



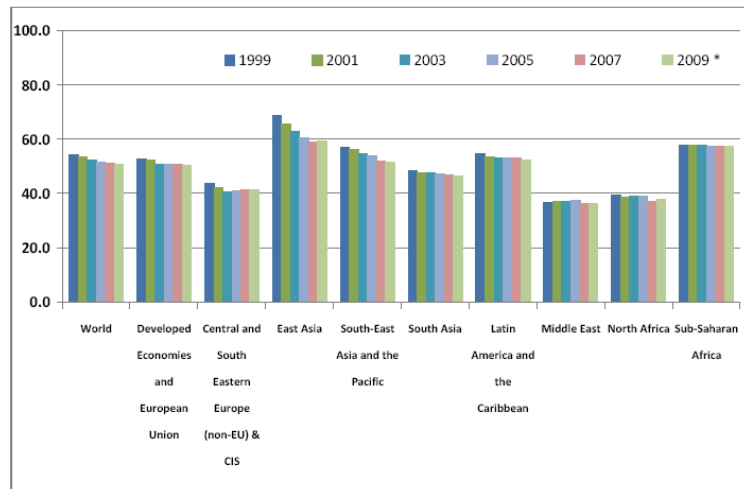
Helping children since 1937

Capacity Statement Youth Enterprise and Vocational Training¹

Nearly 90% of today's youth, those aged 15 to 24, live in developing countries², and these youth represent more than 40% of the world's unemployed³. In the next decade, one billion young people will enter the work force⁴; during the same period, only 300 million new jobs are anticipated to be created⁵. In the developing world, where over 80% of the new job seekers live, young people are four times more likely to be unemployed than adults⁶. These trends have jeopardized the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) of achieving full and productive work for all young people.

Youth enterprise and vocational training programs provide youth with powerful tools for the betterment of their lives and to strengthen the foundations of our future economy. However, the global economic downturn and constantly changing labor markets have left youth extremely vulnerable and in a formidable economic climate. Plan has worked to implement locally integrated approaches, which employ a wide range of strategies including: education and skills training, labor market services, and targeted support for work and entrepreneurship development. Plan has also strived to create economic opportunities for youth through strategic partnerships. In 2009, Plan partnered with the World Bank Global Partnership for Youth Investment and ImagineNations Group to co-create a global Youth Economic Empowerment program to foster investment and create opportunities around the world for youth employment and empowerment. The details of this program are highlighted below.

Youth labour force participation rates, by region (%)



*2009 are preliminary estimates.
Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, October 2009 (see Annex 4).

Youth Economic Empowerment (YEE)

¹ Prepared by Eric Tyler in April, 2010

² The World Bank: Children & Youth, 2008

³ International Labour Office, Youth Employment: A Global Goal, A National Challenge, 2009

⁴ Making Cents International, State of the Field in Youth Enterprises, Employment and Livelihood Development 2008

⁵ UNFPA State of the World Population, 2005

⁶ Ibid.

The Youth Economic Empowerment (YEE) program will take advantage of a unique alliance between Plan, World Bank Global Partnership for Youth Investment (GYPI) and ImagineNations bringing together a well established child-centered development organization working in 48 developing countries; a network of social entrepreneurs, academics and experts; and global leaders and specialists in economic development and youth employment. Over a five year period (2010-2015), the partners will draw from a range of experiences and expertise to inform the development of a program engaging youth in developing countries around the world.

Plan's role as Secretariat and implementing partner will ensure accountability and outreach to youth. At the national level, program strategies will be built on human rights principles, with young people taking the lead in their own development. Specific responses will be based on market research and analysis as well as recommendations from young people from areas where the program is operating. A few pilot projects will be launched in 2010, with YEE to be scaled up over time as more Plan country offices join the global program. Partnerships at the local, national and international levels will be essential to achieve scale and sustainability.

The program will also make full use of technology (social networking, mobile banking, web-based education and training, etc.) to enhance results. Through YEE, thousands of young people will make viable career choices, develop skills needed for the 21st century workforce and successfully transition into safe and dignified work of their choosing. Along the way, stories will be told through published documents and youth's testimonies.

Vocational Training

In 2008, 34 Plan country offices implemented programming centered on youth enterprise and vocational training, and more than 50 programs utilized local government and business-sector partners to deliver quality skills training to thousands of youth. Skill development is offered in various sectors according to the local labor market, including: agriculture, hospitality, food service, internet and communication technology, sales, and many others. Vocational training, often included in programs focusing on adolescence, has traditionally been an area of strength in Plan Asia's regional programs, which has eight on-going initiatives. Two of which are highlighted below as case studies.

Case Study – Vietnam: The Livelihood Advancement Business Schools (LABS) Project

The unemployed population in Vietnam is estimated to be around 5 million, in which an alarming 45% are youth aged between 15 and 24⁷. Since 2004, Plan Vietnam has implemented a highly successful employment skills building program in the three major cities of Hanoi, Hue and Danang. The 'Livelihood Advancement Business School' (LABS) program enables disadvantaged young people to claim their rights to safe, fairly paid, and equitable employment opportunities by improving their technical skills, helping them to obtain hands-on work experience, instilling proper work ethics, and helping them to find suitable jobs.

The LABS approach consists of an intensive training program in technical and life skills, English language basics followed by careful job placement, and follow-up support. Plan manages a cadre of committed professionals as trainers who provide an essential mix of theory and practical knowledge and teach skill-based competencies to students to help them get entry-level jobs. The program's emphasis on essential communication, problem-solving, work readiness, time and money management, and personal integrity is what makes this effective. LABS facilitators also have hands-on experience within their industries, allowing them to provide more relevancy in their trainings. Trainers spend significant non-teaching time networking with representatives of

⁷ United Nations Position Paper 2007-2010

businesses with which they have established relationships. Among the numerous corporations where LABS graduates work are The Hilton, Sheraton, Intercontinental, Sofitel Metropole/Plaza, Hanoi Daewoo Hotels, Coca Cola, PepsiCo, Mead Johnson, Colgate Palmolive, Big C and Carings Supermarkets, Viet Nhat Motor, Highlands Coffee, Al Fresco's Restaurant, Vietnam Net, Peacesofts and CyberSoft Company.

Through the LABS program, 3,503 young men and women have been trained in three industries: customer relations and sales, hospitality, and information technology services. Over 85% of the graduates have been placed successfully in jobs within their sectors, strengthening various businesses in Vietnam.

Case Study – Philippines: Auto Mechanic Training Center

The Context: The Philippines is one of the poorest in Asia with 37 percent of its 82 million people living below the national poverty line. National unemployment figures typically hover around 10 percent, but youth unemployment is a much bigger problem. Over 50 percent of all the unemployed in Philippines are youth aged 16-24. With limited experience, little money for education and lack of skills, some 2 to 3 million youth remain jobless. Among industries that have high potential for wage-earning labor is the transport sector. There were five million vehicles registered in 2005 in the Philippines, and this volume has been increasing over the last ten years by 6.5% annual growth rate – one of the highest in Southeast Asia.

The Solution: The project establishes a training center for automotive mechanics based on market research that determines the geographic demand for mechanics, the type of skills and training needed and the major employers of mechanics. A key component of the program will center on the quality of training, and Plan Philippines is also working with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) in operating the training center and conducting the automotive training program. TESDA is the Philippine government agency that is specifically tasked to manage and supervise technical education and skills development in the Philippines. Training will not only consist of technical training but also cover areas such as interpersonal skills, basic financial education, job interview techniques, computer proficiency, etc. These types of skills are particularly important for trainees who come from poor, rural backgrounds.

The Expected Results: In establishing a functioning job placement system, the projected outputs of the Project are the following:

- ✓ A comprehensive training center composed of a 2-storey workshop building, dormitory, cafeteria, and a developed site and water system.
- ✓ 30 female and male youths trained and certified as qualified auto-mechanics every six months (the first 30 NC4 certified trainees is expected at the end of the first two years of the training program)
- ✓ 90% of graduates employed within one year of completing the course.

Savings and Microfinance Services for Youth

Plan's programs have shown the viability of microfinance for youth as well as savings schemes for children. Among these young populations, such programs can have a lifelong positive impact—children are able to learn the value of saving from an early age, and youth are not only educated about the importance of saving but also learn about and gain access to credit and valuable entrepreneurial and life skills training.

In 2005, Plan has supported a five-year microfinance project in Tanzania through the Youth Self Employment Foundation (YOSEFO. The project has reached more than 2,500 clients and trained 576 micro-entrepreneurs, surpassing the project's target. Solidarity groups were used to facilitate follow-up of loans and build cohesion in the community

which was key to the project’s success and sustainability. In addition, in a separate project, Plan implemented a Village Savings and Loan (VSL) project targeted at children in Kisarawe, Tanzania. 21 VSL groups have reached a total of 500 members which are managed solely by children. The project has worked to help teach children to save and manage money given to them by their parents.

Case Study – West Africa: Making Financial Services Accessible and Promoting the Entrepreneurial Development of Youth (2007-2010)

In 2008, Plan International’s West Africa Regional Office began a pilot project in Niger, Senegal, and Sierra Leone to provide microfinance services to youth. With high and growing rates of unemployment among youth in much of Africa, access to financial services and business skill are key in enabling youth to lead productive lives. The project seeks to empower targeted youth socially and economically, enabling them to realize their rights and become change agents to take their countries forward. The project has engaged 3,000 youth, especially girls, aged 15-24 years in microfinance and entrepreneurial activities.

Beginning with the formation of formal savings groups, youth were provided with training on and access to savings and credit. With the technical partnership of Oxfam America, the Saving for Change methodology was adapted for the participating youth. In addition, the formation of savings groups provided youth with the opportunity to learn to live by a group code of conduct and to gain a sense of group solidarity. A preliminary evaluation has shown that the youth economic empowerment initiative has succeeded in providing youth with business skills training and access to credit, which have allowed participants to embark on income-generating activities. The participating youth have indicated that they are gaining economic independence and respect from the community—key elements towards empowering youth to work towards a productive future. As the project moves beyond the pilot phase, Plan aims to reach 70,000 youth, including at least 70% girls and young women, living in rural, urban, and peri-urban areas of Niger, Senegal, and Sierra Leone.

Women Empowerment

Plan believes strongly in the equal participation of girls in all programs and implements girl-focused programming in 33 countries.

Youth labour force participation rates, by sex, 1995 and 2005

	Total		Males		Females	
	1995	2005	1995	2005	1995	2005
World	58.9	54.7	67.2	63.0	50.1	45.9
Developed Economies and European Union	53.6	51.8	56.9	54.0	50.1	49.6
Central and Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS	47.2	41.8	52.8	48.4	41.5	35.0
East Asia	75.2	67.3	74.6	66.3	75.7	68.4
South East Asia and the Pacific	56.1	56.5	64.5	64.2	51.6	48.5
South Asia	50.6	47.2	68.0	64.2	31.7	29.1
Latin America and the Caribbean	56.4	54.2	70.4	63.8	42.3	44.5
Middle East and North Africa	40.0	40.0	56.2	54.3	23.2	25.1
Sub-Saharan Africa	68.2	65.5	76.1	73.7	60.2	57.3

Source: ILO (2006)¹²³

Many of these programs emphasize economic empowerment, including vocational training, financial education, village savings and loan, and market analysis and entrepreneurship. Plan believes that girls who receive skills training are better able to enter the economy and thus become women who can provide for their families. Given the opportunity, these girls become women who ensure the health and education of their children, supporting a sustainable livelihood and breaking the cycle of poverty. An estimated 57% of the youth served in Plan’s youth employment programs are females.

Case Study – Nepal: Women Empowerment Project (1999-2008)

Plan Nepal has been implementing a Women Empowerment Project (WEP) since July 1999 in the Makwanpur district with an objective of empowering women in social and economic spheres. Although the 1990 constitution of Nepal guarantees equal opportunities in all spheres for men and women, gender inequality is prevalent in many aspects including control over resources, property rights, decision making process and acquirement of citizenships. Women also heavily suffer from domestic violence, illiteracy, malnutrition and deep rooted patriarchal practice.

The formation of a saving and credit group is considered an entry point for empowering women and addressing child rights. Based on the wellbeing ranking, poor women are encouraged to join in the groups, which comprise 10 to 25 group members. These women's groups are ultimately linked up with women's saving and credit cooperatives (WOSCCs). Since the inception of the project, over 18,500 women have been enrolled in financial services through 1,185 self-help groups and 25 women's cooperatives. As of 2008, women's cooperatives have accumulated resources amounting to over \$1 million. Furthermore, over 12,000 women have been graduated through 608 functional literacy classes, and more than 2,000 women have acquired citizenship certificates.