 Gold Awards to September 2006 to allow for better participation and involvement of Governments, and to facilitate the re-structuring of the Awards."



Ohangwena Youth Cultural Group of Namibia, receiving the 2006-2007 Commonwealth Youth Development Award (Silver)

In the period under review, CYP Africa supported 11 projects from Cameroon, Zambia, Seychelles, Tanzania, Malawi, Kenya, Namibia, Zambia, Sierra Leone and Botswana through the Award scheme. *The 2006/7 Africa Gold Award Winners were Chawama Youth Project, Zambia.* Chawama Youth Project was established in 2001. It offers vocational training for the youth to enable them to create employment for themselves. The members benefit from skills like carpentry and joinery, designing, cutting and tailoring, welding and metal fabrication, automotive mechanics, power electrical and house wiring and ICT.

## RYC representative becomes MP

CYP's investment in young people's capacity and leadership skills continues to pay off, with youth representatives taking their agendas forward into government. For example at 28 Emmalin Pierre, Commonwealth Regional Youth Caucus Representative from Grenada, was appointed to the Senate as the new Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, with responsibility for Youth Development.

On 20 January 2008, Ahmed Mahloof, the CYP Asia Regional Youth Caucus (RYC) representative was appointed a Member of Parliament in the Republic of Maldives by President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom.



Ahmed Mahloof, took his oath of office before the President, having been appointed as the President's People's Special Majlis, which is the parliament formed to revise the constitution. The swearing-in ceremony was held in the morning at the President's Office. The oath was administered by the Chief Justice Mr. Mohamed Rasheed Ibrahim.

The ceremony to swear-in Ahmed Mahloof as Member of the People's Special Majlis was attended by the President of the People's Special Majlis, Mr. Qasim Ibrahim, the Minister for Presidential Affairs, Mr. Mohamed Hussain and the Secretary-General of the People's Majlis, Mr. Ahmed Mohamed.

One of the reasons for Mahloof's appointment was due to his current position as the Asia Regional Caucus Chair. He was elected as the RYC for Maldives at the sixth Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting in May 2006 in the Bahamas. But it was not until November 2007 that he was elected Chair of the Asia Region during the Asia Centre Regional Advisory Board meeting held in Islamabad, Pakistan.

"The Commonwealth is extremely proud and congratulate Mahloof on his new appointment as a Member of Parliament. We commend the visionary Government of Maldives for having faith in young people and for their realisation that young people play an integral part in the development of a nation" said Dr Fatiha Serour, Director and Head of Youth Affairs.

Ahmed Mahloof, 27, has been working with the Ministry of Youth and Sports as an Assistant Programme Officer since 2000. He got promoted to an Assistant Director in December 2007. He was crowned with the National Youth Award in 2006, in recognition of the exemplary work he did in the youth and sports field. He has participated in 28 international youth programmes as well as having been a member of the Commonwealth Observer Group for the presidential and parliamentary elections in Sierra Leone in August 2007.

## Results summary: Strategic Programme Area 2 Governance, Development and Youth Networks

Strategic Objectives	Outputs	Outcomes	Emerging Impact
<p>(Objective 1.1) Enhance the capacity of at least 15 representatives of RYC and NYCs per Region to undertake leadership roles in participatory development by end of October 2007;</p>	<p>Capacity, leadership building and strategic planning for Regional Youth Caucus and National Youth Councils (plus 25 African youth parliamentarians). Greater resourcing of Africa RYC activities.</p> <p>6th Commonwealth Youth Forum (CYF) and CHOGM youth dialogue, Uganda.</p> <p>Support and input to the UK Youth CHOGM; Copperbelt Province Youth Forum, Zambia (International Youth Week); youth fora of Turks and Caicos, Kiribati, Solomon Islands (national and Isabel Province), Tuvalu, Samoa, Cook Islands, Vanuatu. RYC participation in Pacific Parliamentarian and Speaker's Consultation, Samoa; Pacific Youth Council, Tahiti; 2nd Conference of the Pacific Parliamentary Assembly on Population and Development.</p>	<p>RYC country action plans in Africa</p> <p>Influence on CHOGM agenda and decisions. CYF news coverage including interviews with RYC. Debriefing with new minister in Australia. Benefits to Solomon Islands national youth forum. Recommendations taken up by Solomon Islands youth focal point and ministry</p>	<p>Mores skilled, active and vocal RYCs and NYCs</p> <p>Increased awareness of youth development agenda; mainstreaming in ComSec Strategic Plan</p>
<p>(Objective 1.2) Contribute to the creation of opportunities for young people to become effective advocates of democracy and good governance through their participation in observer missions, peace building initiatives, and other governance processes including in collaboration with other COMSEC divisions</p>	<p>RYC participation in election observation missions (The Gambia, Zambia, Lesotho, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Guyana, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands)</p> <p>CYP input and RYC participation in Commonwealth Commission on Respect and Understanding. PCO Research into political theory for young people; Africa study on building a culture of peace; discussion paper on democratic governance and peace building in Africa.</p>	<p>Increased visibility of youth leaders</p> <p>Contribution of youth angle to "Civil Paths to Peace" report.</p> <p>Increased visibility of young people and involvement in peacebuilding dialogue</p>	<p>Sustainability of governance processes</p> <p>Young people perceived as stakeholders in political stability, and a potential resource for democracy and good governance</p>
<p>(Objective 1.6) Promote the development of award schemes for excellence in youth achievement in each country within the planning period.</p>	<p>North Uganda Youth Development Centre</p> <p>Commonwealth Youth Development Awards (and review)</p>	<p>Awareness and commitment to PAYE framework e.g. youth working committee set up in Cook Islands to consider enterprise work; integration of PAYE into</p>	<p>Contribution to the normalisation of economic and political conditions in northern Uganda</p>

Strategic Objectives	Outputs		Outcomes	Emerging Impact
<p>(Objective 2.1) Enhance the capacity of line ministries, youth structures and young people to mainstream a youth perspective into policy and programme planning, and monitor progress;</p>	<p>Youth ministry personnel (Africa: 48; Caribbean 100+) and young people trained in youth mainstreaming. Youth mainstreaming policy guidance to ComSec Strategic Planning and Evaluation Division.</p> <p>Consultation on and revision of the Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE). Technical assistance to PAYE and National Youth Policy processes. Technical assistance to strategic action planning (Antigua and Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Guyana, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos, St Lucia, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands, Kiribati) Dissemination of Zambian National Youth Policy. Namibia/Zambia study visit.</p>	<p>Anguilla Social Security Board's strategic plan.</p> <p>Formation of Interim National Youth Council Working Group, Cook Islands. Formation of Tonga National Youth Stakeholders Committee. Detailed request for mainstreaming pilot, Antigua and Barbuda</p> <p>Rationale and capacity for youth strategic action plans; alignment with National Youth Policy.</p>	<p>Best practices shared and replicated</p> <p>Appreciation of urgency of youth development challenge, including the mainstreaming agenda</p> <p>Shared vision of regional and Commonwealth youth development for 2007-2015</p>	
<p>(Objective 2.2) Promote and support the implementation of PAYE in at least 1 country per region by March 2008;</p> <p>(Objective 2.3) Support the formulation and updating of National Youth Policies in all Commonwealth countries by June 2008;</p>	<p>PAYE and NYP publicity with Directors of Youth, diplomats, bilateral donors (in e.g. Australia) and journalists: official PAYE launches in Anguilla, Guyana, Barbados, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Vanuatu and Cook Islands.</p> <p>Commonwealth Youth Volunteers Forums (CYVF) launched in five states of India. Bonding Beyond Boundaries Through Sports, India (international intake).</p>	<p>CYP and young people influenced National Youth Policies and Strategic Plans. Interest from Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat to collaborate on National Youth Policy development.</p> <p>Formation of volunteer corps and National Youth Policy Forum in Turks and Caicos.</p>	<p>Sound foundation for strategic action plans; capacity building among participating stakeholders. Better use of available resources for the benefit of youth populations; enhanced legitimacy of policy process</p> <p>21 African countries now have youth policy frameworks that CYP has assisted in developing</p>	
<p>(Objective 2.4) Support the formulation and implementation of strategic action plans in at least 2 Commonwealth countries per region by June 2008;</p>	<p>Review of Uganda National Youth Council (NYC) structure and operations. Enhanced skills of NYCs and ministries of youth officials from Swaziland and Zambia for effective programme delivery. Africa guide on NYC best practice. Support to NYC process in Cook Islands and Tonga.</p> <p>Directory of Youth Organisations in the Commonwealth Africa Region.</p>	<p>Policy development.</p>	<p>Youth concerns and experiences made an integral dimension of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes; reduction of power inequalities</p>	
<p>(Objective 2.5) Strengthen the capacity of at least 2 NYCs/youth development</p>	<p>Zambia mainstreaming project. Asia regional consultations on Youth Policies and Programmes, Youth and Local Self-Governance: launch of</p>			

Strategic Objectives	Outputs	Outcomes	Emerging Impact
<p>structures per region in the implementation of national youth development plans by June 2008;</p> <p>(Objective 2.6) Promote the implementation of youth mainstreaming in 2 pilot initiatives (regional and pan commonwealth office) by June 2008.</p>	<p>the Centre of Excellence (and revision of CYP-Government of India MoU), Caribbean Capacity Building Youth in Governance Programme.</p> <p>Training of Trainers on conflict resolution in Sri Lanka. CYP-OECS youth crime and violence consultation.</p>	<p>Greater regional awareness of youth issues, policies and good practices. Space for youth voices and international links between youth leaders</p>	<p>Enhanced quality and quantity of research data on youth development.</p> <p>Stronger research networks</p>
<p>(Objective 4.1) Ensure the finalisation of the YDI in collaboration with other stakeholders by March 2008;</p> <p>(Objective 4.2) Enhance the capacity of at least 2 Youth Ministries/Departments/Agencies per Commonwealth region and at least 25 RYCs and youth leaders to undertake and facilitate</p>	<p>Revamping of CYP website with regular online debates among Youth Caucus members. "Young Asia"; Caribbean Youth Vibes, Caribbean Youth Lecture Series and Youth Journal. CYP-CARICOM "Youth Writes" project; CYP-JUNESCO Youth portal for the Americas; Caribbean Youth Internet Radio Project. Training workshop for journalists covering Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meeting. Pacific EZINE.</p> <p>Regional Advisory Board Meetings (x 4) including RYC capacity building.</p> <p>Caribbean Youth Exchange 2006.</p> <p>Training of trainers parenting workshop, Guyana</p> <p>Caribbean symposium on youth development. Zambia national youth symposium.</p> <p>Technical assistance to youth ministries in Trinidad and Tobago, Solomon Islands and Samoa.</p> <p>Partnership with Regional Rights Resource Team, Suva. Contribution to UN Agencies Country Planning and Consultations in Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Kiribati.</p> <p>Input to Advisory Panel of forthcoming Pacific Leadership Programme (of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat) Input to South Pacific Community's Youth Mapping Exercise</p>	<p>Identification of CYP Caribbean Centre as implanting/advisory partner for the specific youth initiative on crime and violence mandated by the OECS Heads of Government. Caribbean Development Bank seeking assistance with revitalizing Caribbean Federation of Youth</p> <p>Governments and young people input to CYP governance and planning. Renewal of relations in Pacific after period of under-staffing; awareness of Pacific Youth Mapping Exercise findings</p> <p>Enhanced capacity of RYC and programme contribution to CYP</p> <p>CYP Pacific to become Centre of Excellence in youth-led research</p>	<p>Enhanced accountability and publicity of CYP programmes.</p> <p>Enhanced knowledge base for future project cycles</p> <p>Enhanced capacity of departments of youth and other stakeholders to set benchmarks and monitor progress in youth development</p> <p>Better informed departments of youth and other stakeholders</p>

Strategic Objectives	Outputs	Outcomes	Emerging Impact
<p>applied and participatory research in youth development by March 2008;</p> <p>(Objective 4.3) Design and pilot, in collaboration with all stakeholders, at least two applied and participatory research projects per Commonwealth region to monitor the impact of CYP-led intervention in youth by March 2008;</p> <p>(Objective 4.4) Contribute to the identification, compilation and dissemination of applied and participatory research on youth issues within the planning period.</p>	<p>Development of CYP Pacific's Youth Empowerment Resource and Research Centre at the Honiara centre.</p> <p>Internships at PCO and Regional Centres, including for RYC members. Revised RYC framework and RYC handbook.</p> <p>New promotional material for the GDYN programme. Advocacy with British Council; UN Alliance of Civilisations; Innovations in Civic Participation, Washington; Youth for Human Rights, USA; Ourtopia World; Oaktree Foundation; Canada World Youth; Facilitating Local Initiatives for Conflict Transformation (FLICT), Sri Lanka; Royal Commonwealth Society, UK; Africa Practice, London</p> <p>International Youth Day and Commonwealth Day celebrations</p>	<p>Increased awareness of Commonwealth and International Youth Day themes. Young people travelling and mixing within countries e.g. in Sri Lanka, Kiribati and other Pacific nations</p>	<p>Better targeted youth development interventions</p> <p>Greater coordination of youth activities at national levels e.g. in Solomon Islands</p>

## Reaching young people through their own popular media: Youth Vibes Radio in the Caribbean

*In partnership with UNESCO's Caribbean Internet Radio Portal*

*The CYP Caribbean Centre's internet radio station, 'Youth Vibes Radio' has mustered up strong interest within the region and beyond. This station has attracted scores of listeners and the centre is hoping to receive more participation. Youth Vibes Radio has caused a radio renaissance of sorts writes Ajay Kumar as the youth agenda dominates air waves.*

*The radio renaissance with youth as the focal point is set to change broadcasting in the Caribbean region. Broadcasting live from the Information Department at the CYP Caribbean Centre in Georgetown, Guyana; this initiative by the CYPCC makes for an excellent avenue to mobilize, disseminate and promote youth opinion and learning. The main philosophy behind the radio programmes is to empower young people to build a team and sustain the spirit, to introduce young people to new opportunities and new people and give them the chance to build confidence, promote learning and extend their skill set through interactive and evolutionary ideas.*

*Although youth radio is not a novel concept, the distinguishing aspect of 'Youth Vibes Radio' is its inherent Commonwealth focus and the ability to produce programmes that promote understanding, sensitivity and youth agendas. Call them what you will – faceless friends... presenters without the presence... airwave stars... today, nearly two months after the launch, the radio station has a bouquet of youth presenters sharing their stories and promoting understanding.*

*Broadcasts from workshops, interviews and youth focused seminars are broadcast between 08:30 -16:00 hours Eastern Caribbean Time, under the direction of Robert Bazil, the*



*From "Caribbean Youth Vibes", August 2007*

*Information Officer at the Caribbean Centre. The internet radio as a medium is picking up pace, with organisations like UN and Red Cross establishing formal contact with the station to collaborate on their own Caribbean focused broadcasting, since the stations' launch in June. The Regional Director of CYPCC – Mr. Henry Charles is enthused about the interest shown in the station. The immediate objective according to Charles is to extend the radio as a distance learning tool and promote leadership within youth communities. He also aims to make it a social marketing tool for all other Commonwealth youth initiatives.*

*So, what does an average listener look for in an internet radio station? It seems to be the two-way process of communication where both the presenter and listener are actively engaged. Especially youth of the region telling their stories, their aspirations and taking a sense of ownership and responsibility have motivated many more youths. Janeen Wilson a youth worker from 'Carib 2 UK', a UK based talent company says "It's a great initiative to connect youngsters away from home with Caribbean issues and learn about each other and the difficulties they face. This will help cross-cultural exchange."*

## 2.3 Strategic Programme Area 3: Youth Work Education and Training

In order to work optimally with young people, the intensive, complex and demanding nature of youth work requires youth workers to possess and demonstrate a high level of knowledge, skill and self-development. Yet often, youth workers are perceived as simply those whose role it is to keep young people out of the way, provide recreation and fun for them and generally keep young people off the streets. There is little understanding and even less appreciation that Youth work is a distinctive field of practice and a highly demanding professional skill which carries with it considerable responsibilities and pressures:

- In many countries the occupational category does not even exist, or where it does, is not yet clearly defined or conceptualized by the majority of stakeholders, including policy makers. Therefore, Youth work is not widely recognized as a formal career as yet, those who practice the profession are limited, and this limitation is further exacerbated by lack of funding and other resources.
- The major weakness of youth work in many countries is the absence of any direct funding and availing of resources by government to the youth work service. Neither is there provision of funds for the documentation and highlighting of effective youth work programmes or good youth work practice. This means that the services of youth organisations are limited and they cannot provide adequately for the needs of young people.

Since 1974 the Commonwealth Youth Programme has been tackling these related challenges through provision of the best possible Youth work training and learning experiences. And since 1998 it has vastly increased the reach of its courses by transition to supported distance education. The Commonwealth Diploma in Youth Development Work is currently reaching students in 46 countries through 29 partners.

In the period under review, new partners have been coming on board in Swaziland, Mauritius, Brunei, Maldives, New Zealand, Samoa, and Tonga, and CYP Caribbean is becoming a Centre of Excellence in Youth Work Education and Training.

On 18th February 2008, 77 of 152 CYP Diploma students graduated from SNDT Women's University, India – the largest cohort of CYP graduates to date.

“To the new graduands, please continue to be good role models in your communities or wherever you may wish to further your career. Wherever you may be and in whatever field you may wish to pursue, please continue to shine as leaders for our young people for they represent the future as well as the present and therefore need our support even more.”

- Hon. Peter Tom, Solomon Islands Minister for Women, Youth and Children's Affairs at a CYP graduation ceremony.

## Achievements in Youth Work Education and Training

- Youth workers trained in 46 countries. Students trained: Africa: 600; Asia: 1,136; Caribbean: 112; Pacific: 36. (This represents improved delivery and enrolment e.g. in Papua New Guinea.)
- Diploma launched in Brunei and Maldives. New partners coming on board in Swaziland, Mauritius, New Zealand, Samoa, Tonga. Interest in establishing Certificate courses for Cayman Islands and Turks and Caicos.
- The 13 core modules of the Programme were revised and the updated curriculum now reflects the changes recommended by 27 Universities and by Commonwealth Secretariat Divisions and the Human Rights Unit. The programme more now embeds more substantially Commonwealth values into youth work.
- To achieve recognition of the Diploma and leverage for upward mobility of youth workers, various regions undertook regional consultations with Ministers from the Public Service, Ministers of Education and youth workers to initiate the process for establishing an occupational category for youth workers. Technical support was extended to Youth Worker Associations in Cameroon, Ghana, Tanzania, Zambia, Malaysia and across the Caribbean.
- In addition there were regional consultations on establishing Youth Worker Associations (Africa) and on professionalisation and codes of practice (Asia). 16 national Consultations on the Caribbean Regional Competency Standards for Youth Development were undertaken and the Standards completed. Two new Caribbean member countries



recognised the Diploma as acceptable for entry into and promotion within the public service.

- The evaluation of the pilot phase of the Diploma undertaken during 2003/04 found insufficient government involvement in the programme, and as a result national Directors of Youth are more directly involved in the implementation of the Diploma programme in their countries. This is producing positive spin-offs in the effort to institutionalise youth work. There are now National Advisory Committees guiding the programme, comprising the government-appointed country coordinator, representatives of tutors/mentors, students and graduates. Competency standards for professionalisation of youth work have been completed for a number of regions

and national consultation underway in others.

- Some universities had previously relied almost exclusively on examinations, but all have now agreed to assess the Diploma with a 60/40 exam/coursework split. This is an example of the programme's impact on teaching and assessment methodologies which has gone beyond youth work education to other subject areas.
- In response to problems with attrition rates in the Pacific, a flexible system of study has been developed: four modules completed earn a certificate; nine modules earn an Advanced Certificate; and fourteen modules earn the Diploma. In addition, students can "drop out and drop in" to the course as desired. This assists those who require flexible attendance and is impacting positively on the reach and gender balance of the programme.
- The Diploma programme is demand driven, and leverages five pounds in spending by local partners for every one pound invested by the CYP. A self-funding Diploma was launched by University of the West Indies in Jamaica.
- CYP Caribbean is to become Centre of Excellence in YWET. Through related discussions the Diploma is to be articulated with programmes of Brunel University, London.
- Interest in Commonwealth partnership from the World Youth Foundation is just the most recent example of policy impact coming from CYP Diploma alumni.

### **YWET Activity highlights**

- Appointment of new Pacific Diploma coordinator and 11 tutors in PNG
  - Senior youth functionaries and Regional Youth Caucus/National Youth Council members trained. Achievement Motivation Training for 20 youth officers from Trinidad and Tobago.
  - Review of Diploma programme in Africa and Asia.
  - Agreement with African partners to develop a Youth Work Degree. 2nd and 3rd phase Diploma Memoranda Of Understanding/Financial Agreements.
  - Quality assurance for Commonwealth Diploma in Youth Development Work: External Regional Moderators (ERMs) technical support visits to Botswana, Ghana, Lesotho, Namibia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, the Gambia, Uganda, Zambia, Jamaica, Papua New Guinea, Australia, Solomon Islands and the University of the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji.
  - Participation in 4th Biannual Pan Commonwealth Distance Education Conference, Jamaica.
  - Coordination of online Practitioner Research and Evaluation Skills Training (PREST) course (Africa)
  - Partner Institutions and External Moderator's Meetings, in Botswana, Australia; Pacific Diploma Partner Institutions meeting; 8th Diploma Progress Review meeting, Brunei
  - Support to the 16th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers
  - Commonwealth Youth Development Journal and Intercom students' newsletter
  - Caribbean curriculum writers' workshop in partnership with Commonwealth of Learning and HEART Trust NTA.
  - New promotional material for the YWET programme. Advocacy with Commonwealth of Learning, Canada; The Open University, UK; University of Surrey.
- Diploma and Certificate Tutor Training (Ghana, Namibia, the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Bangladesh, Brunei, India, Caribbean). 7 potential Partner Institutions participated in Caribbean Training of Trainers and YWET Marketing workshop, Barbados.

## Developments in the Pacific

New Zealand used to have a strong programme of Youth Work Education and Training. However, this is now in need of renewal; recent research revealed that at least 50% of youth workers are not qualified and that 74% are not doing any youth work study. The research findings are especially relevant in that they confirm the need for quality training programs which are relevant, accessible and of quality. (Pacific Partner Institutions Meeting, Sydney, December 2007)

There are three institutions that have shown interest in delivering the Commonwealth Diploma course in New Zealand. These are Northland Polytechnic, Hamilton Polytechnic and Manukau Polytechnic, all of which are located in the North Island. All three institutions have high student intakes from Maori and Pacific backgrounds and have positive consortium arrangements with each other. They are in close proximity to each other and this will be useful for the purposes of student support through face to face sessions and tutor visits.

The approval process in New Zealand involves a submission of a business Plan by the Partner Institution to the New Zealand Quality Assurance Authority (NZQA). Once approved, the PI can then access Government funding through the Tertiary Education Grants so that costs are subsidized. It is not yet known whether the Ministry of Youth will provide additional funding to the PI's. If not, students will be required to pay full cost fees and these funds would be used to fund tutor training and other support costs.

Once approval is gained, each institution will begin offer, most likely in mid-2008. In terms of sustainability and viability, the Diploma will be offered utilizing a variety of delivery methods such as face to face, full time or part-time and block mode.



*“I’m very proud to have the Diploma in Youth in Development Work. The two years experience in this programme exposed me to three main functions to develop myself and youth through enabling, ensuring and empowering. Enabling is about creating the conditions in which young people can act on their own behalf, and on their own terms, rather than relying on other people and especially professionals to do things for them. Ensuring is about operating in accordance with the value system which give a sense of purpose and meaning to how young people use their skills and knowledge and most important thing is empowering about putting democratic principles into action, so that young people can play an assertive and constructive part in the decision-making that affects them at different levels of society”.*

- Zamzurina Abdul Wahab, CYP Diploma graduate, Universiti Putra Malaysia

## From Brunei to Brunel: the CYP Diploma in Youth Development Work

One of the latest countries to come on board with the Diploma is Brunei Darussalam, where the programme is a joint effort between Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD), the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, CYP and youth work employers.

Launching the project the Vice Chancellor of UBD, Dato Paduka Dr. Haji Ismail bin Duraman said: "The lecturers take on a facilitative role in working alongside groups of students to explore ideas and theories, linking them with local contexts. The students will be engaged in an interesting and meaningful educational process through employing interactive and experimental learning methods."

Staff of UBD, CYP and Universiti Putra Malaysia kick-started the course by teaching and moderating Module 3 (Principles and Practice of Youth Work) and Module 10 (Conflict Resolution Strategies and Skills).

Meanwhile CYP is working out the details of linking the Diploma to a distance learning degree in youth work offered by London's Brunel University. Dr Simon Bradford, Director of the Centre for Youth Work Studies visited CYP Caribbean Centre in October 2007. Said Dr Bradford, "The BA (Hons) Youth and Community offers a challenging and stimulating route to a degree for students who have completed previous study...For graduates of the CYP Diploma it could provide a positive way of developing their existing knowledge and skills. Of course, the BA also leads to the future possibility of postgraduate and doctoral study."

The University of Guyana has agreed to partner with Brunel on a number of research areas, and the University of the West Indies has agreed in principle to collaborate on creating an undergraduate degree.

In the UK, Zambian students who progressed from the Diploma attended a graduation ceremony at the University of Huddersfield where they took BA honours in Community Education. To date 39 Zambian students have achieved the qualification, which is offered in partnership with Zambia's Ministry of Sport, Youth and Child Development, and the King George VI National Youth College.

CYP's Adviser for Youth Development Ms Cristal de Saldanha Stainbank said, "This is great news: it's evidence of the portability of the Diploma and credit transfer."

*"The experience and knowledge I have gained in the CYP Youth Development Programme has enriched me beyond my own expectations. I have not only become a better youth development worker, but a better parent to my own three children whose ages range between 12-23 years. Having gone through Teacher's Training College, I can say this programme was not like a teachers training programme. At Teachers' College I was taught to teach people but in the CYP programme I was taught to reach people. There is a difference - when we teach people they learn, but when we reach people, they learn, they turn and they earn. The one word that could be used to describe people who have learned and turned and are now earning is empowered. The CYP Programme taught me to help young people to empower themselves. I did not think the programme would help me so much as a school teacher, but it has made a big difference. I cannot believe the number of times I have to refer to my modules as I deal with situations in my new role as a principal."*

- Octavia Alfred, Best Graduating Student, Dominica, 2004 - 2006

## Results summary: Strategic Programme Area 3 Youth Work Education and Training

Strategic Objectives	Outputs	Outcomes	Emerging Impact
(Objective 3.1) Ensure the adoption and finalisation of competency standards, and the development of quality assurance mechanisms in collaboration with other stakeholders by the end of the planning period;	16 national Consultations on the Caribbean Regional Competency Standards for Youth Development; Standards completed	Competency standards adopted. Public service commissions in two additional Caribbean member countries recognised the Diploma as acceptable for entry into and promotion within the public service.	Body of knowledge around youth work enriched
(Objective 3.2) Provide opportunities to enhance tutor capacity of tertiary institutions to deliver ODL programmes by October 2008;	Diploma and Certificate Tutor Training (Ghana, Namibia, the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Bangladesh, Brunei, India, Caribbean). 7 potential Partner Institutions participated in Caribbean Training of Trainers and YWET Marketing workshop, Barbados. Appointment of new Pacific Diploma coordinator and 11 tutors in PNG		
(Objective 3.3) Promote the establishment of at least four Youth Worker Associations per region during the planning period;	Technical support for Youth Worker Associations in Cameroon, Ghana, Tanzania, Zambia, Malaysia and across the Caribbean. Africa regional consultation (Botswana) and guidelines on good practice in establishing Youth Worker Associations. Asia regional workshop on professionalisation (and code of practice), Malaysia.	Greater professional-isation; formation of Youth Worker Associations. Interest in forming them in Botswana, Namibia, Nigeria, Seychelles and Uganda. Code of ethics in development in Caribbean	Cadres of trained, registered and networked youth workers who are equipped for their professional roles and accountable to other stakeholders, most importantly youth clients
(Objective 3.4) Provide training in CYP refresher, certificate, diploma or degree courses to at least 2 senior youth functionaries in youth and line ministries per region and 6 RYC/NYC members;	Senior youth functionaries and Regional Youth Caucus/National Youth Council members trained. Achievement Motivation Training for 20 youth officers from Trinidad and Tobago.	Trainees' self-awareness and motivation enhanced	Diploma graduates (including those from the 1970s and 1980s) having a policy impact, e.g. through government, World Youth Foundation
(Objective 3.5) Increase the delivery options for the CYP certificate, diploma and degree courses;	Review of Diploma programme in Africa and Asia. Agreement with African partners to develop a Youth Work Degree. 2nd and 3rd phase Diploma Memoranda Of Understanding/Financial Agreements.	Diploma to be articulated with programmes of Brunel University, London.	

Strategic Objectives	Outputs	Outcomes	Emerging Impact
<p>(Objective 3.6) Contribute to and ensure the design and development of quality training material for youth work courses at certificate, diploma and degree levels in collaboration with partners throughout the planning period;</p>	<p>Commissioning revision of materials, Instructional Design, SID, copyright clearance and proofreading of 13 new modules of the Diploma in Youth Development Work</p> <p>Quality assurance for Commonwealth Diploma in Youth Development Work: External Regional Moderators (ERMs) technical support visits to Botswana, Ghana, Lesotho, Namibia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, the Gambia, Uganda, Zambia, Jamaica, Papua New Guinea, Australia, Solomon Islands and the University of the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji.</p>	<p>Self-funding Diploma launched by University of the West Indies in Jamaica.</p> <p>Recognition of Diploma by governments and in some cases matching funds</p>	<p>£5 EBR leveraged for every £1 invested by the CYP: progress towards self-sustainability of the Diploma programme</p>
<p>(Objective 3.7) Increase the number of partner institutions delivering the CYP certificate, diploma and degree courses.</p>	<p>Diploma launch in Brunei and Maldives.</p> <p>Participation in 4th Biannual Pan Commonwealth Distance Education Conference, Jamaica.</p>	<p>Improved delivery and enrolment e.g. in PNG. Youth workers trained in 46 countries. Students trained: Africa: 600; Asia: 1,136; Caribbean: 112; Pacific: 36</p>	
	<p>Coordination of online Practitioner Research and Evaluation Skills Training (PREST) course (Africa)</p>	<p>New partners coming on board in Swaziland, Mauritius, New Zealand, Samoa, Tonga.</p>	
	<p>Partner Institutions and External Moderator's Meetings, in Botswana, Australia; Pacific Diploma Partner Institutions meeting; 8th Diploma Progress Review meeting, Brunei</p>	<p>Interest in establishing Certificate courses for Cayman Islands and Turks and Caicos.</p>	<p>Demand for CYP-style training; life-long/self-directed learning philosophy in partner universities beyond the departments offering the Diploma</p>
	<p>Support to the 16th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers</p> <p>Commonwealth Youth Development Journal and Intercom students' newsletter</p>	<p>Awareness of new CHOGM mandates. Work plans and review of Certificate agreed to.</p>	<p>CYP's work in education extending to new stakeholders such as ministries of education, Commonwealth of Learning and research networks</p>
	<p>Caribbean curriculum writers' workshop in partnership with Commonwealth of Learning and HEART Trust NTA.</p>	<p>CYP Caribbean to become Centre of Excellence in YWET</p>	
	<p>New promotional material for the YWET programme. Advocacy with Commonwealth of Learning, Canada; The Open University, UK; University of Surrey</p>		



# 3 Looking ahead, 2008-2012

## 3.1 Youth Mainstreaming and the Youth Development Index

*“To mainstream youth, through education, knowledge and awareness is a huge global challenge.”*

Commonwealth Secretary General Kamalesh Sharma

### Youth Mainstreaming

Youth Mainstreaming is:

*“The process of assessing the implications (for youth) of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making (youth) concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes, in all political, economic and social spheres so that (youth) benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.”*

– ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions 1997/2

Meeting in 2006, Commonwealth Youth Ministers recognised “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.”

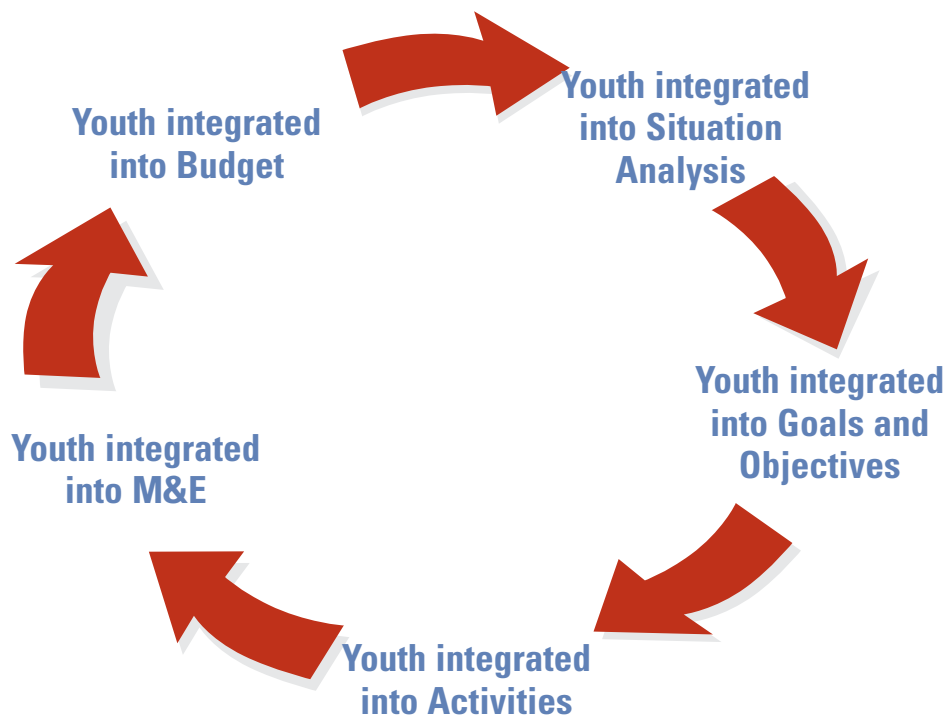
It is recommended that:

*“The Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment will be implemented primarily at national level, relying heavily on mainstreaming of youth issues into national development agendas. This will maximise the use of scarce human and financial resources and ensure that the cross-cutting nature of the PAYE is realised. Youth ministries and departments must be strengthened as part of this process, to ensure that they can act as lead agencies in research, planning, target-setting, monitoring and evaluation on youth issues.”*

In turn the Commonwealth Secretariat is called upon to:

- Provide technical assistance on mainstreaming youth issues in national development; and
- Mainstream youth affairs within the Secretariat, impacting on a range of CFTC-funded projects.

## The basic steps of youth mainstreaming



Mainstreaming is integral to CYP's work on the PAYE. There has been a positive response, especially in the Caribbean where PAYE has been integrated into the Anguilla Social Security Board's strategic plan, and where there is a request for a mainstreaming pilot in Antigua and Barbuda.

The PAYE and its mainstreaming approach is also an integral part of CYP's work on National Youth Policies and strategic action plans. In the period under review, technical assistance in this area has been given to Antigua and Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Guyana, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos, St Lucia, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands and Kiribati.

In addition, Youth ministry personnel (48 in Africa, 100+ in the Caribbean) and young people have been trained in youth mainstreaming, and it has been on the agenda of all Regional Advisory Board Meetings. CYP is in discussion with the Strategic Planning and Evaluation Division of the Secretariat on how to mainstream youth and PAYE across the work of the Commonwealth.

Next steps: CYMM 2008 to consider giving more weight to youth mainstreaming within CYP's portfolio of assistance to member countries.

## Youth Development Index

Without rigorous evaluation, successes in youth development are re-discovered and mistakes repeated. In order to mainstream youth and to set and revise our goals, we need to know where we started from and how far we have come.

Youth Development Indicators have been on the agenda of the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) and its Youth Ministers Meetings since 1998, when Ministers “welcomed the proposal by the Secretariat to develop a Youth Development Index using specific performance indicators.” At first the Youth Development Index was perceived as being analogous to the Human Development Index (HDI), raising concerns among member countries that it would become an inter-country ranking exercise. There is wider support for the YDI concept now that:

- It is about indicators plural, rather than arriving at a single number outcome
- Countries are expected to elaborate their own indicators, within certain regional and Pan-Commonwealth guidelines
- It is seen as a reinforcement to youth mainstreaming

Work on the YDI was de-prioritized in 2002 by a Ministerial Review, although a data gathering exercise took place in the Caribbean region. In July 2005 the CYP again picked up the issue of YDI, convening an inter-agency meeting on the YDI with the participation of the World Bank, GTZ, UNESCO, UNDESA, UNDP, UNV and the University of the West Indies.

This was followed by an expert group meeting at UN Headquarters in December 2005 with the participation of a larger number of academics and UN agencies. The Sixtieth Session of the General Assembly had requested the UN Secretariat to establish a broad set of indicators related to youth which governments and others may use to monitor progress under the World Plan of Action for Youth (WPAY).

Also in 2005 there were calls from young people (e.g. at 5th Commonwealth Youth Forum, Malta, November 2005) and government (review of PAYE 2000-2005) for greater monitoring and evaluation efforts connected with the Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment. In 2006 Youth Ministers in their message to CHOGM 2007 stated: “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 inconsistent. 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.” The YDI also fits with the Centres of Excellence proposals (see below) and their emphasis on research.

In 2007, CYP ensured that the YDI was covered in a youth mapping exercise commissioned by the Youth Working Group of the Civil Society /UK Department for International Development (DFID) Network on Children and Youth. The results were presented to 20 key DFID staff and the Minister in October 2007. The executive summary report stated: “Of particular interest to DFID should be the development of Youth Development Indicators as a positive, innovative method of using different indices to measure development generally as well as specifically for youth. It is suggested that DFID take a much closer look at the PAYE and work on Youth Indicators”.

A concept note on the YDI and an implementation structure for it was submitted to the Regional Advisory Board meetings in 2007. This envisaged that the nodal points for the YDI would be government ministries and research institutions (at national and regional levels) but there would also be a role for a range of stakeholders, including youth, civil society bodies and political parties, to contribute their perspectives. Rather than being one “measurement” then, the YDI and

its reports would be an arena of debate and social dialogue. Managing the tensions of such an exercise would seem to be a niche area for the Commonwealth Youth Programme:

- It is inter-governmental, and hence has the trust and buy-in of governments
- It is about consensus-building and democracy
- It has a track record of publicising civil society as well as government views
- It has the youth development skills and networks necessary to conduct social dialogue with young people and others
- It has elaborated the PAYE
- It has experience in National Youth Policy which is just as relevant to YDI as is the PAYE.

Given that other agencies have greater strengths in collecting and analysing hard data, the contribution of the CYP would therefore be to

- Spearhead and coordinate the process, especially at the regional level, pooling the resources of participating countries and agencies
- Ensure that the YDI is youth-centred, asset- rather than problem-based, and participatory
- Ensure that qualitative indicators are included, most importantly process indicators concerning the quality of youth participation.

**Next steps:** CYMM 2008 to elaborate CYP/government commitment to YDI in terms of resources and strategy for engaging other necessary partners.

## 3.2 Centres of Excellence

Commonwealth Youth Ministers at their meeting in The Bahamas in May 2006, noted that: *“In order to optimise the benefit of Pan Commonwealth lessons and experiences, the Meeting agreed that the CYP Asia Centre, in association with sister organisations in the region will be a focal centre for cooperation and learning in the field of youth and local government under the programme area of Governance, Development and Youth Networks (GDYN). The Meeting further agreed that the other three regional centres...will be developed as centres of excellence in research, knowledge gathering and information sharing in the fields of crime and violence, HIV/AIDS, youth enterprise and sustainable livelihoods, and youth work education and training.”* (CYMM Communiqué, para 34)

The Centres of Excellence were further discussed and endorsed at the four Regional Advisory Board Meetings.

The CYP commenced the implementation of this mandate with its Strategic Planning Meeting in November 2006, and in April this year with the launch of its first regional capacity building workshop focusing on youth and local self-governance. Both of these activities were held at the Asia centre in Chandigarh, India.

The plans for the Centres of Excellence were presented at the Commonwealth Secretariat Board of Governors/Executive Committee meeting in May 2007.

### **CYP Asia – Centre of Excellence in Youth and Local Self-Governance**

The total project cost over a five year period, including the cost of creation/up-grade of new facilities at the CYP Asia Centre and the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth

Development, is estimated at £ 2 million. The Government of India has committed to meet the entire cost of creation/upgrade of infrastructure to ensure programme delivery beginning from 2008 onwards.

In order to make the Asia Centre a Centre of Excellence compliant to international standards, programmes will be organised in partnership with sister organisations such as the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD) in Sriperumbudur, India. Talks were undertaken with the RGNIYD in April 2007 and key areas of programmes were agreed upon.

Further partnership opportunities have been explored through discussions with the UN Resident Representative to link the Centre of Excellence programme with UNDP's Governance programme and to seek interest in and commitment to the Centre's work. The feedback from the UNDP was positive and further efforts will be directed towards the UNDP's Regional office in Bangkok.

In addition, CYP will seek private sector involvement and contributions to the Centre, particularly from knowledge-based companies. A list of such companies will be drawn and it is hoped that an event (half-day advocacy for the Centre) could be organized with the Secretary General's participation and support. Moreover, the Indian Technical and Economic Co-operation (ITEC) programme will be contacted for exploring the possibility of accessing some funds from the ITEC.

An Inter-Ministerial Coordination and Implementation Committee headed by the Secretary in the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India has been constituted to oversee the programme implementation and appraise the outcomes.

## **CYP Africa – Centre of Excellence in Young People and HIV/AIDS**

Past and current interventions in HIV/AIDS have been in areas including treatment and care, prevention, effect mitigation, stigma and discrimination. While these intervention areas have had significant effect, several gaps still exist. The risks and demands that arise due to gender aspects provide skewed services and responses; disproportionate budget allocations to care and treatment have posed a challenge in priority setting for most governments; there is insufficient intervention in the area of further education for out of school youth; there is decline in prevention efforts in some countries as well as inadequate numbers of youth on antiretroviral treatment programmes. It has been realised that impact and overall acceptability will be achieved with new methodologies.

The Commonwealth has built up an enviable record of working through and with government systems, international organisations and civil society activists in several intervention areas. The focus of becoming a Centre of Excellence will enable the regional centre be in a better position to provide effective facilitating services. Being a catalytic agent that is able to promote partnerships, advocacy and follow up is central to the formulation of a dynamic and proactive strategy in Sub-Saharan Africa.

## **CYP Caribbean – Centre of Excellence in Youth Work Education and Training**

Building on the enormous experience and partnerships over the last 24 years CYP Caribbean will work with a Steering Committee of key regional stakeholders, young people to develop the implementation plan. The central objectives would be:

- To further professionalize youth work across the Commonwealth
- To design and delivery of youth work education and training to benefit Public Policy Specialists, Youth Work Professionals, Researchers, Youth Leaders, development planners and young people

- To provide capacity building for target groups: advanced training and advanced research
- To strengthen issue networks and communities
- To advance young people's social and economic development and empowerment in the region.

CYP Caribbean is in communication with the Government of Guyana as a strategic partner in the process.

## **CYP Pacific - Centre of Excellence in Youth-led Research, Knowledge Gathering and Information Sharing**

Youth must acquire specific skills to assist them to realise successful youth development outcomes. A snapshot of youth suggests that researchers must take into account where youth are situated. The lens might capture young people going about their business, going places, seeking new experiences, hanging with peers, playing sports, learning new skills and absolutely striving for difference from others. An analysis of youth across the Commonwealth can only be a fleeting endeavour (and reminder) to the fluidity and speed at which young people can simply outstrip the researchers lens and focus. Essentially what is researched and recorded today can be redundant tomorrow. While there has been some very good research on youth in development there is not a lot of research about youth carried out by youth. Who better then, to capture periodically youth in development; their issues, their place in families, their communities and their respective nation's development?

Youth as researchers, knowledge providers and conduits for the dissemination of good information to youth is an ambitious proposition. The Commonwealth has made good progress in the past through its abilities to partner with and to embed in their partnering the core Commonwealth values that are essentially values that most peoples commit to. The CoE initiative will facilitate

training and capacity building for RABs, RYCs and other youth stakeholders in consideration of the key youth issues highlighted by the situational analysis in the three programme areas, in the Commonwealth countries as identified in partnership. Examples might include governance and human rights training; training on translating youth policies into action; leading to more effective and efficient implementation of government policies, mainstreaming of the youth aspect in policies in all spheres of government decision making.

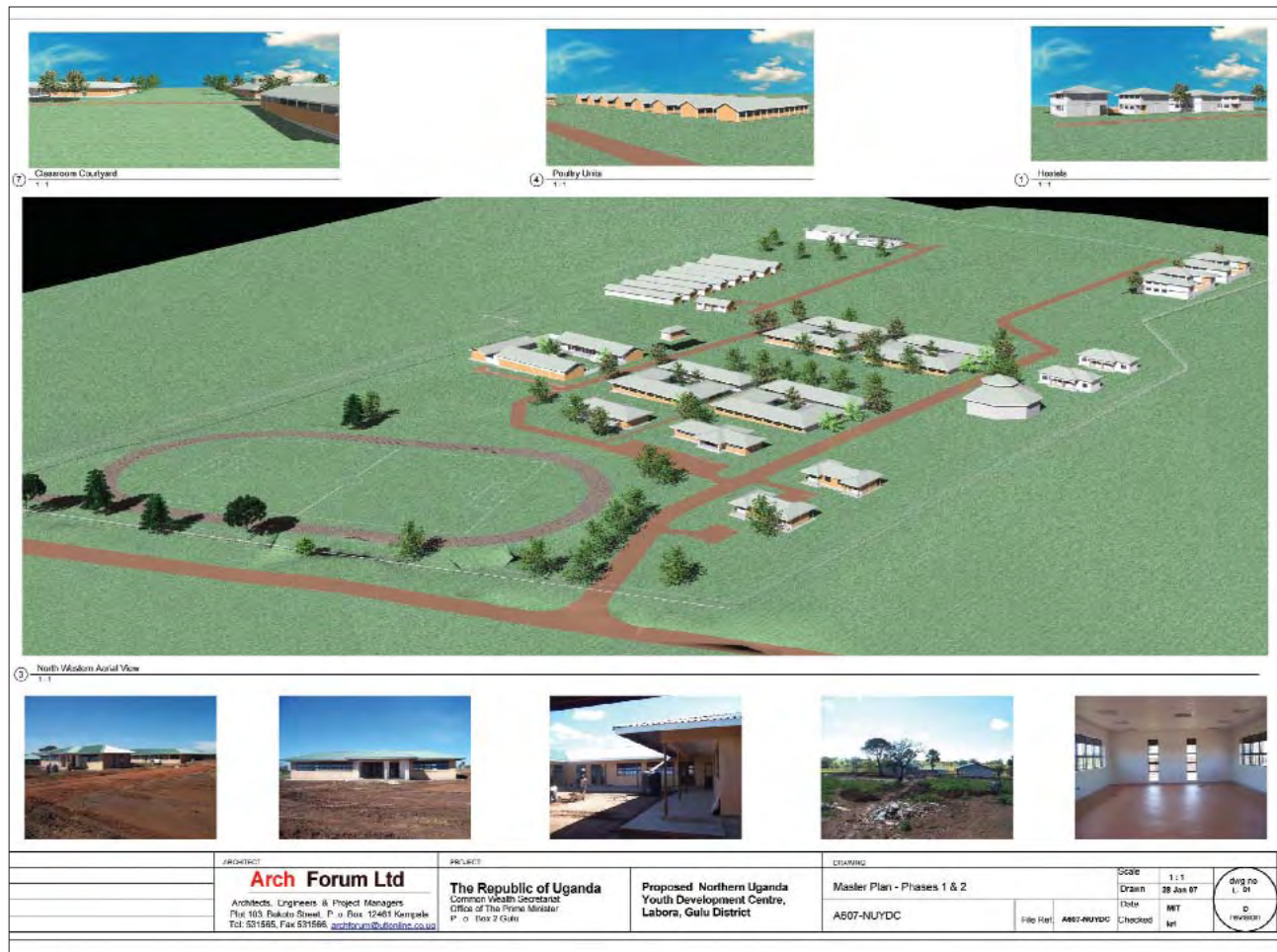
## Northern Uganda – Centre of Excellence in Peacebuilding

The Northern Uganda Youth Development Centre (NUYDC) is a Government of Uganda Project located in Gulu district, currently supported with £500,000 of start-up funding from the Commonwealth Secretariat. Hence it started as a special project, but will go on to

become a Commonwealth Centre of Excellence. The goal of the project is to contribute to the rebuilding of Northern Uganda in partnership with youth through decent employment and positive living. The project will initially target young people aged 15-25 years in Gulu District and will subsequently expand to cover the Acholi sub-region.

The project is designed to address the challenges resulting from the decades-long conflict in Gulu district and Northern Uganda as a whole. The conflict has affected the youth in many ways. Young people in the region have missed the opportunity of a formal education, the poverty level is very high and most youth are unemployed. Many have been traumatised by their experiences. The youth that participate in some form of agricultural production lack the knowledge, skills or inputs to produce for the market; many livelihoods skills and opportunities have been lost due to prolonged internal displacement.

### How the completed Centre will look:



The project aims to build young people's capacity for decent employment through vocational and other skills; create a healthy young labour force and ensure a constructive contribution to the development and peace building process; and facilitate youth involvement in social and cultural reconstruction as a way for young people to reclaim their identity.

### How the Northern Uganda Centre helped me

"My name is Wilfred Okello. I left school in P6 in Koro Primary school. I am now 21 years. My mother died when I was 17 years old and my father was abducted by the LRA rebels in 1990 when I was only 3 years old. My mother told me on that fateful day, the LRA surrounded my village and took my father away. He has never come back. I believe he is dead. When my mother died, my sister and I were left orphans. We were displaced to the urban centre in Gulu where Good Samaritans kept helping us.

When the NUJDC centre started operations I registered to do art and craft. Although I am disabled in one hand, I thought I could master and practice a marketable skill. This centre provided the perfect opportunity. I started learning the skills and I enjoyed the training.

I am very grateful for this training because now I can make some money. Before that, I could only plant tomatoes, which was not enough to sustain us. During the day, I sell yoghurt and do other activities in town, in the evenings I make some handicrafts which I later sell. I have on my own made 30 sisal and acrylic bags and sold 16 so far. I together with a few of my classmates have formed a work group and the centre is going to help us with some working capital.

Training in the centre has given me confidence in myself and an opportunity to live a better life. I am currently taking care of my younger sister whom my mother left."



Secretary-General Don McKinnon opening the Northern Uganda Youth Development Centre

When the Centre was officially opened in November 2007, to coincide with Uganda's hosting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, infrastructure development and training of some youth had already begun. The project conceived a concept, Friends53, which sought to make the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting relevant to the young people of northern Uganda. Friends53 connotes friendship and respect for the 53 member countries of the Commonwealth. As peace slowly returns, Friends53 will act as a platform for engaging the young people and their communities to understand the underlying causes of conflict and to find ways of solving the conflict without returning to violence.

Young northern Ugandans have not known the peaceful side of living. The vast majority have grown up amidst fear, poverty and insecurity. *"[The rebels] would make us do anything from maiming victims and burning huts to armed*

*looting and abducting other children,"* explained Patrick Omony, a former child soldier, when he visited the Commonwealth Secretariat in March 2007. Through NUYDC dialogue and promotion of reconciliation and peaceful coexistence is being encouraged. The young people and their communities are also facilitated to start the truth and reconciliation process so as to mend families and communities torn by the conflict. Community dialogue, peace trainings, HIV/AIDS training, reconciliation processes and peace-related events are taking place. A draft peace curriculum has been developed with consultation from a number of stakeholders including the young people. Young people's views were also incorporated into the design of the centre.

The incidence of HIV/AIDS is high among the internally displaced, and NUYDC is involved in promoting appropriate behavioural change as a key part of sustainable livelihoods.

NUYDC has identified Lugogo Vocational Institute as a technical partner. Arts and crafts training is currently taking place at the Centre. Youth groups in the centre are also showing interest in brick laying and concrete; carpentry and joinery; painting and decorating, electrical work; welding and fabrication; tailoring; agriculture and other trades. In January 2007 agricultural students were able to harvest 200 acres of groundnuts, rice and cassava which they had planted earlier. The first of several fish ponds has been constructed and stocked. Skill transfer sites are under development which will help in technology transfer and will generate interest in diversification, for example into fruit planting. Plans are also under way to use sports as a development and leadership tool. Looking to the future, NUYDC expects the vocational training to involve around 250 young people a day in two shifts, targeting an initial 4,000 trainees. So far 180 learners have registered.

Speaking at the opening of the Centre CYP's Director Dr Fatiha Serour remarked: "I salute the gentle and intelligent people whom I met, those who are clearly committed in a real and



Secretary-General Don McKinnon with a graduate of the Northern Uganda Youth Development Centre

positive way to healing their community. People like Joseph Okema [NUYDC's Project Manager]. It is a long road to travel and it will be as potholed, risky and as unpredictable as the route we travelled from Kampala, but it's the only way to move forward and young people living there deserve that chance."

The Commonwealth is grateful to a range of partners for getting involved – to UNFPA for its work on issues of HIV/AIDS and counselling; to Save the Children and World Vision for education and vocational training; to the Duke of Edinburgh Award; to JICA which provided grain for rice production; to USAID for training materials; to the World Food Programme for their support to the fish farming.

CYP is collaborating with vocational training experts (UK and Africa) on fundraising for the Centre.



# 4 Conclusion

During 2006-2008 some areas of the programme have gone from strength to strength.

- The new Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment is proving a powerful tool for pushing forward national youth development agendas, particularly in the Caribbean and the Pacific. CYP's capacity building work with youth ministries and national youth bodies provides a sound foundation for mainstreaming work in the coming cycle – for example all countries in the Asia region now have National Youth Policies in some form, as do 21 countries in Africa.
- The strategic programme area of Youth Work Education and Training has seen renewal of the Diploma course content, expansion of the partner network, increased recognition of the qualification and the training of nearly 2,000 students. The Diploma programme has pan-Commonwealth coherence and is demand-driven with five pounds in spending by local partners for every one pound invested by the CYP.
- In Youth Enterprise and Sustainable Livelihoods the Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative has expanded in Africa and Asia – and in India in particular. In Gujarat alone it has reached nearly 7,500 young women and men. ICT training in India and Pakistan is another area of success. The Caribbean is witnessing a range of exciting new pilot projects around social inclusion. In all regions where it is active the Young Ambassadors of Positive Living project has been revitalized.
- In Governance, Development and Youth Networks the Regional Youth Caucuses in all regions are more active than in the previous project cycle. They have also benefited from long overdue investments



The Ghana Minister of Manpower, Youth and Employment Hon. Abubakar Saddique Boniface with CYP Diploma Graduate, Ms. Sarah Banfro (University of Ghana)

in communications, both at the regional centres and the Pan-Commonwealth Office. CHOGM 2007 saw unprecedented youth participation with not only a successful Commonwealth Youth Forum but also the Youth Dialogue.

- All programme areas are benefiting from new partnerships with e.g. Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States; the Caribbean Development Bank; Inter-American Development Bank; Joint Pacific UN Agencies; and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. There has been a renewal of relations with Pacific member countries after period of under-staffing in the region.

Disappointments for the programme have included slow progress with the Youth Development Index and participatory research. Some member countries in Asia and elsewhere have yet to fully embrace the Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment, and to move from National Youth Policy to the next stage i.e. the formulation of national action plans. In Youth Work Education and Training, there is disappointment that more public service commissions have not recognised the Diploma.

## The way ahead

With the creation of Centres of Excellence and new mandates around Respect and Understanding/Peacebuilding, CYP's work will continue to evolve in 2008-2012. Youth mainstreaming in the Commonwealth Secretariat, and renewed partnership with UN system agencies and others, will be the key to success. CYP will continue to play to its strengths as a global network founded on professional youth work principles.

*“I care passionately for the young people of the Commonwealth and believe that this short meeting can help secure strong support and commitments in the final communiqué. It's a legacy issue for me”.*

- Outgoing Secretary-General The Rt Hon Don McKinnon, opening the CHOGM Youth Dialogue, November 2007.

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