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Launching of the ILO Global Employment Trends for Youth 2010
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Talking points

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Every second year since 2004 the International Labour Organization has published comprehensive data and analyses concerning the global labour market trends for youth.

The numbers contained in the Global Employment Trend for Youth tell a very powerful story about the challenges young men and women face as they start their lives as productive members of society.

Today we are launching the 2010 edition of this Report. As in the past, it provides rich data on the standard indicators of the youth labour market.

For the first time, however, we have added an important new piece to the picture that will help us better understand what is happening to the youth labour markets of the developing world, where 90 per cent of the young people live.

In this Report we get the first measure of youth working poverty. In 2008, there were an estimated 152 million young women and men who worked, but were unable to earn enough to lift themselves and their families out of extreme poverty. This number corresponds to 28 per cent of total youth employment globally and shows that working poverty rates among youth exceed those of adults, at least in 27 out of the 30 low-income countries for which data are available.

In developing countries, the poor live on the threshold of crisis every day.

The global economic and financial crisis which hit in late 2008 is exacerbating the labour market difficulties faced by young people in low-income countries.

Furthermore, this same crisis has driven youth unemployment levels to unprecedented heights.

The numbers I am about to share will not come as a surprise to many of the young men and women in the audience today. You might be the ones living the story that these numbers tell.

- At the end of 2009 **81 million** young people were unemployed. This is the largest number ever recorded.
- Between 2008 and 2009 the youth unemployment rate jumped **a full 1 percentage point** - the highest yearly increase on record.
- Between 2007 and 2008 **1.1 million** young men and women joined the ranks of the unemployed.
- Between 2008 and 2009 **6.7 million** more joined them.
- To put this into perspective, over the course of the ten year period prior to the current crisis (1997 to 2007) the number of unemployed youth had increased, on average, by **191 thousand** per year, while, the crisis increased this number by 35 times in one year only.

We expect youth unemployment to continue increasing through the end of 2010 with only slight improvement in 2011.

Past experience tells us that the recovery in the youth labour market may be protracted if we do not take urgent action.

It is prescient that the UN General Assembly has called for the International Year of Youth (IYY).

These data cry out for action at the national and international levels, developed together through dialogue and mutual understanding with young people.

This report describes responses taken by 65 countries. This gives us a basis from which to act and a platform from which to advocate for the design and implementation of National Youth Employment Strategies.

We hope the IYY will shine a glaring light on the needs of young people including the challenges they face in getting and keeping decent jobs.

The ILO stands ready to contribute to the international efforts in this direction and looks forward to actively participating in the activities of the IYY.