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Framing Paper 3

**Whole People, Holistic Approaches:
Cross-Sectoral Action and Learning**

AN ENABLING RIGHT:
**EDUCATION
FOR YOUTH
AFFECTED BY CRISIS**
2010 INEE POLICY
ROUNDTABLE

Framing Paper 3

Whole People, Holistic Approaches:
Cross-Sectoral Action and Learning

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Executive Summary

Today's youth population is the largest the world has ever seen; of the world's 14 million refugees, approximately 35% are young people between the ages of 12 and 24. Beyond that, many more youth are seriously affected by disasters and displacement. These crisis-affected youth have diverse and complex needs, but they also have much to contribute to community reconstruction and development. Far too often, however, youth fall between mandate and funding cracks, and their voices are not adequately heard in decision-making arenas.

Worldwide, adolescence and young adulthood is regarded as a transitional phase and is often associated with increased vulnerabilities and challenges. These can be exacerbated by crisis, especially when youth do not have opportunities to contribute in a positive way to their families and communities. In addition, although the international community has prioritized education of children in crisis contexts, youth generally face greater challenges in accessing education and other services. This is particularly a concern as education can be an effective entry point from which to address the many physical, social, emotional, and psychological needs of youth.

In transitioning from childhood to adulthood and from education to employment, relevant youth issues fall into a variety of sectors including education, early recovery, livelihoods, protection, WASH, health. Effectively responding to their rights, meeting their needs, and allowing them to develop to their potential – even when affected by crisis – is a key concern for international humanitarian action. Holistic programming that capitalizes on cross-sectoral partnerships is required to adequately address the complex challenges facing youth. This paper also advocates that youth fill a role far greater than that of passive beneficiaries. With appropriate support structures and room for creative outlet, youth can self-initiate and play a central role in program effectiveness and in the recovery of communities and societies affected by crisis.

Through six case studies from across a range of sectors, this paper explores innovative programmatic approaches, with a particular emphasis on the role of youth participation. From the case studies, it draws out key impacts and findings, summarizes lessons learned for the education sector, and suggests recommendations for holistic inter-sectoral action.

Initial recommendations for areas of action within this topic include creating channels for increased coordination on youth issues between IASC Clusters and other relevant actors at both global and national levels. The paper calls for the systematic participation of youth in emergency preparedness, response and recovery in the education sector in order to improve the quality, effectiveness and relevance of programming. Finally the dearth of data regarding the impact of emergencies on youth populations is highlighted.

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Acknowledgements

Photo credit: A student during class in a community-based school in Wush Tangi in Nangarhar province, Eastern Afghanistan. Mats Lignell, Save the Children.

Introduction

The diversity and complexity of challenges facing youth affected by crisis hints at the need for holistic and inter-agency approaches in working with, and for, youth in emergency and early recovery contexts. Yet it is widely acknowledged that the rights and needs of youth have not received the same attention as those of their younger counterparts. Although youth in crisis are particularly vulnerable to recruitment into armed forces, trafficking or commercial sex, humanitarian assistance has typically focused on the urgent health and nutrition needs of under-five and primary school-age children.[1] No longer protected by laws and policies specific to younger children, all too often the world's significant youth population falls between policy, programming and funding cracks.

Not only are the needs of youth diverse and multi-faceted, but the term "youth" itself brings up conflicting connotations; many view youth as a threat to order and stability, while others may focus on youth as the hope for a distant future. Caught between childhood and adulthood, youth may be a demographic majority, but they tend to view themselves as an "outcast minority".[2] Often the experience of youth in crisis situations is one of exclusion and frustration, which can lead to involvement in conflict as an attempt to feel a sense of empowerment.[3] However, the view of youth as simply a potential threat to stability is one-sided, and youth are also an important potential resource for development and reconstruction. Unfortunately, according to the World Bank, there are far too few helpful examples of programmes that successfully address aspirations of youth in post-conflict societies or which tap into their potential contributions to reconstruction.[4]

Regardless of specific definitions of adolescence, youth are generally considered to be developing and transitioning from childhood to adulthood in a myriad of ways. On a daily basis, their experiences fall within the arenas of work of many sectors, including education, health, livelihoods, and protection. In fact, many of the issues affecting youth – whether physical, psychological, social or educational – intersect to such a degree that they cannot be seen separately.[5] The model here depicts this inter-connectivity and highlights the difficulty in placing any one programming response in one area exclusively.

Figure 1: Model of Youth Needs (UNICEF, 2010)

At a recent UNICEF meeting on Adolescence and Emergencies, participants identified education as an area where adolescent programming can be maximized. It was suggested that integrated, cross-sectoral action, addressing the psychosocial, livelihoods, WASH, protection and health needs of youth, might very well find an entry-point through the work of the education

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[1] UNICEF, *Adolescent programming experiences during conflict and post-conflict - CASE STUDIES*, 2004.
[2] Sommers, M., *Urbanization, War and Africa's Youth at Risk*. Washington, 2003.
[3] McLean Hilker, L. and Fraser, E., *Youth exclusion, violence, conflict and fragile states*, 2009.
[4] World Bank, *Reshaping the Future: Education and Postconflict Reconstruction*, 2005.
[5] UNICEF, *Meeting on Adolescents in Emergencies: Meeting Report*, 2010.

sector, often coordinated at the national level by an Education Cluster. They also noted the key role the Protection Cluster has to play, given the vulnerability of adolescent girls to violence, harassment, and sexual abuse, and the vulnerability to trafficking or recruitment to the military of many youth affected by crisis.

It follows then, that to address the rights and needs of youth as whole people, youth-focused programming needs to adopt holistic approaches and effective cross-sectoral action. With the goal of prompting discussion around effective, holistic youth programming and potential cross-sectoral partnerships, this Framing Paper examines the following questions:

1) How have youth been integrated in programming and made programmes successful?
2) What are examples of holistic approaches and cross-sectoral action in working with youth?
3) What can the education sector learn from experiences of youth programming in other sectors?

First, Section II of the paper summarizes selected data and definitions pertaining to crisis-affected youth. Section III then highlights examples of promising youth work and lessons learned through cross-sectoral case studies as well as accounts written by youth. Section IV suggests recommendations for effective partnerships and strategies towards working with, and for, youth.

Selected Data and Definitions on Youth Affected by Crisis

Data on crisis-affected youth worldwide remains limited; however, this section attempts to paint a broad picture of the situation for youth affected by crisis through figures available from UN agency publications and other international organizations. Key concepts, which are used throughout the paper and which may be helpful in further discussions are also defined.

What do we mean by "youth affected by crisis"?

According to UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO, youth are people between 15 and 24 years old; however, definitions of youth also recognize that specific socio-cultural, institutional, economic and political factors determine the exact age range within countries and across cultures. For instance, depending on the culture, rites of passages such as marriage, menarche or the achievement of economic independence might be seen as more of a demarcation between youth and adulthood.

In crisis contexts, where young people often take on adult responsibilities earlier than they would otherwise, and may lack certain developmental opportunities, it is necessary to look beyond rigid age categories. Any definition of youth affected by crisis should focus on the transitional experiences young people make in a period of progression towards self-discovery, independent responsibility, and increased decision-making power. Furthermore, it is vital to keep in mind the heterogeneity of this group as the term "youth" comprises young women and men, students in formal or non-formal education in addition to out-of-school youth, teenage mothers and young parents, young professionals, combatants and ex-combatants – all who live in diverse cultural, socio-economic and political contexts.

As a developmental stage, youth is often associated with various challenges and increased vulnerabilities along the road towards adulthood. This side of youth experience can be exacerbated by crisis, conflict and instability, especially when youth are not given a platform to contribute positively to their families and communities. Under the extreme conditions of war, if youth are left without opportunities to envision a better future, youthful optimism may turn into bitter pessimism.[6]

Here, the term "youth affected by crisis" encompasses all young people who have been affected by disaster, conflict or instability. As crises are unexpected, create uncertainty and present a threat to the status quo, the term also carries the connotation of transition and change. Youth affected by crisis experience a number of simultaneous transitional processes, both in terms of their own physical and psychological development and in terms of the abrupt changes in their natural, political or socio-economic environment.

Defining youth participation and empowerment

Youth participation is an important concept in all youth-focused discussions and work. It refers to the degree of empowerment and decision-making that youth are able to assume through established organisational mechanisms. Meaningful youth participation involves recognising and nurturing the strengths, interests, and abilities of young people through the provision of real opportunities for youth to become involved in decisions that affect them at individual and systemic levels.[7]

Youth empowerment, then, is a key feature of youth participation and the ultimate aim of holistic programming. Empowerment is an attitudinal, structural, and cultural process whereby young people gain the ability, authority, and agency to make decisions and implement change in their own and other people's lives.

Partnerships between adults and youth can act as a catalyst for youth empowerment as they emphasize an equitable working relationship between youth and adults. However, this type of power structure is rare. In an online survey of 30 youth living in 18 different countries as part of the research for this paper, one youth commented, "Youth are neglected in our community, and even if we have some ideas for developing our community, elders don't consider our voices." In fact, this point of view was brought up repeatedly by survey participants, 64% of whom indicated that there are no opportunities in their home communities for youth participation, that adults make decisions. A surveyed youth observed, "We are not empowered to solve these problems." Despite, and perhaps because of, these comments, it is critical to emphasize the role of youth participation and empowerment in holistic emergency preparedness, response and recovery.

Key statistics on the world's youth

Today, nearly half of all people are under the age of twenty-five. This presents the largest generation of children and youth in history.[8] The total youth population – defined as those between 15 and 24-years old – has been calculated at some 1.2 billion, which represents around 18 percent of the world's population. The share of youth is highest in least developed

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[6] UNICEF, 2004.
[7] UNFPA, *Framework for Action on Adolescents and Youth - Opening Doors with Young People: 4 Keys*, 2007.
[8] UNFPA, *State of World Population 2003 - Making 1 Billion Count: Investing in Adolescents' Health and Rights*, 2003.

countries (LDCs), where more than one in five people are between 15 and 24. Of the 1.2 billion youth in the world, almost 85 percent live in developing countries, and this share is predicted to grow to approximately 90 percent by 2025. Asia has the largest share of the youth population at around 62 percent, followed by Africa at around 17 percent. Young men account for about 51 percent of the entire youth population.[9]

These large numbers of youth are referred to as "youth bulges" and are often associated with a threat to social and economic stability and security.[10] Proponents of the youth bulge theory highlight the historical tendency for countries with large youth populations and inadequate education, healthcare and employment opportunities to also be the countries which are most volatile and vulnerable to conflict. They point to empirical evidence that large, young male population bulges are also more likely to increase the risk of conflict in societies where male secondary education is low.

Figure 2: World youth population in 2010 (UNDESA, 2010)

This risk seems particularly strong in low and middle-income countries, which is especially challenging for Sub-Saharan Africa as the region with the youngest age structure, and the lowest educational attainment levels.[11]
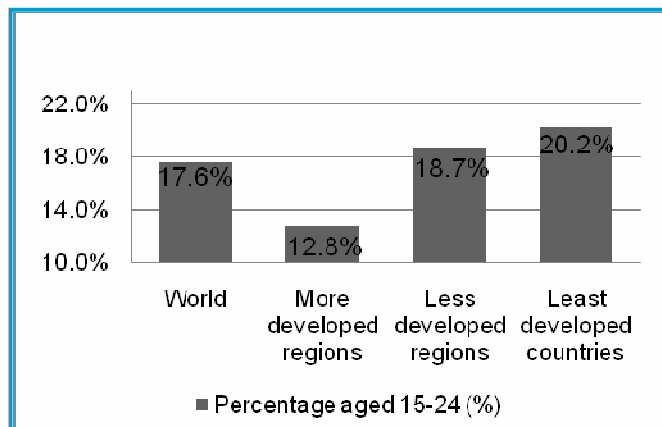
It has been estimated that over 300 million young people under the age of 25 are living in countries affected by armed conflict, and this excludes many IDPs and refugees who are never counted.[12] The most commonly cited figure of young people under the age of 18 who are directly involved in warfare or have recently been demobilised in more than 30 different countries is 300,000 – representing ten percent of the world's combatants.[13] There are no global or regional figures that calculate the number of youth affected by disasters such as earthquakes, floods or hurricanes.

In terms of socio-economic status, youth make up half of the world's unemployed, and are often further socially marginalised in decision-making processes due to age-based hierarchies.[14] The global youth unemployment rate increased to 13 percent in 2009, up from 11.9 per cent in 2007;

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[9] UNDESA, *World Population Prospects*, 2010.

[10] Barakat, B. and Urdal, H., 'Breaking the Waves: Does Education Mediate the Relationship Between Youth Bulges and Political Violence?' in *Policy Research Working Paper*, 2009; Curtain, R., 'For Poor Countries Youth, Dashed Hopes Signal Danger Ahead' in *Current History,* 2007; Hendrixson, A., 'Angry Young Men, Veiled Young Women: Constructing a New Population Threat' in *Corner House Briefing,* 2007; McLean Hilker, L. and Fraser, E., *Youth exclusion, violence, conflict and fragile states*, 2009; UNDP, *Youth and Violent Conflict: Society and Development in Crisis?,* 2006.

[11] Barakat, B. and Urdal, H., 2009.

[12] Lowicki-Zucca, J., *Youth Speak Out: New Voices on the Protection and Participation of Young People Affected by Armed Conflict*, 2005.

[13] World Bank, *Children and Youth,* 2010.

[14] GTZ, *Promoting development, integrating young people: Good practices from the children and youth sector*, 2009.

furthermore, youth are nearly three times more likely to be unemployed than adults.[15] However, constituting 25 percent of the working-age population,[16] youth also have the potential to drive economic development, revitalise a country's institutions, and play a significant role in the social and economic development of their communities.

In the health arena, there is concern about young people's increased risk of reproductive health issues and HIV/AIDS. Half of all new HIV infections occur in people aged 15 to 24.[17] In some countries, ratios of new female-to-male HIV infections among young people between ages 15 to 24 run as high as 8:1. Girls face the additional risk of unwanted early pregnancies that can lead to dangerous childbirth or unsafe abortions. Some 15 million teenage girls become mothers every year, with average infant mortality rates at 10 percent.[18]
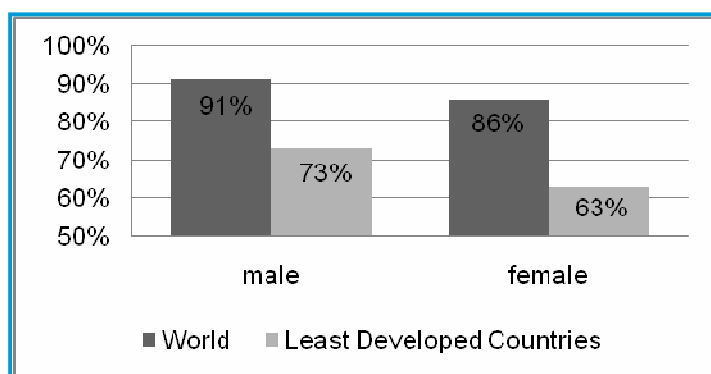

Figure 3: Youth Literacy Rates (source: UNICEF, 2010)

Globally, more than 100 million adolescents (aged between 10 and 19 years) do not attend school. In developing countries, some 57 million male youth and 96 million female youth are illiterate. Literacy rates tend to be lower for marginalised youth such as ethnic minorities, youth with disabilities, or girls. Some of the lowest literacy rates for female youth can be found in countries such as Afghanistan, Chad, Mali, Somalia and Niger, where they fall below 30 percent. In least developed countries, female youth literacy rates stand at 63 percent, compared to 73 percent for their male peers. This is 23 percentage points lower than the female world youth literacy rate of 86 percent and 18 percentage points lower than the male world youth literacy rate.

Data on education indicators for crisis-affected youth is virtually non-existent. However, it is broadly understood that youth generally face greater challenges in accessing education than do children and that this problem is compounded in crisis and post-crisis contexts. Youth in conflict situations are often prevented from attending school because of school closures, lack of safety and security in – or en route to – school, family poverty, bureaucratic obstacles, or lack of access to the next level of education. Additionally, many out-of-school young people, aged 12 and older, are unable to return to school once conflict has ended.[19]

Ease of access to post-primary education opportunities differs across crisis-affected populations. For example, access to education for youth living in rural areas, as illegal migrants in urban areas, or in the immediate aftermath of disasters is even more challenging than is access for long-term refugees in camp settings.

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[15] ILO, *Global Employment Trends for Youth - Special issue on the impact of the global economic crisis on youth: August 2010*, 2010.

[16] UNDESA, *World Youth Report 2007: Young People's Transition to Adulthood: Progress and Challenges*, 2007.

[17] UNFPA, *State of World Population 2003 - Making 1 Billion Count: Investing in Adolescents' Health and Rights,* 2003.

[18] DFID-CSO, *Youth Participation in Development - A Guide for Development Agencies and Policy Makers,* 2010.

[19] UNICEF, *Machel Study 10-Year Strategic Review: Children and Conflict in a Changing World*, 2009.

While many of these statistics begin to depict a grim picture of the very real challenges of taking on youth issues, it is important to note that youth also represent the hope of change and a better future; youth present an immense opportunity for development.[20] Tapping into the energy and potential of youth can yield large returns for generations to come, while failing to act risks incurring tremendous costs to individuals, societies and the world at large.[21]

Promising Approaches to Humanitarian Youth Work

In general, holistic approaches that take a wide perspective and consider the person's well-being and developmental needs are most successful. A holistic approach to working with youth in humanitarian action requires the specialties and attention of many different sectors, such as education, health, protection, early recovery and livelihoods; therefore, encouraging coordination and building strong partnerships becomes of great importance.

Recognizing the role of various sectors in responding to global change, the international community has put increased emphasis on establishing partnerships over the course of the last decade**.** Rationales for such partnerships suggest that different sectors each possess distinct advantages that can aid effectiveness, efficiency, and equity in addressing social issues.[22]

By its very nature, education for youth affected by crisis implicates several different sectors on issues pertaining to livelihoods, HIV/AIDS programmes, health education, protection, landmine awareness, and psychosocial support, among others. For example, if youth are to successfully transition from school to employment, the labour market and economy cannot be ignored. Sexual and reproductive health messages will often be included as part of more general lifeskills education. Education can also provide an entry point for other sectors' service provision. Health, protection and hygiene messages can be shared through education, key services for learners and teachers can be coordinated through schools and those in need of further support and referral can be identified.[23]

In the humanitarian arena, the need for partnerships and leadership within and between sectors led to the development of the "cluster approach." The aim of the cluster approach at the global level is to strengthen system-wide preparedness and coordination of technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies, by ensuring that there is predictable leadership and accountability in all the main sectors or areas of humanitarian response. In September 2005, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) agreed to designate global "cluster leads" in nine sectors or areas of activity, including logistics, telecommunications, shelter, health, nutrition,

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[20] Barakat, B. and Urdal, H., 'Breaking the Waves: Does Education Mediate the Relationship Between Youth Bulges and Political Violence?' in *Policy Research Working Paper*, 2009; McLean Hilker, L. and Fraser, E., *Youth exclusion, violence, conflict and fragile states*, 2009.

[21] UNFPA, 2003.

[22] Andrews, R. and Entwistle, T., 'Does Cross-Sectoral Partnership Deliver? An Empirical Exploration of Public Service Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Equity', in *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory,* 2010; Findlay-Brooks, R., et al, *Cross-Sector Partnership as an Approach to Inclusive Development, 2007*; Simo, G. and Bies, A. L., 'The Role of Nonprofits in Disaster Response: An Expanded Model of Cross-Sector Collaboration', in *Public Administration Review, 2007.*

[23] INEE, *Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery*, 2010. The 2008 Sphere Project and INEE Companionship Agreement reinforces the importance of ensuring that inter-sectoral linkages between education and other sectors are made at the outset of an emergency.

water and sanitation, early recovery, camp coordination, and protection. Education was not identified as a sector to be included in the cluster approach at the global level until a year later in 2006, when UNICEF and Save the Children became co-lead agencies.

While the clusters at the global level present a potential forum for coordination between sectors on youth issues, as yet there is little inter-sectoral work being done in this area. "Age" is formally recognized as a cross-cutting issue for all clusters, but this has been narrowly interpreted thus far to refer only to older people. Despite a lack of collaboration to date at the global level, in programmes on the ground, there are many examples of links being made between sectors to address the needs of youth. The case studies presented below seek to explore these connections, and draw out lessons that might inform more systematic global and national level coordination in this area. Accounts from three youth who have been active in humanitarian and development efforts in their communities are also featured in text boxes throughout the section.

Case Study 1: Protection for cyclone-affected children and youth in Bangladesh
(Save the Children Sweden Denmark - SCSD)

Context: When the tropical cyclone Sidr, a super category 4 storm, hit Bangladesh on 15 November 2007, it caused major devastation in 17 districts. Access to food and clean water was scarce, approximately 10,000 people died, and hundreds of thousands lost their homes.

Activities: Children and youth may traditionally rely on adults when disasters strike, but in Bangladesh youth were among the main actors in relief efforts. The first day after the cyclone, youth took initiative to turn their clubs into open safe spaces for their peers. Some of these safe spaces were in turn made into new children and youth clubs. Youth also self-identified their most vulnerable peers and offered their support.

Impacts and Key Findings:
- Youth often have a finger on the pulse of their communities. They are able to identify who is in real distress, and they often know details of their peers' lives that are inaccessible to adults. As a result, youth can pinpoint families in need and provide support.
- Youth who had not previously been enrolled in school were encouraged to study in the safe spaces created after the cyclone; this was particularly true for youth with special needs who felt neglected in regular school settings.
- Youth said that being involved in the relief work was a great experience that helped them enhance their leadership skills and gain more respect in the local community.

Lessons Learned:
- Youth are able to be active contributors in identifying community needs and providing psychosocial support to their peers.
- In creating safe, educational spaces, the protection and psychosocial needs of children and youth can also be met.
- Responsive education programmes utilize the opportunities that arise through crisis to reach out to previously marginalized groups and to empower youth.

> ***Youth Voices:***
> *The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) in Palestine offers youth the opportunity to undertake self-identified projects in their local communities. Adham is a young resident of Jabalia refugee camp in the Gaza strip and a social worker for AFSC.*
>
> I lost my brother in the conflict when I was young. After this hurtful experience, I felt I had two options: be a fighter or be a peaceful person. It was a hard decision since I am a human and had feelings of retaliation. Finally, I chose to be a peaceful struggler because I did not want to be like the people who killed my brother.
>
> Through my work with AFSC, I have learned about civic engagement concepts. My work helps me improve my social and life skills. I also joined the Youth Bank programme which helps to support young people in developing their abilities and allows them to access finances for their own projects. It means youth leading themselves.
>
> After the war in 2008, I got involved in relief work for Palestinian families. I worked on needs assessments and food parcels and school bag distribution. Through this work, I have felt that I am an active citizen in my community am happy about my role in drawing the smiles on children's faces.
>
> The next year, I got involved in a post-war recovery and psychosocial support project for Gazan youth, where we worked on training trainers in psychosocial support and repaired homes of poor families that had been destroyed during the war on Gaza. I worked very closely with people who were directly affected by the war, listened to their sad stories and tried to keep my tears away in order to help them think about the future.

Case Study 2: Youth mobilisation in humanitarian response in Haiti *(UNFPA)*

Context: In addition to political, social and socio-economic instability, Haiti has undergone a series of natural disasters – most recently the 7.0 earthquake in January 2010, which displaced 1.5 million people.

Activities: As a component of its humanitarian response, UNFPA mobilised 150 young volunteers through its network of partners, including the Ministry of Youth and youth-led and youth-focused NGOs. These youth volunteers had the opportunity to develop their capacities in areas such as data collection, sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS prevention, GBV prevention, entrepreneurship, and civic action. Youth directly participated in key UNFPA relief activities such as undertaking post-disaster rapid needs analyses, conducting camp assessments to identify pregnant women and provide them with extra food supplies (a joint action with UNICEF and WHO), assembling dignity kits for distribution to affected women and girls to safeguard personal hygiene and health, distributing solar flash lights, labelling donated tents and mattress, ensuring condom availability and implementing HIV/AIDS awareness sessions.

Impacts and Key Findings:
- Maintaining a database of youth contacts, and providing them with continued training, led to significant youth involvement after the earthquake.
- Recruiting one youth as project coordinator proved to motivate other youth and helped to ensure all activities were adapted and appropriate for youth.

- Financial support to cover transportation costs and hot meals while working were a morale boost for young volunteers; it also allowed them to support their families and encouraged them to steer clear of riskier activities.

Lessons Learned:
- Partnerships between government ministries and NGOs and UN agencies working in various sectors can prove effective in engaging youth and meeting the larger needs of crisis-affected populations.
- In contributing to relief work, youth learn important life skills related to health, entrepreneurship, and civic engagement.
- Keeping accurate data on youth contributes to programme efficiency and effectiveness.

Youth Voices: *Kashif was Deputy Coordinator of the Young Professional Network (YPN) in Pakistan's conflict-affected North-Western Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province, which has recently also been troubled by disastrous floods affecting around 20 million people.*

Our voluntary network of 20 committed youth became active across the sectors of education, governance and protection. We were involved in deliberations with local government officials for a literacy awareness campaign in rural areas of Peshawar. The most notable contribution of the network was that our recommendations on the establishment of skill enhancement and job counselling centers were incorporated into Pakistan's National Youth Policy.

I consider the establishment of this voluntary network a great achievement since it was the first of its kind in the region. I was impressed to see the motivation of so many youth members, who, under difficult circumstances, dedicated their time, resources and energies for a larger cause.

In North-Western Pakistan, the needs of youth have been neglected over time. Pakistan's youth need to be given a greater voice and to be the primary framers of formulating long-term youth policies. I believe the process of forging youth partnership in the crisis-affected areas needs to be fostered and given state patronage. Youth have the potential to be peace-builders if the right environment is made available to them.

Case Study 3: Providing a platform for youth voices in Lebanon
(Catholic Relief Services - CRS)

Context: In post-war Lebanon, youth are susceptible to the rhetoric of political party leaders, and access information mainly from their families or the highly politicised media.

Activities: CRS is building youth's active citizenship skills through the development of a standardised youth curriculum on municipal governance and the creation of an online referral system with activities, learning tools, and information on Lebanon's municipal elections. CRS is also creating opportunities for youth to play a constructive role in the municipal elections through training on youth activism for youth groups who undertake initiatives in their communities. An Arabic-language online youth activism forum – the first of its kind in the country – and social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, are other effective ways to reach out to young voters to hear their ideas and encourage their participation across the country.

Impacts and Key Findings:
- The website and online curriculum generated a lot of interest and use; online forums proved a good way to connect youth to one another.
- Investing in youth training helped to create a cadre of knowledgeable, competent youth who are able to pass what they've learned on to their communities. Some youth trainers have

even been asked by municipal councils to train them on the curriculum, indicating a rise in youth credibility.
- While social media and IT literacy is valuable, many youth had fairly low levels of internet literacy and not all youth activists wished to be active online.
- In building social media project partnerships, time should be invested in ensuring that all partners fully understand each other's time constraints and expectations.

Lessons Learned:
- Investing in thorough and relevant youth training allows youth to become trainers of others.
- Partnerships need to be built on clear communication and specified responsibilities.

Case Study 4: A multi-level approach to youth work in Bosnia and Herzegovina
(German Technical Cooperation - GTZ)

Context: Over 50% of youth have expressed the desire to leave the country due to the poor education system, high unemployment rates, and unstable political situation. Complicated administrative structures – consisting of national, federal, cantonal and municipal levels of government – have done little to get youth involved.

Activities: The project takes a multi-level approach by aiming to formulate a national youth policy at all government levels and engaging with state actors, civil society and youth themselves. At the central governmental level, it attempts to improve the institutional framework in the youth sector through working with the Ministry of Civil Affairs and the National Youth Commission. At the local authority level, the project helps to establish democratically-based administrative structures for youth promotion. In youth councils, adolescents self-organize around activities such as leisure-time pursuits, awareness campaigns and training courses for youth leaders.

Impacts and Key Findings:
- The National Youth Commission is developing a youth policy, and 85 percent of 50 pilot local authorities are now responsible for their own multi-sectoral youth strategies, using their own local budgets for youth support.
- More than 25,000 young people have taken part in activities provided by youth councils in their local communities. 150 youth leaders oversee the activities and are actively involved in improving youth work in their local authority areas.
- Youth centres, which are accepted by local youth as both training institutions and as meeting places, have been created. In making youth and their positive potential visible, they have helped to improve the acceptance and appreciation of young people as important and valuable citizens.
- The training for government-employed youth advisors is regulated and 'youth advisor' has become an officially and legally recognised profession.
- A third of all Bosnian local authorities have employed a qualified youth advisor and have passed multi-sectoral youth strategies, which include extracurricular training, health and employment.

Lessons Learned:
- Addressing youth issues at multiple levels of national and state government will help ensure a more comprehensive approach to youth policy and programming.

- Monitoring and evaluating programme and policy effects through pilots and data collection will help to build an evidence and knowledge-base around youth-focused initiatives.

> **Youth Voices:** *Diana works with the Northern Uganda Malaria AIDS & Tuberculosis Program (NUMAT) as Monitoring and Evaluation Manager.*
>
> Many youth today are still facing the after effects of the conflict. Many are orphans and now over 95 percent live with their grandparents for caretakers. Grandparents usually cannot meet all the needs of youth as they cannot raise enough income for nutrition, school fees, and treatment for opportunistic infections from HIV. Most of these families also still live in IDP camps where they depend on handouts from donors.
>
> We are training HIV-positive youth to reach out to their fellow youth on issues of stigma and discrimination, drugs adherence, positive living and HIV prevention. We recognise the potential of using youth as a key resource in reaching out to their fellow youth.
>
> I recognise that youth's needs are diverse; hence, there is need for a more holistic and encompassing approach in meeting these needs. In our project, we have leveraged on forming partnerships with other service providers in the region and then linking them to youth through referrals. We also work through existing structures such as child protection committees and village health teams.
>
> I believe communities like mine can empower HIV-positive youth by providing self-esteem training, supporting them to establish youth-centred positive prevention clubs, educating them on condom use, and by linking them to existing youth centres and youth organisations.

Case Study 5: Agricultural and lifeskills training for youth in the occupied Palestinian territories *(UN Food and Agriculture Organization - FAO)*

Context: Youth in the occupied Palestinian territories face enormous challenges related to occupational opportunities, conflict, poverty, food insecurity and a lack of extracurricular activities.

Activities: The Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) programme uses unique learning methodology and a curriculum that combines both agricultural and life-business skills, including topics such as psychosocial protection, child labour prevention, property rights, health, nutrition, environmental awareness and agri-business skills. At the end of the eight-month JFFLS cycle, all students are systematically enrolled in local youth clubs, local farmers' cooperatives or women's associations so that they receive further trainings (including greenhouse cultivation of vegetables, beekeeping and honey processing, livestock, and marketing skills) and are able to gain profits out of their membership.

Impacts and Key Findings:
- Since 2008, 1,180 youth have directly benefited from this initiative, including youth selected from refugee camps (in partnerships with UNRWA).
- Linking JFFLS graduates with existing youth clubs, women's associations and local farmers' groups, has proven to be key to ensuring the continuity and sustainability of programme activities.
- Small farms have been praised by government ministries for strengthening the relationship between school and community.

Lessons Learned:
- Non-formal education programmes, undertaken by other sectors, can complement education system activities and can link education and communities.

- Recognition and accreditation of non-formal education programs is important for participants' future success.
- Effective education programme curricula are relevant for the local context and responsive to participant needs.

Case Study 6: Holistically empowering refugee youth in Syria
(European Institute for Cooperation and Development – IECD – and UNICEF)

Context: In the context of emergency to post-emergency transition in Syria, youth face restricted mobility, the risk of exploitation and a lack of access to learning, socialising and livelihood development opportunities.

Activities: The IECD Youth Centre provides students with secretarial, electrical, English and computer courses, while integrating empowerment elements such as life-skills workshops, youth-led initiatives, sports and recreational and social activities. The Youth Centre also offers psychosocial support and protection in a youth-friendly and supportive environment. Peer educators offer workshops on communication, critical thinking, decision making, problem solving and anger management; families are involved in the protection mechanism through interviews, consultancies and monitoring of family situations.

Impacts and Key Findings:
- In 2009, the Youth Centre hosted 261 Iraqi, Somali and Sudanese students; 400 are expected in 2010, including the involvement of the most vulnerable Syrian youth.
- A system of transportation reimbursement allows students from more distant areas to attend activities.
- Extra-curricular activities such as study visits, sport activities, life-skills training and recreational trips have enforced students' commitment to Youth Centre activities and reduced the drop-out rate.
- Benefits of the programme which have been identified by students include: the chance to deal with concrete problems, the opportunity to be outside of the home environment and the chance to develop social relationships and to gain self-confidence.
- The Youth Centre also supports the youth's families in addressing wider family problems, and provides psychosocial counselling and follow up in the most vulnerable cases.
- Students have been offered internships in local industry.
- Upon completion of training, youth continue to be involved; they have produced short documentaries and rap songs and have led discussions with their peers and parents about family relations, challenges in adolescent life and goals for the future.
- The main constraints faced by youth attending Youth Centre classes include a lack of legal job opportunities for males and socio-cultural constraints for females.

Lessons Learned:
- Safe youth centres provide a space to address the protection, social and emotional needs of youth, and can also serve as educational facilities for a variety of workshops and trainings.
- Through wider community engagement, post-training linkages can be established, allowing youth to take steps into successfully integrating into the labour market.

Recommendations for Cross-Sectoral Approaches to Youth Policy and Programming

There is a clear need to work to strengthen inter-sectoral action for, and with, youth affected by crisis. While there are many examples at the programming level of inter-sectoral work being undertaken, the research undertaken for this paper revealed little systematic coordination of this at national and global levels. These recommendations therefore draw on what has been learned through the programmes featured here and attempt to propose action to address the critical gaps identified:

Strengthen inter-sectoral coordination for youth programming at the global level
Improving coordination at the global level, with a view to improved practice at the national level to address the rights and needs of youth affected by crisis is essential. While "Age" is a cross-cutting issue for all clusters, at the global level there has been limited inter-sectoral work to address the specific needs of youth. Mechanisms and spaces for increased partnership and learning should be created, particularly between the Education, Protection, Early Recovery, Agriculture, WASH and Health Clusters, as well as with other cross-cutting issues such as Gender, HIV/AIDS and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support. IASC guidance on *Humanitarian Action and Older Persons* should be complemented by guidance on Humanitarian Action and Youth, as another key age group that is often overlooked before, during and after emergencies.

Work with governments at the national level to develop youth action plans and policies
At the national level, youth policies or youth action plans can provide systematic frameworks for working across sectors or ministries. National youth policies and plans should include an emergency component which identifies the specific roles and needs of youth during crisis preparedness, response and recovery across sectors, including education. The development and implementation of national youth plans and policies should involve the participation of an inclusive range of youth, as well as key civil society and international actors.

Ensure the participation of youth in emergency preparedness, response and recovery in the education sector
Crisis contexts can be an opportunity to build youth capacity, and youth can be mobilized for positive action before, during and immediately after a crisis. Several of the case studies shared here show how other sectors are working with youth in this context; the education sector could and should take a leading role, setting the standard for youth participation at all phases and levels of an emergency response. Youth involvement should build upon networks and groups that already exist, and ensure that youth are appropriately supported and compensated for their efforts. The meaningful participation of youth in education programming can reinforce the need for holistic cross-sectoral action, and will ensure that education programming is relevant and responsive to the varying capacities and priorities of youth. Youth participation is one way to ensure that the education response is directly accountable to those it seeks to assist.

Improve the collection of data relating to the youth population in emergencies
As noted in Section 2, data regarding the number of youth affected by crisis is extremely limited and incomplete. Lack of data on the age distribution of crisis-affected populations mean that youth can be overlooked by multiple sectors. Countries and communities often lack baseline statistical information on their population prior to an emergency making it extremely difficult to

determine the number of youth affected by crisis at both national and global levels. In the midst of crisis, humanitarian actors will often limit disaggregation to gender with insufficient information about the age of affected populations. Building agreement between sectors on age groups would make it easier to exchange and share data regarding particular population groups. Within the education sector, work on needs assessments and more general information management should reflect the unique needs of youth. Furthermore, there is a need to invest in more rigorous monitoring and evaluation systems for youth-specific programming, in order to demonstrate effects and impacts. Youth-specific impact indicators should be developed and systematically utilized in order to inform future programming, and to demonstrate the financial returns of investing in youth.

Questions for Further Discussion

- Which institutional bodies are best placed to coordinate systematic data collection at global and local levels?

- What mechanisms and tools are needed to overcome challenges of data collection on crisis-affected youth?

- What partnerships are needed to effectively advocate for youth's needs and how can such partnerships be developed and maintained at national and global levels?

- How can meaningful youth participation in humanitarian action become systematized and scaled up?

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