



**INTERNATIONAL
YEAR OF
YOUTH**
AUGUST 2010-2011
OUR YEAR OUR VOICE

Dialogue and Mutual Understanding

Background on the International Year of Youth

In December 2009, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 64/134 proclaiming the International Year of Youth from 12 August 2010 to 11 August 2011. Under the theme International Year of Youth: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding, the Year aims to reach across generations, cultures, religions and civilizations and promote the ideals of peace, respect for human rights and solidarity.

Youth organizations, Governments, and civil society are encouraged to celebrate the Year by holding activities to showcase youth contributions to development, promote mutual understanding, and highlight the benefits and significance of youth participation in all aspects of society. The Year aims to generate much needed attention for youth development and to provide an impetus among youth organizations to form partnerships and foster dedication to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

United Nations System

The UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development is coordinating the activities of the UN system for the Year, with the UN Programme on Youth leading this effort. The Network strives to increase the effectiveness of the UN's work by strengthening collaboration and exchange among all UN entities working on youth. Members of the Network adopted the UN Framework Approach for the International Year of Youth in February 2010 to provide a concrete framework for collective efforts and to set the strategic objectives for the Year. The Framework identifies the following three key objectives:

Create awareness » Increase commitment and investment in youth

- Increase recognition of youth development as a smart investment by the public and private sectors
- Advocate for the recognition of young people's contributions to national and community development and to achieving the Millennium Development Goals
- Promote understanding of inequalities amongst youth and how to effectively address the needs of the most disadvantaged
- Foster research and knowledge building on youth to better inform youth policies and programmes

Mobilize and engage » Increase youth participation and partnerships

- Institutionalize mechanisms for youth participation in decision-making processes
- Support youth-led organizations and initiatives to enhance their contribution to society
- Strengthen networks and partnerships among Governments, youth-led organizations, academia, civil society organizations, the private sector, the media and the UN system, to enhance commitment and support for holistic youth development





Connect and build bridges » Increase intercultural understanding among youth

- Promote youth interactions, networks and partnerships across cultures
- Empower and support youth as agents of social inclusion and peace

The progress achieved during the Year will lay the foundation for further work in youth development, including increased implementation of the **World Programme of Action for Youth**.

Member States of the United Nations

International Years are customarily celebrated at the national level and steered by National Committees, which are usually comprised of Government entities such as the Ministry of Youth or Ministry of Education; National Youth Councils; civil society organizations; representatives of the UN system; and other relevant stakeholders. To find out whether a National Council has been established in your country, please contact your relevant Ministry.

In addition to holding national events in celebration of the Year, Member States are also encouraged to review their national youth development policies and programmes with an aim of fully implementing the World Programme of Action for Youth and, ultimately, increasing young people's access to opportunities.

As a highlight of the Year, the General Assembly decided to organize a UN Conference on Youth (A/RES/64/134). Consultations of the General Assembly on the details of the Conference began in May 2010. The UN Programme on Youth updates its website as information on the Conference becomes available at: social.un.org/youthyear.

How can YOUth promote and celebrate the Year?

- Organize an event: The UN Programme on Youth has developed, together with NGO partners, an Activities Kit that provides guidance on organizing an event to celebrate the Year. The Kit includes practical advice and effective strategies on how to promote your event; engage the media; develop partnerships; build a constituency of supporters and much more.
- Post an event on the UN's official Calendar of Events for the Year: Visit social.un.org/iyyevents and submit an Event Registration Form. If you wish to attach the official logo of the year to promotional materials, please follow the Guidelines posted on the website.
- Participate in local events: Visit the Calendar of Events to learn about activities taking place in your community and around the world. Also, subscribe to Youth Flash, the UN's monthly newsletter at un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/flash.htm, to learn about youth-related activities and publications.
- Contribute to online discussions: Monthly consultations are held on Facebook to encourage youth from around the world to share their views on various aspects of the Year. Topics have included: contributions for low-cost ideas for celebration activities; suggestions to increase the effectiveness of youth participation and representation at the community level; ideas for engaging the media to raise public awareness and ways to increase dialogue and understanding among the UN, Governments and youth. To participate, please visit facebook.com/UNyouth and follow the link.
- Raise public awareness: Download the International Year of Youth banner from the official website and post a link on your webpage.

