



To wrap up the International Year of Youth, a High-Level Meeting on Youth was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 25 to 28 July.

The main concern of the member states was youth unemployment and as a result of the meeting they called for the creation of a global strategy on youth employment to anticipate and offset “the negative social and economic consequences of globalization and to maximize its benefits for young people”. Seventeen areas of action on youth issues were noted in the outcome of the High-Level Meeting ([A/65/L.87](#)). These areas included specific measures to advance inclusive job creation, skill development and vocational training designed for specific labour market needs. Strengthening of educational opportunities, promoting human rights knowledge among youth, and encouraging dialogue for mutual understanding were also called for in the text. Governments are also urged to support the capacity of youth-led organizations so they can participate in national and international development activities.

More than 100 youth-led organizations made important contributions to the text negotiated by Member States. The youth-led groups that participated, called for more inclusive citizenship, as well as strengthening partnerships with youth to jointly address the serious difficulties young people face.

About 50 UN and senior government officials, national youth delegates, civil society organizations and private sector representatives participated actively in two panel discussions. The discussions were held consecutively on the first day of the meeting, addressing two themes: "Strengthening international cooperation regarding youth and enhancing dialogue, mutual understanding and active youth participation as indispensable elements of efforts towards achieving social integration, full employment and the eradication of poverty," and "Challenges to youth development and opportunities for poverty eradication, employment and sustainable development."

Need for cross-sectoral policies

The Secretary-General of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development and Under-Secretary General of the UN conference on Sustainable Development, Sha Zukang, said that the challenges that are facing youth development – such as poverty, low-quality education and unemployment are interrelated. He also added “these challenges must be addressed through cross-sectoral policies and programmes that are holistic in nature. Our approach should be respectful of the rights of youth to inherit a healthy planet, and sensitive to youth needs in employment and youth diversity. In short we need to foster sustainable development for youth and their future”.

The panel co-Chairs presented summaries of the discussions at the plenary closing session. Themes that were highlighted in the closing session consisted of strengthening international cooperation for youth, as were other ways to support the eradication of poverty, full employment and social integration. Participants were also reminded to better integrate youth issues in national development agendas, help strengthen national youth institutions and organizations of young people, and promote efforts to enhance inclusion and the effective participation of youth.

The International Year of Youth is coming to its end soon. But you can still take part in it before it ends through the Change Your World 2011 campaign. The campaign was initiated by Global change makers in collaboration with the UN programme on youth. The goal of the campaign is to support the International Year of Youth and celebrate International Youth Day. You can find the campaign via [Facebook](#).