



UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME (YEP)

MOONBEAM YOUTH TRAINING CENTRE

'A RAY OF HOPE FOR YOUTH LIVING IN SLUMS'

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations World Youth Report 2007 states that youth make up 25 per cent of the global working-age population, but account for 43.7 per cent of the unemployed. In the Africa region, 27 per cent of youth are neither in school nor at work, a situation the report stresses can lead to frustration, delinquency and social exclusion.

A major cause of youth unemployment and inaccessibility to entrepreneurship opportunity is lack of empowerment through appropriate training. Youth possess enormous potential and are the society's most important asset and source of energy and innovation. They can make meaningful

contributions to the well-being of societies and, therefore, it is essential to address youth unemployment concerns in a holistic manner.

Youth empowerment and participation for effective transformation in society is being realized through the Youth Empowerment Programme (YEP) launched by the Executive Director of UN-HABITAT, Mrs. Anna Tibajuka in June 2008.

The goal of the Youth Empowerment Programme is to improve the livelihood of youths living and working in slums and informal settlements. It has an overarching aim to ensure provision of skills training and capacity building to young people in urban slums and informal settlements.

The programme is being implemented in Kenya to create employment opportunities for sustainable development of young people. The overall goal of the Kenya programme is to improve the livelihoods of at least 300 youth, both male and female, living and working in Kibera slums and the Mavoko informal settlements, through the provision of practical training in construction, business development and information communication technology that will lead to income generation activities. The programme aims to equip young people with managerial and organizational skills, certification and apprenticeship experience to compete for jobs in the construction industry.

Ultimately, over the course of the YEP programme's pilot phase in Nairobi, nearly 300 young people will be trained in basic construction skills, including production and use of "Habitat-blocks," a technology developed to produce blocks that are considerably stronger than ordinary and can be made by self-help builders for a quarter of the price of an ordinary block. Other



skills training will cover carpentry, masonry, electrical wiring, plumbing and other low-cost block making technologies.

These training courses will be directly linked to the construction of UN-HABITAT's training facility in Mavoko, to give students hands-on experience in construction. Graduates of the YEP training will be assisted in taking on apprenticeships and attachments to private sector construction companies as well as within ongoing construction projects by UN-HABITAT's Kenya Slum Upgrading Programme

The Kenya programme is being implemented through multi-stakeholder partnerships that have brought together representatives of local and national government, the private sector, youth organizations, grassroots organizations as well as other development partners. Given the early success of the programme, other development partners have expressed interest in providing financial and technical support into further implementation.

This programme is directly linked to the Sustainable Neighbourhood Programme being implemented by UN-HABITAT in cooperation with the Governments of Kenya and Finland. The idea behind this programme is to demonstrate sustainable, low-cost approaches to housing, especially in planning, sanitation, house design and



'Approaching the midpoint of the race to achieve the Millennium

Development Goals, we need [young people's] participation more than ever.

Their energy and idealism can help make up for lost ground and achieve our development goals in full and on time.'

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General,
United Nations



“Young people, lest we forget, constitute the majority of the urban population in rapidly urbanizing countries. Often, they have no jobs and no voice. Any

effective response to improve the living conditions of the urban poor and slum dwellers must deal, *prima facie*, with the challenges facing youth.”

~ Dr. Anna Tibaijuka, UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director, UN-HABITAT

building materials. A series of practical workshops and hands-on training courses in the production and use of low-cost building materials will be undertaken.

MOONBEAM YOUTH TRAINING CENTRE

The project derives its mandate from the Habitat Agenda and the Millennium Development Goals, and it complies with UN-HABITAT's new Medium Term Strategic Institutional Plan 2008-2013. The Habitat Agenda promotes the participation and enablement of youth through developing and enhancing their skills, employment and training opportunities.

The project is expected to positively contribute to the realization of the Millennium Development Goal 7, target 11, aimed at 'Improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020' through the direct impact of improving the livelihood prospects of the youth through construction training, as well as to realization of Goal 8, target 5, aimed at 'Developing and

implementing strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work'.

Utilizing funds from the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki moon, youth from Kibera and Mavoko in Kenya have been undergoing practical training in innovative construction technologies resulting in the construction of the "Moonbeam Youth Training Centre". The Training Centre will empower and offer participatory opportunities for youth, and foster sustainable neighborhood programs that enable them to realize their potential as agents of positive change. The Centre will also serve as a regional hub for showcasing best practices and innovations in the provision of affordable housing.

The Centre will train youth, tapping into the abundant urban semi-skilled youth population working in the informal economy, providing them with advanced skills in building and low cost alternative construction technologies.

The young people benefiting from the training will undergo certification and apprenticeships in their respective skills. To complement the technical and vocational training, leadership, entrepreneurship, business incubation and information technology skills will be offered in order to increase the sustainability and competitiveness level of youth entities formed within UN-Habitat's Youth Empowerment Programme.

The first phase of the programme involved various steps:

- Identification of youth through training needs assessments
- Identification and consultation with active partners to participate in the programme

- Development of a training curricula and methodology
- Practical training in building construction skills and technologies
- Training in Information and Communication Technology (ICT), leadership and business skills
- Establishment of a Youth Construction Brigade focused on small enterprise

In the second stage, the already trained trainers, together with relevant civil society organizations or private sector companies, are involved in additional training programmes in order to train at least 1000 youth. So far 300 youth are undergoing training.

The plan is to approach the private sector through their corporate social responsibility to fund the youth training and later to employ them. The youth trained will also be supported to form small enterprises that can compete in the construction and building market. The Construction Brigade will also act as a forum for social integration, interaction, team building and capacity building.

RESULTS ACHIEVED:

- 300 young people are undergoing various types of construction training.
- Ongoing construction of Moonbeam Youth Training Centre.

EXPECTED RESULTS:

- By December 2008 some 700 additional young men and women, representing other urban areas surrounding Nairobi,

will benefit in the proposed phase two of the Youth Empowerment Programme in Kenya. Already, partners have come on board and are replicating the same training in Kiandutu Slums within Thika Municipal Council in Kenya, training 45 youth on construction skills using the Makiga technology.

- Urban youth will be given certificates following the successful completion of training in the various courses.
- Operational, registered construction brigade with various chapters under its auspice
- Replication of the same training in Burundi, Rwanda using the same model

A Construction Brigade in Kenya, currently with just under 300 members, is a youth-led initiative that arose out of the Youth Empowerment Programme and is supported by UN-HABITAT. It is intended to act as a guild representing youth from slum areas that have completed the Youth Empowerment Programme's construction trades trainings. Plans for ongoing training and support for the Brigade include identifying and bringing on board professionals from around the world to offer advice and guidance in the formation of the Brigade, as well as capacity building for the Executive body of the Brigade to strengthen their ability to govern this unique youth-led organization.

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