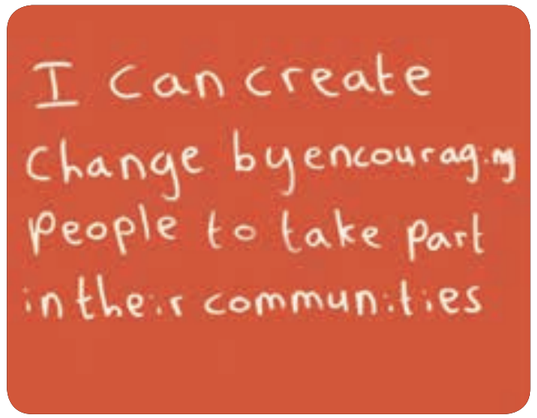
Youth Voices on a Post-2015 World

DFID | CSO
Youth Working Group



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Executive Summary

I see a world where equality is everyone, everywhere, every day.
Youth consultations participant

The global conversation on a post-2015 world is one of the most important debates of our time: any development framework agreed by UN member states in 2015 / 2016 will guide future policies and spending on development, not only in developing countries - where over 87% of the population is under 25 - but also globally. As youth-led and youth-focused agencies working internationally, we see no sense in discussing future development goals without recognising the role that young people can and must play as assets and problem-solvers in development. Our top priority for the post-2015 process has been to ensure that young people with fewer opportunities, including young people living in poverty, conflict or post-conflict situations, and/or those living far from global decision-makers, are able to have their voices heard in the post-MDG agenda.

'Youth Voices on a Post-2015 World' is the result of youth consultations that were run in 12 countries globally from October 2012 to January 2013 to understand young people's views on what should come after the Millennium Development Goals. 346 young people were given the space to discuss the local and global issues of importance to them, and articulate their solutions and visions for a world beyond 2015. Delivered through a global network of 14 youth-led and youth-focused partners, these consultations have engaged diverse groups of young people rarely present in global or national policy-making processes (*Appendix 1*). We are confident that this innovative collaboration has provided a depth of analysis and understanding rarely seen; offering access and insight on the world that young people want, and showing that young people can and must be a leading part of the solution.

Following a youth-led analysis workshop in February 2013 to identify the common themes in young people's discussions, this report summarises the findings.

Visions and Principles for a post-2015 world

Through the youth consultations a picture emerged of how young people envision a better world post-2015. The vision presented here is a summary of individual visions and discussions collected from the youth consultations in 12 countries worldwide:

We see a world that values diversity, environmental sustainability and active participation by all citizens. A world that operates an economic system based on fairness and equality, where everyone feels safe and has access to basic services such as health and education and where the standards of those services are high no matter what people's background or economic situation. No young person in this world would be excluded or marginalised because of gender, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation. Young people in this world are incorporated into decision making processes and given access to the levers of power regardless of their background.

We have identified 11 principles in the consultations that underpin the world we want. The most important of these is **equality & freedom for all**, regardless of gender, disability or where you are on the social spectrum. Closely related to this are principles of non-violence and respect for diversity. Environmental sustainability was one of the top three principles globally and was seen as enabling the achievement of many goals. Crucially a post-2015 framework should ensure that concern for sustainability underpins other targets. The right to access basic services such as health and education was also important. Taking responsibility and ensuring accountability also play a key role in principles that relate to governance, the economy and civic participation.

Issues to be addressed by the post-2015 framework and their Solutions

Many of the important issues identified by young people related closely to the underpinning principles. For example, ineffective governance and corruption was the most widely mentioned issue across all consultations. The discussions also included issues that are not explicitly mentioned in the principles or visioning discussions, such as poverty, food and nutrition, and infrastructure.

Young people put forward a great number of solutions for resolving these problems and most have implications for all stakeholders in development, not only governments. Five common themes amongst the solutions were identified by the analysis team:

- **Sensitize:** Raise awareness to promote human rights, respect for others, support equality and protect the environment.
- **Empower People:** Support wide scale civic participation, proper representation, accountability and knowledge of human rights.
- **Harness Technology:** Use technology and promote innovation to enable, support and strengthen solutions and their reach.
- **Collaborate:** Build effective relationships from local to international levels to support solutions across issues and amongst everyone involved.
- **Reform Institutions:** Review and reform systems across education, health, governance and infrastructure (to ensure access to basic human securities).

So, what? And what next?

Our consultation results are being used by young people and youth-led / youth-focused organisations to shape national, regional and international conversations on the world we want post-2015. Youth engagement has been much more visible in the post-2015 process, than it was during the formulation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): young people have been involved in national and thematic consultations and have taken part in discussions with the UN High Level Panel in London, November 2012, and Monrovia, January 2013. The next challenge for the post-2015 process is to go beyond creating the space for participation and ensure that the Post-2015 agenda and ensure that young people's input is reflected in the final outcome. Our next step is to present the highlights of this report directly to the UN High Level Panel at their fourth meeting in Bali, March 2013, and to develop an influencing strategy that ensures that the voices in this report are fed into the global conversation from now on. In doing so, we want to demonstrate that youth consultations delivered through collaboration between youth-led and youth-focused organisations globally can and must be replicated across all policy frameworks. Our ultimate goal is to contribute to the development of a holistic framework that is responsive to the needs and rights of young people and enables them to play a leading role in addressing the most important issues facing their countries and the world.

Without young people's ideas we, the Panel, would be missing the best hope for a successful set of goals. Bring us your ideas.
UN High Level Panellist Graca Machel, London, November 2012

This project was initiated by members of the DFID / CSO Youth Working Group and would not have been possible without the support of the Youth in Action Programme of the European Union. The activities were co-funded by the Youth DFID PPA Consortium led by Restless Development, with War Child and Youth Business International.

Introduction

Background of the Post-2015 Youth Consultations project

The global conversation on a post-2015 world is one of the most important debates of our time: any policy framework agreed by UN member states in 2015 / 2016 will guide future policies and spending on development, not only in developing countries - where over 87% of the population is under 25 - but also globally. As youth-led and youth-focused agencies working internationally, we see no sense in discussing future development goals without recognising the role that young people can and must play as assets and problem-solvers in development. The youth consultations project seeks to promote genuine youth-led development through meaningfully consulting young peoplet to bring their voices to policy-makers, and to work with other youth organisations in other countries as part of a sustainable network-based approach.

Our first priority for the post-2015 process has been to ensure that young people with fewer opportunities, including youth living in poverty, conflict or post-conflict, and/or those living far from global decision-makers, are able to have their voices heard on the post-MDG agenda. Our ultimate goal is to contribute to the development of a holistic framework that is responsive to the **needs** and **rights** of young people (who make up half of the world's population) and enables them to play a leading role in addressing the most important issues facing their countries and the world.

Why you should read this report

Youth Voices on a Post-2015 World is the result of youth consultations that were run in 12 countries globally from October 2012 to January 2013 to understand young people's views on what should come after the Millennium Development Goals. 346 young people were given the space to discuss the local and global issues of importance to them, and articulate their solutions and visions for a world beyond 2015. Delivered through a global network of 14 youth-led and youth-focused partners, these consultations have engaged diverse groups of young people rarely present in global or national policy-making processes (*Appendix 1*). In person workshops enabled partners to generate a greater depth of insight and analysis than other methods, such as surveys, allow. **We are confident that this innovative collaboration has provided access and insight on the world that young people want; showing that young people can and must be a leading part of the solution.**

How you can use this report

This report summarises the findings from youth consultations on (1) **visions** for a post-2015 world, and the **principles** that underpin these visions, and (2) the most important **issues** that need to be addressed by the post-2015 framework and the **solutions** to these issues. You can also read in greater detail about the design of the youth consultation project (*Appendix 2*), including the online survey that was used to cross-examine data (*Appendix 3*), and the sample of young people who took part in the consultations (*Appendix 1*).

For consultation to be truly meaningful, these findings must be used to inform national, regional and international dialogues on the post-MDG framework. They can also be used to guide further consultation with young people as the conversation continues up to 2015, informing partnerships and inspiring creative ways to ensure that young people can be partners, leaders, innovators in the implementation of a new framework.

We encourage you to share this report with colleagues and partners, and to use the findings in your conversations on the new framework. For individuals and organisations coming fresh to youth-led development, we hope that this report might challenge perceptions of how well young people understand development and the role that they see for themselves across development priorities. This report shows that far from only being the beneficiaries of typical 'youth issues', young people have a depth of understanding about holistic development approaches, and a concern for their global and local communities. Furthermore they have ideas for solutions that can help to frame a truly innovative and transformative development agenda.

Quick consultation facts

- 346 young people took part in the youth consultations
- 395 people took part in the online survey
- Consultations were conducted in 12 countries: India, the UK, Sierra Leone, Colombia, Kenya, Nepal, Kyrgyzstan, Croatia, the Philippines, Romania, Tanzania and Ghana
- Between them the participants in our consultations spoke 70 languages and identified as 64 different ethnicities!
- The 'consultations toolkit' was translated into five languages
- 13 young people participated in analysing the consultation results

Visions and Principles for a Post-2015 World

The Top Line

- **The youth consultations collectively painted** an inspiring vision for the future, **which was underpinned by** 11 key principles **that emerged through both the consultation workshops and the online platform.**
- **The 11** principles were ranked in order of importance **by young analysis participants, however,** all principles are considered significant **enough to be reflected in the post-2015 framework.**
- Equality and freedom **was overwhelmingly highlighted as the most important principle in the youth consultation process, followed by** fair, responsible and accountable governance systems, environmental sustainability **and the** right to be healthy.
- **The focus on equality and freedom highlights the current issue of** widening inequality, **which young people see as having a significantly negative impact on development.**

What visions did young people have for a post-2015 world, and what principles underpin these?

In the workshops, young people individually identified a 'vision' for the world they wanted to see. In the analysis, the visions that had been recorded by facilitators in each of the workshops were collated and analysed to identify common themes. The vision presented here is a summary of these discussions:

Our vision is a world that values diversity, environmental sustainability and active participation by all citizens. A world that operates an economic system based on fairness and equality, where everyone has access to basic services such as health and education and where the standards of those services are high no matter what people's background or economic situation. No young person in this world would be excluded or marginalised because of gender, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation. Young people in this world are incorporated into decision making processes and given access to the levers of power regardless of their background.

Next, young people worked in groups to create a set of principles that summarised these visions. The analysis team has identified 11 principles that showed broad agreement throughout the workshops and that were also reinforced in the online survey. As far as possible, the final principles are phrased using the words actually recorded by facilitators in the partner reporting sheets.

The eleven principles were ranked in order of importance in the workshop which enabled the analysis team to produce a global ranking, with principles of equal importance given the same ranking. However, all principles in the final list of 11 are considered significant, and need to be reflected in the post-2015 framework.

The online survey

The online survey asked respondents to summarize the type of world they wanted to see (in three sentences or less) and to select three important principles from a pre-defined list. They were also able to suggest any other principle not listed. These results were used in the analysis to examine the findings of the workshops. (Appendix 3) at end of sentence

1. Equality and freedom

Equality should be for all, regardless of your gender, disability or where you are on the social spectrum. Equality includes freedom from discrimination and freedom of choice, as well as the opportunities to access justice mechanisms and to be empowered. A post-2015 world addresses social justice and is one where all young people are guaranteed basic human rights.

I wish to live in a world where... everyone has their own identity and everybody's rights and equality is ensured, problems are seen from a global perspective, there is mutual respect, and no limitations or barriers to happy life.
Nepalese participant

2. Fair, responsible and accountable governance

A post-2015 world needs *effective* governance and a new development framework will only be as effective as the governance structures that implement them. This means ensuring access to information, effective implementation, local participation and localisation of development issues. Effective governance needs to ensure transparency, accountability, honesty, support, responsibility and democracy. As one participant put it:

Good things are put into practice, not just left as words.
Online respondent

3. Environmental sustainability

A post-2015 world needs to be environmentally sustainable. This includes ensuring sustainable livelihoods, as well as protection of the environment, renewable energy and respect for all living things. Environmental sustainability can lead to the achievement of other goals.

I wish to live in a world where environmental security is prioritised and leads the development of other goals and targets, in order that we tackle the burning issue of climate change head on, whilst also dealing with other priority areas, such as health, which are both a precondition and outcome of environmental security.
Online respondent

3. The right to be healthy

Everyone should have the right to be healthy and to access the basic services that support that right. This is not just access to healthcare but addressing wider health concerns including the provision of food, addressing maternal mortality, child health and access to improved drinking water and sanitation.

In Colombia, the only consultation in Latin America, the right to be healthy was the most important principle. The Colombian consultation identified good health as being closely related to non-violence, something that cannot be guaranteed in the context of the on-going conflict in Colombia.

You shouldn't just act when the problem occurred, but it should be a preventive approach to health that educates people.
Colombian participant

4. Peace

Individuals and communities can live in peace. No one should be hurt or at war on the basis of religion, tribe, creed or gender. Everyone should feel secure and in harmony with one another and live the principle of non-violence for resolving conflict or disputes.

5. Quality education for all

Everyone should have the right to be educated and literate, and have access to quality services that support that right. Access to non-formal education (such as youth clubs and youth groups) is also particularly important for young people's growth and development.

Everyone should be able to get a good education and that doesn't end with primary school. To be educated means that you get to know your rights, you learn how to benefit from them and you learn how to stand up for others who haven't been taught about their rights. Education for me means that people respect others in their way of being different, take responsibility for themselves and others, and treat men and women, children and youth, disabled and foreign people as equals.
Online respondent

6. Responsible approach to the economy

Economic priorities and models are questioned and challenged, and there is emphasis on fairness, redistribution and honesty. Economic stability and entrepreneurship are key priorities. As one consultation participant put it:

People want things other than money.

6. Respect for diversity

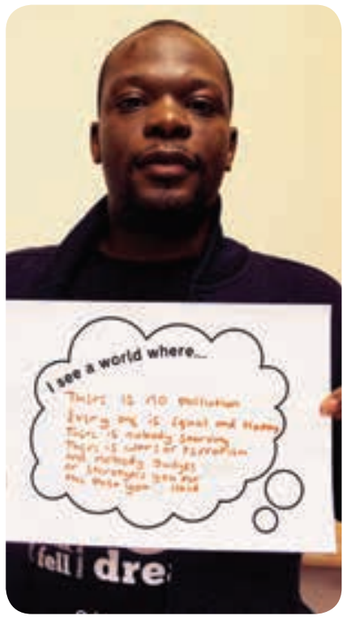
Diversity is respected and valued, including the promotion of new and old cultural values and the inclusion of marginalised communities. Everyone should be able to live without discrimination and live with tolerance.

I wish to live in a world where...Human Rights and fundamental freedoms are afforded to all, regardless of ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, gender, profession or age.
UK participant

7. Decent employment for all

All types of work should be respected and exploitation should be eliminated. A post-2015 world should ensure decent work for all, and recognise that young people are particularly vulnerable to unemployment.

You cannot talk about development without taking youth employment into account.
Online respondent to French language survey



8. Civic participation and active citizenship, including youth empowerment

A post-2015 world should recognise the rights of citizens, as well as facilitating everyone to be active citizens. Everyone should play a role in taking social responsibility, through participation, youth empowerment and spaces for young people to participate in policy making and '*responsible activism*'.

I wish to live in a world where... communities take responsibility for each other and their surroundings, where we can all feel as proud of being global citizens as we do of our own culture.
Online respondent

8. Global co-operation

There needs to be a strong global civil society for inclusive collaboration on important issues and development processes.

"A world where people have the power, resources and voice to continue to build a sustainable life for themselves and the communities they live in."
Online respondent

What does this tell us?

- **Equality and freedom** was overwhelmingly highlighted as the most important principle across all regions of consultations. Despite equity being absent from the MDG framework, young people see widening inequality as having a significantly negative effect on development. In the discussions, equality was described as not just an absence of discrimination, but also the possibility to access opportunities.
- **Environmental sustainability** was also one of the top three principles globally, with young people in Africa in particular highlighting it as one of their top principles, together with equality and freedom and a responsible approach to the economy.
- **Quality education for everyone**, **Decent employment for all** and the **Right to be healthy** are also seen as fundamental, but with the recognition that a new development framework will only be effective if it is underpinned by **Fair, responsible and accountable governance.**
- **Responsibility** also plays a key role in several of the principles identified: young people participating in the consultation see a world where decision-makers have integrity and are held to account, and that institutions provide opportunities to young people to take responsibility for their communities.

The most important issues to resolve in a post-2015 framework, and how to do it

The Top Line

- **Governance was the most important issue overall from the youth consultations. Young people want to see** effective governments that are held to account**, and** governance structures where young people have access **to decision making processes.**
- **There was a strong emphasis on** citizenship **and ensuring all minorities have access to it, thereby** guaranteeing the rights of all citizens **but also recognising the responsibilities that citizens have.**
- **Access to** affordable and quality healthcare and education **were two of the other top priorities.**
- **It was emphasised that a new development framework needs to** ensure sustainable development **and** mitigate the impacts of climate change**.**
- **Solutions put forward broadly fit into the increased** sensitization **and** empowerment **of the people, better** harnessing technology**, increased** collaboration **and** institutional reform**.**

What do young people see as the big problems that need to be addressed in a post-2015 world, and what are their solutions?

In the workshops, young people individually identified the issues they felt most needed to change in a post-2015 world, before voting to reach an overall agreement on the ten most important. All issues raised were recorded by facilitators. In the analysis workshop, young people identified ten overarching categories that the individual issues could fit into and coded the findings from each workshop accordingly.

Following the activities to identify the top issues, the participants worked together to identify the solutions through role play, forum theatre, community mapping exercises, mind mapping and/or discussion. The solutions largely responded to those issues that had been identified, but our analysis also showed that young people also have many solutions for issues that ranked lower. Furthermore, the implications of many of them would not only affect governments, but all stakeholders in development. For example, young people had the most solutions for encouraging equality and eliminating discrimination. The solutions identified are provided below in response to the 10 issues. Although solutions for each issue varied, the analysis team identified five common themes amongst the solutions: As far as possible, the final descriptions of issues and solutions have retained the same words recorded by facilitators in the consultation reporting sheets.

We don't live in a society that believes in second chances and this needs to change.
UK participant

1. Governance

Corruption featured strongly in the majority of consultations, together with accountability and transparency:

> *If only the government were not so corrupt, the country would be able to solve all of the problems we face.*
> Consultation Participant

The role of civil society in effective governance and the influence of other states (both positive and negative) is seen as important, with consultations highlighting that irresponsible and unsustainable partnerships need to be eradicated. A number of consultations raised issues with the media giving out the wrong information or not informing or educating appropriately.

What are the solutions to these problems?

In the majority of consultations young people felt most able to offer ideas for solutions on governance, especially in Africa and in Colombia, alongside equality and discrimination. Similarly, most of the solutions offered by survey respondents were related to governance, followed by education and then equality and discrimination.

Young people see a world where corruption is eradicated and minority groups have full access to governance, including accountable decision-makers.

1) Ensure there is fair representation of all groups and establish programmes to encourage active citizenship and knowledge of rights:

- Marginalised groups (women, youth, people with disabilities and others) should actively participate in law-making and decision-making. Better use of SMS campaigns and social media would help to inform young people and allow them to participate in policy discussions.
- Support should be given to increase citizen's access to information, improve communications with civil society and to sensitize citizens about their rights. The media should be used as a tool to inform and to educate. Governance education should be available in schools.
- Implement formal youth empowerment training, establish volunteering programmes and review national youth policies regularly.

2) Agents of governance (media, government) should be held accountable to effective regulatory bodies:

- Implement reforms targeting the media to ensure transparency.
- Regulatory bodies (e.g. Anti-Corruption Commissions, fast-track courts, etc.) should be able to penalize infringements, vet elected leaders, review policies and engage citizens.
- Community participation in government budget processes.
- International relationships between governments should ensure accountability, fight corruption and support newly established governments.

3) De-centralize governance structures, including strengthening local and rural governments, to enable equitable distribution of wealth and services.

2. Healthcare

Healthcare was the second most important issue in both workshops and online consultations. Good healthcare is not just about access to facilities but also the quality of services provided. There is a lack of universal access to HIV treatment; to family planning services; to sexual and reproductive health services and education; with high maternal mortality rates and insufficient medication available.

What are the solutions?

Healthcare should be universal and access made easier, particularly for poor people and those with disabilities; this was particularly strong in the South and East Asian youth consultations. Universal access to treatment for HIV was also highlighted as being important in different regions, which is striking given that no other condition was referenced specifically.

1) Provide affordable and quality healthcare for all by:

- Providing social welfare systems and lowering costs.
- Allowing private investment and providing more resources.
- Establishing youth friendly services and support groups.
- Providing funding for HIV Testing and treatment.

2) Sensitize people to basic health rights and roles and responsibilities, including sexual and reproductive health rights and support for people living with HIV and AIDS.

3) Improve patent systems & research, particularly sustained funding for HIV/AIDS research.

3. Education

Online respondents selected education as the most important issue by a clear margin and this is consistent with broader MY World findings available at the time of analysis (*Appendix 3*). A highly ranked issue in the workshops, education was third in the analysis and concerned access to institutions as well as the quality of education itself. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to education. Barriers identified are a lack of facilities for the deaf, a lack of access to education for minority groups, a lack of relevance to country contexts, unsuitable methodologies, and poor facilities. Education, including the cost of uniforms, is expensive for many young people. This leads to school drop outs, untrained young people and high levels of illiteracy. There should be access to, and promotion of, non-formal education as well as education that fits country context and teaches 'life skills'.

What are the solutions?

A post-2015 framework needs to ensure that all young people have access to a quality education.

1) Establish quality education through teacher training and a syllabus relevant to employability:

- Ensure better teacher training and better pay for qualified teachers. A twinning system between trained and untrained teachers.
- Implement education relevant to life (for example financial management, employment, governance, equality).
- Centralize education policy and curriculum development.

2) Increase access to education and improve number and quality of facilities:

- Increase the number of polytechnics, vocational centres and other facilities focused on youth development.
- Ensure universal access to education, increased access to further education and support for government institutions.
- Ensure all schools have essential infrastructure, including toilets, electricity and water, as well as technological capabilities.

4. Environmental sustainability

Environmental sustainably was the fourth most important issue overall, and one of the top issues in the African consultations.

Many parts of the world are experiencing natural disasters on a large scale, as well as the loss of biodiversity and soil erosion. There are unsustainable practices include mining and deforestation. There is also a lack of 'eco-education' and recycling and sanitation facilities in many communities. Where environmentally sustainable policies and programmes have been put in place, there is often an implementation gap.

What are the solutions?

A post-2015 framework needs to ensure environmental sustainability, and resilience to climate change.

1) Create policies that ensure businesses are environmentally responsible:
Penalize businesses that do not use green technology, protect biodiversity and hold corporations accountable to their protection policies.

2) Provide environmental education and raise general awareness of sustainability issues (such as the promotion of recycling and the use of green technology).

5. Equality and Discrimination

A post-2015 framework needs to guarantee equality for all and the absence of discrimination. Young people are discriminated against on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, disability, their HIV status and also because of their age. A world where equality and the absence of discrimination are guaranteed would ensure that violence against girls, women and boys, and child exploitation, was eliminated. It would guarantee opportunities for particularly marginalised young people, such as young mothers. The lack of youth and women's participation was a recurring theme in the majority of consultations.

What are the solutions?

There were many solutions offered to address inequality and discrimination, particularly from the South and South East Asia, Colombia, Eastern Europe and Kyrgyzstan consultations.

1) Empower women and girls:

- Ensure gender mainstreaming and establish gender sensitization programmes.
- Reduce gender-based violence through education with police, women and children.

2) Enable people with disabilities to lead full lives as equal citizens:

- Establish effective policies on disability.
- Use education to reduce stigma and increase understanding, including a deaf or sign language focused education.
- Increase support for infrastructure and accessibility options (for example on public transport).
- Establish quotas to ensure equity in opportunity, particularly in employment and education.
- Decrease inequality between services provided in rural/urban areas.

3) Ensure more inclusive political systems and better representation of marginalized groups in decision-making.

4) Recognize cultural and ethnic diversity and promote minority cultures.

6. Food and Nutrition

A post-2015 framework needs to ensure access to nutritious food and guarantee food security. Currently young people face rapidly rising costs of food, and poor farming methods and implementation of agricultural policies increases the food crisis.

What are the solutions?

Focus on sustainable local and commercial farming practices:

- Improve agricultural practices. Use mechanized agriculture, irrigation systems that increase farmable land and sustainable water systems.
- Build the capacity of local farmers and support them by providing insurance, helping them to compete in markets and providing more of a focus on agriculture as a livelihood.

7. Employment

There is a lack of job creation for young people, and it is often difficult to find a first job. Young people are emigrating to find work, leading to a 'brain drain', and minority groups face even more barriers to employment. In one consultation there was a concern that the aspirations of young people could lead to the neglect of the family.

What are the solutions?

1) Ensure better access to employment options:

- Increase and improve self-employment opportunities; reduce restrictions on finances and loans.
- Encourage social enterprise and entrepreneurship.
- Build stronger links between education and employment.
- Better use of and access to information technology, particularly effective employment databases and online job enquires.
- Stop internal promotions.
- Manage economic migration (domestic and international); either reduce it or encourage more circular movement, to allow youth employability across the urban/rural divide.

2) Promote fairness in employment:

- Provide full pay for internships and work experience programmes.
- Place youth representatives on boards of companies and institutions with power to make decisions on company policies.

8. Poverty and Social Issues

A post-2015 world should be one without poverty. Social issues such as teenage pregnancy, alcohol abuse, rapid population growth, an increase in violence and the high cost of living should be addressed.

Solutions to 'poverty and social issues' were not specifically identified during the analysis. This could be because solutions targeting other issues (such as healthcare, education, food and nutrition etc.) also target poverty.

9. Infrastructure

A post-2015 world should ensure adequate sanitation and waste management. Everyone should have access to clean drinking water, adequate housing, electricity and energy supplies.

What are the solutions?

Utilize innovative technologies to develop infrastructure that enables universal access to clean water, sanitation, electricity and affordable housing:

- Ensure community ownership of development projects.
- Support low cost housing schemes as well as infrastructure that provides access for people with disabilities.

10. Conflict

A post-2015 world is one without conflict. Currently young people face ethnic and cultural conflict and chieftaincy disputes, armed-conflict and terrorism. There is a lack of dialogue between factions in long-term conflict.

What are the solutions?

Conflicts can be addressed by encouraging international cooperation, peacekeeping mandates at both global and local levels and establishing systems of conflict resolution for both developed and developing countries:

- Enable opportunities for cross-cultural exchange and promote both minority cultures and national identity.
- Establish twin towns internationally to build and sustain relationships.

What does this tell us?

Whilst there are differences between the regions, the findings of the consultations reveal the remarkable similarities that exist amongst youth participants: governance/corruption was the most widely mentioned issue across all consultations. A number of the issues highlighted here were similar to the principles previously identified, but discussions also generated issues that were not explicitly mentioned in the principles or visioning sections, such as poverty, food and nutrition and infrastructure. As far as possible, the final descriptions of issues (and solutions) have used the same words recorded by facilitators in the consultation reporting sheets.

Africa, South and East Asia, and Latin America all included governance in their top two issues. Regardless of language, ethnicity and religion in these regions, issues relating to youth participation and corruption are vitally important to all the participants. The world's youth are far from homogenous but this shared view of the most important issue is significant.

In the UK the most important issues were equality, discrimination and human rights. In the Africa region the top three issues were governance, environmental sustainability and food and nutrition. Poverty, basic needs and social issues were only mentioned specifically in Africa. It is likely that some youth consultation discussions may have attributed poverty and social issues to other underlying issues such as education, inequality and governance.

Unemployment was ranked as the seventh most important issue in the consultations. Despite the global youth unemployment crisis, this could suggest that unemployment is of secondary importance compared with fair and accountable governance and education. However, this could reflect that many participants in the consultations were still in full-time education and not yet job seekers. It might also point to the role of better governance to addressing many issues, including unemployment.

The analysis team reflected that participants didn't purely represent their own interests, or that of their ethnicity/religion, but tried to take a majority view and consider issues affecting their countries - not just individuals. For example, despite there being a significant number of different ethnicities involved in the consultations, there was little explicit emphasis on ethnic minority rights. There is a similar finding with religious rights. However, other traditionally marginalised groups such as LGBT communities, people with disabilities, or women were mentioned repeatedly. The rights of people with disabilities was highlighted as an important issue, despite that only a small percentage (around 6%) of consultation participants considered themselves to have a disability. Disability was mentioned within many of the specific issues raised and spanned almost every region, highlighting rights for people with disabilities requires international attention. There was recognition that the majority of issues affect everyone, and that universal access was almost a given in the process of improving each of the issues.

The key to success

Although solutions for each issue varied across the cosultations, the analysis team were able to identify five common themes amongst the solutions. This provides us with a clear overview of the key steps to be incorporated in to the implementation of the post-2015 development framework:

- **Sensitize** - Raise awareness to promote human rights, respect for others, support equality and protect the environment.
- **Empower People** - Support wide scale civic participation, proper representation, accountability and knowledge of human rights.
- **Harness Technology** - Use technology and promote innovation to enable, support and strengthen solutions and their reach.
- **Collaborate** - Build effective relationships from local to international levels to support solutions across issues and amongst everyone involved.
- **Reform Institutions** - Review and reform systems across education, health, governance and infrastructure (to ensure access to basic human securities).

A call to action!

The Top Line

- **This report demonstrates that** young people have a far more nuanced understanding development **than they frequently have opportunities to express. Decision-makers therefore need to** recognise the innovation and expertise that young people can bring **to the new development agenda.**
- **Youth engagement has already been much more visible than it was during the creation of the MDGs. We must** ensure that this continues to grow**, and that these youth voices are represented in a new post-2015 framework.**
- Participatory **and** inclusive **approaches must be prioritised in order to** collect the voices of those who are marginalised **from global decision making processes.**
- **The new development framework must be** transformative for all young people**, guaranteeing their equal status and opportunities** no matter what their background**.**
- **Innovative** solutions that get to the root causes **of issues, harness** new technologies **and** transform global and local systems **must be prioritised. And young people must be** partners in the design and implementation **of these new strategies.**

It's 2013 and we live in a complex world. There are 3.5 billion people on the planet who are under 25. That's the 3.5 billion who have the greatest stake in seeing The World We Want. **Young people in these consultations engaged in critical discussion on post-2015**

The project partners set out to do something different. As youth-led and youth-focused agencies we had run consultations before, but never in collaboration with so many others and involving such diverse groups, as the views in this report illustrate. From our work on the ground we already knew that young people valued education, health and decent work. But we hoped we could prove that young people have a far more nuanced understanding of other development issues, like governance or inequality, than they frequently have opportunities to express.

Participants from all global regions had direct and indirect experiences of the issues and offered many solutions to address these. From better harnessing technology to reforming local or global systems, **the young people we have consulted are pushing for a transformative development agenda.** These solutions have roles for many stakeholders, not just governments. Young people aren't relying on older generations to change the world, from the Arab Spring to technology revolutions, they're already doing it.

This is the generation of 3.5 billion who will hold the responsibility for the implementation of any future goals, and be held to account on their delivery. The conversation with and between young people on post-2015 can't and won't stop here. For the partners in this project, this must only be the end of the beginning.

Youth engagement has already been much more visible in the post-2015 process than it was during the creation of the MDGs. If you're reading this report, we expect you probably already know this. Young people and their organisations have been invited to both national and thematic consultations and have taken part in discussions with the UN High Level Panel, as well as being active in various online and SMS consultations.

The next step is to move from creating the space for youth participation to ensuring the inclusion of young people's priorities in a post-2015 agenda.

So what can you do?

- Listen to the priorities and recommendations from these youth consultations as you develop your own position on post-2015.
- Recognise the innovation and expertise that young people bring across all development priorities, not only the typical 'youth issues'.
- Push for a post-2015 agenda with youth voices at its heart, by keeping spaces open and accessible for diverse young people to be equal partners in the discussion on all themes and at all levels.
- Build partnerships with young people, their organisations and their networks to deliver participatory and inclusive decision-making on the decisions that matter and will make a difference.

And what will we do?

The results of this report will be presented directly to the UN High Level Panel during their meeting in Bali, March 2013, and to various members states ahead of the UN General Assembly in September of the same year. We are also producing a dissemination guide with recommendations and information on how young people and their organisations can use these results to influence both the on-going conversation and key moments within it. As individual organisations, we are going to live the values of youth-led development and use the findings in this report to build our own positions and shape the next development framework.

I am a product of the MDG generation. The MDGs have been a part of my 'coming of age'; I therefore strongly believe that my generation need a seat at the discussion table if the post-MDG agenda is to be sustainable.

Youth consultations participant

Appendices

Appendix 1: Who We Reached

The project partners specifically sought to reach young people with fewer opportunities that face social, economic, geographical, cultural and religious barriers to participation in decision-making processes. Nevertheless, the sample was not intended to be a fully representative sample of all young people in 2013, if indeed that were even possible. At each workshop, participants completed an anonymous 'diversity form' that captured a wide range of information that illustrates the consultations successfully captured the views of a great variety of young people.

- Consultations were conducted in **India, Nepal, the UK, Kyrgyzstan, the Philippines, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Croatia, Tanzania, Colombia, Romania** and **Ghana.**
- The session content was officially **translated into five languages**, but several consultation countries used **facilitators to translate sessions into the participant's first language** (for example in India the consultation ran concurrently in three local languages).
- **91% of individuals were taking part in the consultation as participants** and **9% were facilitating**. There was also **one sign language interpreter**.
- There was a fairly even spread between **male (49%)** and **female (50%)** participants. Only a small proportion of participants identified themselves as **other (0.5%)**.
- **89% of respondents were 18** or older. Colombia was the only country to include participants that were younger than 16 - two participants were aged between 12 and 15.
- **10% of respondents had children.**
- A significant proportion of individuals were engaged in a number of employment and education activities. **42%** of participants were **in formal education** and 27% were engaging **in volunteering activities**. Only eight people **(2%) identified themselves as self-employed** and nine people **(2%) unemployed and/or seeking employment.**
- The figures for the level of schooling completed are fairly ambiguous. Individuals interpreted the question in two different ways - either to mean that they should only acknowledge the highest level of education completed or to acknowledge every level of education completed. This is clearly represented when looking at the figures: **123 individuals stated they completed primary education**, whereas **156 individuals (29%) answered that they had completed undergraduate education** and **11% had completed postgraduate education**. One individual had not completed any formal education. Despite this, we can interpret that we did work with a number of young people who had only completed a minimum level of schooling.
- **4% of participants** consider themselves to **have a disability**: these were visual impairment, hearing impairment, cerebral palsy, polio and asthma.
- **73%** of participants lived **in urban areas,** and **37% in rural areas.**
- **4% identified themselves as being LGBT**, **2% were living with HIV** and 9% were affected by it. **2% had refugee status** and **2% were seeking asylum**. Some respondents may have been anxious about disclosing some of the personal information requested (e.g. sexual orientation, HIV status) especially in contexts where this may be stigmatised. **We might therefore assume that the numbers reported could actually be higher in reality**.
- **70 different languages were identified as first languages of recipients.** There were at least **64 different ethnicities** identified, although 81 participants did not answer this question indicating a potentially higher figure for this.
- **79% of those who answered identified themselves as being religious**. Out of the main religious tgroups, **68% identified themselves as Christian, 19% Muslim** and **9% Hindu**. There were 12 different denominations of Christianity, the most common denomination being Roman Catholicism (31 participants).

Note on the numbers: Parts of this summary present numbers that do not add up to 100% (for example the education section or the gender section). Filling in the diversity form was confidential and it was therefore impossible to check whether all participants filled it in correctly – some participants may have missed out questions whilst some may have ticked more than one box for certain questions. This should be considered when reading through the data.

Appendix 2: Methodology & Approach

Stage 1: Project Design

The project brought together 14 partner organisations from 12 countries to facilitate youth consultations. Each partner was selected on the basis of their expertise in working with young people, especially marginalised young people who are often excluded from global decision-making processes. This project was managed by a consultant based at Restless Development's offices in London, with support from the Restless Development advocacy team, the Project Taskforce and Online Taskforce. At the centre of the project is the post-2015 youth consultation toolkit (download at **www.youthpost2015.org**) - session plans and templates developed by the project team and reviewed by youth representatives, that partners were encouraged to adapt to meet local contexts. The workshops were designed to ensure a creative and participatory approach and to facilitate young people to take a leading role in the discussions. Further information on the methodology used can be found in the Youth Consultations Toolkit **www.restlessdevelopment.org/news/2012/11/16/youth-consultations-for-a-post-2015-framework**

Stage 2: Consultation Delivery

Each partner delivered a two-day consultation workshop between October 2012 and January 2013. Where English was not the first language spoken, the toolkit was also translated into Croatian, Romanian, Russian and Spanish. After the consultation, each partner completed a reporting form detailing the discussions from the workshop including: (i) visions for a post-2015 world and the principles underpinning these visions, (ii) the most important issues that need to be addressed by the post-2015 framework and (iii) solutions to these issues. Inevitably, this flexibility in approach led to different interpretations of how to run the workshops and how to report on the findings. For example, some consultations highlighted the key issues for young people, giving detailed descriptions, whilst others reported on the ten issues much more briefly. We cannot measure how much time was given to each section of the workshop, any power dynamics in the room or the amount of emphasis that different facilitators might have given to each issue.

Stage 3: Analysis

In January 2013, the data from the consultation workshops was collated by the project team in London, and analysed at a two-day workshop (February 2013) involving a group of 18 young people. The group, from the UK, Romania, Croatia and Ghana, had participated in the initial consultations and were joined by youth workers from the UK. The meeting also included Skype calls with participants from Nepal and Tanzania. Participants were taken through a 'how to' workshop in data analysis and then spent the weekend coding and sorting the data from the 12 countries. The end result was a summary of the key themes emerging in "visions and principles" and "issues and solutions," which form the basis of this report. These findings were then triangulated with those from the online survey (also collated in January 2013, see (*Appendix 3*) - with the survey generating some new ideas that were not recorded in the workshop consultations. In the analysis workshop young people 'coded' the data by identifying key themes. The analysis workshop worked with a much smaller group of young people than those who took part in the consultations. The analysis team were encouraged to think about the voices they were representing in the process of analysis, to help them reflect on their own biases. As such, they recognised that there were many groups of young people not involved in the analysis team, including people with disabilities, consultation participants from other countries (largely due to unsuccessful applications for a UK visa), some marginalised groups (e.g. Roma communities) and, of course, future generations.

Young people from each of the analysis groups drafted a section on either visions and principles or issues and solutions, which formed the basis of this report. The final report incorporated comments and feedback from young people and the task force that were given on the first draft.

Stage 4: Dissemination

We are developing a guide with advice and information on how partners and young people can identify opportunities for using consultation

findings and influencing the post-2015 debate, both nationally and globally. The Project Task Force are also leading on a broader dissemination strategy, targeting key external stakeholders and influencers including Member States, UN Agencies, the UN High Level Panel on Post-2015, and civil society, including the Beyond 2015 campaign. If you have ideas for dissemination please contact **Victoria@restlessdevelopment.org.**

Appendix 3: Online Survey

An online survey was launched in December 2012, giving young people unable to participate in person an opportunity to input. This online survey looked at similar themes to the in-person consultations and was used in the analysis process to triangulate the emerging results. For the most part, online respondents identified the same visions and principles, as well as other dimensions of the eleven principles identified in-person including: empowerment of women; green jobs; access to youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services; access to health insurance; life above the poverty line for all; rich people support financially poor people; enforcement of social responsibility of transnational companies; less violence and crime, especially among youth; reduction of stigma and discrimination on LGBTQ and youth workers; promoting culture; outside of the box thinking for wealth creation; the ability of everyone to reach their potential; no colonization; a world of global unity, without nationalities; and ending female genital mutilation and early child marriage.

Young people then selected six issues from a pre-identified list - taken from the MY World survey hosted by the United Nations and partners (**www.myworld2015.org**) - that were most important to them. The issues include: Equality between men and women; affordable and nutritious food; political freedoms; protection against crime and violence; action taken on climate change; a good education; support for people who can't work; better healthcare; access to clean water and sanitation; reliable energy at home; better transport and roads; phone and internet access; an honest and responsive government; better job opportunities; freedom from discrimination and persecution; protecting forests, rivers and oceans. There was also the option to add any issues not covered in the list. Respondents were also asked 'what actions could be taken to address these issues by your community, your government, the international community and other young people?'

The top four issues identified in the survey were education, healthcare, equality and non-discrimination, and governance. The issues featured lowest on the list were infrastructure and conflict (albeit in a different order). The most significant difference is the position of food and nutrition - the 5th most important issue in the wider UN prompted section compared with 8th on the unprompted section. This could suggest that, when unprompted, respondents were less likely to think about food than other issues such as unemployment, poverty and social issues, and environmental sustainability. Nevertheless, these issues could have implications that prevent individuals from being able to buy healthy, satisfying food. Another notable difference is the importance afforded to governance. While in the workshop consultations it was the most important issue for participants, it ranks as the 4th most important for those who responded to the online surveys. This could be attributed to a broader definition of governance being used in workshops to a potentially narrower view of governance indicated in the online options survey.

Environmental sustainability featured in the online surveys as the 7th most important issue (7th for prompted, 6th for unprompted) compared with 4th in the youth consultations. The online survey highlighted ideas that did not fit easily into the already identified principles including media activism for positive change, parents being aware of issues and challenges that youth are facing, and Information Communication Technology (ICT) enabling access to information and communication.

The online survey was also available in French and Spanish, with 24 respondents filling out the Spanish version and 24 the French version. The French and Spanish surveys largely supported the English survey findings. The French survey showed education, healthcare and access to sexual and reproductive health services, equality and environmental sustainability all featuring prominently. In Spanish survey there was an emphasis on rights and equal participation.

Finally, we will share the results of these consultations with **My World**, an online global survey for citizens to express their priorities for the post-2015 development framework, led by the United Nations and partners.

Thanks

There were a great number of people who made this project possible. We would like to extend a special thanks to....

The 346 young people who gave two days of their time to participate in the national youth consultation workshops, **and the 395 who gave their views online.**

Our partner organisations who organised and ran youth consultations using the toolkit:

- IPAS (**www.ipas.org**)
- Restless Development India (**www.restlessdevelopment.org/india**)
- Restless Development Global Programmes (**www.restlessdevelopment.org/uk**)
- Restless Development Nepal (**www.restlessdevelopment.org/nepal**)
- Restless Development Sierra Leone (**www.restlessdevelopment.org/sierra-leone**)
- Restless Development Tanzania (**www.restlessdevelopment.org/tanzania**)
- Status: M (**www.status-m.hr/en.html**)
- VSO International (**www.vsointernational.org**)
- VSO Jitolee (**www.vsojitolee.org**)
- VSO Bahaginan (**www.vsobahaginan.org**)
- Y Care International (**www.ycareinternational.org**)
- Y-PEER Kyrgyzstan (**http://y-peer.kg**)
- YES-Ghana (**www.yesghana.org**)
- YMCA Colombia (**www.ymcacolombia.org**)
- YMCA Sierra Leone (**www.ymcasierraleone.com**)
- Youth for Youth Federation (**www.y4y.ro**)

Our Project Consultant Lead, Katy Chadwick, and the **Project Taskforce,** including Asel Turgunova (*Y PEER Kyrgyzstan*), Glenn Benablo (*VSO Bahaginan*), Jess Kopp (*VSO*), Michael Boampong (*YPWC Ghana*), Tom Burke (*Y Care*) and Victoria Forsgate (*Restless Development*).

The Online Platform Taskforce, including Jess Kopp (*VSO*), Katie Chau (*IPPF*) and Sarah Huxley (*Action Aid*), and led by Katy Chadwick.

The analysis weekend team, including Ana-Teodora Rizescu (Romania), Cosmin Obretin (Romania), Elen Meggy (UK), Gary Clayton (UK), Hrvoje Brčić (Croatia), Kenneth Green (UK), Laura Williams (UK), Lewis Emmerton (UK), Margareta Delaš (Croatia), Oliver Day (UK), Pedro Telles (Brazil), Sarah Witts (UK), Tabitha Ha (UK), and Vera Ado (Ghana), with input from Abdus Miya (Nepal) and James Mwala (Tanzania). The weekend was facilitated by Eleanor Kennedy (Restless Development), Gaby Wood (VSO), Hannah Smith (Restless Development), Tom Burke (Y Care), Victoria Forsgate (Restless Development), and led by Katy Chadwick.

This project was initiated by members of the **DFID / CSO Youth Working Group,** a network of over 30 UK-based youth-led and youth-focused organisations. The group was established in 2007 in partnership with DFID, to help put young people at the heart of the development agenda, recognising their huge potential as partners and leaders in the development process, as well as their specific needs as beneficiaries. Civil society members of the YWG and DFID policy teams have been working together on related issues over the past four years, creating new partnerships and building capacity within the youth development sector (**www.youthindevelopment.org.uk**, **@YWGUK**).

Find out more: For more information on youth participation in the post-2015 consultations visit **www.youthpost2015.org**. Follow us on Twitter **@youthpost2015** and like our page at **Facebook.com/YouthVoicesUN** (Global Youth Voices - UN Global Conversation on the Post-2015 Agenda).

What did you think of the report? Follow the discussion online
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This project was funded by the **Youth in Action Programme of the European Union.**

This project was co-funded by the Youth DFID PPA Consortium led by **Restless Development**, with **War Child** and **Youth Business International.**

This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.