

Youth Exclusion and Political Violence: Breaking the Link and Engaging Young People Positively in Development

A conference co-organized by the Africa Fragile States, Conflict and Social Development Unit of the World Bank and the Centre for the Study of Civil War (CSCW) at the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO).

Funded by the World Bank 'Trust Fund for Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development' (TFESSD).

Background

Some recent academic scholarship suggests that large youth cohorts, or 'youth bulges', under conditions of social, economic and political exclusion, increase the risk of political violence. But large youth cohorts may also represent a significant resource that can boost development, in the form of so-called 'demographic dividends'.

This conference marks the conclusion of a project on 'Youth Exclusion and Political Violence' co-funded by the World Bank 'Trust Fund for Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development' (TFESSD) and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The project sought to identify ways to break the adverse relationship between youth bulges, marginalization, and political violence, and to engage large youth cohorts positively in development.

The conference gathers invited experts, international organizations and donors to discuss and identify new and emerging strategies to engage youth in the development process. Specifically, the aim is to discuss advances in the research on youth and political violence in relation to developmental policies targeted towards youth inclusion, such as education reform, social protection, employment programs, urban development strategies, micro credit schemes and reintegration programs for displaced youth or former combatants. A specific focus will be on at-risk youth in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Dates: 4-5 December, 2008

Place: Thursday 04.12.: Folkemuseet (The Norwegian Museum of Cultural History)
Friday 05.12.: Håndverkeren Conference Centre

Program

Thursday 4 December
Folkemuseet, Bygdøy

8.00 Departure from Hotel Stefan

8.30 Welcome, registration, coffee

9.00-10.00 General introductions: Youth bulges, political violence, and development (Chair: Sarah Michael)

Henrik Urdal (PRIO): Youth bulges and political violence: An overview.

Bo Malmberg (University of Stockholm & Institute of Future Studies): Youth as a driver of development: When can states realize demographic dividends?

10.00-12.00 Dimensions of youth 'exclusion' (Chair: Paul Francis)

Scott Gates (PRIO): The recruitment of youth to rebel organizations.

Aderoju Oyefusi (University of Benin, Nigeria): Education and disposition to civil unrest in resource-abundant regions: Evidence from Nigeria's Delta.

Maya Christensen (University of Copenhagen): Youth exclusion and remobilization in Sierra Leone.

Sabine Kurtenbach (Institute for Development and Peace (INEF) & German Institute of Global and Area Studies): Causes of youth violence in post-war societies.

12.00-13.00 Lunch

13.00-14.30 Youth in development strategies: Current practices and priorities (Chair: Henrik Urdal)

Jane Hobson (Department for International Development, UK)

Naseem Awl (UNICEF)

Jaikishan Desai (World Bank)

15.00-16.30 Excursion Folkemuseet: Christmas for rich and poor in the city

16.30-17.30 Youth policy development: Experiences to date (Chair: Kendra Dupuy)

Mary Kraetsch (Brookings Institution's Middle East Youth Initiative): Youth policy development in the Middle East.

Markus Pilgrim (Youth Employment Network, ILO): What works in youth employment?

18.00-19.00 Ghosts at the museum: a guided tour after dark

19.00-22.00 Dinner at Folkemuseet

Friday 5 December
Håndverkeren

08.30-10.30 Challenges relating to urban and rural youth populations (Chair: Jaikishan Desai)

Morten Bøås (Fafo, Oslo): Rural youth exclusion and violence: the case of Northern Uganda.

Krijn Peters (Swansea University): Rural development, youth, and conflict in West Africa.

Marc Sommers (Tufts University): Challenges related to urban youth populations.

Henrik Urdal (PRIO): Urban youth bulges and social disorder: an empirical study of Asian and Sub-Saharan African urban centers.

10.30-11.00 Break

11.00-12.30 The role of education in conflict settings (Chair: Bo Malmberg)

Bilal Barakat (Vienna Institute of Demography): Does education mediate the relationship between youth bulges and political violence?

Kendra Dupuy (PRIO): Providing education in conflict and post-conflict settings.

Elisabeth King (Columbia University): Education and ethnic conflict: Educating for conflict or peace?

12.30-13.30 Lunch

13.30-15.00 The challenge of developing youth livelihoods and providing opportunities for young people I (Chair: Sabine Kurtenbach)

Sarah Michael (World Bank): The School-to Work Transition: Risks and Opportunities for Youth in the North Caucasus.

Cindy Horst (PRIO): Youth refugee livelihoods in East Africa.

Marie Besancon (American Sudanese Partnership & Harvard University): Engaging youth in conflict zones: Experiences from the Sudan.

15.00-15.30 Break

15.30-16.30 The challenge of developing youth livelihoods and providing opportunities for young people II (Chair: Krijn Peters)

Jim Pugel (George Mason University & CSCW): Lessons learned from the reintegration of ex-combatants in Liberia.

Paul Francis (World Bank): Some thoughts on youth livelihoods in post-conflict situations: marginality, trauma and employment.

16.30-17.30 Strategies for mainstreaming youth into development policies: what have we learned, where are the research gaps?

19.00-21.00 Dinner