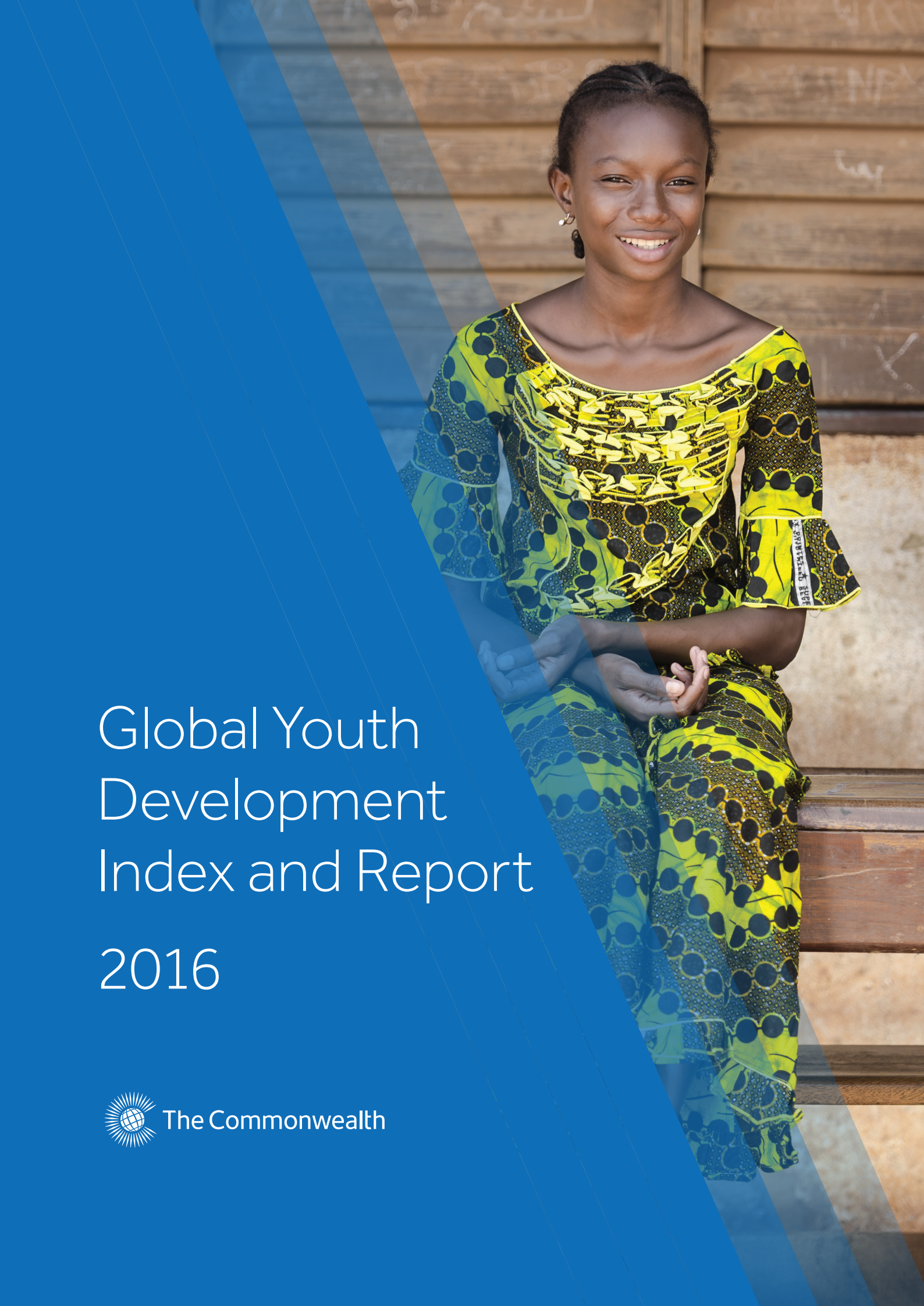

Global Youth Development Index and Report 2016

The Commonwealth

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Foreword

Dr Joseph Muscat

Prime Minister of Malta and Chair-in-Office of the Commonwealth

The Earth's population has been increasing drastically in these last decades, especially in certain parts of the world where development still lags behind, owing to advancements in research and health across the globe. In the Commonwealth Family of Nations more than 60 per cent of citizens are now young people. Youth by definition is that period in a person's life when childhood is left behind and the formative years between the age of 15 and 29 stretch ahead.

Young people see what is around them in a fresh light and itch to improve what is their inheritance – they are bubbly and full of inspiring ideas, and they have a strong voice and the ability to make a huge difference worldwide. It is therefore important that young people are empowered and given the opportunity to reach their full potential. Such a goal can only be achieved through investing in their skills, harnessing their energy, encouraging their ambitions, and providing opportunities to further their education and participation in their local – and by default often the global – economy.

Youth development can be achieved even in low-income countries by providing quality education and training and allowing young people to participate in the nation's political, economic and social life.

Health and well-being are also factors that weigh heavily in youth development, and world leaders need to focus more on promoting mental and sexual health, as well as education and nutrition. Besides encouraging a healthy lifestyle, sport and physical activities also promote teamwork, responsibility and intercultural learning – all providing sound bases for young people's roles in the future.

The ongoing global economic slowdown hinders young people from entering the labour market. This barrier must be reduced as youth unemployment simply exacerbates this economic slowdown. Goal 8 of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, formally adopted by world leaders in September 2015, provides a new opportunity to marshal global partnerships to support action in underlining the need to reduce substantially the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training by 2020.

During the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting held in Malta in November 2015, the young people of the Commonwealth recommitted themselves to the values and principles enshrined in the Commonwealth Charter and the Commonwealth Youth Council Constitution – it is up to us to help them achieve this goal!

Foreword

The Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC

Secretary-General of the Commonwealth

Young people are a greatly cherished Commonwealth asset, and 640 million of the citizens living in our 53 member states are aged between 15 and 29. It is because we have such riches, and have long recognised their potential for nation-building and for inclusive and sustainable economic and social progress, that as long ago as 1973 the Commonwealth Youth Programme was established as a pioneering intergovernmental initiative to champion the all-round development of young people.

In the Global Youth Development Index (YDI), which is similarly innovative, the Commonwealth is again blazing a trail. It brings together vital data on young people for analysis and to guide policies and projects for youth development in every country. The YDI and this report track the story of youth development in great detail. By showing where progress is being made, and also where it isn't, they identify areas that require attention and investment.

The Commonwealth Charter and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provide internationally agreed frameworks and focus for our collective effort over the next 15 years. Success in measuring up to shared Commonwealth values and principles, and to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will depend to a large extent on how we involve young people in shaping our world and our systems – locally, regionally and globally.

The healthier and more skilled our youth are, and the more they play a recognised role in our societies, the more opportunities and freedom they will have to fulfil their aspirations and talents, and the more likely it becomes that we will succeed in achieving the SDGs by 2030.

Acknowledgements

The *Global Youth Development Index and Report 2016* was prepared by a Commonwealth Secretariat Youth Division research team led by Abhik Sen, who was also co-editor along with Rafiullah Kakar, the lead researcher for the project. Layne Robinson and Sushil Ram played a leading role in the development of the Youth Development Index (YDI) and the National YDI Toolkit.

The methodology and data for the YDI were developed and collated by the Institute for Economics and Peace, a team comprising Daniel Hyslop, Gemma Wood and David Hammond. Part of the qualitative research in the report was contributed by Youth Policy Labs, specifically Andreas Karsten, Cristina Bacalso and Alex Farrow.

Andy Furlong, Professor of Social Inclusion and Education at the University of Glasgow, was the editorial consultant for the report, and Youth Division staff Melissa Bryant, Ida Asfir-Muktar and Christopher Jones provided valuable research, production and communications support.

Special thanks are due to the YDI Technical Advisory Committee – drawn from a range of governments, international organisations, universities and NGOs – which played a critical role in refining and validating the methodology and data choices for the YDI.

The full composition of the Committee is listed in Annex 1.

The report benefited immensely from the guidance and support of Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General Deodat Maharaj, and advice from Dr Selim Jahan, Director of UNDP's Human Development Report Office. A debt of gratitude is also owed to the guest authors and the young change agents who have shared their inspiring stories.

The project received the support of numerous additional members of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Youth and Communications Divisions, in particular Sherry Dixon, Tim Inman, Andrew Schofield, Omnea Said, Sita Patel, Malcolm Dingwall-Smith, Sionlelei Mario, Bhagya Ratnayake, Tiffany Daniels, Lawrence Muli and Dharshini Seneviratne.

Finally, sincere thanks are due to the Government of Australia, whose generous financial support made possible the development of the *Global Youth Development Index and Report 2016*.

Katherine Ellis

Director, Youth Division

Commonwealth Secretariat

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Young Changemakers

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AYINET	African Youth Initiative Network
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CCYD	CARICOM Commission on Youth Development
CRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
CYDAP	CARICOM Youth Development Action Plan
CYDGS	CARICOM Youth Development Goals
CYP	Commonwealth Youth Programme
EU	European Union
GBD	Global Burden of Diseases, Injuries, and Risk Factors Study
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPI	Global Peace Index
GSDRC	Governance and Social Development Resource Centre
HDI	Human Development Index
HDRO	Human Development Report Office
ICTs	information and Communication Technologies
IEP	Institute for Economics and Peace
ILO	International Labour Organization
International IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and/or Intersex
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAYE	Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment
SAMOA	SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNOY	United Network of Young Peacebuilders
WHO	World Health Organization
WPAY	UN World Programme of Action for Youth
YDI	Youth Development Index
YLL	Years of Life Lost
YOUNGOs	Youth Non-Governmental Organisations

1

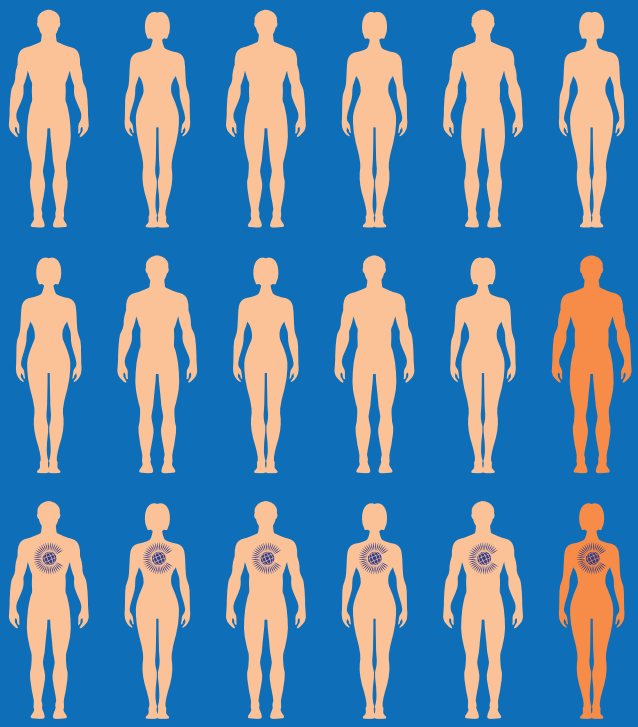
Generation Hope: Young People in a Changing World

This chapter introduces the Youth Development Index and explains the theoretical framework that underpins it. It seeks to define and unpack the concept of youth development in the context of the wider discourse on human development and the Sustainable Development Goals.


LOVE
LOVE
GIV

Global Youth Population

Where do young people live?

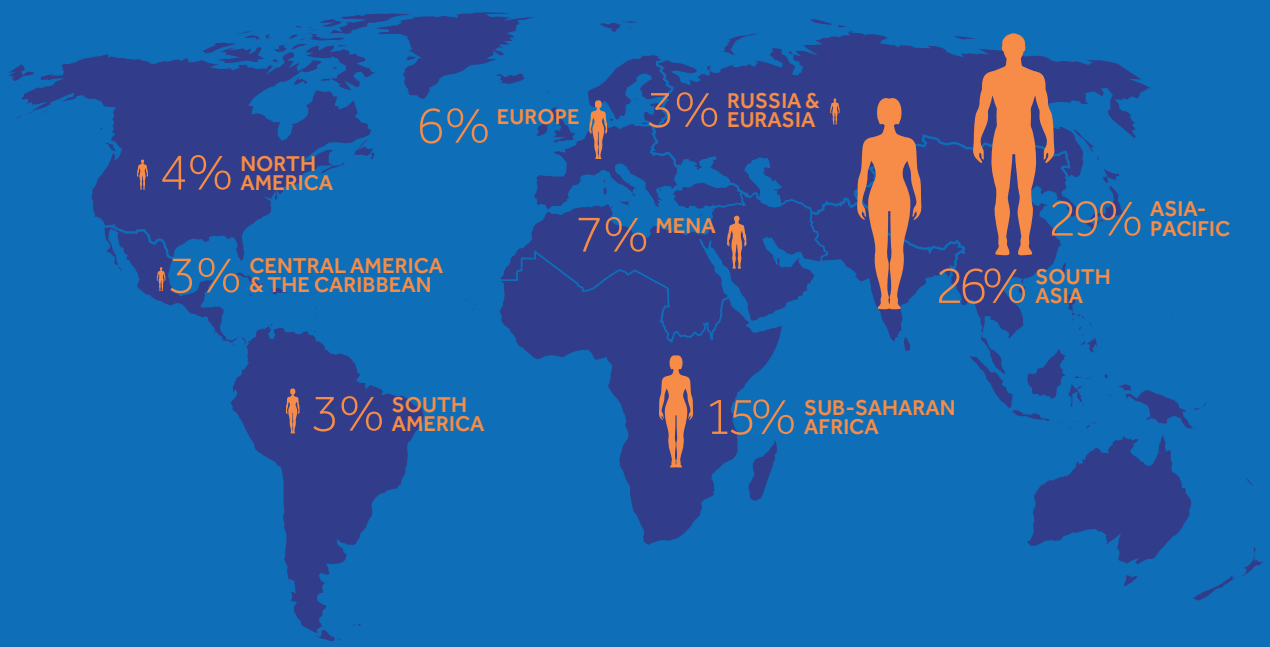


1.8 BILLION YOUTH POPULATION

90% LIVE IN LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

1 IN 3 LIVE IN COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES

Global youth population by region:



Source: **UN Data**

Chapter 1
Generation Hope: Young People in a Changing World

With 1.8 billion people between the ages of 15 and 29, the world is home to more young people today than ever before. Close to 87 per cent of them live in developing countries. Young people make up approximately one-quarter of humanity, but in many countries, especially in South Asia and Africa, one in three people is a young person. Demographic trends and projections make it clear that the proportion of young people in the global population is declining and it is predicted to fall below 20 per cent by 2075. The next few decades, therefore, are an unprecedented window of opportunity for the world, and developing countries in particular, to reap the promise of this 'demographic dividend'.

In September 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which provides the overarching framework for global development between now and 2030. Although the 17 Sustainable Development Goals do not specifically mention young people, the needs and role of youth are addressed in some of the targets and indicators that underpin the SDGs, and the Agenda includes a commitment to 'the full realisation of [young people's] rights and capabilities, helping our countries to reap the demographic dividend'. The hopes of building a world that is more prosperous, equitable, inclusive and peaceful rest on the shoulders of young people, not least because of their sheer numbers.

However, the potential of young people to be agents of social and economic progress continues to be undermined by the wide range of challenges they confront. These obstacles include but are not limited to the lack of decent work opportunities, ineffective and undemocratic political participation structures, protracted conflicts, natural disasters and poor health. For instance, in every part of the world, young people are at least twice as likely as others to be unemployed.[1] Annually, at least one in five adolescents suffers from mental and psychological trauma, most commonly in the form of depression or anxiety.[2]

At least one-third of young people in the world live in fragile and conflict-affected states, thus disproportionately bearing the brunt of war and violence. Young people, especially men, are victims of homicide far more often than older people. Estimates suggest that more than 50 per cent of all the victims of homicide in the world are under 30 years of age and the vast majority of them live in low and middle-income countries.[3] Similarly, the number of young people forcibly displaced by conflict and disasters has increased significantly over the past few years. In 2011, around 14 million young people were adversely affected by conflict and disasters. The figures are likely to be much higher today, given that the number of forcibly displaced people hit a record high of 65.3 million in 2015.[4]

Although climate change threatens to inflict dire consequences on the entire world, its debilitating impact will be faced first and foremost by those who are young now. In the more vulnerable parts of the world, such as small island developing states, climate change is not just a risk any more; its effects are being felt already, disrupting lives and destroying age-old ways of life. Whether they want to or not, young people will bear the burden of leading their countries and communities through this uncharted territory.

Within the youth cohort, inequalities persist among individuals and between social groups. Many young people continue to face inequalities and discrimination in accessing the building blocks of human development because of their gender, class, sexual orientation, geographical location, disability or ethnicity. Within the youth population, widespread gender disparities in health, education, employment and participation are still entrenched. In 2015, out of 183 countries, just over one-third had achieved gender parity in enrolment at the secondary education level, with the gap widening at the tertiary level, where only 4 per cent of countries had achieved gender parity in enrolment.[5] Moreover, in developing countries, one in three girls is married before her 18th birthday and more than one-half of victims of all sexual assaults across the world are girls younger than 16.[6] These inequalities often become entrenched in the lives of young people and result in inequality traps, which most young individuals and groups find hard to escape.

Young people are responding to the opportunities and challenges they face in a variety of ways. Although frequently portrayed as disengaged or excluded from formal political processes,[7] in recent times young people have expressed their views, voiced their demands or registered their protest through both formal and non-formal channels, often bypassing traditional participation structures and institutions. The ubiquity of social media and mobile phones is making it more and more possible for young people to connect with each other, get organised quickly and inexpensively, and mobilise support for campaigns and agendas that can transcend cultural, geographic and legal borders.[8] Since 2009, social unrest and protest movements have gripped almost every region of the world, some leading to radical political transformation, and others to violence and instability.[9] The message is clear: young people will not settle for an inadequate status quo if they can help it.

Young people everywhere are also proving at every opportunity their capacity to be champions, agents and partners in fostering all-round development at local, national and international levels. From countering climate change to peace-building, from strengthening human rights to tackling inequality, it is often young people who are showing the way with their innovative ideas and modern approaches.

The world has an unprecedented opportunity today to lay the foundations of a better future for young people. Governments have the obligation to recognise the barriers to youth development, overcome them with policies and programmes that have young people at their heart, and help promote progressive youth development. This last objective should be based on an understanding of youth development that not only recognises the agency of the individual but also emphasises the structures and contexts in which young lives take shape.

It is universally acknowledged that young people represent promise. Yet surprisingly little is known about the current state of affairs in youth development. Measuring progress on youth development continues to be a challenge, even though its importance is widely recognised.

1.1 Defining youth

Although it is a familiar term, there is still no universally recognised definition of 'youth'. While adolescence is widely understood as the period of life that begins with puberty and ends once physical and emotional maturity is established, definitions of youth are more contextual, dependent as much on formal nomenclatures as on informal factors such as culture, tradition and socio-economic conditions

in a country or community. In simple terms, youth is a period of transition during which children and adolescents gradually come to be recognised as adults.[10] Falling between childhood and adulthood, it is a period of semi-dependency during which young people try to achieve personal autonomy while still remaining dependent on their parents or the state. The length of periods of dependency varies hugely across socio-economic and political contexts.

A young person may be regarded as an adult in one domain but a minor in others. Depending on national contexts, a young person may be regarded as old enough to marry or join the armed forces, but not mature enough to vote or be an elected representative of the people. Normative markers can be important as there are occasions where an individual may be regarded as an adult in the eyes of the law, but may be denied social recognition as an adult as they remain dependent financially on their parents.[11] Indeed, in many societies economic independence is a prerequisite for family formation,[12] and, in some, marriage is a necessary condition for living outside the parental home.[13] To add to this complexity, legally a young person may be recognised as an adult at different ages in different policy domains: entitled to vote at 18, for example, but unable to claim 'normal' social security entitlements or entitled to adult wage rates until age 25.

1.2 Youth transitions

The process of graduating from education to employment, and from dependent to independent living, is a crucial part of the life course, as young people become adults and are accepted as such by the state and society. Research shows that in many countries youth transitions have become much more complex and drawn out, with young people facing difficulty in moving from one phase to another. Processes of acquiring personal and social autonomy no longer develop in a linear fashion. Young people may attain legal or civic autonomy but still remain economically dependent on the family, the state, or both.[14] Similarly, in what would once have been regarded as an anomaly, they may leave the parental home only to return there after living independently for a while. Moreover, transitions increasingly involve uncommon patterns: young people may return to full-time education after establishing a family,[15] or may achieve economic independence but still remain dependent on families for cultural or emotional support. This complexity has led scholars to make distinctions between linear and non-linear transitions, as 'accelerated' or 'delayed', and even as 'yo-yo' movements.[16]

The forms youth transitions take vary across cultural, economic and political contexts. For example, in Western countries there is a marked difference between the slower route to adulthood through longer education and delayed assumption of adult roles, versus a faster track of leaving school at a very young age, then entering the labour market and forming a family relatively rapidly. Depending on the point of view, either route can be defined as 'problematic' or 'optimal'.[17] While young people following a protracted route involving extended educational participation may increase their earning potential in the long run, they may sacrifice economic independence and stability in the near term. In other contexts, such as the MENA region, transition routes can be completely different and even when young people have access to education it is still difficult to find jobs, with unemployment sometimes highest among those with medium and high-level qualifications.[18] Similarly, in many developing countries, young people continue to live at the parental home even after achieving full economic independence.

In the Middle East, Africa and parts of Asia, the term 'waithood' has been used to describe the delay in achieving full adult rights and responsibilities, and in some countries in these regions the delay of 'adulthood' is thought to be both 'a symptom and driver of armed conflict',[19] and in the MENA region was one of the triggers for the Arab Spring.[20] In developed countries, there has been a focus on the psycho-social implications of the protracted youth phase with terms introduced (such as 'young adulthood'[21] and 'emerging adulthood'[22]) to mark what is regarded as a new intermediate stage between youth and adulthood. For a number of commentators, the protraction of youth can be seen as a 'destructive period'[23] associated with an 'identity moratorium' whereby young people can get lost or become side-tracked.

The speed, scale, shape and consequences of youth transitions vary across countries and contexts depending on a combination of structural constraints and opportunities, societal expectations and policy frameworks, as well as individual agency. Transitions, and even 'adulthood', can have different meanings and consequences for different young people. For instance, in most countries, young women leave the parental home earlier than their

Box 1.1

Definitions of youth by age group

The limitations of defining youth chronologically are acknowledged, but legal requirements and policy making necessitate defining youth within an age bracket. National governments and international organisations use different age ranges to categorise young people (Table 1.1). The Commonwealth's definition includes people between the ages of 15 and 30. While recognising the many definitions that exist, this report by and large focuses on the 15–29 age bracket.

Table 1.1 The age definition for 'youth' of various international organisations

Organisation	Age group considered to be youth
The Commonwealth	15–29
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	15–24
International Labour Office (ILO)	15–24
UN Habitat (Youth Fund)	15–32
UN Population Fund	10–24
World Health Organization (WHO)	10–29
World Bank	15–34
African Union	15–35
European Union (EU)	15–29

male counterparts and have fewer opportunities to develop and sustain independent careers owing to caring responsibilities. Even young people living in 'optimal' youth development environments face obstacles, and conversely, at the other end of the spectrum, there are many young people who are managing to carve a life path for themselves with access to very few resources or opportunities. Youth is also the phase in life during which individuals can be exposed to social exclusion for the first time, either getting or feeling 'left behind' or being forced to occupy transitional spaces.[24]

1.3 What is youth development?

Youth development can be understood in a variety of ways. It was initially perceived and understood from within the psychological perspective, which tends to explore the ways young people grow emotionally and construct identities.[25] A broader perspective on development, often linked to sociological insights, focuses on young people's experiences and the ways in which these experiences provide opportunities for life management and distinct, culturally-shaped, perspectives on the world and their place within it.[26] Crucially, this 'asset-based approach' to youth development recognises the ability and agency of young people themselves to influence development outcomes. Youth development can also be impacted by the transmission of inequalities between generations, as some find pathways blocked because of the socio-economic status of their families, while inherited privilege opens the door to opportunities for others.

One of the primary objectives of this report is to provide an evidence-based overview of the condition of youth across the world, focusing on opportunities for their development. A core instrument used to achieve this aim is the Commonwealth's global Youth Development Index (YDI), which is described later in this chapter. The theoretical framework for the development of the YDI is derived from the work of Sen and Nussbaum on capabilities, which has been used to underpin a range of international reports, such as the human development report of the UNDP.[27]

As an alternative to approaches that use statistics on economic growth as a proxy for the quality of life in a country, this approach focuses on

the opportunities available to individuals as a result of the core capabilities that provide the essential underpinnings of a 'good human life'. Nussbaum regards capabilities as closely related to human rights, covering what she refers to as 'first generation rights', such as civil liberties and opportunities for political participation, and 'second generation rights', such as opportunities for education and employment.[28] Sen illustrates the advantages of a capability approach by pointing out that while the gross domestic products (GDPs) of Mexico and Brazil are significantly higher than those of India and Sri Lanka, life expectancy and child mortality are far better in the two economically poorer countries.[29]

Although Sen has expressed scepticism about the possibility of providing a list of capabilities, Nussbaum has suggested a range of specific capabilities that are essential to a 'good human life' (such as 'being able to have good health, adequate nutrition, adequate shelter, opportunities for sexual satisfaction and choice in reproduction, and mobility'), and endorses the operationalisation of capabilities in order to compare nations in areas such as health and education.[30]

Using the capabilities approach as a theoretical framework for the YDI, the aim is to assess the extent to which countries provide effective preconditions for youth development, whereby policies are framed as part of a 'process of enlarging people's choices'[31] and providing the freedoms essential to fulfil those capabilities and choices. In this context, poverty is regarded not simply as income deprivation but as capability-deprivation, as it restricts an individual's ability to participate in civic and political life, engage economically, live to old age, and so on.[32]

Here the human development paradigm has two main components: the *enhancement of human abilities* (identified broadly as the ability to choose to live a long and healthy life, to acquire knowledge, and to have a decent standard of living) and the *conditions for human development* (participation in political and community life, environmental sustainability, human security and rights, and gender equality).[33]

In this context, the Commonwealth defines youth development as 'enhancing the status of young people, empowering them to build on their competencies and capabilities for life. It will enable them to contribute to and benefit from a politically stable, economically viable, and legally supportive environment, ensuring their full participation as active citizens in their countries.'[34]

With an emphasis on empowerment, this definition focuses on the agency of young people, placing them at the heart of their own development, where they can build the competencies and capabilities to live a life of their choosing, and also be citizens who can contribute positively to national development. Simultaneously, the definition recognises that social and economic contexts and inappropriate policies can limit their capability. Positive youth development requires a supportive environment and fares best in contexts of political, legal and economic stability that allow and encourage young people to participate freely and openly in political and civic life. Where young people are denied access to education or face restrictions based on gender or family wealth, where they are poorly nourished and have limited access to healthcare, where they are denied opportunities for fulfilling employment or to a living wage, or where full political and civic participation is blocked, then they are disempowered and have their capabilities curtailed.

1.4 Prioritising youth development in policy and action

At a global level, youth-related issues have never been as high a priority as they are currently. The role of the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth was created in 2013;[35] 190 countries have a national authority responsible for young people;[36] and youth summits – such as the UN ECOSOC and UNESCO Youth Forums, the Commonwealth Youth Forum, and the World Youth Conference – have become influential platforms on the international stage. These efforts build on longstanding international youth policy frameworks such as the UN World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) and the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE).

Against this backdrop, key UN agencies have developed strategies to guide their work with young people. The UNDP Youth Strategy[37] and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) Strategy on Adolescents and Youth[38] lay out their priorities in youth development, including increased economic empowerment, civic engagement and participation, resilience-building,[39] sexual and reproductive health, and a special focus on marginalised and disadvantaged youth, especially girls.[40]

Several development agencies have also taken steps to prioritise youth. For example, the UK

Department for International Development, the US Agency for International Development and Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development all have youth strategies that inform their programming around the world.

Most policies and frameworks for children and young people use a rights-based approach whose defining feature is an emphasis on citizens as 'rights holders' and the state as the 'duty bearer'. In contrast to a needs-based approach, which sees development assistance primarily as a needs assessment exercise, a rights-based approach firmly identifies development as an obligation of the state towards its people, providing a stronger basis for citizens to hold their governments to account.

For example, when the *need for clean water* becomes the *right to clean water*, it implies the state has a responsibility to provide clean water, and gives justification to citizens to demand it. The shift to a rights-based approach creates a powerful normative framework within which development action can take place, and makes the demands of the people for basic services from the state more persuasive in a moral, legal and political sense. A rights-based approach ideally shifts how development actors undertake business, with a focus on strengthening the capacity of duty-holders to respond to and be accountable for obligations in fulfilling human rights, as well as enabling and empowering citizens to claim their rights.[41]

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is the exemplar of a rights-based approach, and is the most widely ratified international human rights instrument in history. It sets out political, civil, economic, social, health and cultural rights of children and young people, and marked a turning point in the way young people would be viewed and treated, being individuals with a distinct set of rights, and not simply passive objects of charity.[42] Notably, the CRC only covers the rights of young people up to the age of 18. In other words, from the day young people turn 18, they are vulnerable to a whole range of risks as they no longer enjoy the protection afforded by the CRC. For instance, an 18-year-old without a family may be asked to leave a care centre to live on their own, or a young person in the care of the justice system could be transferred from an institution focused on education and rehabilitation to an adult prison, forcing an accelerated transition to adult life. This uncertainty has prompted some scholars and practitioners to demand a separate international instrument for the protection of the rights of young people.[43]

The 2014 Baku Commitment to Youth Policy, which is the most recent international document to lay out guiding principles for national youth policy making, also promotes a rights-based approach, for youth policies across the globe. The Commonwealth PAYE, which sets out a framework for the Commonwealth's support to member states in the area of youth, is also grounded within a rights-based approach. As the foundational document for the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP), the PAYE is guided by the realities facing young people in the Commonwealth, and anchored in the belief that young people are:

- a force for peace, democracy, equality and good governance
- a catalyst for global consensus building
- an essential resource for sustainable development and poverty eradication.[44]

1.5 Introducing the Youth Development Index

It is worth clarifying at the outset that measuring something as complex and multidimensional as human or youth development through any single indicator is impossible. Like human development, youth development is a concept that can be better understood via an aggregation of several indicators. Many international, regional and national institutions publish data on specific aspects related to various age groups, including the young. By putting all the pieces of the jigsaw together to build a wide-ranging index, it is possible to quantify youth development in a reasonable and comparable way.

The YDI is a composite index of 18 indicators that collectively measure progress on youth development in 183 countries, including 49 of the 53 Commonwealth countries. It has five domains, measuring levels of education, health and well-being, employment and opportunity, political participation and civic participation among young people. The YDI is guided by the Commonwealth definition of youth as people between the ages of 15 and 29, while recognising that some countries and international institutions define youth differently. By compiling the available stock of global youth-related datasets into one comprehensive and harmonised measure, the YDI enables users to gain a better understanding of youth development in a single snapshot. Moreover, the research that has informed the index also enables users to identify the

Measuring human progress: challenges and prospects

Dr Selim Jahan

Director, UNDP Human Development Report Office

Measuring development has always been a challenge, even though it has become a necessity in an increasingly complex and interdependent world. The Human Development Index (HDI) was published for the first time in 1990, following the emergence of the human development paradigm. It was a bold experiment in shifting the discourse in international development from measuring progress in purely income terms to considering human well-being in its broadest sense as the true yardstick of development. After all, as has been pointed out by others before, 'GDP measures everything except that which makes life worthwhile.'

This year we are celebrating the 25th anniversary of the HDI. Looking back, we can see how useful the HDI has become to governments, policymakers, researchers, NGOs, civil society, the media and others, and to our collective understanding of what constitutes development. Uses of the HDI have also changed over the years, reflecting our broadening knowledge, constantly evolving socio-economic challenges in the world, the need for methodological refinements, and our response to calls to include data on critical indicators of human progress such as sustainability and equity.

The ultimate objective of research insights anchored in data is to inform and guide policies, provide instruments for advocacy and undertake initiatives – all that seeks to improve the quality of life for people everywhere, by enhancing their capabilities and improving their opportunities. That said, it is also important to recognise that human development is a broader concept than what can be measured by a single index.

One of the characteristics of the HDI, or perhaps a drawback in the eyes of its critics, is its simplicity. The HDI provides a snapshot by distilling many aspects and dimensions of human development down to their essence. However, this average measure does not assess human development by different age groups, even though it can be disaggregated by age cohorts if data are available. As much human development hinges on the fate of the young, and there are more young people in the world today than ever before in history, it is surprising how small and shallow the pool of data on young people still is.

The YDI, therefore, is an admirable effort and timely contribution by the Commonwealth Secretariat to fill a critical gap in the global development landscape. I hope the YDI will underscore the importance of collecting more development data at national and sub-national levels, which are disaggregated by age, gender and income.

Only by attempting to assess the ability of young people to play a part in shaping their own destiny, and that of the world, is it possible to get a fuller measure of youth advancement. Therefore, I am particularly happy to note that the YDI seeks to assess the multidimensional nature of youth development by giving the same importance in the methodology to indicators on the civic and political participation levels of young people as it does to their education, health and economic prospects.

To a great extent, the world's ability to attain the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 will depend on the capabilities of the young and the opportunities available to them. Therefore, the YDI is a welcome development that can help the world keep track of the progress we make in our pursuit of the SDGs in the next 15 years and beyond.

By providing country level scores and analysis on the status of the nearly 2 billion young people in the world, the YDI can help enrich the evidence base that governments need to design smarter policies, the private sector needs to guide investments, and NGOs need to target their interventions. It will also give the rest of us, including all the young people in the world, an objective benchmark that we can use to evaluate the well-being of a generation on whose shoulders rest the hopes of the entire world.

Composite indexes such as the YDI should always be considered as work in progress because their construction involves trade-offs. By no means are they perfect nor are they the last word on human or youth development, given the quirks in methodology and the limitations imposed by the quality and quantity of available data. Instead, they should be seen as tools that can help us plan and prepare a better future for all, by making us think critically about the most important lessons from the past.

areas in which collection of data on young people needs to be strengthened or expanded.

The YDI makes it possible to compare the status and well-being of young people in different countries and regions. It is a tool and resource to help policymakers, researchers, development practitioners, young people and others see how young people are faring in absolute and relative terms, identify successes and achievements that could provide provide inspiration to others, and where policies, programmes and investment need to be targeted in order to improve the quality and state of youth development.

The YDI is not an end in itself. Its primary goal is to generate a conversation among key stakeholders, help policymakers identify priority areas for intervention and reform, empower young people with information, and provide an evidence base to those who need data to guide their investment decisions and advocacy efforts.

The inaugural iteration of the YDI, published by the Commonwealth Secretariat in 2013, was the first ever attempt at capturing the multidimensional properties that indicate progress in youth development at the country level. This report provides the results and findings from the second iteration of the YDI, which is based on an updated methodology. In combination, the analysis provides a snapshot of progress in youth development based on the latest available data, with a time series going back to 2010.

The new YDI reflects improvements in methodology and data that have made it possible to build a more sophisticated and nuanced picture of youth development across the world. While this index is not comparable with the 2013 iteration, datasets sourced retrospectively in line with the revised methodology make it possible in this iteration to compare youth development levels in 2010 and 2015. A discussion on improvements made in the methodology can be found in Annex 2.

The various age definitions of youth used by different agencies posed a significant challenge in the development of the YDI. As a consequence, indicators included in the YDI unavoidably cover slightly different age cohorts. Adding to this definitional ambiguity is the fact that certain sub-categories considered important to youth development also relate to smaller and different age cohorts. For example, data on teenage pregnancy in the YDI relate only to 13–19-year-olds.

1.6 What does the Youth Development Index measure?

The YDI measures five distinct domains or key aspects of youth development: Education, Health and Well-being, Employment and Opportunity, Political Participation and Civic Participation. The YDI uses 18 indicators in total, grouping between two and six indicators in each domain, as shown in Table 1.2, and uses globally recognised data sources.

1.7 How should the Youth Development Index be interpreted?

The YDI score is a number between 0 and 1. For a country to receive a perfect score of 1, it would represent the highest possible level of youth development attainable, with 0 reflecting little to no youth development. This scoring system is the same as the one that underpins the HDI produced by the UNDP's Human Development Report Office (HDRO). In some cases, countries may be separated by very small differences in the scoring that, because of the number of countries in the index (183), may give the impression of greater divergence than might actually be the case. It is also useful to consider whether a country is at a 'very high', 'high', 'medium' or 'low' level of youth development, as this categorisation reflects unambiguously the position of a country on a spectrum stretching from 'relatively good' to 'relatively poor'. (The categories are explained in more detail in Chapter 2.)

1.8 The basis for selecting domains and indicators for the Youth Development Index

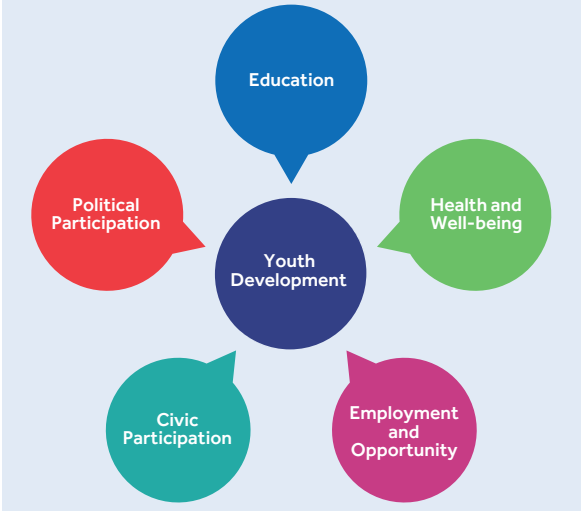
The domains that constitute the YDI were selected on the basis of their importance to and impact on the development of young people. Youth development is multidimensional and many factors are at play during this period between childhood and full adulthood in any person's life. Evidence grounded in research makes it clear that some of these factors play a more important part in the lives of young people than others. Thus, based on the evidence and also the availability of data, education,

health and well-being, employment and economic opportunity and participation were chosen as the core components of youth development. Education is a crucial resource, which is strongly correlated with occupational entry, levels of pay and security, and life satisfaction, although there are large and persistent inequalities associated with educational performance and progression.[45] Physical and mental health and behaviours that have an impact on health, such as smoking and drinking alcohol, are also clearly related to socio-economic status and some of the habits and practices that become established in youth will subsequently affect patterns of mortality.[46] Patterns of participation are also related to socio-economic status: having an interest in politics and participating in elections are more common among young people from more affluent families and those who are better educated.[47]

The YDI is a global measure of the progress of young people across five domains: Civic Participation, Education, Employment and Opportunity, Health and Well-being, and Political Participation (Figure 1.1).

There were innumerable indicators to consider within each domain. The 18 indicators in the YDI were chosen on the basis of the quality, relevance, and global coverage of available data.

Figure 1.1 The five domains of the Youth Development Index



The methodology and components of the YDI were reviewed, refined and validated by the YDI Technical Advisory Committee, which includes leading researchers, practitioners and policymakers from around the world. The final list of indicators consists of datasets that include comparable, timely and trusted information on large numbers of countries, to minimise the need for imputations. A discussion on indicator improvements can be found in the section on methodology in Annex 2. The YDI Technical Advisory Committee will continue to investigate improved data and methodology for future iterations of the YDI.

The YDI attempts to be as comprehensive as possible, taking into account the key aspects of young people's lives. However, in enabling cross-country comparisons, it is not always possible to make like-for-like comparisons given the data limitations in some countries. Over time it is hoped that governments, international institutions, NGOs, civil society and researchers can work together to improve the quality and quantity of available data and work towards creating more robust measures of youth development.

1.8.1 Education

Education opens up opportunities and improves life chances. However, there are still vast numbers of young people who lack basic literacy skills, and opportunities are restricted for a range of groups such as girls and young women, rural youth and young people with disabilities.[48] Therefore those involved in youth development should prioritise improving access to quality education for all.

1.8.2 Health and Well-being

Although young people are often thought to be in the prime of health, many die from injury, road accidents, suicide, violence, communicable diseases (including HIV) and non-communicable diseases. Moreover, a large number suffer from illnesses and conditions that hinder their ability to grow and develop to their full potential. In order to develop positively, young people require access to good healthcare and, crucially, should engage in healthier practices to guard against premature death and diseases, and to ensure they will be healthy in adult life.

Table 1.2 YDI indicators by domain

Domain	Indicator	Description	Source
Education	Enrolment in secondary education	Total (gross) enrolment in secondary education, any age, as percentage of population of official secondary education age	UNESCO
	Literacy rate	Percentage of 15–24-year-olds who can both read and write with understanding a short simple statement on everyday life	UNESCO
	Digital native rate	Percentage of 15–24-year-olds with five years or more experience using the internet	International Telecommunications Union
Health and Well-being	Youth mortality rate	Mortality rate per 100,000 of 15–29-year-olds	Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation
	Mental disorder rate	Years of Life Lost (YLL) due to mental disorder per 100,000 of 15–29-year-olds	Global Burden of Diseases, Injuries, and Risk Factors Study (GBD)
	Alcohol abuse rate	YLLs due to alcohol abuse per 100,000 of 15–29-year-olds	GBD
	Drug abuse rate	YLLs due to drug abuse per 100,000 of 15–29-year-olds	GBD
	HIV rate	Percentage of 15–24-year-olds infected with HIV	World Bank
	Score on Global Well-being Index	Gallup weighted score of well-being in five domains – purpose, social, financial, community and physical – among 15–29-year-olds	Gallup World Poll
Employment and Opportunity	NEET rate	Percentage of 15–29-year-olds who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	International Labour Organization, World Bank, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
	Youth unemployment ratio	Ratio of youth (aged 15–24) unemployment rate to adult unemployment rate	UN data
	Adolescent fertility rate	Births per 1,000 female 15–19-year-olds	World Bank
	Existence of account at a financial institution	Percentage of 15–24-year-olds with an account at a formal financial institution	World Bank Findex
Political Participation	Existence of a national youth policy	1 = existing youth policy, 0.5 = youth policy in development or draft, 0 = no youth policy	Youth Policy Labs
	Existence of voter education conducted nationally	1 = continuously, 0.5 = election time only, 0.25 = at other times, 0 = no information or not applicable	ACE Electoral Knowledge Network
	Voiced opinion to official	Percentage 15–29-year-olds answering 'yes' to questions on expressing political views	Gallup World Poll
Civic Participation	Volunteered time	Percentage 15–29-year-olds answering 'yes' to questions on volunteering	Gallup World Poll
	Helped a stranger	Percentage 15–29-year-olds answering 'yes' to questions on helping a stranger	Gallup World Poll

1.8.3 Employment and Opportunity

Opportunities to gain employment in secure and meaningful jobs, or pursue financial independence, are a key feature of a well-functioning society. Without access to employment or dignity of labour young people are unable to develop skills, become established as independent citizens or maintain an adequate standard of living and quality of life. For this reason, measures of employment and financial independence are important indicators of youth development.

1.8.4 Political Participation

The participation of young people in the political life of their communities shows the extent to which they are empowered and engaged in the political process and have a voice in the development of their communities. Participation promotes social integration, combats exclusion, promotes youth development, and – by giving young people a stake in their society – creates bonds between generations.

1.8.5 Civic Participation

Civic engagement and community development can take many forms, including through sport, religious groups, music, drama and the arts. Data for such participation are not easily available for global comparison. Civic engagement is a key marker of human development and full incorporation into society, and complementary to political participation.

1.9 The main limitations of the Youth Development Index

The YDI is only as good as the data informing it. One of the key findings of the research informing the YDI is that currently there are not enough data to measure youth development adequately in some countries. The problem is more acute in some domains – such as Civic Participation and Political Participation – than others. The challenge is particularly stark in developing countries that have a limited capacity to invest in data collection. The YDI is also constrained because it focuses on national-level data, which can sometimes mask variations in outcomes at the sub-national level.

Box 1.2

Toolkit for developing national YDIs

The global YDI is constructed with national-level data that international agencies currently collect on key indicators of youth development. While this facilitates comparison of YDI scores between countries and regions, it does not provide any insight on variations and inequalities in youth development within a country.

Therefore, to assist countries in gauging and comparing levels of youth development within a country, the Commonwealth Secretariat has developed a toolkit which governments and others can use to construct their own national or sub-national YDIs. National level YDIs can thus be constructed using additional data that may not be available at a global level, and/or that is deemed critical to youth development in a particular country's context, and taking advantage of geographic, age, gender and rural/urban disaggregations as available. The toolkit can be downloaded from the YDI website: http://youthdevelopmentindex.org.

Such national level YDIs can help governments develop more evidence-based policies, guide them in improving the allocation of resources, or assist statisticians, NGOs and others in the evaluation of youth development programmes within a country.

There are, however, often serious shortcomings in the quality and quantity of data available on young people at the sub-national level, particularly in developing countries, so national statistics bodies and international organisations must also prioritise the collection of age, location and gender-disaggregated development data at the sub-national level.

An open letter to the world's leaders

Paraschos Cant

Winner, 2015 Commonwealth Essay Competition (Age: 16, Cyprus)

Dear Leaders,

I hope that I find you well and that all the people you represent, old and young, are happy. If they are not all happy, I hope that they are well. If they are not well, I hope that they are getting better. If they are not getting better, I hope that they have hope.

I have hope.

Of course, I'm sure that you must have a more developed sense of hope than I do – after all, you have the experience to understand the pressures, politics, economics and religions of your country far better than me and so can guide them in the best way possible to provide the most happiness, health and hope to your people.

Being just a youth myself, what I think that means is that you probably just think like I do – but in a more grown up way that gets more done, better.

But I thought I should check because I'm led to believe that I and people of my age might be a little naïve and so in your journey through the challenges of responsibility, growing up, coming to power and developing all your experience – you may already have forgotten more than youngsters like me think we know yet.

Perhaps the best way to see if we share the same outlook is to compare your country to my classroom; I apologise for the simplicity of the comparison but I have very little experience of much else.

In my 'country', we have many different nationalities and a couple of different religions. Some of my classmates (I mean 'fellow citizens') are richer than others; others are brighter than some and some are more athletic than others. Our differences all make us the same because everyone is different, which I think makes it an interesting class (sorry, 'nation').

We all sit on the same sort of chairs and on the same sort of desks and the teachers teach us the same things and we are all working towards the same exams – so as much as we are different, we are all treated the same. I suppose that must be the way it works in the grown up world too, with everyone equal and working towards the same goals with the same opportunities? I hope so.

Sometimes there are limited resources in a class, even the best school can only have so many teaching aids, test tubes and text books, so we have to huddle around and share things so that everyone gets an equal chance to learn. This can be quite good fun because it means that my friends and I get to do things together. That must be the same way you share things out? I hope so.

Occasionally, we do have to team up against each other though – on sports days. We all take turns to be captain of the team and then choose teammates in turn. This means that teams are not always the same and sometimes I don't get my very best friends on my side – but that's alright because they are still my friends after the game and we can congratulate each other more warmly when the other achieves something. Is that the same fair way that adults team up and praise each other? I hope so.

Of course, I am not always nice to all my friends every day. From time to time, I will admit that I might have a down day or be frustrated by something. The good thing is that my friends rally round and help me see what I've done wrong either by a kind word to me or by supporting the person I have wronged. We end up friends again quite quickly, I mean, what's more important than your friends? I guess you feel the same? I hope so.

I want to be an astronaut or perhaps a computer-programmer or maybe an adventurer or an entrepreneur or a humanitarian or someone like that and loads of my friends do too. It's brilliant because we all believe we can be or do something really fantastic and nobody ever tells us that we can't, they just suggest we find ways that we can. I might even grow to become a leader like you that tries to help everyone become as good and successful as they can be. That is what you do? I hope so.

We have recently started to learn more about history, politics and current affairs at school (well, we are getting older and more experienced). Perhaps

there is something that you could kindly help me understand, before I forget it's important?

The thing is: if countries are like my classroom and are populated by a youth like ours who hope what we hope and so who are as naïve as you think we must be – when is it that we will learn enough experience to understand how to spot our differences, guard our opportunities, separate our wealth, battle our opponents and control our aspirations?

I might try to miss that lesson. I hope so.

Yours faithfully,

Paraschos Cant

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Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

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Focal Point, UN Programme on Youth

The international community took a bold step towards addressing the world's pressing development challenges when it adopted the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This agenda is a plan of action for people, the planet, peace and prosperity, with partnership at its heart. The new universal agenda includes 17 SDGs, which have 169 targets and 230 indicators, demonstrating its scale and ambition. The goals are integrated and indivisible, and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

The goals and targets will stimulate action over the next 15 years and young people will need to be key partners in those actions. While youth are specifically addressed in some of the targets and indicators related to the goals, it is important to clarify that all goals are universal and – whether implicitly or explicitly mentioned – the needs and role of young people can be considered in all of the goals, not simply those that specifically refer to youth. The SDGs that explicitly refer to young people fall into two categories: those that refer to age disaggregation or age groups, and those that specifically mention young people. Eight goals refer to age disaggregation or age groups in the goal, targets or indicators. These are goals 1 (poverty), 3 (health), 5 (gender equality), 8 (decent work), 10 (inequality), 11 (sustainable cities), 16 (peaceful, just and inclusive societies) and 17 (partnership). There are explicit references to youth, young men and women, adolescents, girls and women aged 20–24 in the targets or indicators of nine goals. These are goals 1 (poverty), 2 (hunger), 3 (health), 4 (education), 5 (gender equality), 6 (clean water and sanitation), 8 (decent work), 13 (climate action) and 16 (peaceful, just and inclusive societies).

Youth around the world can contribute to the SDGs in a number of ways. Young people and their organisations were actively involved in the development of the 2030 Agenda through the Major Group for Children and Youth, and continue to be involved at the global level. Now that the process of implementing the 2030 Agenda is moving to the national level, it is anticipated that similar multi-stakeholder processes can be built on. Partnership is central to the 2030 Agenda. In fact, SDG 17 on partnership specifically targets multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilise and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the SDGs in all countries, in particular developing countries, and to encourage and promote effective public, public–private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships. Governments and other organisations can fully involve youth in the implementation of the SDGs, by including them in influential high level and developmental meetings at local, regional and global level. Such inclusion can also work towards bringing greater transparency and accountability.

Continuing with the idea of partnership, data and data tools such as the YDI produced by the Commonwealth can play a vital role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY). The YDI can help in implementation owing to its ability to help policymakers analyse areas of current situations and trends. In addition, the YDI can help by following the progress of some of the SDGs targets, such as those regarding youth employment, and the progress of WPAY.

There are similarities between certain areas of the SDGs, the YDI, and the priority areas of the WPAY. For instance, the YDI aims to provide insight on the extent of gender equality among young people, and SDG goal 5 aims to empower all women and girls. Like the SDGs and YDI, the WPAY priority area on women and girls addresses the need to promote equal opportunities for women and girls in all areas of life. Similarities also exist between SDG goal 4, particularly target 4.6, which seeks to ensure that by 2030 all youth and adults reach a proficiency level in literacy and numeracy sufficient to participate in society fully, and YDI, which contains an indicator that measures the literacy rates among all youth. The WPAY priority area on education also stresses the need to improve the level of basic education, skill training and literacy among youth.

Another overlap is apparent between SDG target 3.3, which aims to end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, neglected tropical diseases and other communicable diseases by 2030, and YDI indicators that measure HIV prevalence among pregnant women from age 15 to 24. The WPAY priority area on health focuses on issues such as reducing HIV/AIDS rates and the prevention of diseases and illness among youth. In essence, data and data tools such as the YDI can work as an informative tool and evidence base for the implementation of the SDGs and the WPAY.

This is an exciting and changing time in the world. We have all been called to action to implement the new Agenda, with the cost of inaction greater than the cost of action. Let us make sure that no one is left behind and the voices of youth remain an active part of the process of implementing the 2030 Agenda for years to come.

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this guest contribution are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations.

Table 1.3 SDG targets most relevant to young people

The table rows shaded in green are the SDG targets that directly mention youth, young men and women and adolescents.
The remaining table rows are SDG targets that have indicators pertaining to different age groups, which include young people.

SDG 1	**End poverty in all its forms everywhere**	
	1.1	By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than $1.25 a day
	1.2	By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions
	1.3	Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable
SDG 2	**End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture**	
	2.2	By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons
SDG 3	**Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages**	
	3.1	By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births
	3.3	By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases

	3.4	By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being
	3.5	Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol
	3.6	By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents
	3.7	By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes
	3.8	Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all
	3.a	Strengthen the implementation of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries, as appropriate
SDG 4	**Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**	
	4.1	By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes
	4.3	By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university
	4.4	By 2030, ensure that all youth and adults have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship
	4.6	By 2030, ensure that all youth and adults, both men and women, reach a proficiency level in literacy and numeracy sufficient to fully participate in society
	4.7	By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development
	4.a	Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all
SDG 5	**Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**	
	5.1	End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
	5.2	Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation
	5.3	Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation
	5.4	Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate
	5.6	Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences
	5.c	Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels
SDG 6	**Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all**	
	6.2	By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations

SDG 8	**Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**	
	8.5	By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value
	8.6	By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training
	8.7	Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms
	8.10	Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all
	8.b	By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization
SDG 10	**Reduce inequality within and among countries**	
	10.2	By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status
	10.7	Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies
SDG 11	**Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable**	
	11.2	By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons
	11.7	By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities
SDG 13	**Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts**	
	13.b	Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities
SDG 16	**Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels**	
	16.1	Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere
	16.2	End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children
	16.3	Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all
	16.7	Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels
	16.a	Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime
	16.b	Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development
SDG 17	**Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development**	
	17.18	By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.

Source: Transforming Our World: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Notes

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2 WHO 2015.
3 UNODC 2013.
4 UNHCR 2016.
5 Education for All 2015.
6 Global Partnership for Youth in the Post 2015 Agenda 2014.
7 Park 2004.
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9 Castells 2012.
10 World Bank 2007; see also Heinz 2009; Clark-Kazak 2009 on age conceptualisations.
11 Zarrett and Eccles 2006; Arnett *et al.* 2011.
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14 Leccardi and Ruspini 2006.
15 Jones 2002; see also Hardgrove *et al.* 2014.
16 European Group for Integrated Social Research 2010; see also Furlong *et al.* 2003.
17 Kerckhoff 1993.
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2

2016 Global Youth Development Index: Results and Analysis

This chapter analyses the key findings from the 2016 Global YDI and summarises the state of youth development in 183 countries. The YDI highlights the progress countries have made since 2010 in improving socio-economic opportunities and outcomes for young people, and identifies potential areas for policy focus and investment by governments and others.

Chapter 2
2016 Global Youth Development Index: Results and Analysis

Highlights

- The all-round development of young people is improving in most parts of the world, though at a very slow pace. Of the 183 countries considered in the index, 142 recorded improvements in their YDI scores between 2010 and 2015, with gains being the largest in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Central America and Caribbean, in that order. In the same period, youth development has remained almost static in Russia and Eurasia, and the MENA region.
- Despite making significant progress in the last five years, Sub-Saharan Africa continues to have the lowest levels of youth development in the world, preceded by South Asia and the MENA region. All of the ten lowest-ranked countries in the 2016 YDI are from Sub-Saharan Africa. As a region, North America has the highest level of youth development, followed by Europe, Asia-Pacific, South America, Central America and Caribbean, and Russia and Eurasia. Except Australia and Japan, all other countries ranked in the top ten in the YDI are from Europe.
- Of the five domains of the YDI, Civic Participation and Political Participation recorded the largest improvements between 2010 and 2015 at a global level, followed by Employment and Opportunity. Education and Health and Well-being registered the lowest improvement.
- Youth development in the Commonwealth registered larger gains than the global average. Collectively, there was a 5 per cent increase in the average YDI score of Commonwealth countries between 2010 and 2015. Aside from Pakistan, every country in the Commonwealth either maintained or improved its level of youth development from 2010 to 2015.
- The three countries showing the greatest decline in their YDI scores between 2010 and 2015 were Pakistan, Angola and Haiti. Young people in all three have been severely affected by civil unrest, armed conflict and/or natural disasters.
- Deep inequalities in levels of youth development persist among countries, with the largest gaps being in the domains of Education, and Health and Well-being. For both these domains, the average score of a very high YDI country is nearly twice that of a low YDI country:
  - Nearly three-quarters of the world's youth population is living in countries that fall in the low and medium YDI categories, and nearly one-half of them are in the Commonwealth. Nine out of every ten young people in

Highlights *(continued)*

the Commonwealth live in countries that are in the low and medium YDI categories.

  - Gaps between low and very high YDI countries are most pronounced in the access that young people have to education, health services, financial inclusion and digital technology. Within the youth cohort in low YDI countries, young females are much less likely to have these opportunities than their male peers.
  - In a few areas of youth development, the scores for countries in the higher YDI categories are the same or even worse than those for countries in the lower YDI categories: youth-to-adult unemployment ratio, mental disorder and drug abuse.

- Youth development tends to be highest in countries where young people represent a relatively small share of the population. Among the ten highest-ranked countries in the YDI, only one country – Australia – has a youth cohort that represents more than 20 per cent of the total population. In contrast, young people make up more than 25 per cent of the total population in nearly all the 30 lowest-ranked countries.
- South Asia, Central America and Caribbean, and Asia-Pacific score better on youth development than their overall level of human development. The MENA region, Russia and Eurasia, North America and Sub-Saharan Africa have higher levels of overall human development than youth development, suggesting that the development of young people trails that of other age cohorts in the countries of these regions.
- Traditional indicators of development, such as governance and income, remain important predictors or proxies of youth development. Only three countries in the YDI top 30 – Costa Rica, Chile and Latvia – are not in the high-income category.

By analysing the key findings from the 2016 Global YDI, this chapter summarises the state of youth development in 183 countries, including 49 of the 53 Commonwealth countries, in 2015, and tracks trends for the five-year period since 2010. The YDI highlights the progress countries have made in improving the prospects and outcomes for their young citizens, and identifies potential areas for policy focus and investment by governments and others in the years ahead. However, the YDI scores and rankings must be considered within a wider context.

Nearly 87 per cent of the 1.8 billion young people in the world live in countries that are classified as less developed – in Africa, Asia (excluding Japan), Latin America and the Caribbean, Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia. Just over one-half of the world's young people can be found in the neighbouring regions of Asia-Pacific (29 per cent) and South Asia (26 per cent), home to the two most populous countries in the world, China and India. Sub-Saharan Africa has a youth population of 265 million – 15 per cent of the world's young people – making it the third most populous region of young people in the world. Central America and the Caribbean, Russia and Eurasia, North America and South America, respectively, have the lowest number of young people. [1]

In nearly all developing countries, young people currently make up approximately one-quarter of the total population. In some countries, especially in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, young people constitute almost one-third of the total population. This demographic trend where the proportion of young people in the population is significantly large compared with other age groups is generally referred to as a 'youth bulge' by policymakers and researchers. This phenomenon reflects a stage of development where countries have been successful in reducing infant mortality even as fertility rates are still relatively high. In this report, when more than 20 per cent of a country's total population are young people aged 15–29, the country is deemed to have a youth bulge. By this definition, nearly 85 per cent of the countries included in the YDI have a youth bulge.

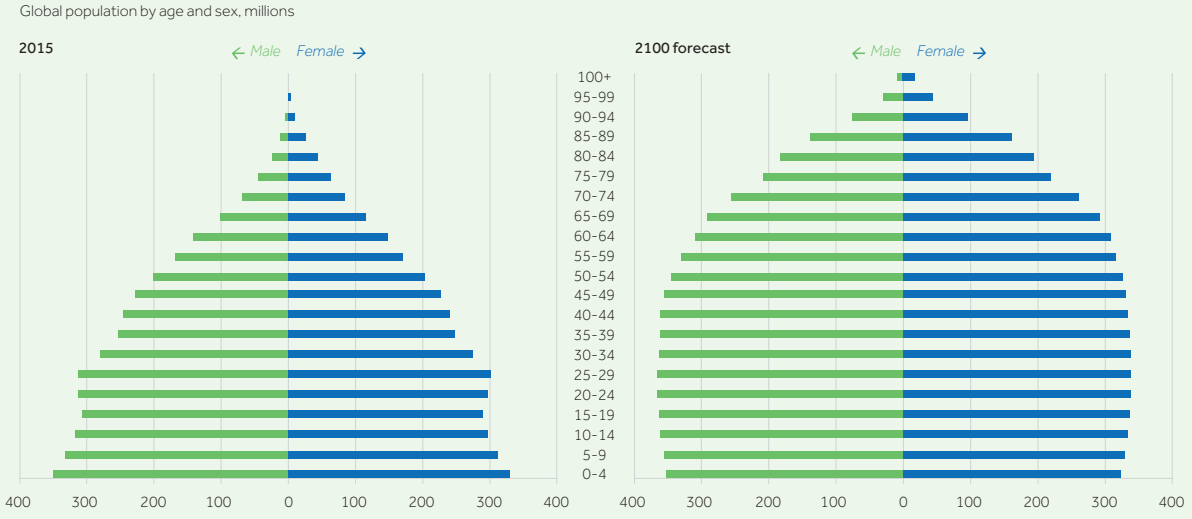
A youth bulge represents both an opportunity and a risk. A youth bulge implies falling dependency ratios and rising proportion of workers and savers in a country's population. If young people form a large share of the population, countries have the incentive to allocate more resources in sectors that are critical to economic and social development such as education, health and infrastructure. That, in turn, can result in exponential socio-economic gains for individual countries and the world at large. A failure to capitalise on this 'demographic dividend', however, could bring untold misery to families, communities and entire countries as the youth cohort instead becomes disenfranchised and disillusioned.

Many countries have limited time in which they can hope to make the most of the youth bulge. Currently, the share of young people in the world's population is falling and that of older people is steadily increasing owing to declining fertility rates and rising life expectancy. This ageing of the population is at its fastest in developing countries, where young people currently make up nearly one-quarter of the population. According to UN population projections, the proportion of young people in the global population is likely to fall below 20 per cent by 2075, though the absolute number of young people will increase to 2 billion by 2060 and remain around that figure till the end of the 21st century.[2] In contrast, the share of people aged 60 and older, who currently account for 12 per cent of the global population, is expected to rise to almost 22 per cent by 2050.[3] The two population pyramids in Figure 2.1 show the projected change in global age structures between 2015 and 2100. The second pyramid is far wider at the top, showing the transition from having large cohorts of children and young people through to larger proportions of aged populations. This ageing of the population can potentially have many undesirable consequences such as workforce shortages, slowdown in economic growth, overstretching of pension and healthcare systems, and the dissipation of demographic dividends.[4]

2.1 Youth development: global trends

In aggregate, youth development is improving on a global level, although the rate of progress is very slow. The Global YDI score improved by 3 per cent between 2010 and 2015, though more progress has been achieved in some domains than others, and not all young people have benefited in equal measure. Of the 183 countries considered in the index, 142 recorded improvements in their YDI scores over the last five years, with the largest gains being in Kenya, South Africa, Niger, Togo and Malawi, in that order, all Sub-Saharan African countries. There was a fall in YDI scores in 40 countries, with the deterioration being greatest in Pakistan, Angola, Haiti, Algeria and Chad.

Figure 2.1 The world's population by age and sex, 2015 and 2100 forecast

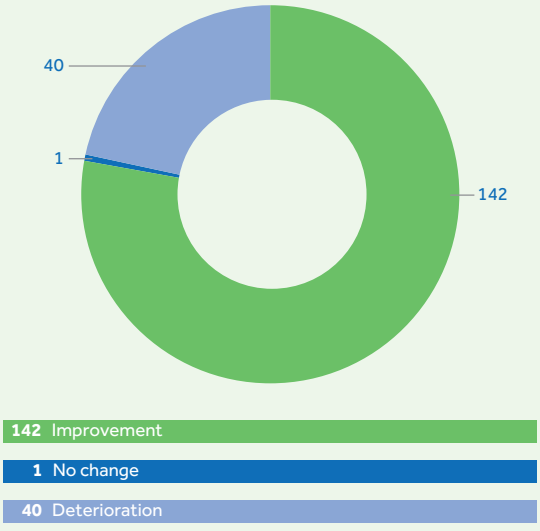


Source: UN Population Division

Progress has been made in all the five domains of the YDI, with improvements in the Civic Participation and Political Participation domains being the largest, followed by Employment and Opportunity, Health and Well-being, then Education. Figure 2.3 shows the percentage change in each of the five YDI domains between 2010 and 2015. The improvement in Global YDI scores between 2010 and 2015 is primarily the result of improvement in four indicators included in the Index: existence of a youth policy, holding an account at a financial institution, helping a stranger and adolescent fertility rate. Other indicators that showed marginal improvement over the same period include youth mortality, youth literacy rates, alcohol abuse and mental health. Between 2010 and 2015 there was a deterioration at the global level for only two indicators: the drug abuse rate and the youth-to-adult unemployment ratio.

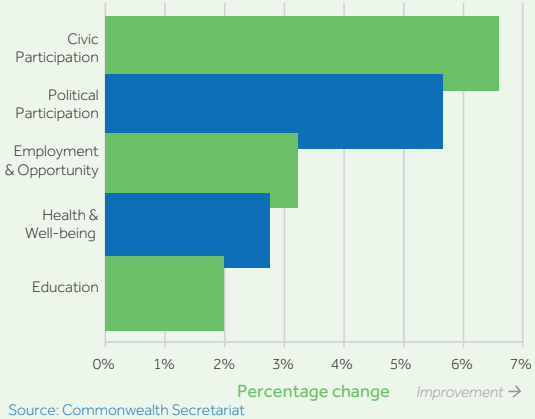
Of the nine world regions, Sub-Saharan Africa recorded the largest improvement in its overall youth development levels between 2010 and 2015, followed by Asia-Pacific, Central America and the Caribbean, then Europe. With a negligible increase in their YDI scores, Russia and Eurasia and

Figure 2.2 Change in YDI scores by number of countries, 2010–2015



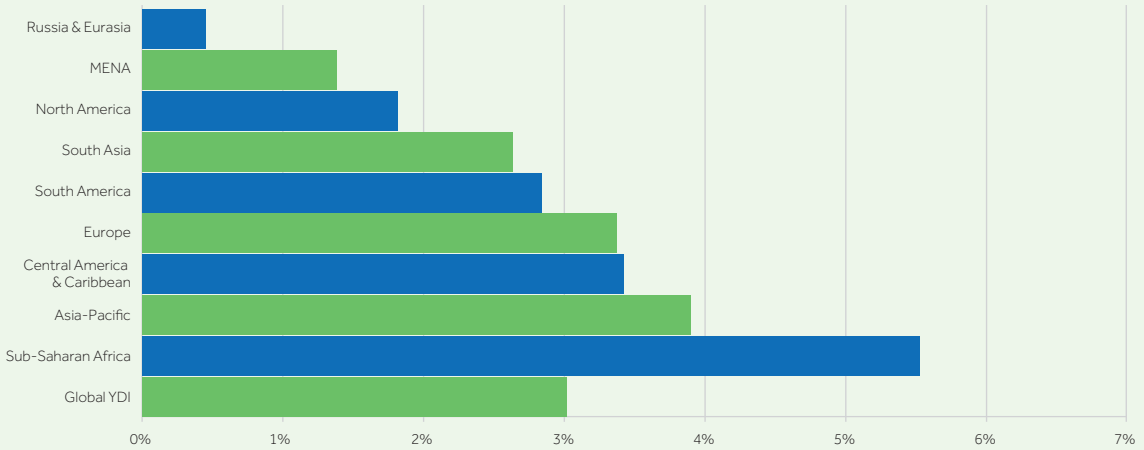
Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

Figure 2.3 Change in YDI scores by domain, 2010–2015



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

Figure 2.4 Change in YDI scores by region, 2010–2015



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

MENA regions saw the lowest improvement in their youth development levels. Figure 2.4 shows the percentage change in regional YDI scores between 2010 and 2015.

Despite making significant progress in the last five years, Sub-Saharan Africa continues to have the lowest levels of youth development in the world in 2015, preceded by South Asia and the MENA region. All of the ten lowest-ranked countries in the 2016 YDI are from Sub-Saharan Africa. North America has the highest level of youth development, followed by Europe and Asia-Pacific. Except Australia and Japan, all other countries ranked in the top ten in the YDI are from Europe (see Table 2.1).

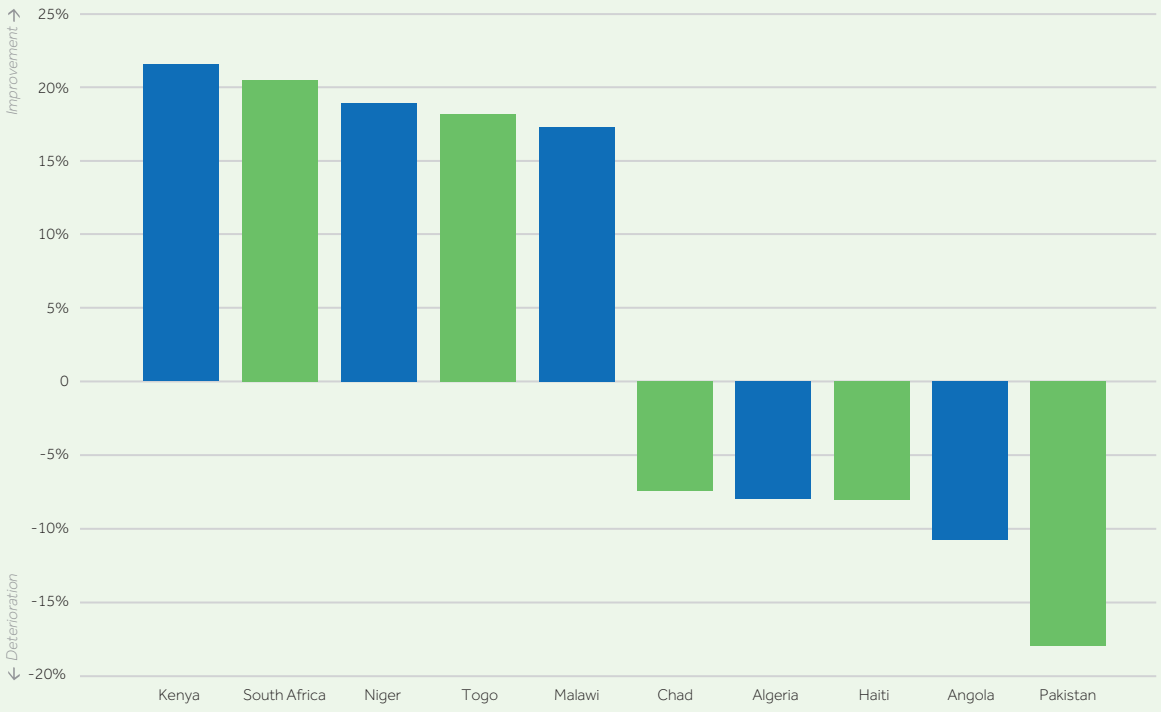
Between 2010 and 2015 there was an improved score for 142 of the 183 countries, or 78 per cent, included in the YDI (Figure 2.2). The 2016 YDI rankings for all the 183 countries are provided in Chapter 6 (see Table 6.1).

All domains in the YDI improved from 2010 and 2015 worldwide, with gains in Civic Participation being the largest followed by Political Participation, Employment and Opportunity, Health and Well-being, then Education (Figure 2.3).

Table 2.1 The countries with the highest and lowest 2016 YDI rank in the world

Global YDI rank	The ten highest-ranked countries	Proportion of 15–29-year-olds (20% < youth bulge)	Global YDI rank	The ten lowest-ranked countries	Proportion of 15–29-year-olds (20% < youth bulge)
1	Germany	17%	**174**	Mali	26%
2	Denmark	19%	**175**	Democratic Republic of the Congo	27%
3	Australia	21%	**176**	Zambia	28%
4	Switzerland	19%	**177**	Mozambique	27%
5	UK	18%	**178**	Guinea-Bissau	28%
6	Netherlands	18%	**179**	Equatorial Guinea	27%
7	Austria	19%	**180**	Niger	24%
8	Luxembourg	16%	**181**	Côte d'Ivoire	28%
9	Portugal	15%	**182**	Chad	28%
10	Japan	17%	**183**	Central African Republic	29%

Figure 2.5 Biggest risers and fallers globally between 2010 and 2015



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

Between 2010 and 2015, average YDI scores for all the regions improved. However, there were larger changes in the average scores for some regions than for others (Figure 2.4).

Since 2010, eight countries have moved up from the low to medium YDI category and three countries have fallen from the medium into the low YDI category, resulting in a 26 per cent net decrease in the proportion of young people living in low YDI countries (see Table 2.2). Similarly, 11 countries have progressed out of the high YDI into very high YDI category, and one country has fallen from the very high YDI to high YDI category, leading to a 16 per cent net increase in the proportion of young people living in very high YDI countries. Figures 2.5 and 2.6 show how the YDI rankings have changed between 2010 and 2015. These improvements indicate that more young people have decent prospects today than in 2010.

In general, youth development has improved consistently from 2010 to 2015. Eight countries moved up from the low YDI category over this period, while Pakistan, Angola and Haiti went in the other direction from medium to low YDI category.

Box 2.1
Definition of YDI categories

The YDI score is a number between 0 and 1. A score of 1 would represent the highest level of youth development attainable for a country, while a score of 0 would indicate the lowest possible level of youth development.

Using these scores, countries have been grouped into Very high, High, Medium and Low categories or levels of youth development in the YDI. This categorisation reflects the position of a country on a spectrum ranging from 'relatively good' to 'relatively poor'. The scoring system is the same as the one that underpins the HDI. The YDI categories by score are:

Low	0–0.494
Medium	>0.494–0.607
High	>0.607–0.671
Very high	>0.671–1

Table 2.2 Global youth population by YDI level, 2010 and 2015

YDI level	Youth population, 2010 (millions)	Youth population, 2015 (millions)	Percentage change
Low	353	263	–25%
Medium	949	1,018	7%
High	223	228	2%
Very high	252	292	16%

2.2 Youth development in the Commonwealth

The Commonwealth is home to one-third of the global youth population. Over the past five years, youth development in the Commonwealth has registered larger gains than the global average. Collectively, there was a 5 per cent increase in the average YDI score of Commonwealth countries between 2010 and 2015. Of the 49 Commonwealth countries included in the Index, 45 improved their YDI scores.

The Commonwealth has made progress in all the five domains of the YDI, with improvements in the Civic Participation and Political Participation domains being the largest.

The ten highest-ranked Commonwealth countries in the YDI are mostly from Europe and Asia-Pacific. Except Pakistan, all the ten lowest-ranked countries in the Commonwealth are from Africa (Table 2.3).

With four countries transitioning from the high to the very high YDI category, there was a 58 per cent increase in the proportion of young people living in very high YDI Commonwealth countries. Pakistan was the only Commonwealth country that moved into a lower YDI category in 2015 than it had in 2010. Deteriorations in YDI scores were also recorded for St Vincent and The Grenadines, and the Maldives, but the decline in their scores was not significant enough to transfer them from one YDI category to another. There were significant fluctuations in Bangladesh's scores over the course of the last five years but in 2015 it had the same score as in 2010, thus showing no net change in its YDI score. A summary of Commonwealth countries and regions can be found in Chapter 6 (see Table 6.2).

Despite the gains discussed above, young people in the Commonwealth continue to face significant challenges. Commonwealth countries continue to figure more prominently in the low YDI category than countries in the rest of the world (Figure 2.7). Of the 1.8 billion young people in the world, nearly 15 per cent live in low YDI countries, a majority of which are in the Commonwealth. In contrast, young people in the Commonwealth account for only 14 per cent of the global youth population living in very high YDI countries.

Low YDI countries in the Commonwealth are performing better than their peers in the cohort in all domains except Health and Well-being. Commonwealth countries in medium, high and very

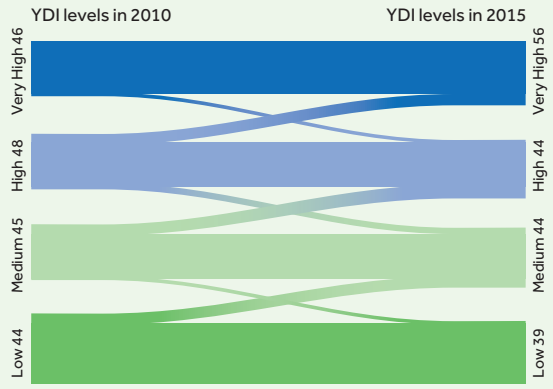
Table 2.3 Commonwealth countries with the highest and lowest 2016 YDI ranks

Global YDI rank	The ten highest-ranked Commonwealth countries	Proportion of 15–29 year olds	Global YDI rank	The ten lowest-ranked Commonwealth countries	Proportion of 15–29 year olds
3	Australia	21%	**148**	Rwanda	29%
4	UK	19%	**149**	Sierra Leone	28%
11	New Zealand	20%	**154**	Pakistan	29%
14	Canada	20%	**155**	Namibia	30%
20	Malta	19%	**162**	Malawi	29%
28	Barbados	19%	**163**	Cameroon	29%
31	Brunei	26%	**168**	Tanzania	27%
31	Sri Lanka	22%	**171**	Lesotho	33%
34	Malaysia	28%	**176**	Zambia	28%
38	Cyprus	23%	**177**	Mozambique	27%

Table 2.4 Commonwealth youth population by YDI level, 2010 and 2015

YDI level	Youth population in 2010 (millions)	Youth population in 2015 (millions)	Percentage change
Low	154	145	–6%
Medium	408	454	11%
High	15	1	–94%
Very high	26	41	58%

Figure 2.6 The number of countries worldwide at the different YDI levels, 2010 and 2015



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

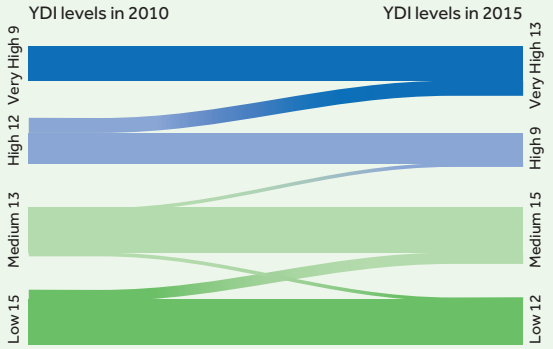
high YDI categories have average scores that are in line with those of others in these categories. Aside from Pakistan, every country in the Commonwealth either maintained or improved its YDI level of youth development from 2010 to 2015. Table 2.4 shows the youth population in Commonwealth countries in 2010 and 2015 by their YDI level.

2.3 Inequalities in youth development

While levels of youth development have improved across the world between 2010 and 2015, progress has been uneven. There are sharp disparities in youth development between and within different regions and countries. Although the YDI does not take into account inequalities within countries, the extent of inequality between countries can be gauged by analysing the gap between youth development levels of low and very high YDI countries.

Nearly three-quarters of the world's youth population is living in countries that fall in low or medium YDI categories. Figure 2.8 shows the average scores

Figure 2.7 The number of Commonwealth countries at different YDI levels, 2010 and 2015



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

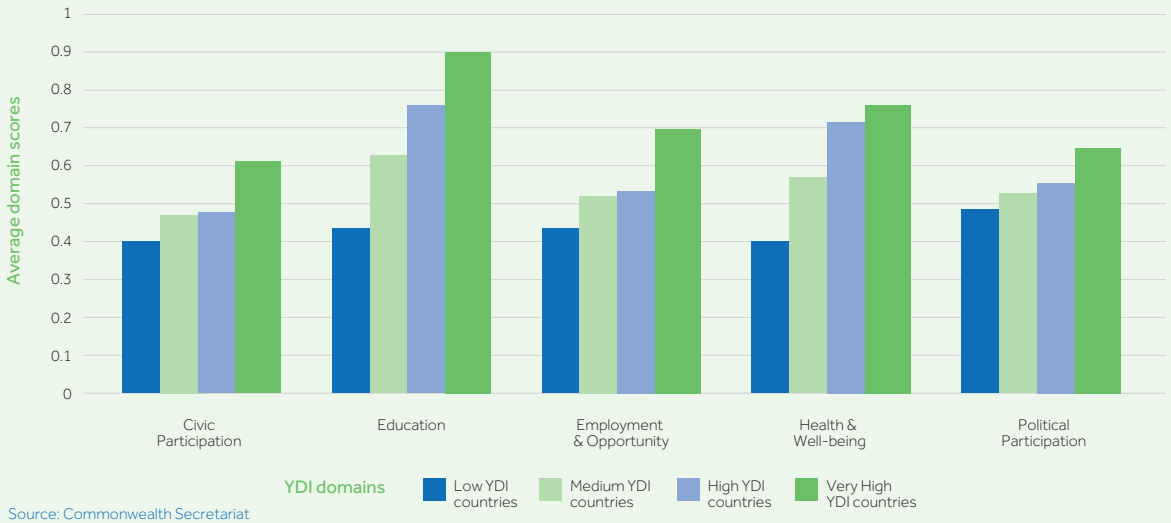
for the five domains of the YDI for each category of youth development. There are significant differences between countries that score very high and low on youth development in all five domains of the YDI, with the gap in Education being the largest, followed by Health and Well-being, then Employment and Opportunity. For both Education and Health and Well-being domains, the average score of very high youth development countries is nearly twice that of low youth development countries, indicating the persistence of high inequality between countries in these key social sectors despite a narrowing of the gap over the past five years.

The gap between low and very high YDI categories for Commonwealth countries is largest in the domains of Health and Well-being and Education (Figure 2.9).

Table 2.5 shows the average score of all the 18 indicators for low, medium, high and very high YDI categories. It can be observed that the average score for most indicators progressively improves from the low to the very high YDI category, reflecting the better living conditions for young people that exist in high YDI countries compared with low YDI countries, though the degree of improvement is not uniform across indicators. The indicator scores that vary the most between the low and very high YDI categories include digital native rates, youth mortality rates, literacy rates, HIV rates, existence of an account at a financial institution and adolescent fertility rates:

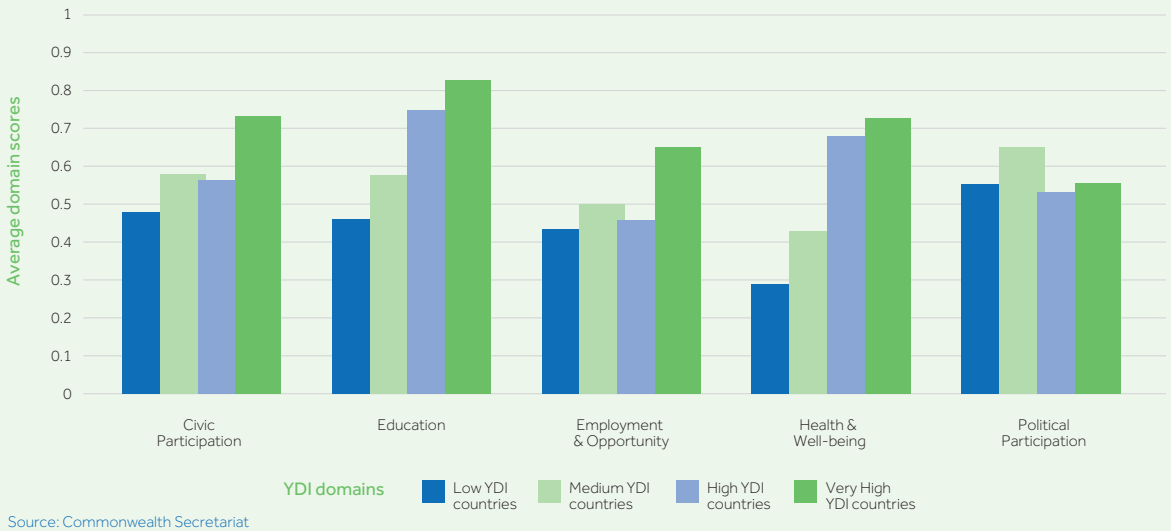
- The proportion of young people who have been online for at least five years is on average 11 times higher in very high YDI countries than in low YDI countries (indicating a massive lag in access to and usage of digital technology in low YDI countries).

Figure 2.8 Average domain scores globally (183 countries) in all YDI categories, 2015



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

Figure 2.9 Average domain scores for Commonwealth countries in all YDI categories, 2015



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

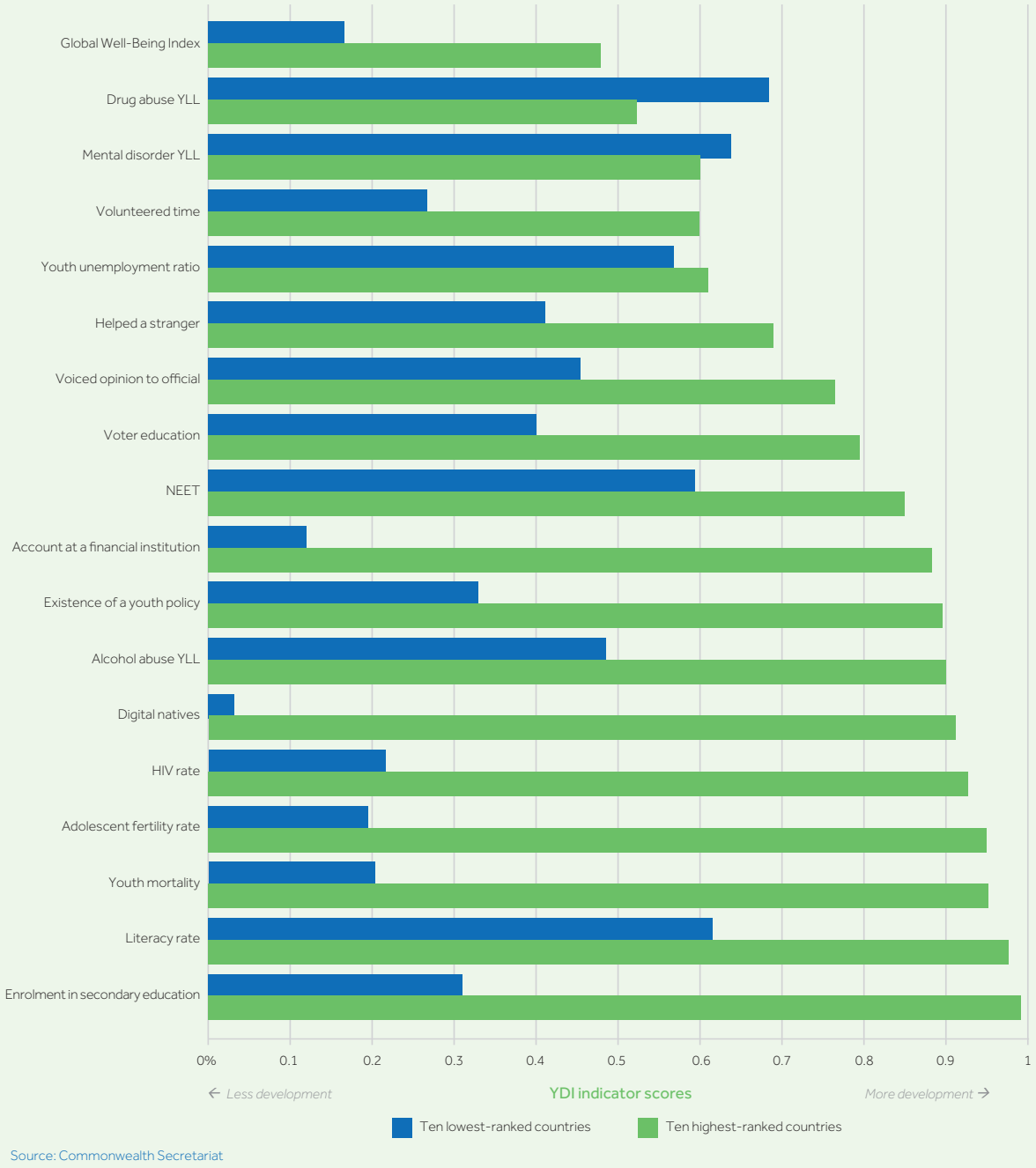
- Gross secondary enrolment rate in very high YDI countries is on average more than double that of low YDI countries.
- The percentage of young people with an account at a formal financial institution is on average six times higher in very high YDI countries than in low YDI countries, indicating much higher rates of financial inclusion.
- The proportion of youth infected with HIV is on average eight times higher in low YDI countries than in high YDI countries.
- The youth mortality rate is on average five times higher in low YDI countries than in high YDI countries.
- Adolescent fertility rates in very high YDI countries are on average five times less than those in low YDI countries.

Figure 2.10 compares the average indicator scores for the ten best and ten worst performing countries in the YDI. This figure produces the same result as above: the difference between the ten highest and lowest-ranked countries worldwide is the largest

Table 2.5 Average scores by YDI category for the YDI indicators, 2015

YDI indicator	Indicator description	Average score by YDI category			
		Low	Medium	High	Very high
Existence of account at a financial institution	Percentage of 15–24-year-olds with an account at a formal financial institution	12	35	39	73
Adolescent fertility rate	Births per 1,000 female 15–19-year-olds	98	53	37	18
Alcohol abuse rate	YLL due to alcohol abuse per 100,000 of 15–29-year-olds	69	89	34	23
Digital native rate	Percentage of 15–24-year-olds with five years or more experience of using the internet	7	21	38	75
Drug abuse rate	YLL due to drug abuse per 100,000 of 15–29-year-olds	187	181	108	177
Enrolment in secondary education	Total (gross) enrolment in secondary education, any age, as percentage of population of official secondary education age	44	73	92	106
Existence of a youth policy	All ages, 1 = existing youth policy, 0.5 = youth policy in development or draft, 0 = no youth policy	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.8
Score on Global Well-being Index	Gallup weighted score of well-being of five domains – purpose, social, financial, community and physical – among 15–29-year-olds	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.3
Helped a stranger	Percentage 15–29 year olds answering 'yes' to questions on helping a stranger	48	50	48	58
HIV rate	Percentage of 15–24-year-olds infected with HIV	1.6	0.7	0.2	0.2
Literacy rate	Percentage of 15–24-year-olds who can both read and write with understanding a short simple statement on everyday life	73	92	98	99
Mental disorder rate	YLL due to mental disorder per 100,000 of 15–29-year-olds	653	725	690	640
NEET rate	Percentage of 15–29 year olds who are NEET	22	22	22	14
Voiced opinion to official	Percentage 15–29-year-olds answering 'yes' to questions on expressing political views	18	14	17	20
Volunteered time	Percentage 15–29-year-olds answering 'yes' to questions on volunteering	16	20	22	26
Existence of voter education conducted nationally	All ages, 1 = continuously, 0.5 = election time only, 0.25 = other, 0 = no information or not applicable	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6
Youth mortality rate	Mortality rate per 100,000 of 15–29-year-olds	300	170	103	61
Youth unemployment ratio	Ratio of youth (aged 15–24) unemployment rate to adult unemployment rate, both sexes	2.6	3.1	3.4	3.3

Figure 2.10 Average YDI indicator scores for ten countries with the highest and lowest YDI scores, 2015



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

for the digital native rate, holding an account at a financial institution, adolescent fertility rate, HIV rate and proportion enrolled in secondary school. These trends indicate that access to education, health services, financial inclusion and digital technology should be the top priority areas for policy focus in countries falling in a low YDI category.

Notwithstanding the progressive improvement in most indicator scores across YDI categories, there are a few indicators where the higher the YDI category, the worse the indicator score. For example, the youth-to-adult unemployment ratio rises as one moves from the low to the very high YDI category. Similarly, countries in the high and medium YDI categories tend to have worse mental disorder scores than those in the low YDI category, though this, to some extent, can be attributed to the relatively poor quality of data collection in many low YDI countries. Moreover, countries falling in the

Box 2.2

Gender disparities in youth development

In any country, region or YDI category, progress in youth development is not shared equally by all young people, and especially by those among the young who are also women, poor, part of an ethnic, religious or sexual minority, differently abled or just happening to live in rural areas. Paucity of data disaggregated by sex, income status or regional background makes it difficult to measure inequalities in youth development adequately. Nevertheless, many indicators used in the YDI have data published by age and sex, making it possible to glean some insight on the gender disparities within the youth demographic. Of the 18 indicators in the YDI, data in only nine are disaggregated by sex and age. Analysis of these datasets reveals the following:

- While middle-income and high-income countries are close to achieving gender parity in secondary school enrolment, serious disparities persist in low-income countries where secondary enrolment rates continue to be skewed towards males despite improvements over the past 15 years. In 2012, there were at least 19 countries with fewer than 90 girls for every 100 boys enrolled in secondary education, of which the majority were in MENA region and Sub-Saharan Africa. Of 183 countries, only 40 per cent of countries have achieved gender parity in secondary enrolment as of 2013. Gender disparities widen at the tertiary level where only 4 per cent of countries have achieved parity in enrolment.
- Young females in low-income countries are less likely to be digital natives than young males. Additionally, the higher a country's income and school enrolment levels, the greater the proportion of digital natives in its youth population.
- Although the gender gap in youth literacy is narrowing, an overwhelming majority of illiterate youth in the world, especially in West and Central Africa and South Asia, continue to be female. Three out of five illiterate young persons are females. In some countries, female literacy rates among youth are as low as 15 per cent whereas the lowest male literacy rate in any country is 35 per cent.
- Young males are more likely than their female counterparts to have an account at a formal financial institution everywhere except in high-income countries. The gender gap is the widest in lower-middle-income countries, where there are 73 female youth for every 100 male youth with an account at a formal financial institution.
- Young women are on average twice as likely to be NEET as young men. In South Asia, young women are almost four times more likely to be NEET as their male peers.
- Unemployment levels are up to 10 per cent higher for young women than young men. However, when compared with how youth are doing in relation to older people, the youth-to-adult unemployment ratio is worse for males than females in seven out of the nine global regions, with South Asia and the MENA region faring the worst.
- HIV prevalence rates tend to be higher among young women globally than young men. The HIV prevalence rates are significantly higher for females than males in Sub-Saharan Africa.

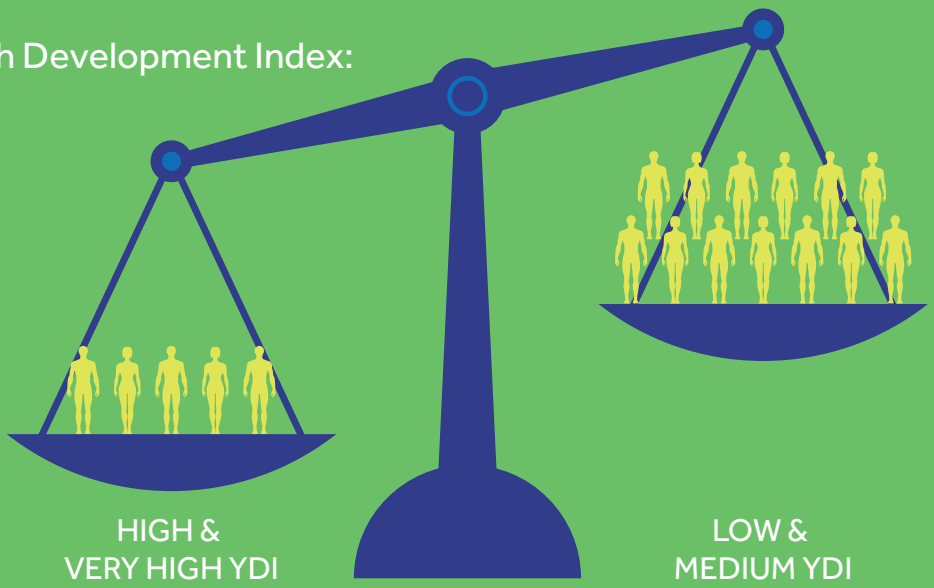
very high YDI category on average have almost the same drug abuse rates as those in low and medium YDI categories. While these variations do not necessarily mean that youth in low YDI countries are doing better on these indicators, they nevertheless indicate that countries with higher levels of youth development need to prioritise young people's mental health and improving access to decent work opportunities in their development agendas and planning.

There are very notable differences between low, medium, high and very high YDI categories on some indicators. Besides identifying areas that need to be prioritised by countries in the different YDI categories, these variations also signify that it is possible to score well in a couple of indicators and still fall into the low YDI category, and vice versa, to score poorly in a few areas but score very high overall.

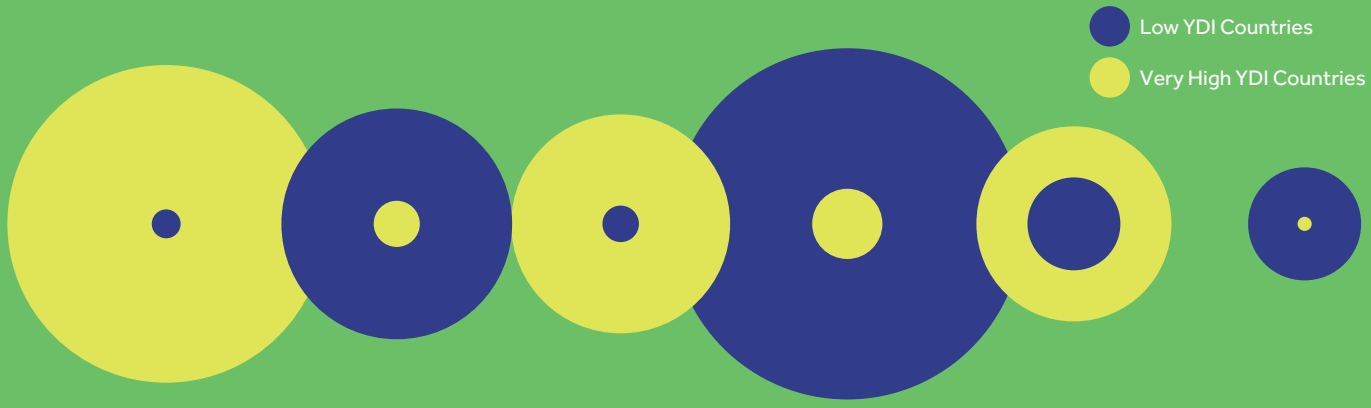
The ten highest-ranked countries scored worse than the ten lowest-ranked countries for drug abuse and mental disorder, suggesting there is an inverse relationship between these indicators and the overall level of youth development (Figure 2.10).

Inequalities in Global Youth Development

2016 Youth Development Index:



Youth development in Low and Very High YDI countries:



The proportion of young people who have been online for at least five years is on average 11 times higher in Very High YDI countries compared to Low YDI countries

The Youth Mortality Rate is on average five times higher in Low YDI countries

Gross secondary enrolment rate in Very High YDI countries is on average more than double that of low YDI countries

Adolescent Fertility Rates in Very High YDI countries are on average five times less than those in Low YDI countries

The percentage of young people with an account at a formal financial institution is on average six times higher in Very High YDI countries compared to Low YDI countries

The proportion of youth infected with HIV is on average eight times higher in Low YDI countries

Source: **Commonwealth Secretariat**

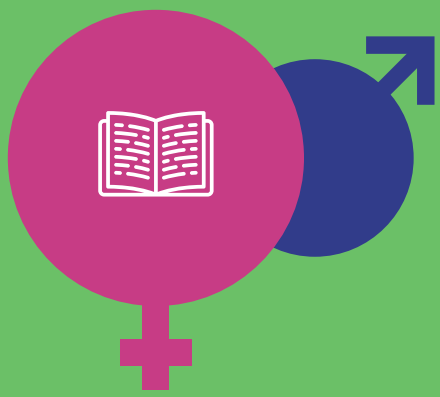
Gender Inequalities in Youth Development

SECONDARY ENROLMENT

60% of countries have not achieved gender parity in secondary enrolment

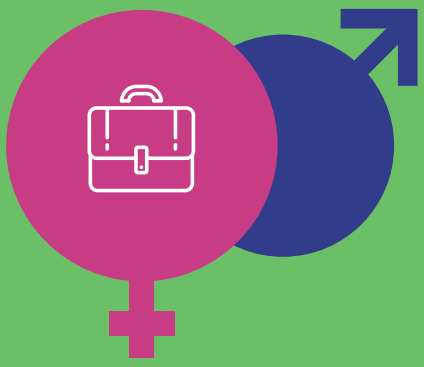
FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Women are 27% less likely to have an account at a formal financial institution



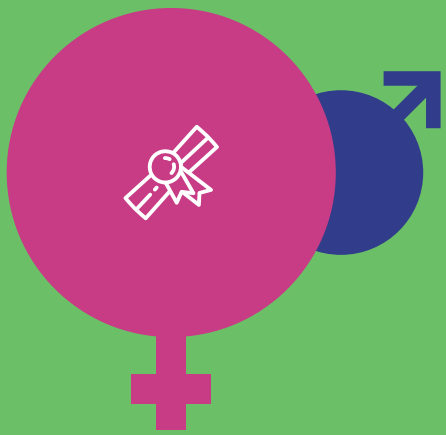
LITERACY

60% of illiterate young people are female



EMPLOYMENT

Unemployment is 10% higher for girls and young women



NEETs

66% of young people not in education, employment or training are female

Source: **Commonwealth Secretariat**

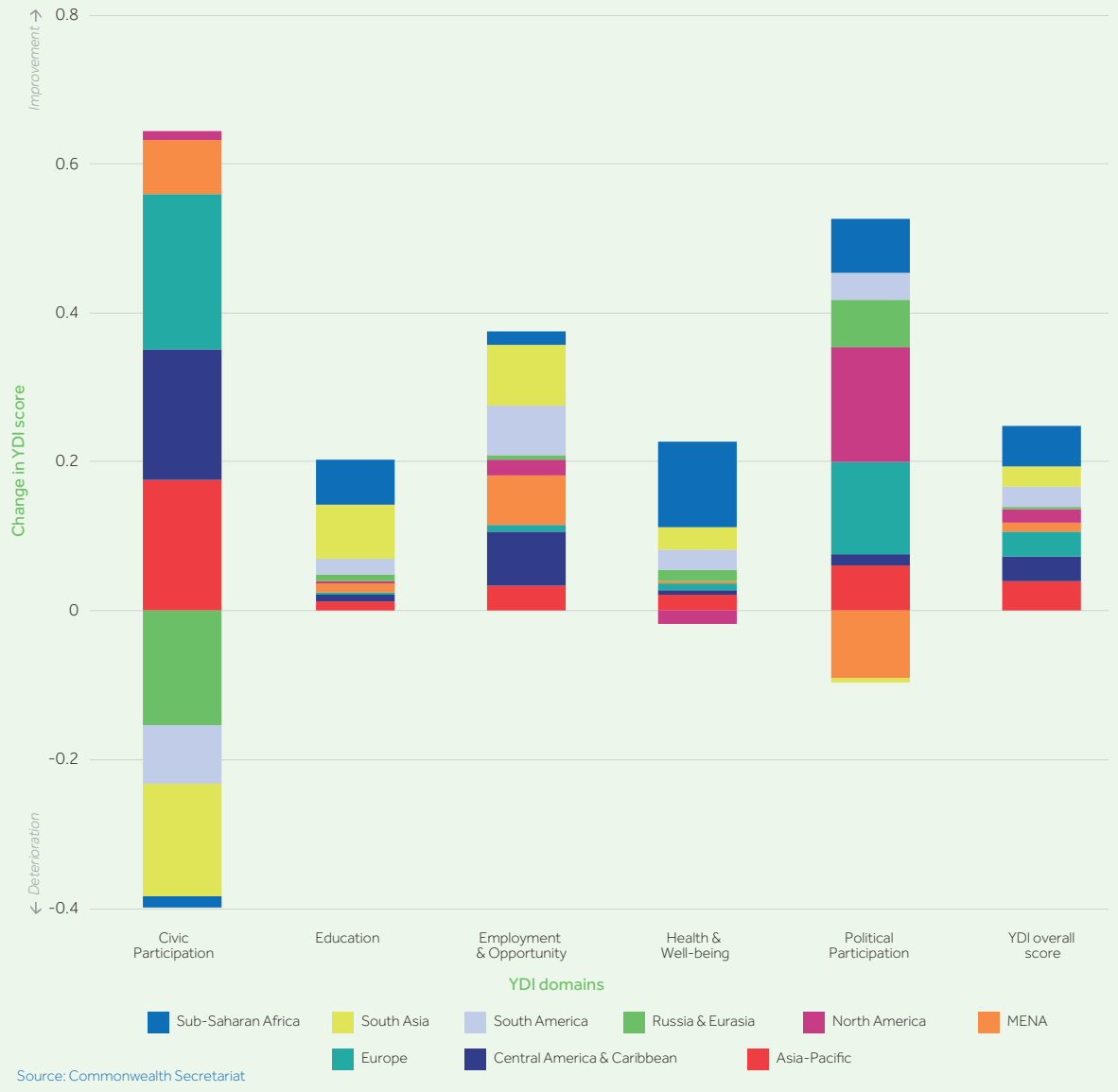
2.4 Analysis by YDI domain

Youth development is as much about progress made in each of the five domains as it is about the overall YDI score. It is important to study the relationship between the domains in order to understand the broader environment for youth development. Analysing the relative performance of a country in any of the YDI domains can help deepen understanding of the positive or negative determinants of youth development.

This section presents the progress made in each of the YDI domains and lists the ten highest and lowest-ranked countries in each domain.

The YDI is intended to provide a rounded view of the state of youth development at national and international levels, and to serve as an evidence base that can help the broader human development framework become more seamlessly aligned with the needs and priorities of young people. It is therefore important to note the YDI weighting scheme when interpreting domain results. Similar to the methodology in the HDI, the YDI depends largely on a set of three primary indicators: literacy rates, youth mortality and youth NEET. Primary indicators are weighted more heavily in the Index, so they have more of an impact on overall YDI scores than other indicators, in some cases giving countries an

Figure 2.11 Regional changes in YDI domain scores, 2010–2015



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

exceptional score in a particular domain, regardless of the country's overall YDI score. Indicator weights are listed in the methodology in Table A2.8 of Annex 2.

There is not a single country that appears in the top ten rankings for all the five domains of the YDI. The Netherlands is the most consistent top ten performer across domains, as it is in the top ten for three of the five domains. Canada, Costa Rica, Denmark, Germany, Iceland and Japan all rank in the top ten for two domains each and are all ranked in the top 25 countries in the overall YDI rankings.

Between 2010 and 2015, domain scores have changed in different directions and at different rates. These changes have been more pronounced in some regions than others (Figure 2.11).

2.4.1 Education

This domain in the YDI captures the progress the world has made in improving young people's access to education and their familiarity with information and communication technologies. Between 2010 and 2015, Education registered the lowest improvement among all the domains, at 2 per cent. Except South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, where moderate improvements were recorded, scores for other regions in this domain barely moved.

North America and Europe are leading the world in this YDI domain (see Section 2.5), with nearly 100 per cent youth literacy and secondary enrolment rates, followed by South America, Russia and Eurasia, Central America and the Caribbean, and Asia-Pacific. South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, which together account for just over 40 per cent of the world's youth population, are the only regions whose average scores in the Education domain are below the global average.

Table 2.6 lists countries with the highest and lowest ranks in the Education domain, and compares them with their overall rank in the 2016 YDI. Except Japan, all top ten countries are in Europe. In contrast, the ten lowest-ranked countries are all from Sub-Saharan Africa. Four countries that rank among the top ten in the Education domain are also ranked in the top ten in the overall YDI. Similarly, four of the lowest-ranked countries in this domain are also in the same category in the overall YDI.

2.4.2 Health and Well-being

The Health and Well-being domain seeks to measure access to, and quality of, healthcare available to young people in every country, as well as the level of youth well-being.

Between 2010 and 2015, the global Health and Well-being average score improved by approximately 3 per cent, mostly because of progress in Sub-Saharan Africa, which experienced a rise of nearly 12 per cent in its Health and Well-being score. For the world on the whole, moderate improvements were recorded in the past five years for the indicators relating to youth mortality, alcohol abuse and mental disorders. Drug abuse was the

Table 2.6 Highest and lowest-ranked countries in the Education domain compared with their overall 2016 YDI score

Ten highest-scoring countries	Education rank	Overall YDI rank	Ten lowest-scoring countries	Education rank	Overall YDI rank
Netherlands	1	6	**Mali**	174	174
Finland	2	25	**Mauritania**	175	172
Latvia	3	30	**South Sudan**	176	160
Denmark	4	2	**Liberia**	177	119
Estonia	5	47	**Côte d'Ivoire**	178	181
Iceland	6	25	**Guinea**	179	155
Japan	7	10	**Chad**	180	182
Germany	8	1	**Burkina Faso**	181	155
Lithuania	9	78	**Central African Republic**	182	183
Norway	10	16	**Niger**	183	180

Table 2.7 Highest and lowest-ranked countries in the Health and Well-being domain compared with their overall 2016 YDI score

Ten highest-scoring countries	Health and Well-being rank	Overall YDI rank	Ten lowest-scoring countries	Health and Well-being rank	Overall YDI rank
Israel	1	31	**Cameroon**	174	163
Kuwait	2	56	**Gabon**	175	169
Netherlands	3	6	**Mozambique**	176	177
Cyprus	4	38	**Malawi**	177	162
Costa Rica	5	21	**Central African Republic**	178	183
Federal States of Micronesia	6	64	**South Africa**	179	126
Qatar	7	75	**Namibia**	180	155
Cuba	8	57	**Botswana**	181	142
Singapore	9	43	**Lesotho**	182	171
Italy	10	37	**Swaziland**	183	146

only indicator that deteriorated between 2010 and 2015.

Nevertheless, despite these improvements, Sub-Saharan Africa is significantly behind the rest of the world in this domain of youth development (see Section 2.5). It is the only region in the world with an average score significantly lower than the global average. Significantly, the high-scoring YDI regions such as North America and Europe are also not doing well in the Health and Well-being domain, owing to high drug abuse and mental disorder rates on the two continents. Among all the regions, MENA is the best performer in Health and Well-being, followed by Europe, and Central America and the Caribbean.

Table 2.7 lists countries with the highest and lowest ranks in the Health and Well-being domain, and compares them with their overall rank in the 2016 YDI. While the top ten countries in Health and Well-being belong to different regions, the ten lowest-ranked countries are all in Sub-Saharan Africa. Only the Netherlands scored in the top ten for Health and Well-being and also scored in the top ten overall YDI.

2.4.3 Employment and Opportunity

The Employment and Opportunity domain seeks to assess the extent to which young people are in employment, their ability to access finance and economic opportunities, or whether they are in education or training that could lead to gainful employment.

Average indicator scores in the Employment and Opportunity domain improved by just over 3 per cent between 2010 and 2015, with most of the progress taking place in South Asia, Central America and the Caribbean, and the MENA region. Significant improvements were recorded in young people having an account at a financial institution and adolescent fertility rate. The youth-to-adult unemployment ratio was the only indicator in the domain to deteriorate between 2010 and 2015, partially reflecting the slowdown in the global economy after the financial crisis that spread across the world in 2008.

Table 2.8 lists countries with the highest and lowest ranks in the Employment and Opportunity domain, and compares them with their overall rank in the 2016 YDI. North America, Europe and Asia-Pacific are the best-performing regions in the world in this domain. Central America and the Caribbean, MENA and Sub-Saharan Africa are the regions that lag behind in this domain (see Section 2.5). The appearance of six of the highest-ranked countries in Employment and Opportunity in the top ten rankings for the overall YDI, the highest crossover ratio among all the domains, signifies the importance of this domain to youth development.

2.4.4 Civic Participation

The Civic Participation domain seeks to measure the extent to which youth interact positively with their communities.

Table 2.8 Highest and lowest-ranked countries in the Employment and Opportunity domain compared with their overall 2016 YDI score

Ten highest-scoring countries	Employment and Opportunity rank	Overall YDI rank	Ten lowest-scoring countries	Employment and Opportunity rank	Overall YDI rank
Netherlands	1	6	**Egypt**	174	138
Germany	2	1	**Honduras**	175	93
Japan	3	10	**Belize**	176	100
Denmark	4	2	**Bangladesh**	177	146
Mongolia	5	71	**Afghanistan**	178	167
Austria	6	7	**Trinidad and Tobago**	179	84
Slovenia	7	12	**Tanzania**	180	168
Switzerland	8	4	**Yemen**	181	152
Iceland	9	25	**Niger**	182	180
Canada	10	14	**Iraq**	183	145

With an approximately 7 per cent rise, the Civic Participation domain registered the largest improvement between 2010 and 2015 among all the YDI domains. This was made possible primarily by the increase in the number of young people in the past five years who have 'helped a stranger'. Almost all of this improvement was concentrated in Europe, Central America and Caribbean, and Asia-Pacific. Civic Participation scores worsened for South Asia, Russia and Eurasia, and South America.

Table 2.9 lists countries with the highest and lowest ranks in the Civic Participation domain, and compares them with their overall rank in the 2016 YDI. North America, Central America and Caribbean, Asia-Pacific, then Europe are the best-performing regions and have better-than-global-average scores for youth civic participation. South America, Russia and Eurasia, and Sub-Saharan Africa fared the worst in this domain (see Section 2.5). Three countries in the top ten of the Civic Participation domain rank below 100 in the overall YDI. This is

Table 2.9 Highest and lowest-ranked countries in the Civic Participation domain compared with their overall 2016 YDI score

Ten highest-scoring countries	Civic Participation rank	Overall YDI rank	Ten lowest-ranked countries	Civic Participation rank	Overall YDI rank
Liberia	1	119	**Slovakia**	174	45
USA	2	23	**Palestine**	175	126
Canada	3	14	**Cambodia**	176	136
Australia	4	3	**Turkey**	177	62
Jamaica	5	46	**Democratic Republic of the Congo**	178	175
Kenya	6	125	**China**	179	118
New Zealand	7	11	**Rwanda**	180	148
Cuba	8	57	**Paraguay**	181	90
Malawi	9	162	**Lithuania**	182	78
Libya	10	82	**Burundi**	183	153

partially explained by the domain's lower weight in the YDI.

2.4.5 Political Participation

The Political Participation domain in the YDI mainly seeks to convey whether the policy environment in a country supports youth development and encourages participation of young people in decision making.

Political participation of young people improved by nearly 6 per cent between 2010 and 2015, not least because of the significant increase in the number of countries that have introduced a youth policy. Gains were the largest in North America, Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa. The MENA region was the only region to experience sharp deterioration between 2010 and 2015 in this domain.

Table 2.10 lists countries with the highest and lowest ranks in the Political Participation domain, and compares them with their overall rank in the 2016 YDI. The top performing regions in the Political Participation domain are South America, Central America and the Caribbean, and South Asia, with the lowest levels of political participation found in the MENA region, Asia-Pacific and – perhaps surprisingly – North America (see Section 2.5).

North America, the highest-scoring YDI region overall, fares relatively badly in this domain, to a large extent because neither the USA nor Canada has a national youth policy – a key indicator for this domain of the YDI. North America's differing scores in the Political Participation domain and the overall YDI indicate that good institutional mechanisms and effective delivery of youth-related services at sub-national or local levels can be just as effective as having a formal policy in place. Many countries doing well in the Political Participation domain have a low rank in the overall YDI. This is partially explained by the domain's lower weight in the YDI.

2.5 2016 Youth Development Index results by region

While this report focuses on youth development at the national level, it is also important to understand similarities and differences between and within regions. Highlighting distinct regional characteristics of youth development may encourage greater regional co-operation and understanding of common challenges faced by countries in a region.

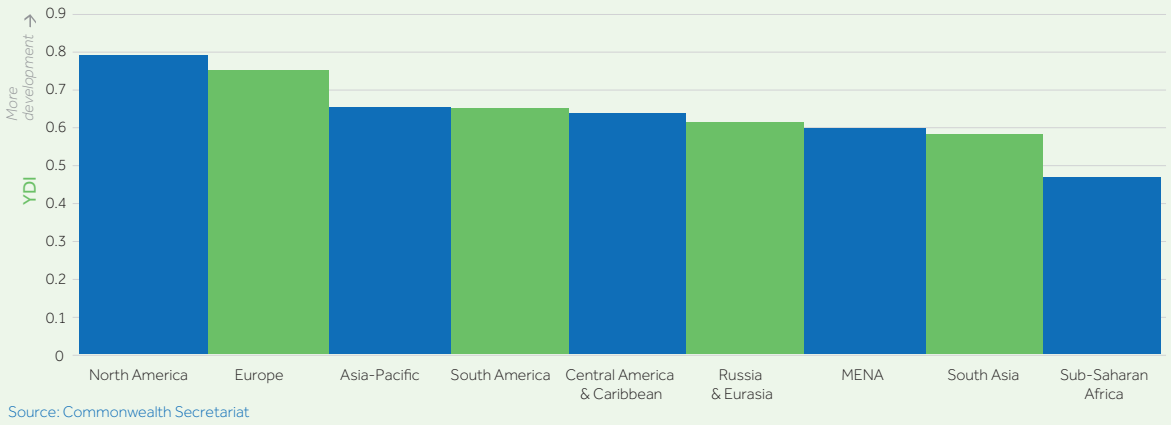
The YDI results show that in 2015 North America had the highest average YDI scores among all the regions, and Sub-Saharan Africa had the lowest (Figure 2.12). Table 2.12 shows the 2016 regional rankings.

Table 2.11 illustrates the state of youth development by region in each of the five domains in 2016. Commonwealth countries, on average, score lower than the rest of the world in the Education, Health and Well-being and Employment and Opportunity domains but significantly better

Table 2.10 Highest and lowest-ranked countries in the Political Participation domain compared with their overall 2016 YDI score

Ten highest-scoring countries	Political Participation rank	Overall YDI rank	Ten lowest-scoring countries	Political Participation rank	Overall YDI rank
Germany	1	1	**Sao Tome and Principe**	174	150
Colombia	2	36	**Equatorial Guinea**	174	179
South Africa	3	126	**Comoros**	176	158
UK	4	4	**Oman**	177	99
Chile	5	24	**United Arab Emirates**	178	107
Costa Rica	6	21	**Qatar**	179	75
Guatemala	7	101	**Chad**	180	182
Uganda	8	135	**Singapore**	181	43
Namibia	9	155	**Algeria**	182	126
Barbados	10	28	**China**	183	118

Figure 2.12 Average regional YDI scores, 2016



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

Table 2.11 Regional YDI domain scores, 2016

Region	Civic Participation	Education	Employment and Opportunity	Health and Well-being	Political Participation	YDI overall score
Asia-Pacific	0.573	0.744	0.659	0.678	0.522	0.656
Central America and the Caribbean	0.620	0.760	0.472	0.714	0.660	0.647
Europe	0.519	0.937	0.725	0.769	0.625	0.754
MENA	0.480	0.738	0.476	0.790	0.340	0.600
North America	0.979	0.972	0.767	0.713	0.542	0.792
Russia and Eurasia	0.456	0.760	0.547	0.623	0.555	0.611
South America	0.378	0.798	0.545	0.684	0.712	0.651
South Asia	0.487	0.581	0.485	0.687	0.628	0.581
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.463	0.464	0.479	0.388	0.574	0.465
Commonwealth	0.637	0.686	0.554	0.555	0.621	0.606
Rest of the world	0.509	0.714	0.567	0.636	0.573	0.616

Key	
	Very High YDI
	High YDI
	Medium YDI
	Low YDI

Table 2.12 Regional YDI and domain ranks, 2016

Region	YDI overall score	Civic Participation	Education	Employment and Opportunity	Health and Well-being	Political Participation
North America	1	1	1	1	4	7
Europe	2	4	2	2	2	4
Asia-Pacific	3	3	6	3	7	8
South America	4	9	3	5	6	1
Central America and Caribbean	5	2	5	9	3	2
Russia and Eurasia	6	8	4	4	8	6
MENA	7	6	7	8	1	9
South Asia	8	5	8	6	5	3
Sub-Saharan Africa	9	7	9	7	9	5

in the Civic Participation and Political Participation domains. North America and Europe score well in Education and Health and Well-being but lag behind some parts of the world in Civic Participation and Political Participation domains.

Table 2.12 shows the overall and domain scores of the 2016 YDI by region. There are marked differences in regional ranks across the domains. Europe is the most consistent, ranking second and fourth across all domains.

2.5.1 Asia-Pacific

Asia-Pacific is home to nearly one-third (29 per cent) of the world's youth population. With over 525 million young people, it comprises the largest youth population of any region. China has by far the largest youth population in this region, accounting for 60 per cent of the region's youth. Youth make up one-quarter of the total population of the region. Asia-Pacific's overall YDI rank is third out of the nine world regions. This region performs better than the global average in all the YDI domains except for Political Participation.

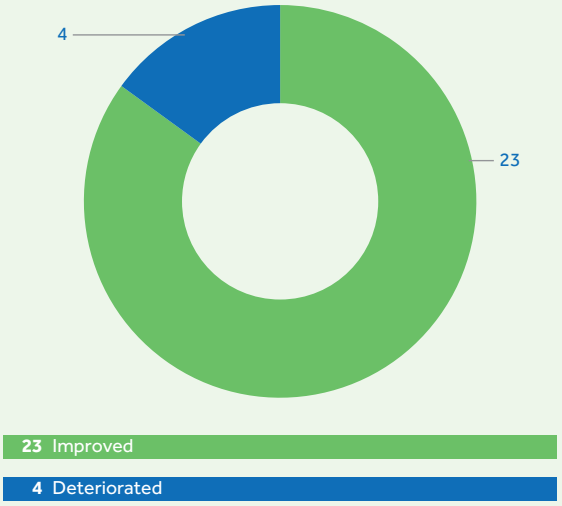
Figure 2.13 shows the regional YDI change in Asia-Pacific between 2010 and 2015. Asia-Pacific had the second largest improvement in its overall YDI score over this period. The region demonstrated improvement in all domains, most significantly in Civic Participation and Political Participation. Progress in Education and Health and Well-being was the slowest. Of the 27 countries in the region, 23 improved their YDI scores between 2010 and 2015, with Myanmar and Malaysia logging the greatest amount of improvement. The four Asia-Pacific countries whose YDI scores deteriorated during this period were the Federated States of Micronesia (4 per cent), Philippines (4 per cent), China (2 per cent) and Laos (2 per cent).

Myanmar and Malaysia improved the most, both by 16 per cent, largely because of gains in Political Participation and Civic Participation. These improvements moved Myanmar from a low to medium YDI country. Nevertheless, Myanmar's scores in Education and Political Participation remained relatively low compared with the global average, with the indicator score for 'digital natives' being particularly low.

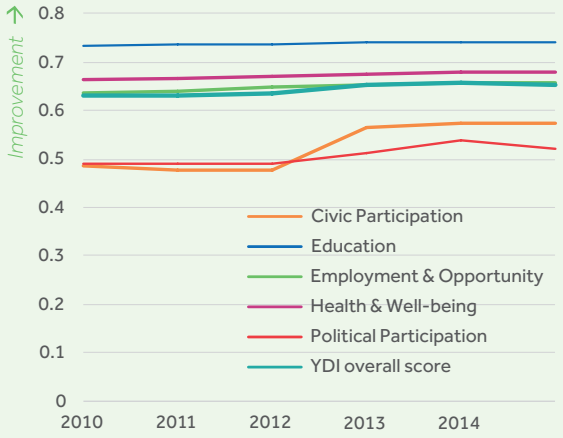
Malaysia's score for Civic Participation and Political Participation improved strongly and it made moderate gains in the other three domains, despite a small deterioration of scores in adolescent fertility, drug abuse and NEET rates.

Indonesia improved its YDI score by 14 per cent in the past five years, although its Health and Well-being indicators showed a slight dip owing to a marginal increase in drug abuse and HIV rates. In the Education domain, Indonesia recorded significant improvement in secondary school enrolment. It had notable improvements in the Civic Participation domain in the 'helped a stranger' and 'volunteered time' indicators, with the proportion of the youth population who volunteered in the past five years more than doubling to 32 per cent.

Figure 2.13 Regional YDI change in Asia-Pacific, 2010–2015



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

The majority of Commonwealth countries in this region are Small Island Developing States. When Australia and New Zealand's scores are subtracted from this group, the average YDI score for 2015 falls from 0.676 to 0.646. Papua New Guinea's YDI score of 0.560 is the lowest for the Commonwealth developing countries in this region, attributable largely to its low attainments in the Education domain.

2.5.2 Central America and the Caribbean

The Central America and Caribbean region has nearly 56 million youth and is home to 3 per cent of the world's youth population. Youth make up just over one-quarter (26 per cent) of the region's total population. It is ranked fifth out of the nine regions. It performs above the global average in all domains except Employment and Opportunity.

Figure 2.14 shows the regional YDI change in Central America and the Caribbean between 2010 and 2015, during which period the YDI scores of 17 countries (85 per cent of countries measured) improved.

Central America and the Caribbean had the third largest improvement in levels of youth development between 2010 and 2015, increasing its overall YDI score by approximately 3 per cent. While all five domains improved in the region, the Civic Participation score rose the highest, followed by Employment and Opportunity. Of the 19 countries in the region, the YDI score declined in only two – Haiti and St Vincent and The Grenadines. Trinidad and Tobago and El Salvador showed the largest improvement in the region.

Most countries in the region have made modest progress in youth development in the period under review. A remarkable improvement for all countries in the region is a drop in the adolescent fertility rate, with the regional rate dropping by over five percentage points.

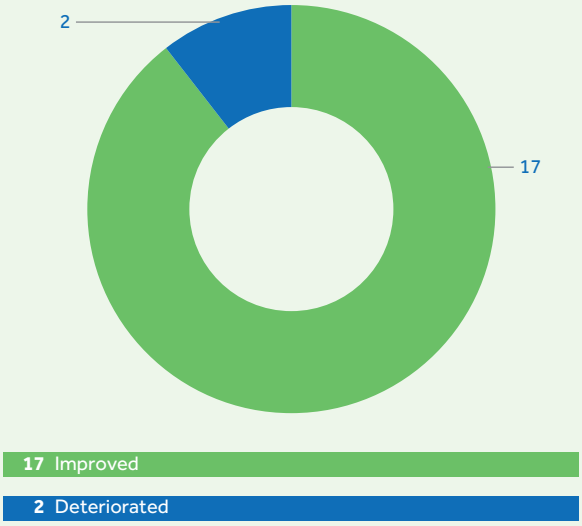
The 8 per cent drop in Haiti's YDI score was the highest for any country in the region; St Vincent and The Grenadines' score deteriorated by 4 per cent. The lack of a youth policy has led to a large decline in Haiti's score in the Political Participation domain. However, it has an operational plan for 2010–2015 focused on education reform in the wake of the 2010 earthquake that devastated the country.[5]

Trinidad and Tobago and El Salvador improved their YDI scores by 10 per cent between 2010 and 2015. El Salvador's progress was slightly hampered by small deteriorations in its scores in the Health and Well-being and Political Participation domains. Trinidad and Tobago made notable progress in its YDI score, not least because of a large improvement in its scores for the Civic Participation and Political Participation domains.

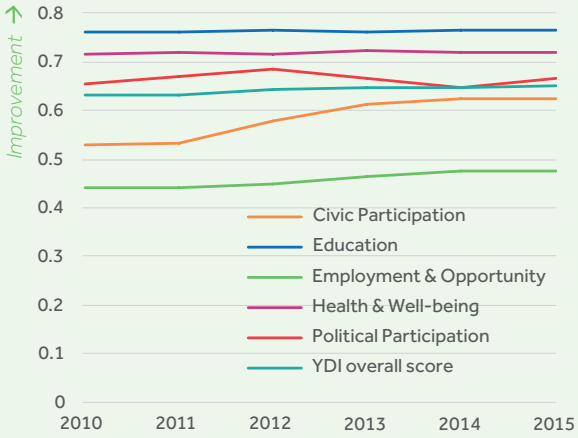
2.5.3 Europe

Europe has 113 million young people and is home to 6 per cent of the world's youth population. Youth make up approximately 19 per cent of the region's

Figure 2.14 Regional YDI change in Central America and the Caribbean, 2010–2015



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat



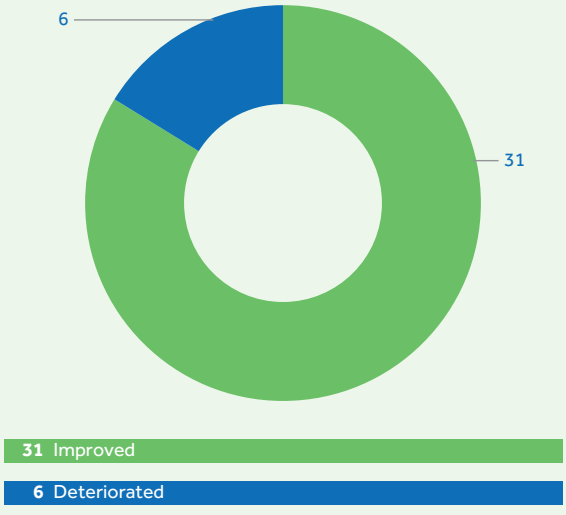
Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

population. Europe's overall population is ageing and that trend is forecast to intensify. All of the European countries are either high or very high YDI countries, except Montenegro, which is in the medium YDI category.

When overall YDI scores are compared, Europe is the second-best-performing region in the world. Its youth development levels are better than the global average in all YDI domains.

Figure 2.15 shows the regional YDI change in Europe between 2010 and 2015. Europe registered improvement in all five domains. Youth development in Europe improved by approximately 3 per cent between 2010 and 2015. Almost all of this change was caused by the large improvements in the Political Participation and Civic Participation domains. Of the 37 countries measured, 86 per cent improved their YDI scores while six countries registered minor deteriorations between 2010 and

Figure 2.15 Regional YDI change in Europe, 2010–2015



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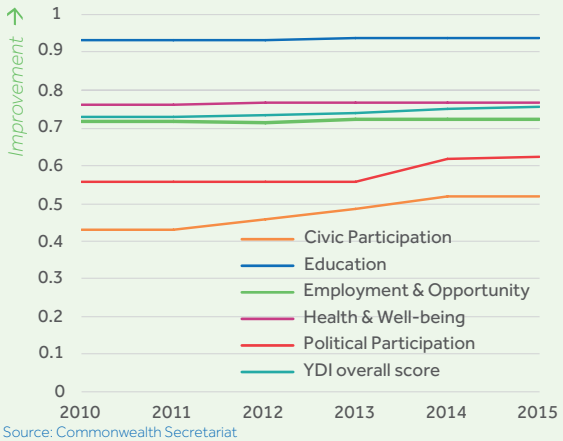


Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

2015. Belgium, Romania and Albania improved by 10 per cent or more, which helped the latter two countries graduate from the high to the very high YDI category.

Poland was the only European country whose YDI score deteriorated by over 5 per cent. This was largely due to its scores for a few indicators: not having a youth policy and increases in the rate of alcohol abuse, drug abuse, mental disorder YLL and mortality among its youth population.

There were large improvements in Civic Participation and Political Participation domains in Belgium and Romania, but very little movement in the other three domains. The existence of youth policies in all countries by 2015, coupled with a large increase in the number of youth who helped a stranger, were behind most of the positive change. Austria introduced a youth policy in this period, which helped its score in the Political Participation domain.

Albania improved in all five domains, most substantially in Civic Participation, as the proportion of youth who helped a stranger nearly tripled and those who volunteered time doubled in the past five years. Employment and Opportunity is the domain that poses the greatest challenge to youth development in Albania. The proportion of NEET youth in the country is relatively high at 31 per cent, when compared with the global average, which stands at 20 per cent, and Europe's regional average rate of 15 per cent.

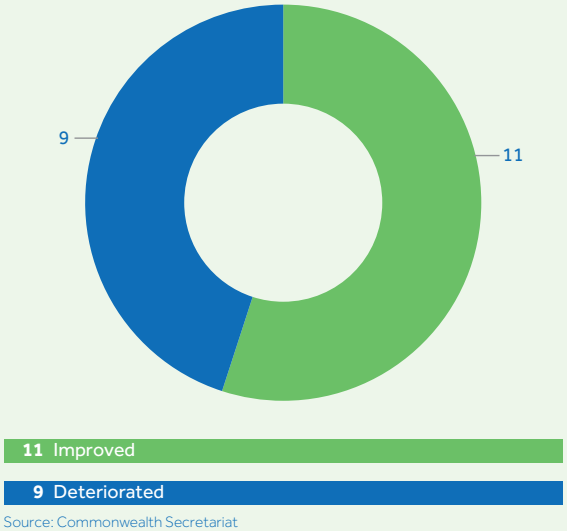
2.5.4 Middle East and North Africa

The MENA region has 126 million young people and is home to 7 per cent of the world's youth population. Youth makes up 28 per cent of the region's total population. The MENA region ranks seventh out of the nine regions in overall YDI scores. Its scores are better than the global average in the Education and Health and Well-being domains, with the latter being its best-performing domain in comparison with the rest of the world.

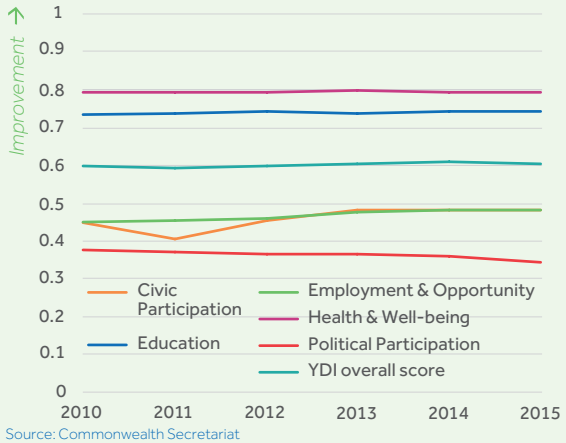
Figure 2.16 shows the regional YDI change in the MENA region between 2010 and 2015. Levels of youth development improved very marginally in the MENA region between 2010 and 2015. Scores in four out of the five domains went up, with Civic Participation and Employment and Opportunity improving the largest. Political Participation rates for young people in the region deteriorated by 9 per cent, making it the only region to show a decline in this domain between 2010 and 2015. Of the 20 countries from the region in the YDI, 11 (55 per cent) improved their YDI scores and those in three of them – Bahrain, Iraq and United Arab Emirates – jumped by more than 10 per cent.

Of the countries whose scores deteriorated between 2010 and 2015, the largest decline was in Algeria, by 8 per cent, largely driven by falls in the Civic Participation and Political Participation domains. While the YDI scores for the State of Palestine, Tunisia, Lebanon, Syria, Qatar, Sudan, Israel and Yemen also deteriorated, it was by quite a small amount.

Figure 2.16 Regional YDI change in MENA, 2010–2015



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

Bahrain transitioned from the high to very high YDI category in 2015 because of its large improvement in the Civic Participation domain and more modest gains in Education, Employment and Opportunity and Health and Well-being domains. Iraq has made significant progress in the Civic Participation and Political Participation domains since 2012, following a deterioration in the scores for these domains between 2010 and 2012. The proportion of youth who helped a stranger improved to 76 per cent, well above the global and regional average scores for this indicator. There has been steady deterioration in the Education domain score since 2010, with the youth literacy rate falling to 81.5 per cent by 2015. The high level of violent conflict in Iraq during this five-year period is a likely explanation for the drop in youth literacy rates.

The scores of United Arab Emirates improved in the Civic Participation, Education and Employment and Opportunity domains, with the proportion of youth who helped a stranger at 68 per cent and literacy rates surpassing 99 per cent in 2014.

2.5.5 North America

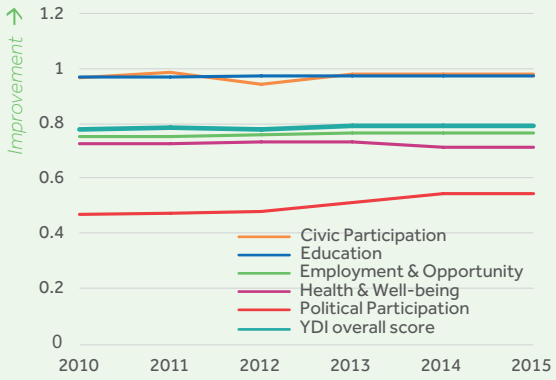
The North American region consists only of the USA and Canada, both of which are in the very high YDI category. The two countries saw small overall improvements in their YDI scores between 2010 and 2015. Altogether, this region is home to 4 per cent of the world's youth population, nearing 74 million. Youth make up approximately one-fifth (20 per cent) of the region's population, a proportion that is on course to decline over the coming years as the population ages.

Figure 2.17 shows the regional YDI change in North America between 2010 and 2015. North America improved its overall YDI score by approximately 2 per cent in the past five years, but it leads the rest of the world for all-round youth development. It scores better than all other regions in the domains of Education, Civic Participation and Employment and Opportunity. Political Participation is the only domain where the region's score is below the global average, although there was an improvement of 16 per cent in Political Participation between 2010 and 2015. North America recorded a minor deterioration in the domain of Health and Well-being.

2.5.6 Russia and Eurasia

The Russia and Eurasia region is home to 3 per cent of the world's youth population, with over 62 million young people. Youth constitute nearly one-quarter of the region's population. This region has the sixth highest overall YDI score out of the nine regions. Except in Education, it has below global average scores in all domains.

Figure 2.17 Regional YDI change in North America, 2010–2015



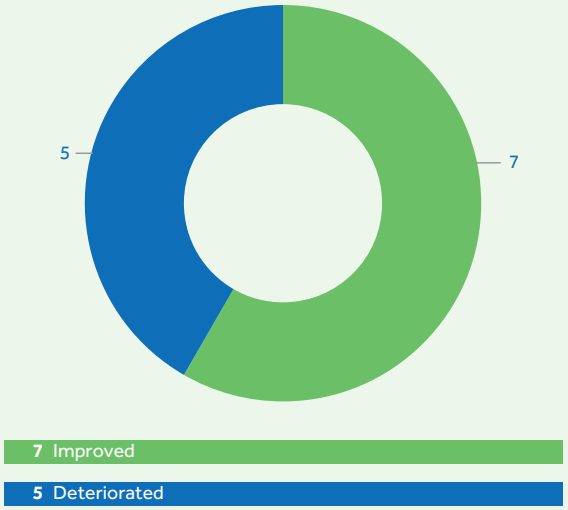
Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

Figure 2.18 shows the regional YDI change in Russia and Eurasia between 2010 and 2015. With less than 1 per cent improvement in its overall YDI score, Russia and Eurasia was the region that made the least progress in youth development between 2010 and 2015. Although there was a slight upswing in scores in the Political Participation and Health and Well-being domains, it was offset by a large deterioration in the score for the Civic Participation domain, the only domain in which its score deteriorated over this period. Of the 12 countries measured, only seven (67 per cent) improved their YDI scores. The largest improvement happened in Kazakhstan at nearly 10 per cent, whereas the biggest deterioration was in the Ukraine and Azerbaijan, at 9 and 8 per cent respectively. The scores for Moldova, Belarus and Armenia also deteriorated slightly, largely due to a decline in the YDI scores for Civic Participation.

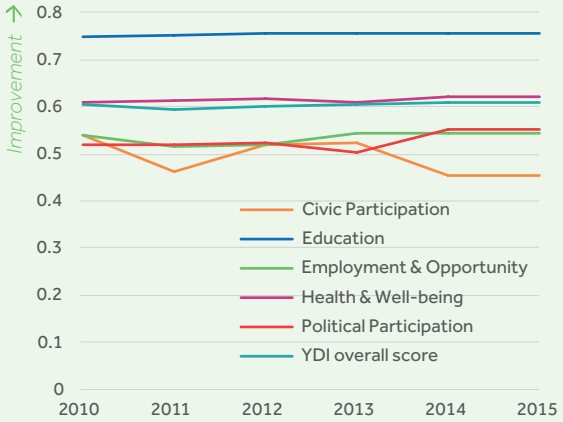
Of the seven countries that improved in all domains between 2010 and 2015, Kazakhstan's 10 per cent gain was the most impressive. This improvement was linked strongly to a reduction in the mental disorder rates and improvement in youth policy.

Kyrgyz Republic and Russia also saw improvements of more than 5 per cent. Both showed improvements in youth with an account at a financial institution and the enrolment in secondary school indicators.

Figure 2.18 Regional YDI change in Russia and Eurasia, 2010–2015



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat



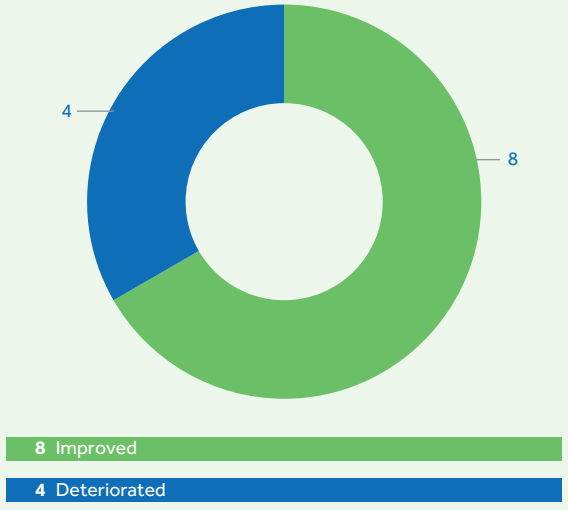
Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

2.5.7 South America

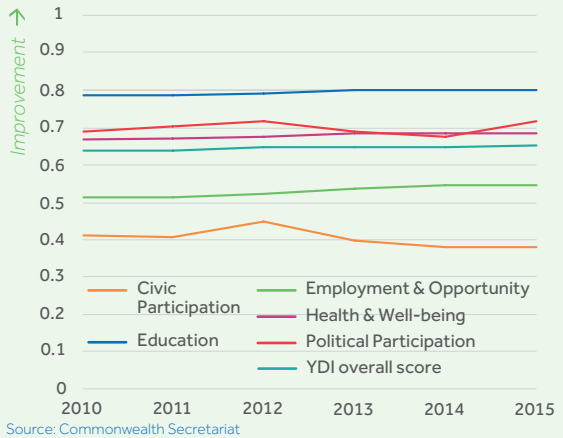
South America has 105 million young people and is home to 6 per cent of the world's youth population. Young people make up just over one-quarter of the region's population. The region ranks fourth out of the nine regions in overall YDI score. It scores better than the global average in the domains of Education, Health and Well-being and Political Participation.

Figure 2.19 shows the regional YDI change in South America between 2010 and 2015. Youth development in South America improved by approximately 3 per cent between 2010 and 2015. It made minor gains in four out of the five domains, with the largest improvement being in the Employment and Opportunity domain. Civic Participation was the only domain in which the region saw a declined, owing to a fall in the number of young people who volunteered time. Of the

Figure 2.19 Regional YDI change in South America, 2010–2015



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

12 countries in the region, eight (66 per cent of countries measured) improved their overall YDI score between 2010 and 2015.

The YDI scores in four South American countries slipped from 2010 to 2015. The largest fall, of 5 per cent, was in Bolivia. The scores in Paraguay, Argentina and Brazil all fell by less than 3 per cent. Bolivia's score in the Political Participation domain deteriorated and there was very little movement in the other four domains. The indicators deteriorating the most in Bolivia between 2010 and 2015 were the existence of a youth policy and the youth unemployment ratio.

Of the countries whose scores improved, only one grew by more than 10 per cent. Although Venezuela has encountered severe socio-economic stress in the past five years, the 11 per cent rise in its YDI score can be attributed to the large increase in the number of young people in the country who now have an account at a financial institution, and to the improvements in the indicators for enrolment in secondary school and the existence of a youth policy.

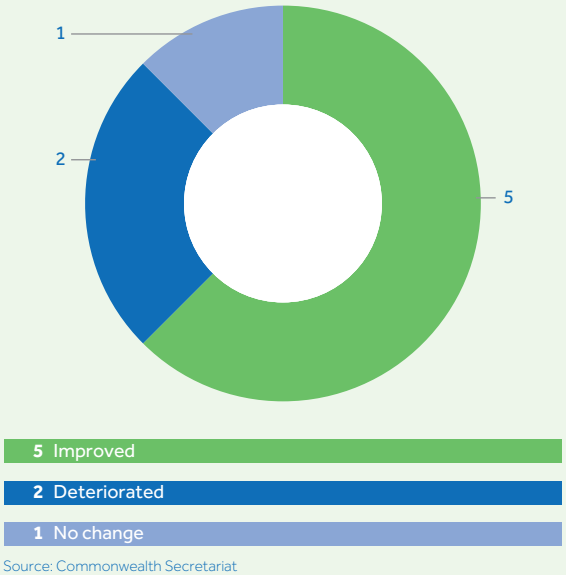
Suriname, Peru and Guyana also improved their overall YDI score by more than 5 per cent between 2010 and 2015. Suriname made significant progress in both the Employment and Opportunity and Health and Well-being domains, with a larger proportion than previously of youth who have an account at a financial institution and a drop in youth mortality. Peru's scores for alcohol abuse and drug abuse (YLL) and existence of a youth policy improved. Guyana showed significant improvement in mental health disorder and youth mortality rates.

2.5.8 South Asia

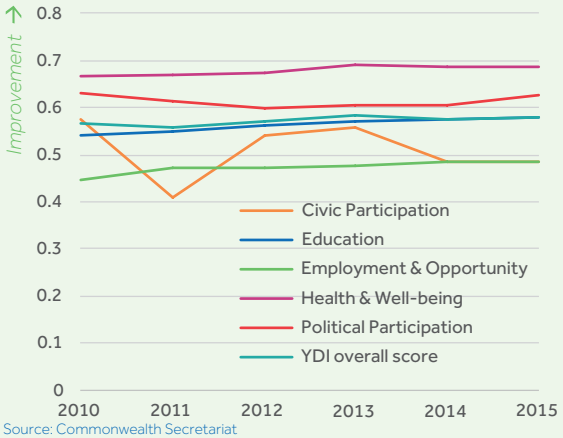
The 477 million young people in the eight countries of the region represent 26 per cent of the world's youth population, making this group the second largest regional youth population after Asia-Pacific. India's 345 million young people account for nearly three-quarters of South Asian youth. With youth constituting nearly 28 per cent of the region's population, South Asia has the largest youth bulge among all the regions. Only the Maldives is an upper-middle-income country in South Asia, while the others are low or lower-middle-income countries. South Asia ranks eighth out of the nine regions, with scores in the domains of Education, Employment and Opportunity and Civic Participation that are lower than the global average for these domains.

Figure 2.20 shows the regional YDI change in South Asia between 2010 and 2015. Between 2010 and 2015, South Asian countries made slow progress in youth development, improving their YDI scores by slightly less than 3 per cent. There were significant gains in the domains of Employment and

Figure 2.20 Regional YDI change in South Asia, 2010–2015



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

Opportunity and Education, which were offset by a large fall in Civic Participation. Of the eight countries in the region, five improved their YDI scores, with the largest improvements being in Sri Lanka and India.

The 18 per cent slide in Pakistan's YDI score over the past five years was the most for any country in the region as well as globally. It has been brought about by a dramatic fall in the domains of Civic Participation (58 per cent) and Political Participation (69 per cent). The indicators that contributed the most to this decline are: voiced an opinion to an official, existence of a youth policy, volunteered time, and helped a stranger. Pakistan scores below the South Asian average in all domains except Health and Well-being.

The YDI score for Maldives also deteriorated marginally in this five-year period. The YDI score for Sri Lanka and India improved by more than 10 per cent between 2010 and 2015. Sri Lanka had a significant drop in indicator score for NEET. India's score was boosted by significant improvements in the number of youth with an account at a financial institution and reduction in the adolescent fertility rate, as well as a drop in youth mortality.

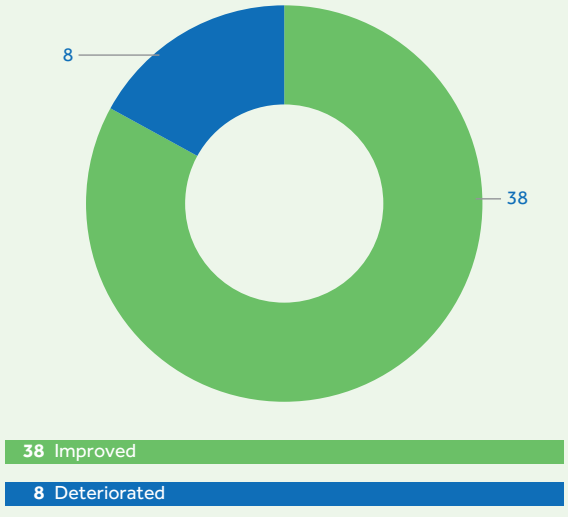
2.5.9 Sub-Saharan Africa

In 2015, 265 million young people lived in Sub-Saharan Africa, accounting for 15 per cent of the global youth population. Youth make up 28 per cent of the region's population. As of 2015, Sub-Saharan Africa is the only region in the world where the size of youth population has not peaked. According to UN population estimates, global youth population will rise to two billion by 2060. Most of this projected growth will take place in Sub-Saharan Africa.[6]

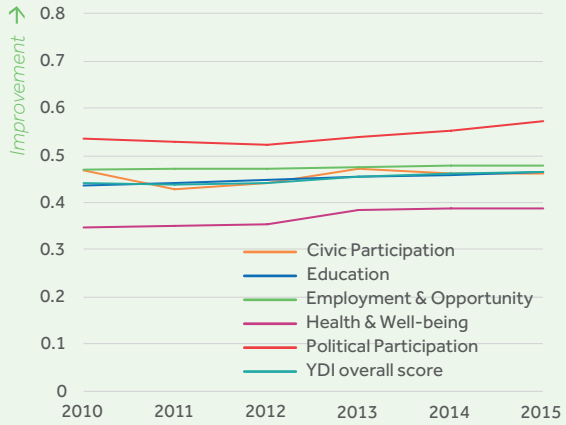
Figure 2.21 shows the regional YDI change in Sub-Saharan Africa between 2010 and 2015. During this period Sub-Saharan Africa had the largest improvement in youth development in the world, driven largely by significant improvements in the domains of Health and Well-being, Education and Political Participation. Sub-Saharan Africa had the largest improvement (of nearly 12 per cent) among all regions in Health and Well-being, made possible to some extent by a fall in youth mortality rates. Of the 46 countries measured, 38 enhanced their YDI scores, with five countries – Kenya, South Africa, Niger, Togo and Malawi – showing an improvement of more than 15 per cent. These five countries also top the list of countries that have made the greatest progress worldwide. Approximately half of the countries in the region improved their scores by more than 5 per cent. The scores in only two countries – Chad and Angola – deteriorated by over 5 per cent.

Despite the noteworthy progress they are making in youth development, Sub-Saharan African countries continue to trail the rest of the world significantly, with scores that are below the global average in

Figure 2.21 Regional YDI change in Sub-Saharan Africa, 2010–2015



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

all domains except Political Participation, where the region scores just a fraction above the global average. Compared with other regions, volatility in YDI scores in the five-year period was greatest in Sub-Saharan Africa. The YDI scores in 83 per cent of countries improved, the most significant gains being in the Education and Health and Well-being domains.

The two countries in Sub-Saharan Africa where youth development seems to have worsened the most are Angola and Chad, which declined by 11 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively, between 2010 and 2015. Other countries that deteriorated did so by less than 5 per cent. Angola registered a dramatic decline (of 70 per cent) in the domain of Civic Participation, and a moderate fall was also recorded in the domain of Employment and Opportunity. Health and Well-being was the only domain in which Angola made notable progress, thanks to gains in the indicators of youth mortality, adolescent fertility rate and alcohol abuse YLL. Chad's score deteriorated in both the Civic Participation and Political Participation domains. Indicators that contributed to this deterioration include the NEET rates, and numbers who volunteered time or voiced an opinion to an official.

Kenya's overall YDI score increased by 22 per cent between 2010 and 2015, the biggest improvement not just in Sub-Saharan Africa but also globally. Improvements were recorded in all domains, the largest being in Civic Participation (61 per cent), Health and Well-being (39 per cent) and Political Participation (38 per cent). Indicators that contributed the most to this progress are volunteered time, voiced an opinion to official, helped a stranger, youth mortality, alcohol abuse and mental disorder. Kenya scores above the Sub-Saharan African average in all domains.

South Africa's YDI score recorded 20 per cent progress between 2010 and 2015, making it the second biggest improver in the world. Gains were the largest in the domains of Civic Participation, Political Participation and Health and Well-being, respectively. Indicators that improved the most include volunteered time, helped a stranger, alcohol abuse, drug abuse, mental disorder and youth mortality. Despite making significant progress in the Health and Well-being domain, South Africa continues to perform very poorly in this domain, with a score well below the Sub-Saharan African and global average. This is explained by the country's high youth mortality rates and high HIV prevalence among young people, especially females. The prevalence of HIV is nearly twice as high in young females as in young males.

Niger's YDI score has improved by 19 per cent since 2010, helped by a dramatic increase in the scores for the Political Participation (61 per cent) and Civic Participation (18 per cent) domains. Moderate improvements were also recorded in the Health and Well-being and Education domains. These gains are made possible by improvements in the indicators of voiced an opinion to an official, existence of youth policy, volunteered time, youth mortality, and mental disorder YLL. Niger scores above the Sub-Saharan African average in the domains of Health and Well-being and Political Participation.

Other Sub-Saharan African countries in the region whose YDI scores have improved by at least 10 per cent since 2010 include Senegal, Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Mozambique. Despite being in the low-income category, all of these countries increased enrolment in secondary education and/or literacy rates for their young people and also managed to bring down their adolescent fertility and youth mortality rates.

Box 2.3
Correlation versus causation

Correlation is a statistical measure that reveals the extent to which two variables are associated. The correlation coefficient indicates the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables. Correlation simply means that change in one variable corresponds with change in a second variable. For example: the statement 'where countries have large youth bulges we find they also have low YDI scores' means that, in more cases than not, a country that has a youth bulge is also likely to have a low YDI score. It does not mean that the youth bulge has led to poor youth development or that poor youth development has led to larger youth bulges. This would be causation, where variation in one variable cause or create variation in a second variable.

Source: Urdan 2010.

2.6 Correlations

2.6.1 Youth bulge and youth development

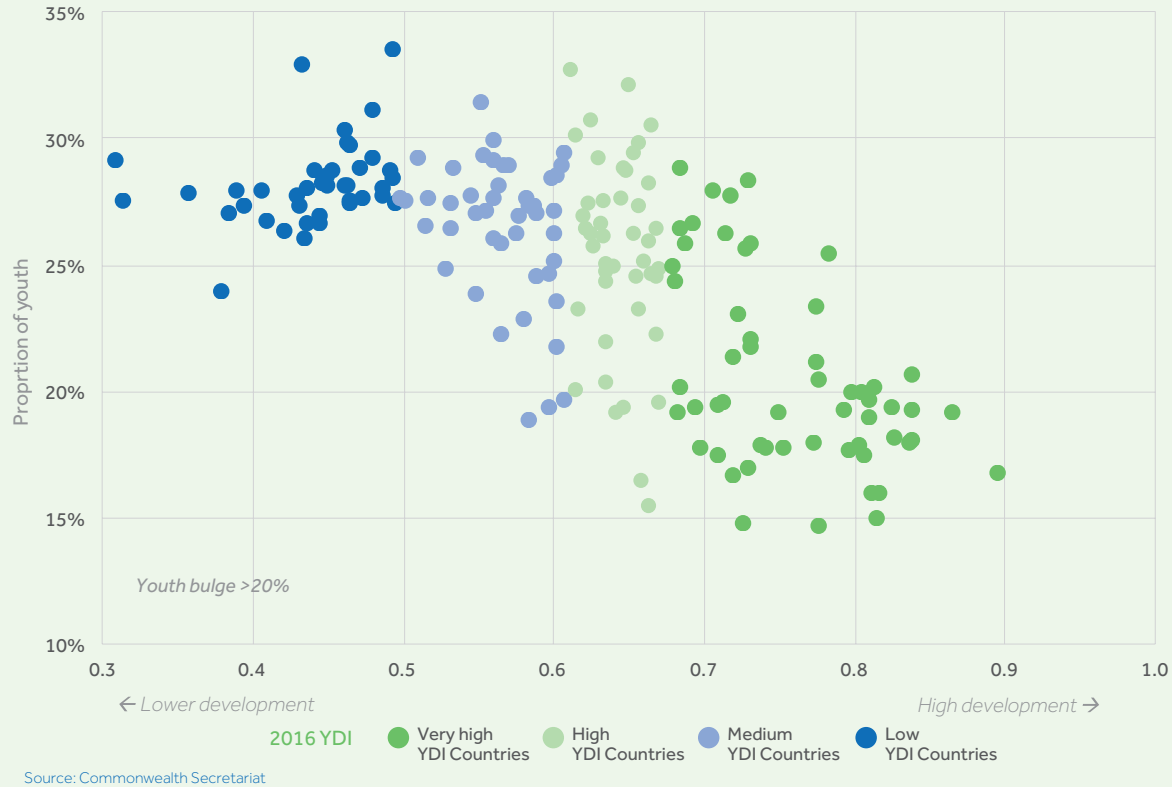
Results of the 2016 YDI show that youth development tends to be most sluggish in countries in which young people represent a large share of the population or are experiencing a 'youth bulge'. Figure 2.22 suggests that YDI scores have an inverse relationship with the proportion of youth within the population. In countries with the most impressive levels of youth development, young people tend to be a relatively small part of the total population.

However, this relationship is not entirely linear and there are significant exceptions to this pattern. There are many countries with a large youth population in the higher YDI categories. The horizontal spread in Figure 2.22 demonstrates that a youth bulge does not necessarily mean low levels of youth development in a country.

Table 2.13 lists the ten countries with the largest proportion of young people as a share of the total population in 2015. There are at least four countries in the high YDI category where young people make up nearly one-third of the population. Additionally, there are at least eight countries in the high and very high YDI categories where youth constitute more than one-quarter of the population. These countries include Costa Rica, Malaysia, Brunei, Colombia, Bahrain and Jamaica. If the criteria of the relative size of the youth population is lowered to 20 per cent, there are many countries that have both large youth bulges and either high or very high levels of development. All these countries demonstrate that high levels of empowerment, achievement and social inclusion are possible for large populations of youth, and that the YDI can be a useful tool for guiding countries in this pursuit.

While the negative correlation between youth bulge and levels of youth development does not prove any causality, it nonetheless demonstrates that countries with higher sizes of youth population are on average more likely to have lower levels of youth development. The implication for countries with a large youth population is that they have to put in more effort than others to achieve better youth development outcomes. Currently, there are at least 148 countries with a youth bulge, and nearly all

Figure 2.22 The correlation between a country's youth population and its 2016 YDI score



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

Table 2.13 The ten countries with the smallest and largest proportion of young people, 2015

Country	Proportion of youth	YDI rank	YDI category
Spain	15%	22	Very high
Italy	15%	37	Very high
Japan	15%	10	Very high
Greece	16%	66	High
Portugal	16%	9	Very high
Slovenia	16%	12	Very high
Bulgaria	16%	68	High
Czech Republic	17%	39	Very high
Germany	17%	1	Very high
Romania	17%	35	Very high

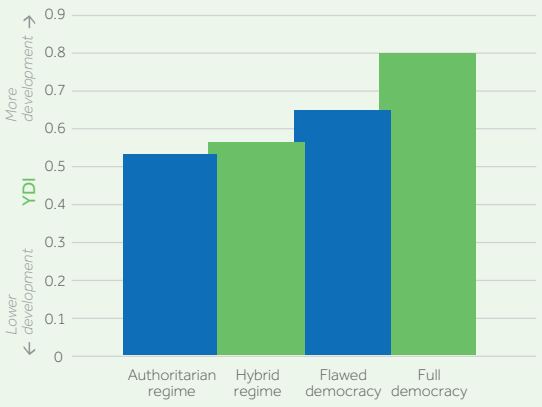
Country	Proportion of youth	YDI rank	YDI category
Swaziland	34%	146	Low
Lesotho	33%	171	Low
Oman	33%	99	Medium
Qatar	32%	75	High
Laos	31%	132	Medium
Yemen	31%	152	Low
Honduras	31%	93	High
Maldives	31%	62	High
Zimbabwe	30%	160	Low
Tajikistan	30%	98	High

the countries in the low and medium YDI categories are experiencing a youth bulge.

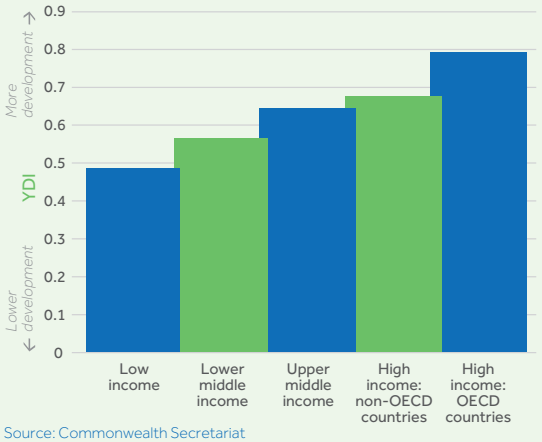
2.6.2 YDI results by regime type and income

With a few exceptions, a country's regime type has a clear relationship with its performance in the YDI. The report uses the Economist Intelligence Unit's classification of regimes: full democracy, flawed democracy, hybrid regime and authoritarian regime. An analysis of YDI results by regime type reveals that full democracies score highest in the YDI. Authoritarian regimes recorded the worst average YDI score in 2015. These results reflect the strong intersection between social, governmental and political structures and mechanisms that support youth development.

Figure 2.23 Youth development by regime type and income, 2015



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

Full democracies and high-income countries have the highest levels of youth development, as measured by the YDI. All full democracies scored in the very high category of YDI scores in 2015, aside from Mauritius and Uruguay, which scored high. Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Uzbekistan are four countries in the very high YDI category that are not democracies.

The income level of a country can affect many of the factors of youth development, and there is a graduated relationship between YDI and income, as shown in Figure 2.23.

This analysis uses the World Bank classification of income type, which groups countries into four levels of per capita gross national income: high income,

upper-middle income, lower-middle income and low income. High-income countries tend to be very high YDI countries and low-income countries tend to be have low YDI scores. Only one country in the YDI top 30, Costa Rica, is not classified as high income. Costa Rica is an upper-middle-income country.

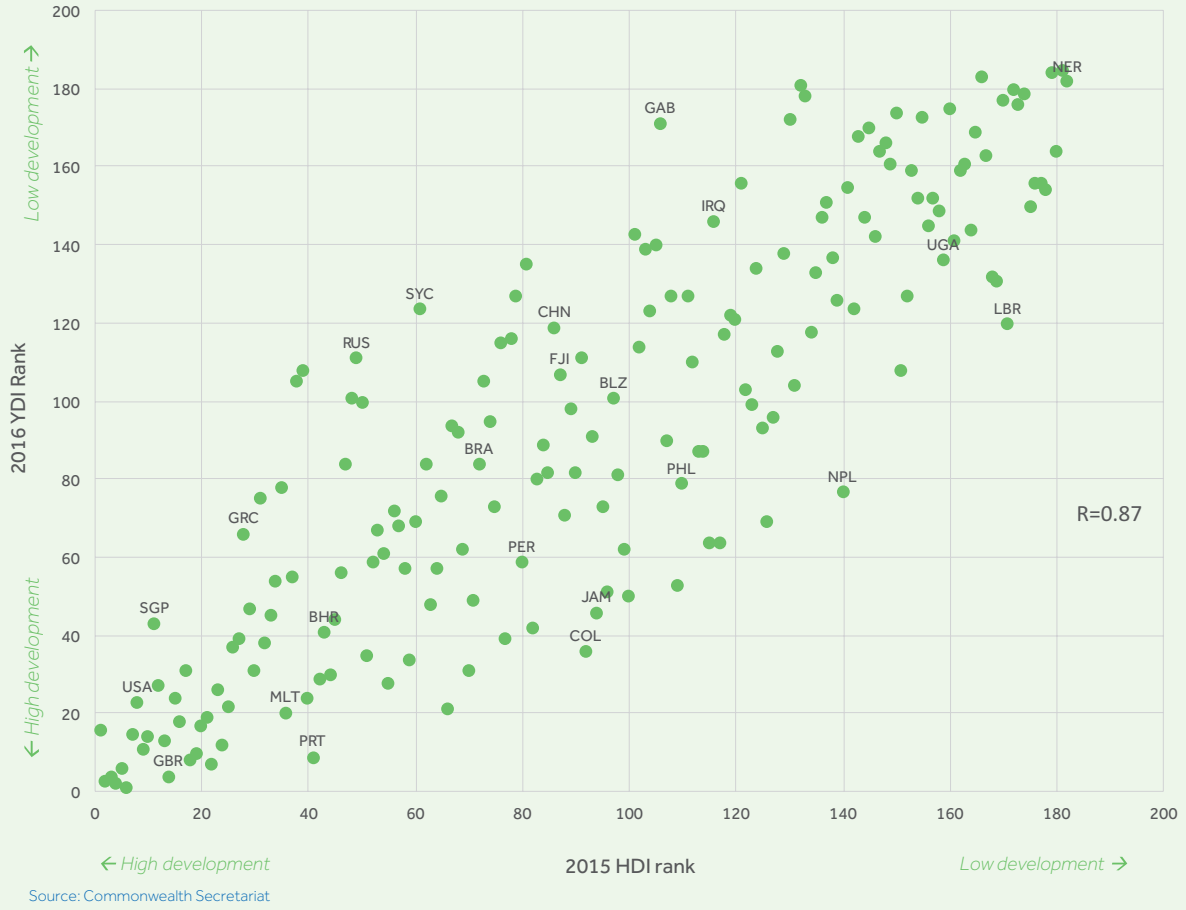
2.7 Youth Development Index and Human Development Index

The HDI is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, adequate education and a decent standard of living. It is an important universal measure of human development and progress, which recognises that all levels of development depend heavily on these three critical elements.

The YDI complements the HDI, with a specific focus on the development of young people. The YDI has three primary indicators, each of which is weighted at 10 per cent in the composite index. The primary YDI indicators are analogous to the HDI dimensions. Conceptually, this reflects the fact that without strong performance in these three crucial areas it is not possible to achieve high standards in youth development. An important difference between the two indexes is the inclusion of the domains of Civic Participation and Political Participation in the YDI. Figure 2.24 shows how the YDI is strongly correlated with but does not exactly mirror the HDI.

Comparing YDI and HDI scores yields some useful insights. Analysing the difference in ranks on the YDI and HDI at a regional level suggests that youth development in South Asia, Central America and Caribbean, Asia-Pacific and South America is high in comparison with the overall level of human development. The MENA region, Russia and Eurasia, North America and Sub-Saharan

Figure 2.24 Comparison of the 2016 YDI and 2015 HDI scores



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

Africa tend to score better in the HDI, suggesting that the development of young people trails that of other age cohorts in the countries of these regions. European countries tend to score consistently well on both the YDI and HDI. Sub-Saharan African countries show significant variation, with eight countries ranking at least 20 places higher in the HDI than the YDI, and nine countries doing far better in the YDI than they do in the HDI.

Table 2.14 shows that among the countries with the greatest difference in their YDI and HDI ranks, United Arab Emirates, Argentina, Gabon, Seychelles and Russia all rank much higher in the HDI than the YDI. United Arab Emirates is lagging the most in youth development in comparison with its level of human development as measured by the HDI, while Nepal is doing significantly better in youth development than in human development.

Countries with high HDI scores but lagging YDI scores may be able to learn from policies and programmes of others to better support their youth. Similarly, best practice and innovative policies could be adapted from countries where the YDI is higher than their HDI. These countries, regardless of income, regime, size or location, may run youth programmes that could be adapted elsewhere; this could be a rewarding area for analysis in local case studies.

The HDI is relevant to the development of all age groups. The youth-related insights revealed by the YDI underline the fact that to assess the development of young people properly, and gauge their socio-economic prospects for the future, it is also important to have benchmarks and yardsticks that are entirely their own.

Table 2.14 Comparison of YDI and HDI rankings, for most disparate countries

Country	YDI rank	HDI rank	Difference	Youth population (%)
United Arab Emirates	107	39	–69	20
Argentina	104	38	–67	28
Gabon	169	106	–65	24
Seychelles	123	61	–63	27
Russia	110	49	–62	32
Federated States of Micronesia	64	117	53	27
Colombia	36	92	56	28
Uzbekistan	53	109	56	30
Bhutan	69	126	57	26
Nepal	77	140	63	29

Challenges and opportunities for youth development in Pacific Small Island Developing States

Dr Colin Tukuitonga

Director General, Pacific Community

'We are not drowning, we are fighting.' Such is the voice of young people from Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS), who see themselves not as victims, but rather as warriors standing up peacefully to the adversary that is climate change.[7] Their islands face the brunt of climate change impacts such as sea-level rise, extreme weather events and ocean acidification.

In the Pacific region, young people also experience many other development challenges that are unique to the nature of SIDS, as outlined in the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway.[8] The Pacific Youth Development Framework[9] identifies Pacific youth's own priorities, including education and employment, health, governance and participation, and engagement in environmental action. Their priorities align broadly with those of global frameworks such as the YDI and WPAY, but with an emphasis on the Pacific context, highlighting the special case for this region.

With little change in the status of Pacific youth over the last ten years,[10] the region is confronted by a pressing need to invest in youth:

> Without major investment in young people, they may well flounder as a generation, undermining the capacity of Pacific Island countries and territories to escape aid dependence, develop economically and, in some cases, even survive as viable societies.[11]

In small economies, although youth issues may be well recognised, they do not feature highly when resources are allocated. In addition to competing priorities, there is a lack of accurate data and analysis in critical areas such as youth employment. For example, three Pacific Island countries have inadequate data for YDI calculations. Understanding the picture of inequity is a key challenge for small administrations with limited capacity to collect data, and the available data reveal that a concerning proportion of young people are marginalised from mainstream development efforts. In Kiribati, 58 per cent of young men aged 20–24 years are not engaged in productive activities.[12] Key youth populations marginalised from mainstream efforts include: young people who are NEET; young women; rural youth; young people with disabilities; and youth who face discrimination because of their sexual orientation or gender identity and expression. Little systematic engagement of youth, and marginalisation of some groups, leads to youth disenfranchisement and negative consequences.[13] Targeted investment in youth development issues, particularly for marginalised populations, will benefit Pacific communities as a whole.

The region's vulnerability to increasingly devastating natural disasters and the significance of climate change in all development issues open up opportunities for youth leadership and increased investment in their development. As the population group that will be most affected by the impacts of climate change, young people in the Pacific have taken an active and effective role in leading climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives in the Pacific Islands region, using Pacific cultural knowledge and skills to advocate high-ambition targets for countries worldwide to strive for. Well-established youth networks in environmental conservation, youth and agriculture, and climate change are driving a new narrative for the region, with young people positioning themselves as Pacific Climate Change Warriors. They recognise that their predicament is also a chance to bring Pacific Islanders together to create stronger and healthier villages, cities and communities, while pushing developed nations to expedite the move towards 100 per cent renewable energy,[14] given that continued burning of fossil fuels by developed nations is a major contributor to the build-up of greenhouse gases, which are producing climate change.

Advancing the status of youth in the Pacific region will require smart investment – strategic and resourceful – to integrate youth outcomes across the development agenda, with services designed to include the most marginalised and to strengthen the ability of SIDS to navigate their own futures. Statistical and analytical evidence, and strategic information to inform decision making, are integral to this journey.

Youth unemployment: a growing concern

Mattias Lundberg[*] and Matthew Hobson[†]

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Global growth and poverty reduction over the next 20 years will be driven by today's young people, yet many of them face significant difficulties in finding productive employment. Recent estimates from the World Bank suggest that 250–300 million young people are unemployed or idle, and another 150–200 million young people around the world are in unpaid or poorly paid work.

In addition, between 2015 and 2030, some 600–800 million more young people will enter the job market – that is nearly 1 million people each month in India, and 1 million each month in Sub-Saharan Africa. The global economy will need to create millions of jobs each month simply to keep employment rates constant.

However, since the 2007–08 financial crisis, the pace of formal job creation has largely slowed. This is of grave concern to those who will enter the labour market, and to the hundreds of millions of youth who are currently unemployed, inactive or underemployed, or working in insecure jobs.

Unemployment levels among youth are generally higher for young women than young men. In the MENA region, the unemployment rate is 50–60 per cent higher among young women than young men. In 2012, a quarter of all young people worldwide – mostly young women – were NEET.

In the MENA region, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa, between 40 and 70 per cent of employed youth are in the agricultural sector, where productivity is lower and access to social protection schemes is rare. In rural areas, young people may not have access to land, productive inputs, technology, capital or markets.

Most young people, particularly those with little education, enter the labour market through the informal sector and take relatively unproductive and short-lived jobs. The informal sector is characterised by low pay, low productivity and high turnover. On the other hand, the informal sector is flexible, presents relatively few barriers to entry, and provides opportunities to gain experience and connections in the world of work.

Agriculture is the main sector and source of youth employment globally. While this is changing, and the share of agricultural employment is falling as economies grow and develop, agriculture will still provide the majority of employment opportunities for young people in Sub-Saharan Africa for the foreseeable future.

Why does youth employment matter for development?

In many countries (especially across Africa and South Asia), youth will represent over 40 per cent of the population, and over 30 per cent of the labour force, by 2030. This large population of young people presents an opportunity to create a 'demographic dividend', such as the one that was partly responsible for the rapid economic growth of East Asian economies in the 1970s and 1980s.

Young people around the world are at the forefront of innovation and entrepreneurship. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor report for 2015 finds that young people aged 18–34 display the highest rates of entrepreneurial intention, and those aged 25–34 display the highest rates of start-up activity.[15] Younger entrepreneurs are often constrained by lack of access to resources, including financial resources, and legal and customary difficulties with ownership and rights.

There is some evidence that the consequences of unemployment can be more severe for youth than other age groups. For instance, prolonged unemployment in youth, or delayed entry into work, has potentially large effects on lifetime earnings.[16] It can also affect human capital accumulation, physical and psychological health, and careers later in life. Youth who take longer to find stable employment are likely to accumulate less human capital, including 'soft skills', than those who can begin on-the-job learning at an earlier age, and this can lead to lower earnings throughout the life cycle. Lost human capital also represents a loss in productivity to firms and the economy.

Unemployment can lead to delayed marriage and family formation, and delays in achieving the

productive identity that marks the successful transition from youth to adulthood. Unemployment experienced at early ages is associated with discouragement, illness, stress and depression in later life, as well as with lower life expectancy.[17] Difficulty in entering the labour market can lead to feelings of hopelessness and low self-esteem, especially among those who are in the process of forming occupational identities.[18]

The World Bank's *World Development Report* for 2011 and 2013 also suggest that unemployed youth may provide fertile ground for gangs, violent resistance movements and criminal activities. Without regular employment to provide structure to their daily lives, some youth can slide into disruptive or criminal activities.[19] Unemployed youth may also exhibit weaker civic engagement and disrupt otherwise well-functioning collective governance.

What drives youth unemployment?

Among the leading causes of youth unemployment is the protracted global recession and financial crisis from which the world is still recovering. Young people are more vulnerable than older workers to economic shocks: they hold more temporary or no-contract jobs, and they are more likely to leave jobs in their search for a suitable career.[20]

The skills that young people have may not be appropriate or adequate for the jobs that do exist. An ILO survey in 2014 found that across 24 countries in Europe, between 25 per cent and 45 per cent of the employed are either over-qualified or under-qualified for their job.[21] In a study of 27 low and middle-income countries worldwide, Sparreboom and Staneva (2014) found that only 47 per cent of employees were considered well matched.[22] At the same time, young people too are feeling underprepared for work. Moreover, vocational training systems have traditionally focused on technical skills, whereas evidence is growing rapidly that other attributes, variously described as 'soft' or 'non-cognitive' skills, are increasingly important to employers.[23]

These dynamics are compounded by a number of other factors that keep young people from secure livelihoods. Young women may find it difficult to complete their education or work outside the home, bearing instead the burdens of early marriage and responsibility for childrearing. Young people who live in fragile or conflict-affected environments are likely to have fewer local opportunities for wage employment, and may have been forced to leave school early, and have experienced debilitating emotional or physical trauma, which can inhibit their ability to succeed in training or the workplace.

What works to facilitate employment among young people?

Sadly, there is little strong or consistent evidence of investments that work well to facilitate the transition to productive employment for all young people. The most consistent benefit appears to come from programmes that support entrepreneurship and self-employment. Vocational skills training will not by itself overcome the problem that there are few wage jobs available. While it may give an advantage to those who have received the training to obtain jobs, it will not increase the number of young people who find employment.

In general, youth employment programmes are more successful in middle- and low-income countries than in high-income countries, possibly because they target the most vulnerable populations. These results also reinforce the finding that entrepreneurship programmes are more successful in low-income countries than among high-income countries. Finally, there is strong evidence that comprehensive programmes, which integrate multiple interventions, are more likely to succeed because they are better able to respond to the complex constraints facing young people in low-income countries.

Notes

1 UN and World Bank 2015.
2 UNDESA 2016.
3 UN Population Fund 2015.
4 Bloom 2016.
5 Youthpolicy.org 2016.
6 UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division 2015.
7 Butler 2014.
8 UN Conference on Small Island Developing States 2014.
9 Secretariat of the Pacific Community 2015.
10 UNICEF and SPC 2011: 5.

11 *Ibid.*

12 *Ibid*: 14.

13 Noble and Pereira 2011.

14 350 Pacific 2013.

15 Schott, Kew and Cheraghi 2015.

16 Kahn 2010; Gregg and Tominey 2005.

17 Bell and Blanchflower 2010.

18 Bowman 1990.

19 World Bank 2012, 2013.

20 Lee *et al.* 2013.

21 ILO 2014.

22 Sparreboom and Staneva 2014.

23 See e.g. World Bank 2014.

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3

Pushing for Change: Youth and Political Participation

This chapter examines the evolving nature of youth participation in political and civic affairs, with a particular focus on the rise of informal or non-formal modes of participation such as protest movements and digital activism. It also summarises how young people are increasingly finding creative and innovative ways to influence policies or decisions at the local, national or international level.


YouthForum

Chapter 3
Pushing for Change: Youth and Political Participation

Highlights

- Youth participation in formal political processes and institutions is declining in most parts of the world except in some of the relatively fledgling democracies, where young people tend to be more optimistic and confident about their ability to make a difference through voting and involvement in formal politics.
- The decline in young people's interest in formal politics does not, however, mean that they now care less about politics. Youth are more engaged with civic and political affairs today than ever before, as can be seen in the rising tide of youth-led protests, political consumerism and single-issue campaigns on all continents. This suggests that young people prefer alternative modes of participation over the more traditional and formal routes.
- ICTs have increased youth participation in civic affairs and 'low politics'. The relationship between access to ICTs and youth participation, however, is not straightforward. Challenges persist of unequal access, unclear causal pathways, superficial nature of impact, and susceptibility to greater government control and policing.
- Poor, uneducated youth, rural youth and young women are less engaged in formal and informal politics than other young people.
- To enhance young people's involvement in politics, governments across the world have tried a number of measures including awareness campaigns, compulsory voting, youth quotas, lower age requirements, establishment of youth councils, and citizenship education. Evidence suggests that while citizenship education can improve young people's personal social development and their participation in more individualised and informal forms of engagement, compulsory voting and youth quotas can partially help address the youth participation deficit in formal politics.

3.1 Introduction

Youth-led protests have erupted all over the world in recent times. From the student demonstrations in Africa, South America and Europe to the pro-democracy movements in Hong Kong and the Middle East, there is one message that young people are sending out loud and clear: they want change. Having shaken the governing order in many countries, these protests have increasingly prompted governments, politicians and scholars to take a keener interest in young people's role in the civic and political affairs of their nations. Around the world, young people are increasingly losing faith in formal political institutions such as parliaments and political parties. In many countries young people are denied a legitimate voice in national affairs, with the right to democratic participation frequently withheld from specific categories of youth, such as those under age 18, females and certain minority groups, particularly migrants. Youth participation in formal political processes may be declining but, from another viewpoint, young people's engagement with political issues has probably never been higher.

This chapter examines the evolving nature of youth participation in political and civic affairs, with a particular focus on the rise of informal or non-formal modes of participation such as protest movements and digital activism. It also summarises how young people are increasingly finding creative and innovative ways to influence policies or decisions and change the course of history at local, national and global levels.

3.2 Youth participation explained

Defining youth participation can be problematic and social scientists have put forward different definitions and conceptions of political participation. Although there is no universal agreement on the definition of youth participation, there is a degree of consensus on the key principles.

In broad terms, youth participation refers to the process of involving young people in the decisions and institutions that affect their environment and their lives within it.[1] This involvement takes place in the social, economic and political domains. Scholars have identified three important levels at which youth participation can take place:

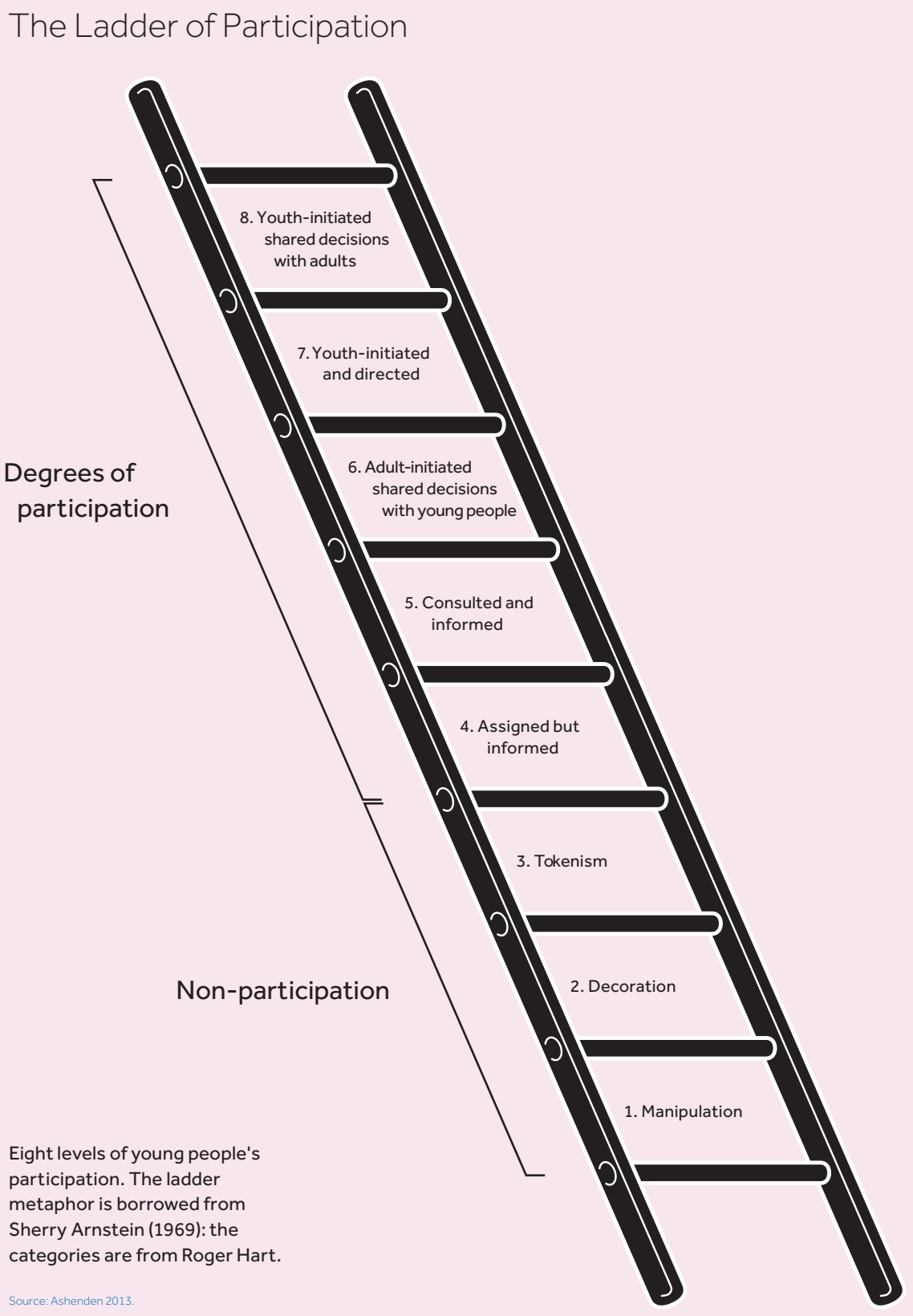
- The *public sphere* is where there are opportunities for youth within existing structures, such as political parties, youth councils or youth parliaments.
- The *social participation sphere* is the space outside formal political structures, such as grassroots campaigns, social movements, faith or identity groups, and housing association and cultural groups.
- The *individual sphere* is where individuals make personal choices and decisions, such as those relating to education, healthcare, religious belief, consumer choice or judicial proceedings.[2]

Within each of these spheres, there are different levels of participation,[3] which vary not only in scope but also in their influence on decisions and outcomes. The distinction between real empowerment and tokenism has been aptly captured in Hart's 'ladder of participation', a conceptual framework[4] which categorises the different degrees of participation: from the lower levels where youth involvement is mostly symbolic, up to the higher levels where young people initiate ideas and share the responsibility of decision making with adults (Figure 3.1).

Scholars draw a distinction between conventional and unconventional or formal and informal forms of participation.[5] Formal participation entails engagement in decision-making processes such as elections, and being involved with public institutions such as national parliaments, local governments or political parties. Informal participation involves activities such as protests, volunteering and digital activism. However, it can be argued that the distinction between formal and informal participation is becoming increasingly redundant with the growing acceptability and popularity of informal forms of participation.[6]

Youth participation is a right protected by the UN CRC. Article 12 of the CRC is widely recognised as the guiding principle for child and youth participation.[7] It states that children have a right to participate in making the decisions that affect their lives and requires adults to listen to them and give their opinions due weight in decision making. Though Article 12 can be applied to numerous areas within the life of a child or young person, it is frequently framed more narrowly as consent, such as gaining the consent of a child or young person for the purpose of adoption or name change. Nevertheless, the right to be included in decision making should be considered a prerequisite for the attainment of *all other rights* and therefore needs to be interpreted and implemented in conjunction with other rights protected in the Convention.[8] In addition, Articles 13 and 15 of the CRC affirm the

Figure 3.1 Hart's ladder of participation



Eight levels of young people's participation. The ladder metaphor is borrowed from Sherry Arnstein (1969): the categories are from Roger Hart.

Source: Ashenden 2013.

Box 3.1
Youth political participation and international law

The UN CRC is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history. Nearly all states are now parties, except Somalia and the USA, whose heads of government have not yet ratified the Convention but have signed it, indicating their support. Article 12 of the treaty is widely recognised as the cornerstone of child and youth participation. Articles 13 and 15 also refer to political participation. These articles are as follows:

Article 12

States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

Article 13

The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.

The exercise of this right may be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:

(a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others; or

(b) For the protection of national security or of public order (*ordre public*) of public health or morals.

Article 15

States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.

No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of these rights other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (*ordre public*), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Source: UN 2007

right of children to freedom of expression, freedom of association and peaceful assembly.[9] Although these articles focus on the rights of children, they are further seen as providing the legal foundation for the involvement of young people in political processes and decision making.[10]

Building on the capabilities approach introduced in Chapter 1, political participation is regarded as a 'first generation right',[11] and there have been calls to adopt a new model, framed within a legal and human rights perspective, for understanding and implementing Article 12.[12] This rights-based approach emphasises that children and young people must be recognised as having the 'right' to participate, not just the 'need', and should be seen as 'a source of strength and opportunity for local communities, rather than a "problem" to be resolved'.[13] The idea of youth as partners and leaders within development – not as passive beneficiaries – is increasingly becoming integral in global thinking.[14] Numerous youth policies have adopted such an approach, especially in Commonwealth countries.

3.2.1 Why youth participation matters

Youth participation in civic and political affairs is important in and of itself but also for the potential consequences that the involvement – or lack of it – of young people in decision making may have.[15] Intrinsically, the development of young people is about providing them with the choices and capabilities necessary to build fulfilling lives.[16] In order to address the barriers that constrain their opportunities, it is necessary to involve young people in decisions that directly or indirectly have an effect on their lives. The active involvement of young people in decision making can improve the lives of individuals, provide better and more

Box 3.2

The world's parliaments: not a place for young people

According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, of the 45,000 members of national legislatures in the world, only 1.9 per cent are below the age of 30. If the definition of 'young' is relaxed to include everyone below the age of 40, the proportion of young law-makers rises to 14.2 per cent.

Nearly one-third of 'lower chambers' of parliament and close to 80 per cent of 'upper chambers' surveyed do not have a single member of parliament below the age of 30.

In only four countries – Sweden, Ecuador, Finland and Norway – do people below the age of 30 add up to at least 10 per cent of the total number of law-makers in the country. Except Ecuador, the other three countries are among the 30 highest-ranked countries in the YDI.

Of the world's young MPs who are below the age of 30, only two-fifths are female.

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union 2016.

accountable public services,[17] strengthen democracy and civil society,[18] and create more peaceful and tolerant nations.[19]

3.3 Losing faith: young people and formal politics

Young people's engagement with politics is a complex phenomenon and is affected by a range of social, economic and political variables. At a global level, youth political participation does not fit one single pattern but some trends can be discerned from available data and research.

While the indicators in the 2016 YDI reflect an improvement in the enabling environment for youth political participation, young people themselves tend to be less engaged with formal modes of participation. For example, there is ample evidence to suggest that they are less likely to vote than older people. Consciously or not, many young people are abstaining from voting and also opting out of other formal modes of political participation such as joining political parties or standing for public office.

In Europe, already an ageing society, young voters are much less likely to vote than older people. With each successive election the proportion of youth that votes declines further.[20] In the USA, only 23 per cent of Americans between the age of 18 and 34 voted in national elections in 2014, compared with 59 per cent of those aged over 65.[21] Similarly, in the 2015 parliamentary election in the UK, and the referendum on European Union membership in June 2016, fewer young people than adults are believed to have voted.[22] The Afrobarometer survey, which covers 19 of the most democratic countries in Africa,[23] also shows low levels of youth involvement in the formal political processes, while the Asian Barometer shows that in East Asia the youth turnout rate in elections is 30–40 per cent lower than that of adults.[24] In Singapore, despite voting being compulsory, voter turnout among young people has fallen from 63 per cent to 38 per cent in recent years.[25] The steady decline in young people's political involvement all over the world is giving rise to what some are calling a 'democratic deficit'.[26]

However, in young democracies where there may be greater levels of optimism among young people about their ability to influence decisions and policies through elections, turnout among younger voters is usually higher. In Vietnam and Cambodia, two countries that have become more democratic in recent years, youth participation is higher than average for the region.[27] Growing pessimism about their economic prospects in comparison with those of adults, particularly in the wake of the 2007–08 global financial crisis, is also leading to young people taking a greater interest in politics in many countries. For instance, there was a surge in voting by young South Koreans in the 2016 election, resulting in a change in government.[28]

3.3.1 What is behind the decline in youth participation in formal politics?

The explanations for declining youth participation in formal political structures and processes can be broadly categorised into those that focus on young people themselves and those that lay much more emphasis on the wider socio-economic and political context or structures within which participation is meant to take place. Some scholars attribute the low participation levels of young people to apathy and slow maturity. The 'apathy' thesis suggests that

young people have little knowledge of and interest in politics; they find politics boring and irrelevant to their lives.[29] The 'maturation' thesis maintains that low levels of involvement are a normal feature of the youth phase and that young people are likely to show greater involvement as they grow older.[30] In a similar vein, others have argued that protracted youth transitions also partially explain why young people are not participating in formal modes.[31] The evidence to support these theses, however, is weak.

Explanations that lay more emphasis on the wider political and economic context cite a lack of political education or awareness, structural and generational shifts, and scepticism about traditional political processes and institutions as some of the factors contributing to youth disengagement in formal politics. Some commentators have argued that young people are not well informed about citizenship, political processes and democracy. This perhaps holds especially true in developing countries where lack of access to information and knowledge can dampen youth participation.[32] There is overwhelming evidence to suggest that young people want to participate in politics but find the existing political culture, institutions and mechanisms ineffective or unwelcoming. Young people are disenchanted with formal politics because it is unresponsive to their needs and interests.[33]

Young people's relative lack of interest in the formal political process partly reflects their scepticism about the ability or will of governments and politicians to create a supportive environment for young people. There is also a widespread perception among the young that elected politicians tend to pay more attention to older citizens, who are more influential and more likely to vote.[34] In Tanzania, a study found that young people's willingness to participate in formal political processes was linked directly to the extent to which they believed their vote would make a difference.[35] Such views are common in other countries, too.[36] In many Sub-Saharan African and Asian countries, young citizens' perception that they are powerless to influence the outcome of elections affects their voting behaviour.[37] The UN's 2014 MyWorld survey, with over 70 per cent of respondents aged under 30, rated 'an honest and responsive government' as fourth most important after education, healthcare and jobs, indicating the strong desire of the young for good governance in their countries. The body of evidence makes it clear that current political institutions and mechanisms are failing to match the aspirations and expectations of young people.

Declining youth participation in formal politics has also been linked to broader trends. In Europe, trade unions used to have an important role in the political socialisation of the young; older colleagues would introduce new workers to political debate on the factory floor. Structural and irreversible changes in the labour market, especially the decline and demise of some labour-intensive industries, technological disruption and growing insecurity in the world of work, have led to young people's identities becoming more atomised as they find it harder to make common cause with others.[38] In Pakistan, for instance, student unions used to play a very influential role in national politics. With the abolishment of all student unions in the country three decades ago, the enthusiasm of young people in the country to participate in politics through institutionalised mechanisms has correspondingly waned.[39]

According to some analysts, traditional modes of participation and collective action hold little appeal for a generation whose creed is individualism and who subscribe to post-materialist values such as identity-based politics, human rights and environmental protection.[40] Recent youth-led protests such as the Occupy movement, nevertheless, demonstrate a complex inter-dependence between materialist factors and post-materialist ideas in youth mobilisation.[41] It has also been suggested that young people are taking more of a 'project-oriented' approach to politics, rejecting wholesale affiliation with traditional political parties and instead choosing to get involved in political debate when they are interested in individual issues.[42]

3.4 Informal youth participation is on the rise

Young people may be losing interest in traditional political processes and institutions but they retain a keen interest in community and political affairs.[43] Young people's involvement in community affairs and informal politics has increased significantly over the past five years. Participation for young people today increasingly involves experimenting with non-traditional activities including volunteering, blogging, protests and consumer activism, particularly when an issue close to their hearts is at stake.

Youth mobilisation has been critical to a host of anti-government protests across the world. In countries such as Japan, South Korea and Taiwan,

Young Changemakers

Brianna Fruean

Samoa

In the not too distant future, climate change and rising sea levels could pose serious risks to life on Earth, most of all to the young people who live on small islands. But Brianna, a 17-year-old student from Samoa, is proving that even small steps can make a big difference in countering the environmental degradation being caused by global warming.

At the age of 11 Brianna founded Small Voices, a voluntary organisation that mobilises children and young people to campaign for more effective action by governments and citizens to tackle climate change. Since Small Voices was born in 2010, school children from all over Samoa have joined its networks to take the lead in protecting the environment by initiating community-based projects such as planting trees and cleaning up waste.

Brianna drew inspiration from her mother, an environmental worker herself. 'My mum used to take me to work with her when I was a child. I'd listen in on the climate change talks and hear about the problems and solutions on climate change. I decided I want to do this: to save my little island. My mum said, "ok, when you grow up." But I said "no, I want to do it now." I was a very impatient little girl.'

In 2015 Brianna became the youngest-ever winner of a Commonwealth Youth Award for excellence in development work. The threat that climate change poses is huge but Brianna firmly believes young people are ready to take it on. She dedicated her award 'to the climate refugees, to the people living in the Pacific islands and other small islands that suffer from the effects of climate change every day and to my fellow Pacific warriors fighting for climate justice.'

Achaleke Christian Leke

Cameroon

Achaleke is a peace activist and the national co-ordinator of Local Youth Corner Cameroon, a youth-led organisation promoting peace and countering violent extremism.

Seeing many of his peers in his home town of Kumba turning to violence during his adolescence, 25-year-old Achaleke instead chose acting and theatre as a way of spreading the gospel of peace among his friends. He then volunteered with a civil society organisation where he campaigned for youth empowerment, inclusion and participation in development and governance. Achaleke has developed a youth training manual on peace-building based on his experience and that of his peers. Over 5,000 young Cameroonians have benefited from the manual's lessons on peace-building, countering violent extremism and nation-building.

Achaleke has not allowed the scarcity of funding or support to become a barrier to his mission. He has used the tools of social media to power his campaign for peace and to mediate dialogue among young people on peace-building, share examples of good practice and highlight the important role young people are playing all over Cameroon to promote peace and counter violent extremism.

Achaleke was named the Commonwealth Young Person of the Year for 2016, and used his award money to create a skills development and networking programme for young men in prison, in order to help them build positive and fulfilling lives. 'I represent young people across Africa,' he believes. 'Recognition and support for the work of young people remains a major challenge we face every day.'

Young Changemakers

Nolana Lynch

Trinidad and Tobago

Nolana is a social entrepreneur and environmental activist, whose eco-friendly business venture has contributed to promoting sustainability in several Caribbean countries which, along with other small island countries, are most at risk from the debilitating impact of climate change.

As a student, Nolana noticed that in her country vast quantities of nutrient-rich agricultural produce were going to waste, including millions of mango and avocado seeds – ideal raw material for producing nutrient-rich moisturisers and skin creams. Combining her passion for the environment and entrepreneurship, Nolana used up all her savings to create an all-natural skin and hair-care line called Eco-Truffles. By using sustainable raw material sourced from rural women farmers throughout the Caribbean, Nolana's enterprise provides a shot in the arm to the local economy, and also supports the sustainable development of her local community.

Thanks to the quality of its products and the values that underpin the business, in just under three years Eco-Truffles' customer base has grown to include retailers, hotels, spas and restaurants across the Caribbean. A big share of Eco-Truffles' profits goes back into the community to support underprivileged families and children, or as scholarships that enable young women to get an education.

Nolana was named Commonwealth Young Person of the Year for the Caribbean and Americas Region in 2015, and has served as the national co-ordinator of the Caribbean Youth Environment Network. She believes that 'whenever there is collaboration among young people, there is a higher chance of bringing about positive development'.

young people are at the forefront of movements to protest against rising unemployment, job insecurity, low wages and social inequality.[44] In Europe, young people have collectively agitated against rising university tuition fees in the past few years. In Israel, there have been protests about the lack of affordable housing, while across North Africa and the Middle East, the lack of employment opportunities has brought young people out onto the street in frustration.

Indeed, a focus on protests as a form of youth participation reveals significant differences in comparison with the patterns observable in formal political participation. Since 2011, the world has witnessed youth-led protests and demonstrations in almost every part of the world, including in Bahrain, Brazil, Canada, Egypt, France, Greece, Hong Kong, Iceland, India, Iran, Israel, Libya, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Syria, Tunisia, Ukraine, the UK, the USA and Venezuela.[45] These have been ignited by a range of issues, from growing inequality and corruption in one country to authoritarianism and abuse of human rights in another. Some of these protests have led to genuine transformation, such as the overthrow of long-standing regimes in Tunisia and Egypt. In other cases, youth-led protests have triggered further repression or deepened schisms in society. In parts of Africa, young people are less likely than their elders to participate in demonstrations, partly due to a fear of police reprisals.[46]

Young people are also using creative methods to empower their peers and boost youth participation. Some are doing it through art and music, for example; others via entrepreneurship; and in some of the most traditional societies in the world, young people – and young women, in particular – are doing it by imparting leadership training and mobilising communities to push for change. (See 'Young Changemakers' above.)

Young people are increasingly also resorting to 'political consumerism', especially in high income and developed countries, to express their ethical

concerns about perceived violation of human rights or environmental protection rules. There is a history of young people engaging in consumer boycotts to pressure companies into adopting fair practices. In recent years, young activists have increasingly used boycotts (punishing business for unfavourable behaviour) and 'buycotts' (rewarding business for favourable behaviour) to promote their political agendas.[47] 'Voting-with-your-trolley',[48] as the latter form of participation has been termed, is becoming increasingly popular as a way to promote organic food and environment-friendly products. Although evidence on the effectiveness of political consumerism is mixed and dependent on a host of socio-political and economic factors,[49] it has clearly emerged as an important form of political participation among young people.

Besides getting involved in protests and campaigns, young people are also increasingly turning to non-governmental and civil society organisations, which for many are providing an alternative and often values-based path to activism or participation.[50] Although NGOs have facilitated young people's participation in 'low politics' and informal spheres, their impact on changing the culture of youth participation at the local level remains quite limited.[51] Some commentators have argued that by filling the vacuum created by a retreating or unresponsive state, NGOs often diffuse the disaffection of young people, diminishing the prospects of a grassroots movement emerging to fight for social change.[52]

Young people's involvement in protests and campaigns are a testament to the fact that they are as socially conscious and politically active today as they have ever been. The big difference today is that they are more willing to bypass formal structures in order to instigate meaningful social change.

3.5 Youth participation in the digital age

It is almost impossible for many people who are young today to imagine a world without the internet, so integral has it become to people's lives. Never before has a generation been as connected or well-informed – a watershed with profound implications for young people and the rest of the world. The widespread use of mobile phones, the technological prowess of the 'digital native' generation and the growing popularity and 'network effect' of social media, in combination, have given a fillip to youth participation in civic and political affairs. By making it easier to access information and ideas, and mobilise people, ICTs are empowering young people and neutralising the 'information asymmetry' of yesteryear.

There is enough evidence to suggest that the use of social media increases youth participation in civic and political life, especially in mature democracies.[53] Young people are using social media to express their opinion, participate in campaigns and organise protests. Empirical evidence for the positive impact of ICTs is the strongest for civic engagement. In countries where freedom of association and assembly are constrained and traditional media are censored, the role of social media is particularly critical in providing space to young people to express their opinion and mobilise support for their cause.[54] In the protest movements that rippled across the Middle East a few years ago – dubbed the 'Arab Spring' by many commentators – social media provided a platform for individuals to voice their concerns and seek strength in numbers that eventually removed the fear of a repressive state in their minds and galvanised them into taking direct action.[55]

The relationship between access to ICTs and youth participation is not straightforward, however. First, not all young people have access to ICTs or the skills to capitalise on them. This is elaborated on further in the section 'Inequality in youth participation' below. Also, while there is evidence of a positive correlation between use of social media and increased participation, the evidence of a causal link is unclear. To pick an example, social media may not be the reason why young people resort to protest in the first place, but research indicates that technology helps their agitation pick up steam quickly in certain circumstances, for instance, in countries that have large youth bulges.[56] Similarly, even decent access to ICTs is unlikely to spur political participation for those young people who think that their involvement will not make a difference.[57]

In addition, the jury is still out whether the effect of social media campaigning on participation is truly transformational. Evidence suggests that the greater use of digital technologies is unlikely to improve significantly youth engagement in formal political structures and processes such as participation in election campaigns or voting.[58] Instead, most of the engagement in the digital space takes place in the 'low' or informal spheres of politics.[59] Engagement through social media can be tokenistic, failing to bring about the desired

outcome. Following the kidnapping of over 200 schoolgirls by the so-called Boko Haram group in Nigeria in 2014, the #BringBackOurGirls campaign 'went viral' – creating worldwide awareness and increasing pressure for action to rescue the kidnapped girls. Yet despite the outpouring of grief and anger generated by the social media campaign, it has thus far failed to secure the release of the schoolgirls. Described by some as 'clicktivism', low-level, online engagement such as signing e-petitions, sharing posts or using hashtags may in fact stand in the way of committed participation.[60] Proponents suggest that while the digital world has made it fairly easy to support a cause, the engagement is often superficial and short-lived, hardly helping the effort required to bring about tangible change.[61]

Another critical aspect of the digital age is that while ICTs and social media can help spread empowerment and information, they can just as easily be manipulated by governments, corporations and others to serve as a tool to exercise greater control through surveillance of citizens or the curtailment of free speech and choice.[62] Across the world, governments are trying to police social media on the pretext of upholding national security, preventing terrorism or safeguarding the public interest.[63] Certain avenues of political dissent in the digital realm are now heavily regulated and in some cases have even been deemed illegal or criminal.[64] Technology firms across the world are under pressure to facilitate such censorship.[65] And censorship has surfaced in many forms, from websites and social media platforms getting blocked in some countries to political activists being detained and journalists disappearing in others. In many cases, the persecuted happen to be young. In many fragile and conflict-affected states, such as Mexico, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Iraq and Syria, non-state actors have also increasingly targeted and punished activists, public intellectuals and journalists.

3.6 Partners in development: youth-led environmental activism

In recent years, young people have taken a leading role through formal structures and within informal movements to press for action on climate change and clean energy. At the international level, young people have been active in environmental negotiations through formal structures, such as the Major Group for Children and Youth.[66] The Major Group system, adopted at The Earth Summit in 1992, formalised the way individuals and organisations participate at the UN according to nine interest areas, including women, local government, business and industry, indigenous people, and children and youth.

In the negotiations at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), young people have been participating in the intergovernmental process since the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 5) in 1999. But the establishment of youth non-governmental organisations (YOUNGOs) – the UNFCCC observer constituency or network of youth-led organisations – has provided a conduit for the exchange of official information between young people and the UNFCCC secretariat since COP 15, which was held in Copenhagen in 2009. In practical terms, members of YOUNGOs now have the opportunity to address the plenary at the convention, make official submissions, and meet senior COP officials to convey their views and demands.

One of the most effective youth-led environmental campaigns is the 'divestment movement'. The cross-border network that makes up this movement mostly comprises students and young environmental activists. It seeks to put pressure on banks, universities, faith groups, pension funds and individuals to stop investing in the fossil fuel industry and instead put their money into renewable energy. The logic of the campaign is simple: do not invest money in companies or projects that in some shape or form are contributing to environmental degradation and climate change. In 2015, investments worth US$3.4 trillion were divested away from the fossil fuel industry.[67] Campaigning by students and activists has forced many universities and colleges, mostly in the USA and Europe, to switch endowments and investments away from fossil fuels.[68]

In May 2016, the 'largest global civil disobedience in the history of the climate movement' took place across 13 countries and, among other things, led to the shutting down of UK's largest opencast coal mine and the halting of $20 million worth of coal shipments in Australia.[69] Young activists were at the forefront of this campaign: planning, leading and directing the actions – giving their time, risking arrest and placing themselves in danger for a cause they really care about and relate to.

Being young in the age of climate change

Dr Adil Najam

Dean, Pardee School of Global Studies, Boston University, and Lead Author, Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change Assessment Reports

Anyone who is aged 30 years or younger has never, ever, in their entire life, seen a year that was not warmer than average.

This harrowing statistic – based on data from the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – is the single most damning articulation of the world that the young will inherit. Indeed, we have condemned the young of today to live in the age of global climate change. Here are five key implications of what this could mean for the young.

First. It should not have been so. It is the failure of my own generation to have acted in earnest or in time – despite having the knowledge and the resources – that will leave the young with an existential burden that could, and should, have been averted. Most importantly, because of our decades of disinterest and inaction, the pain and the cost of climate change will now be multiplied manyfold for the young.

Second, climate change is a very different problem for young people than it was for their parents. In very practical and real ways, climate change has now become a problem that needs to be addressed, not just averted. None of the old challenges of mitigation have been addressed. Yet horrendous new challenges of adaptation have assumed urgency. It is no longer something that 'could' happen in a distant future. It is, in too many places and for too many people, a reality that has to be dealt with today. In many cases, the climate challenge will manifest itself in the life of the young as disasters: floods, droughts, glacial melts, heatwaves, disease and epidemics, and more.

Third, climate adaptation will distract attention as well as resources from development. A year ago we asked a group of young people living along the foothills of the Himalayas (in Chitral, Pakistan) what they were most afraid of. Their response was swift and unequivocal: climate change. Living with now near-yearly floods resulting from glacial melt and exacerbated by mud-slides that erode entire mountain faces, these young people understood the impacts of climate change in very immediate terms. Importantly, they understood that because they were constantly dealing with climate impacts they did not have the resources or even the time to deal with other developmental priorities.

Fourth, climate change will hit the poorest first, and hit the poorest hardest. Climate, it turns out, is not only changing, it is cruel and also unjust. All evidence suggests that it will manifest its wrath most on those who are most vulnerable. Those, very often, who have contributed the least to the problem. Whether it is small islands, coastal communities, or those cultivating marginal lands, it is the already vulnerable who are often the most threatened by, and least able to deal with, climate calamities. The young within these communities could find their options more restricted and their capabilities more strained because of this.

Finally, developing climate resilience could provide a youth dividend. Although this will be neither easy nor cheap, a climate action strategy that moves away from broad-brush carbon accounting and disaster response and towards a holistic sustainable development paradigm could prove to be a vehicle for aligning climate response to youth development. This would involve, for example, designing the deployment of renewables as a source of employment and skill generation among the young, promoting sustainable agricultural processes as a means to maintaining robust rural communities, and aligning infrastructure development as an adaptation measure that responds to a changing climate and demography.

We leave our youth with a massive climate burden, but also with a massive responsibility: dealing with a problem that my generation has ignored. There is shame in this realisation. But there is also hope that young people will do a much better job on climate change than my generation has done, if only because it will affect them so much more immediately.

3.7 Inequality in youth participation

In developed countries, young people who are active in formal politics and protest movements tend to be more educated and empowered than others, leading to the further disenfranchisement of poor and uneducated youth.[70] In contrast, in Asia, where the young tend to be much better educated than older citizens, neither education nor income explains variations in voting patterns.[71] In Asia it has been suggested that there are cultural factors that help explain the lack of an association between education and voting with tradition dictating that young people should focus on their education, leaving politics to older people.[72]

Women are often under-represented in formal and informal politics, especially in traditional societies and developing countries.[73] In many developing countries where women are usually less educated and economically independent than men, visible female participation in public affairs is relatively low. By contrast, young women engage in much greater proportion in behind-the-scenes or less visible forms of participation, such as voting.[74] The impact of social media on these trends is difficult to discern, but women are more likely to be at the receiving end of abusive messages, threats and misogyny.[75] A study in Tanzania found that females are less confident than males that their participation in political activities could make a positive difference to their lives.[76]

Social class and income also influence levels of political involvement. The very poorest may understandably focus on survival rather than concerning themselves with trying to influence national agendas.[77] In Africa, where at least seven out of ten young people live on less than US $2 a day, young people may be forced sell their vote, even though they regard vote rigging as morally repugnant.[78]

Digital technology is helping people connect with each other in different ways and clearly the young are more engaged with digital media than older people. Countries are already exploring the ways in which young people could be encouraged to participate in voting through their mobile phones. But such initiatives also run the risk of increasing the 'digital divide', whereby those without access to digital tools may find it even more difficult to participate than they already do. Almost 60 per cent of the world's population still does not have access to the internet and less than 20 per cent have access to high-speed broadband.[79] Other critical factors such as gender and income continue to affect access to and use of ICT. No wonder many are worried that ICTs may end up exacerbating rather than reducing inequalities within the youth population.[80]

3.8 Improving youth participation: the policy response

Changing youth aspirations and structural shifts in demographic and economic trends are forcing governments and political parties to engage with young people in new and sometimes ingenious ways. The motivations of governments and policymakers to encourage the participation of young people in formal political processes may vary. Sometimes it stems from a genuine concern to ensure all sections of the electorate have a voice, sometimes the political class sees young people as a growing and attractive vote bank, and sometimes there is a desire to prevent young people's frustrations morphing into organised or violent protests.

There is a range of ways in which governments and political parties attempt to increase youth participation, some of which are more effective than others. In some countries, governments launch campaigns to revive young people's interest in electoral politics.[81] For example: in Azerbaijan, the government runs awareness campaigns targeted at first-time young voters. In the UK and USA, politicians often enlist the services of pop stars in order to try and increase their appeal to younger members of the electorate. In India, the world's largest democracy and a country where nearly two-thirds of the population is younger than 35, political parties are reaching out to young people through social media and by enlisting the services of youthful celebrities such as sporting heroes and film stars.

In several countries, governments have made voting in elections compulsory. The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), a global intergovernmental organisation that promotes democracy, lists 26 countries, mostly Latin American, that currently have mandatory voting in place. Some of these countries even impose sanctions on voters who fail to cast their ballot. For example, in Brazil and Peru, abstaining voters are barred from accessing some public services and they may have to pay fines, too. In Australia and Singapore, those who do not vote are fined, and in Singapore also have their names removed from the electoral list. Soldiers, illiterate people and the elderly are often excluded from this rule in most countries.[82]

Available evidence suggests that countries with a compulsory-voting policy in place tend to have higher voter turnout than those where voting is a voluntary choice.[83] Although evidence of the impact of compulsory voting on youth political participation is less robust, it nevertheless suggests it has a positive impact on youth voter turnout.[84] Compulsory voting also reduces socio-economic disparities in voter turnouts, thus ameliorating inequalities in youth participation to some extent.[85] However, the impact of compulsory voting on broader political engagement, interest and knowledge is not clear, implying that compulsory voting may increase voter turnout but not necessarily lead to meaningful participation.[86]

In an effort to increase youth representation in national parliaments, some countries have also lowered minimum age requirements for parliamentary elections and introduced youth quotas – reserved seats for young people in parliament or made it mandatory for political parties to nominate a certain percentage of young candidates. Data compiled by the Inter-Parliamentary Union show that while a lower minimum age has not resulted in a significant increase in the share of young people in parliaments, introducing youth quotas has led to an increase in the number of young parliamentarians. Currently, at least four countries – Rwanda, Morocco, Kenya and Uganda – have reserved seats for young people and six have rules requiring parties to nominate a certain proportion of young candidates.[87]

In many countries, school curricula have also been revised to incorporate citizenship lessons to educate young people about political structures, political philosophy and the importance of participating in democratic processes. Citizenship education has sometimes been seen as promoting 'apolitical forms of citizenship' rather than encouraging 'political activism and the development of political agency'.[88] Evidence on the impact of civics lessons is mixed, however. A systematic review found little evidence that citizenship education has a clear and significant impact on formal political participation such as voting or registering to vote.[89] Nevertheless, there is evidence that citizenship education has a modestly positive effect on young people's personal social development and their participation in more individualised and informal forms of engagement.[90]

In an attempt to promote active citizenship among young people, many countries have established youth councils and youth parliaments that provide opportunities to young people to engage formally with legislative and policy processes. In theory, these platforms can play a vital role in linking governments, parliaments and young people.[91] But such youth-led platforms, often dependent on the patronage of governments, can be susceptible to manipulation by powerful interest groups.

In recent years, much energy has been exerted at the international level on empowering young people and enhancing their participation in decision-making processes. For instance, Commonwealth countries mandated the establishment of the Commonwealth Youth Council in 2012 (see Box 3.3), and the Commonwealth has also established several other youth networks focused on thematic issues such as climate change, human rights, entrepreneurship and peace-building. The first UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth was appointed in 2013. Events such as the World Youth Conference, the First Global Forum on Youth Policies, and the Commonwealth Youth Forum have emerged as influential platforms for informed and united young people to advocate and engage at international and intergovernmental levels.

Importantly, youth workers play a critical role in engaging and supporting young people to contribute as positive and constructive citizens. The Commonwealth's pioneering work over 40 years to educate and train youth workers, and ensure youth work is recognised and valued as a profession, underpins successful advances in youth development and participation in many member countries. The Commonwealth's Diploma and Bachelor's Degree in Youth Development Work are now being made available to higher education institutions across the world as an Open Education Resource.

The World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY),[92] which celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2015, outlines the ways in which UN member states should work to 'incorporate the contribution and responsibility of youth in the building and designing of the future'. Numerous regional and intergovernmental instruments, such as the Iberoamerican Convention on Youth Rights,[93] the African Youth Charter,[94] the Council of Europe's Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life,[95] and the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment,[96] also strive to promote the participation of young people. Such high-level political commitment sends out a clear signal about the importance of promoting the

Box 3.3

Commonwealth Youth Council

The Commonwealth Youth Council (CYC) is the official representative voice of the nearly 640 million young people in the Commonwealth. The CYC was established in 2013 as an initiative of the Commonwealth Secretariat, and was endorsed by Commonwealth Heads of Government at their biennial summit in that year as an 'autonomous, youth-led' organisation.

Led by a nine-member elected executive committee, the CYC acts as a coalition of national youth councils and other youth-led civil society and private sector bodies from across the 53 member countries of the Commonwealth. It seeks to take forward the youth development agenda by integrating young people into development and democratic processes at the national, regional, and pan-Commonwealth levels. The CYC also provides a non-partisan platform to young people from Commonwealth countries to collectively engage with heads of government and other leaders at the highest levels of decision making.

The CYC works to mobilise the voices of young people and advocate for governments to meaningfully engage young people, and takes action on its own youth-led projects. It partners with the Commonwealth Secretariat and other organisations with a focus on youth development.

voice of young people, developing youth-friendly policies and channelling resources to support youth development.

Despite the proliferation of participation structures and frameworks at national, regional and international levels, 'few would claim that these opportunities have resulted in the widespread and effective participation of young people'.[97] Some even argue that such formal structures have not only failed to enhance outcomes for young people but also inhibited more radical youth activism.[98]

3.9 Conclusion

Assessing the extent to which young people contribute to, or are able to participate in, the civic and political affairs of their communities and countries is difficult. Data from the 2016 YDI indicate that young people's role in civic and community affairs is increasing throughout the world. Institutional arrangements at national and international levels are also becoming more conducive to greater youth participation in political processes, with the SDGs providing the roadmap for everyone to work more in concert. Yet, the impact of these developments on the desire and ability of young people to participate in democratic processes has waxed and waned.

There is enough evidence to suggest that all over the world youth participation in formal political processes and institutions is declining. However, in relatively young democracies, youth participation in formal or traditional politics is fairly strong, signalling the optimism and trust of the youth in these fledgling democracies that their voice and vote can make a difference.

The decline in young people's interest in formal politics does not, however, mean that they now care less about politics. The facts point to quite the opposite: youth are more engaged with civic and political affairs today than ever before. They just seem to prefer alternative modes of participation over the more formal routes. All over the world, young people have repeatedly demonstrated in the past few years that they are intensely interested in matters that are eventually decided by the village council, the town hall, the local government or the national parliament. The rising tide of protests, political consumerism and populism, and single-issue campaigns erupting on every continent all point to the increasing appeal of non-traditional and informal modes of participation to a youth population that is better educated and more aware and – for the first time in history – has the tools to mobilise and organise at short notice, thanks largely to the low-cost and high-speed connectivity provided by mobile phones, the internet and social media.

To reverse the trend of declining youth participation in formal politics, governments and international agencies have introduced measures such as compulsory voting, lower age requirements, options to vote online, youth quotas and citizenship education, and established youth councils. While some of these initiatives have led to an increase in young people's participation in certain countries and circumstances, they have yet to result in a

transformational shift in the state of young people's engagement in formal politics.

While the rise in youth participation in community affairs and informal politics is a positive development, it is also important to ensure that political institutions and democratic processes are effective and flexible enough to inspire young people to play a more active role in formal politics. For that to happen, states and institutions need to become more responsive to the ways in which young people prefer to engage and communicate.

The young are ready to serve – and lead

Angela Crawley MP

Member of Parliament for Lanark and Hamilton East, United Kingdom (Age: 29)

The traditional image of a politician in the UK is a grey haired man in a grey suit, distinguishable only by the colour of his tie; this idea persists in legislatures across the world.

Men have typically dominated the institutions of power for generations. For decades, the older statesman was, indeed, the only statesman.

In contrast, I believe parliament should be representative of the entire country – not only geographically, but demographically, allowing for a balance of gender, sexuality, race, socio-economic background and age. While our legislatures are still predominantly made up of middle-class, privately educated men, things are changing.

The parliament in which I sit is the most ethnically diverse, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender inclusive and female-friendly the UK has ever had. However, at the 2015 parliamentary election in the UK 13 members were elected under the age of 30, including myself at 28, which was a drop from the 15 members in that age group elected in 2010.

When I began in politics I responded to what I saw around me: the poverty and inequality I observed in my home town of Hamilton, across Scotland, and in the world at large. I felt that the established order was failing people and I wanted to make a change. I felt that I did not have time to waste as people were suffering from government decisions. I had a voice that could make a change, and my age was not really a factor in my decision to go into politics. As a student, I worked for members of the Scottish Parliament. This gave me the confidence to put myself forward, regardless of what anyone may have thought of me based on my age.

By the time I became a local councillor in Hamilton at the age of 24, I had already come up against many of the challenges that face a young politician. I spent a lot of my early years as a councillor proving to older colleagues that a young woman was just as capable of wrapping her head around the issues faced by South Lanarkshire Council – the county in which I grew up, and which I now represent in parliament – as any of them.

Not only did I quickly develop a tough skin when it came to political discussions, but I also had to have the courage of my convictions when arguing for the needs of my constituents.

Being a young politician involves challenging the assumptions and prejudices of people who believe that you are not up to the job, simply because of your age. It is assumed that young people have very little experience and few ideas of benefit. This is simply not true. I spent a long time working closely with politicians and studying the issues I speak about. Having a strong focus and will has nothing to do with age.

The only way we can ensure future parliaments are more representative of the population is to make sure that gender, race, sexual orientation or socio-economic background are never a barrier to anyone standing for elected office. However, I do not believe that being young or old makes people better representatives of their communities. Anyone can represent anyone, so long as they listen, engage and reflect. Being a good MP is about representation, and we should celebrate our diversity.

Young people deserve to have their voices heard loudly and clearly. It is time all institutions of power recognise the value that young people can bring to elected office. We may be young, but we are engaged, and our eyes are wide open to the challenges and the much needed changes that can be made.

How the youth can help build resilient economies

Ambassador Irwin Larocque

Secretary-General, Caribbean Community

I am pleased to provide a Caribbean Community (CARICOM) perspective for the 2016 YDI, which is an important resource for youth stakeholders across the globe. Approximately 63 per cent or nine million of the CARICOM's population is under the age of 30. This implies that special policies should be developed to facilitate their involvement in the social and economic development of our region, which comprises small island and low-lying coastal developing states. Youth-related data are critical to inform the development of relevant policies, programmes and activities for youth. The CARICOM has put in place the CARICOM Youth Development Action Plan (CYDAP) 2017–2021 and has been actively engaged in developing a regional monitoring and evaluation framework for the Plan, which would generate comparable data on member states. In this short article, I will discuss the vulnerability of small states and the role of youth in building resilience.

The vulnerability and resilience of CARICOM member states

Strategic Plan for the Caribbean Community 2015–2019: Repositioning CARICOM has identified economic resilience as one of the key strategic priorities of the Community.[99] The Plan defines resilience as the ability to protect against and recover from any adversity. In keeping with the *Declaration of Paramaribo on the Future of Youth in the Caribbean Community* (2010),[100] which identified young people as a valuable but under-used resource for community development, the Strategic Plan highlights the importance of youth development as a key element of resilience-building.

The main goal of economic resilience, as defined by the community, is to engender sustainable growth of the economies of member states. In order to achieve this goal, our youth have to be strategically positioned and prepared to play their role in building that resilience and making the region more competitive in the global marketplace.

Every member state within CARICOM faces economic, social and environmental challenges, including high indebtedness, susceptibility to external economic shocks, high energy costs, unemployment, poverty, crime, climate change, natural disasters and environmental management. As a result, CARICOM advocates strongly for the region's special needs as SIDS, within the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Challenges to youth contribution to resilient Caribbean economies

Youth in CARICOM face many economic and social challenges, which hinder their ability to contribute to economic growth and development in a sustainable way. This was underscored in the findings of the report of the CARICOM Commission on Youth Development (CCYD), titled *Eye on the Future*.[101] The report makes a strong case for investment in youth development by CARICOM governments and highlights the opportunity cost of the lack of such investments. For example, Jamaica's GDP would increase by 0.78 per cent if it could achieve full enrolment in primary education, by 1.37 per cent if there was a similar outcome in secondary education, and by 5.47 per cent with a 30 per cent enrolment at the tertiary level. By reducing youth unemployment to adult levels the economy would grow by 2.46 per cent of GDP in Saint Lucia, by 2.3 per cent in St Vincent and The Grenadines, by 1.3 per cent in Haiti and by 1.1 per cent in Belize.

The report confirmed what some experts have also concluded: that young people believe the education system does not prepare them adequately for the world of work. Rapid advances in information and communications technology over the past few decades have created a serious mismatch between the education system and the labour market. One consequence is that levels of youth unemployment in the region are among the highest in the world.

That is one of the reasons the community has launched a Human Resource Development Commission to develop a Regional Education and Human Resource Development 2030 Strategy that would adopt a holistic approach to the transformation of education. It would, among other things, ensure the continual alignment of education and training with the emerging academic, technical

and social skills required for the 21st century economy and society.

The creativity, innovation and unique vision of young people and their willingness to challenge the status quo make them ideally suited to play a leading role in responding to the challenges of globalisation and regional integration.

CARICOM governments and all relevant partners are aiming to develop more evidence-based plans and policies to further youth development at national and regional levels to build vibrant societies and resilient economies. The youth must have an integral role in shaping those plans and policies given that it is their future at stake.

Notes

1 Checkoway 2011.
2 Brodie *et al.* 2009.
3 Major models are fully explored in Karsten 2012.
4 Arnstein 1969.
5 Munroe 2002 and Bourne 2010.
6 Lamprianou 2013.
7 The definition of Article 12 of the CRC in the text box uses UNICEF [n.d.].
8 Gaventa 2004.
9 UNICEF 1989.
10 Source: UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 2007.
11 Nussbaum and Dixon 2012.
12 Lundy 2007.
13 Lansdown 2011.
14 First conceptualised in *World Development Report 2007* (World Bank 2007) and later extended in *Youth Participation in Development* (Youthpolicy.org 2010) by the UK's Department for International Development. The model was most recently adopted by UNDP in *Youth Strategy 2014–2017* (UNDP 2014).
15 Carter 2015.
16 Sen 1985.
17 Badham and Wade 2010.
18 Brodie *et al.* 2009.
19 UN Security Council, Resolution 2250.
20 Cammaerts *et al.* 2016; Fieldhouse, Tranmer and Russell 2007.
21 *Economist* 2016c.
22 Rhodes 2016.
23 Resnick and Casale 2011.
24 Chang 2012.
25 *Ibid.*
26 *Economist* 2014b; Marsh, O'Toole and Jones 2007; see also Electoral Commission 2002.
27 Chang 2012.
28 Moon, Park and Whelan-Wuest 2016.
29 Marsh, O'Toole and Jones 2007.
30 Cammaerts *et al.* 2016.
31 Flanagan 2009.
32 Resnick and Casale 2014; Lall 2014.
33 Zhang and Lallana 2013; Henn and Foard 2014; see also Cammaerts *et al.* 2016; Harris, Wyn and Younes 2010.
34 Saha, Print and Edwards 2005.
35 Alm 2015.
36 Sika 2012; Lall 2014.
37 Resnick and Casale 2014; Zhang and Lallana 2013.
38 Furlong and Cartmel 2007.
39 Rumi and Nauman 2013.
40 Giddens 1991.
41 Vromen, Loader and Xenos 2015.
42 Lewis 2015; see also Bang 2004.
43 Harris, Wyn and Younes 2010.
44 Moon, Park and Whelan-Wuest 2016.
45 For details see *Economist* 2015; *Economist* 2016d; *Economist* 2016b; *Economist* 2014a.
46 Alm 2015.
47 Neilson 2010.
48 *Economist* 2006.
49 Baek 2010; Zhang 2015.
50 Collin 2015.
51 Saeed 2014.
52 Roy 2014.
53 Boulianne 2015; see also Xenos, Vromen and Loader 2014; Bode 2012.
54 Zhang and Lallana 2013.
55 Mason 2013.
56 Ang, Dinar and Lucas 2014.
57 David 2013.
58 Boulianne 2015.
59 Collin 2015.
60 Shearlaw 2015.
61 Barassi 2009.
62 World Bank 2016.
63 *Economist* 2016a.

64 Bessant 2016
65 Ahmed 2013.
66 UN Major Group for Children and Youth (http://childrenyouth.org/).
67 350.org. 2015.
68 McGee 2016.
69 350.org 2016.
70 Lake and Huckfield 1998.
71 Chang 2012.
72 *Ibid*.
73 Acharya *et al*. 2010; see also Wang and Dai 2013.
74 Coffé and Bolzendahl 2010.
75 Gardiner, B. *et al.* 2016.
76 Alm, J. 2015.
77 Henn and Foard 2014; Flanagan 2009.
78 Resnick and Casale 2011.
79 World Bank 2016.
80 Fuchs 2013.
81 Gretschel *et al*. 2014.
82 IDEA 2016.
83 Singh 2011; see also Czesnik 2013; IDEA 2016.
84 Seraina Bousbah 2012; see also Singh 2011.
85 Gallego 2015.
86 Singh 2015; see also Sheppard 2015.
87 Inter-Parliamentary Union 2016.
88 Biesta, G. 2009.
89 Manning and Edwards 2014.
90 Bourn 2016.
91 Gretschel *et al*. 2014.
92 United Nations 1995.
93 Iberoamerican Young Organisation 2005.
94 African Union 2006.
95 Council of Europe 2012.
96 Commonwealth Secretariat 2006.
97 Forbrig 2005.
98 Sukarieh and Tannock 2015.
99 CARICOM 2014.
100 Special Summit of Heads of Government on Youth 2010.
101 CARICOM 2010b.

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4

Agents of Peace: Young People and Violent Conflict

This chapter tracks the ways in which violence and conflict are evolving and affecting young people in different parts of the world. It also examines how 'youth bulges' can potentially contribute to both violent conflict and peace-building.

Chapter 4
Agents of Peace: Young People and Violent Conflict

Violence and conflict are among the most important developmental challenges confronting young people today. A peaceful environment is a pre-condition for positive youth development. Yet young people in many parts of the world are caught in a vortex of violence and armed conflict that is rarely of their own making.[1] Close to 600 million young people live in fragile or conflict-affected areas,[2] and many of them are still in their teens.[3] The physical and mental toll violence is inflicting on young people is hard to imagine, but perhaps even harder to estimate is the harm that it is doing to their long-term prospects and well-being.

4.1 Defining violence

The Commonwealth defines violence with reference to respect and understanding. 'Respect' refers to a way of treating others, regardless of their age, gender, race, religion, or other aspects of identity, with fairness and dignity.[4] In contrast, disrespect is the experience of being discriminated against or treated in a demeaning way. 'Understanding' involves an ability to comprehend others' perspective and acknowledge that one's culture and experience are not the only models for thinking or acting. Violence, as defined by the Commonwealth Commission on Respect and Understanding, a panel of eminent elders chaired by Professor Amartya Sen, 'is the most recognisable form of disrespect, a very public indicator that respect and understanding have broken down'.[5] The World Health Organisation defines violence as the 'intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation'.[6]

Violence takes multiple and often interlinked forms. Violence can be direct – an individual or group of people is subjected to physical or verbal, psychological or sexual harm – and structural, whereby a social, economic or institutional structure limits the ability of an individual or a specific group of people to

meet their needs. The Commonwealth makes a distinction between violence that is mainly physical in nature and violence that does not involve physical contact but has deep psychological effects.[7] The psychological form of violence is experienced most intensely by young people marginalised by poverty, social status, gender or disability.

Young people experience multiple forms of violence including physical assault, suicide, bullying, gang violence, armed conflict, and sexual violence. This chapter primarily focuses on violent conflict and its impact on the lives of young people.

4.2 Relationship between youth development and violence

The relationship between youth development and violence is complex and, in some cases, symbiotic. Violence can affect short and long-term youth development outcomes: the problem is particularly acute in fragile states, where an under-developed youth population can easily fall prey to violence or become perpetrators of violence themselves. Positive youth development is thus a critical dimension of peace-building more broadly, as it can be both a product and producer of a peaceful society. All too often, however, young people in many parts of the world are viewed and treated as potential troublemakers or powerless victims of violence and conflict.

4.2.1 Young people as perpetrators of violence

Young people, particularly young men but increasingly young women too, are a dominant demographic group among those who perpetrate violence, which has led some to regard young people as a threat to global peace and security. When there is an outbreak of violence, as witnessed during the Arab Spring protests, young people are often portrayed as leading actors in the conflict.[8] While young people's role as perpetrators of violence is well documented and highlighted, it is also true that only a minority of young people in any society is guilty of instigating or committing acts of violence.[9] Even in conditions and contexts characterised by injustice, inequality and deprivation, most young people shun violence. The majority of young people caught in violent conflicts are mostly fighting for survival and a brave minority even tries to foster peace despite the risk of getting killed or incarcerated.[10]

Often when young people participate in violent conflict, they are a part of more established groups such as trade unions.[11] Youth participation in conflict can sometimes be involuntary or a result of extreme coercion. For example, the involvement of young people in armed conflict in Uganda, Sudan and Nepal in recent years occurred primarily as a result of their abduction by armed insurgents and rebel groups.[12] Children and young people have been frequently forcibly recruited into combat roles by rebel groups – for example, in Burundi, Guinea, Liberia and Rwanda – and their participation has had a long-lasting and traumatic impact on the rest of their lives.[13] Those who were child soldiers not so long ago are a part of the youth population today. It is also worth noting that young people are likely to make up a significant proportion of national armed forces, with the definition of youth fitting into the military recruitment age range in many countries.[14]

4.2.2 Are countries with a youth bulge more prone to violent conflicts?

Although the majority of young people do not participate in armed violence, in many parts of the world a minority of youth does so. Different risk factors at individual, community and country level explain why some young people turn to violence and others do not. Risk factors are 'aspects of a person, group, or environment that make youth violence more likely to occur'.[15] At the individual level, risk factors can include a range of psychological and personal factors including engagement in risk-taking, peer pressure, unemployment, socio-economic status, and a history of juvenile delinquency.[16] At the societal and country level, risk factors include a range of wider socio-economic and political factors such as poverty, inequality, illiteracy, availability of guns and drugs, unresponsive political systems and poor institutional accountability. The more these risk factors accumulate, the more the likelihood that a young person will engage in violence.

While the debate on youth violence has many sub-texts, young people's involvement in armed conflicts has often been correlated with demographic trends. Some researchers have drawn a link between the existence of large cohorts of youth and the risk of armed conflict, although the empirical evidence is inconclusive and contested. Figure 4.1 shows the correlation between internal peace and the proportion of youth population in countries. It suggests that countries with a low proportion of young people tend to have a higher level of internal peace, and vice versa. This correlation, however, does not establish causality

Figure 4.1 The relationship between positive peace and youth bulges, 2015

Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

and there are also significant exceptions to it. There are many countries that have large youth populations and are still relatively peaceful: Oman, Botswana, Malaysia, Jamaica, Qatar and Bhutan, to name a few. In contrast, a few countries, including Ukraine, Russia and Thailand, have relatively small youth cohorts in their total population but are more susceptible to violence than many of their peers.

The research that links large youth cohorts with social unrest and conflict identifies several transmission channels and causal pathways. One strand of research links young people's propensity to engage in violence with their assumed developmental immaturity and higher vulnerability to revolutionary ideas or propaganda.[17] Other studies maintain that governments are more repressive when faced with a large youth cohort.[18] However, the most prominent approach on the subject stresses the role of economic factors in making large cohorts of youth more prone to violence. According to this approach, youth bulges increase both opportunities and motives for political violence.[19] The first major study on the subject found that large youth bulges increase the likelihood of armed conflict, especially under conditions of economic stagnation.[20] This thesis was based on the idea that youth bulges ensure an abundant supply of young people with low opportunity costs.

Large cohorts of young people are more likely to experience unemployment, which in turn strengthens the motive for violence.[21] In a similar vein, a more recent study found that the mere presence of a youth bulge is not enough to generate violence. Instead, the increased risk of violence that a youth bulge can portend is explained by the pressure that large youth cohorts exert on the total labour force.[22]

Other studies emphasise the role of educational attainment as an intervening variable. Research shows that countries with a less educated but large youth cohort are more prone to violence and political instability. This is particularly true for young males in low and middle-income countries, although it is dependent on structural economic factors,[23] especially in many developing countries where young people have relatively high education levels but still fail to find decent jobs.

Although the theories linking youth bulges with violence often get highlighted in policy and political debates, the empirical evidence to corroborate them is weak and inconclusive. Evidence demonstrates that a youth bulge by itself does not necessarily lead to violence and instability.[24] Similarly, unemployment or underemployment among youth cohorts does not inevitably translate into violence and war. As can be seen in Figure 4.1, there are many countries that have large youth bulges but are still relatively peaceful. As many studies have shown, a range of other political, social and economic factors – such as unemployment, prevalence of corruption, institutional quality, urbanisation, socio-economic fault lines, inequality and limited political participation – are in play.[25] The risk of violent conflict increases when a youth bulge combines with one or more of these wider factors. For example, a recent study shows that corruption is more likely to lead to instability in countries that have large youth bulges.[26]

While the existence of a youth bulge in a country does not have to lead to violence, the above findings, nevertheless, suggest that large youth cohorts can be at risk if their skills are not developed and decent work opportunities are not provided.

4.2.3 Young people and violent extremism: the evidence so far

Recent research on terrorism and violent extremism also shows little conclusive evidence on the link between youth employment (or the lack of it) and armed violence. Studies have shown that the link between terrorism and unemployment and socio-economic status is weak.[27] Instead, evidence shows that the educated middle class is increasingly joining terrorist organisations across the world.[28] Some scholars have maintained that it is radicalisation through a very perverted interpretation of religion that motivates many young people to engage in violence;[29] most scholars downplay the role of religion and instead stress the role of other factors such as identity crisis and experiences of racism.[30] Social psychologists have stressed the importance of a need for identity and sense of belonging in the lives of young people.[31] Others have argued that the rise of terrorism is due to a generational revolt. The current generation of angry young people, the argument goes, is using a warped view of religion to rebel against society.[32]

On the one hand, young people, especially those belonging to diaspora communities or minority groups, are falling back on primary identity markers such as faith or ethnicity in response to real or perceived experiences of cultural marginalisation and a sense of exclusion from the mainstream identity narratives of their host or home countries. On the other hand, the world is seeing the rise of exclusionary and populist identity politics that is often based on a restrictive notion of citizenship and cultural and political hegemony of the dominant social group – a form of collective identity that may also be a reaction to the potentially homogenising forces of globalisation.

Again, the evidence on youth radicalisation is inconclusive and mixed. Nevertheless, the following important insights emerge from the existing body of research on the subject:

- The available evidence suggests that there is no clear profile or single causal pathway that can define the process of radicalisation. Instead, a combination of individual and structural factors explains why some young people might join terrorist organisations or armed groups at a particular point in time.
- Context matters – a lot. The combination of proximate and structural factors that motivate young people to participate in violence varies significantly across contexts.
- Poverty and unemployment alone do not explain why some young people turn to violent extremism. There is increasing evidence that young people from all socio-economic backgrounds are participating in violent extremism, though poverty or unemployment may make some individuals or groups of young people more vulnerable than others.
- Issues of identity and belonging appear to be central to the radicalisation of young people, particularly among displaced and diaspora communities.

4.2.4 Young people as victims of violence

Contrary to what the theories on youth bulges posit, young people are often the victims of violence. Throughout the world, *physical violence* is a major aspect in the lives of children and young people, and continues to be a serious threat to their health and development. One in every three young people lives in a fragile or conflict-affected area. An estimated 200,000 homicides occur worldwide among young people each year, which make up 43 per cent of the total homicides each year.[33] Eight out of ten young homicide victims are male and nearly all these deaths occur in low and middle-income countries.[34]

Youth and Violence

200,000 young people aged 10-29
are homicide victims each year:

45%

OF THE GLOBAL ANNUAL
HOMICIDE RATE

200,000

83%

OF THESE YOUNG
HOMICIDE VICTIMS
ARE MALE

Source: **WHO 2016**

In addition to homicides, young people also disproportionately suffer from other forms of violence including sexual violence, bullying and physical fighting, road traffic injuries, suicide etc. For example: young people, especially females, continue to be victims of dating and sexual violence. According to a 2016 WHO report, nearly one in four women is likely to experience sexual violence by an intimate partner, and up to one-third of adolescent girls see their first sexual experience as being forced.[35] Similarly bullying and physical fighting are common among young people. A 2014 WHO study found that, worldwide, one in two young males were involved in physical fighting during the past 12 months compared with one in four young females.[36] Gender differences were less marked for bullying, with a cross-country average of 43 per cent for young males and 37 per cent for young females.

Besides direct physical violence, young people also disproportionately endure structural violence. Structural violence is a form of violence where, rather than a physical or verbal confrontation between people, a social structure or institution limits a person's ability to meet their needs.[37] This type of violence manifests itself as a form of intense yet unspoken disregard.[38] It is experienced most seriously by young people marginalised by poverty, social status, gender or disability. It is often communicated through passive rejection of their existence.[39] Marginalised young people facing this form of violence are denied access to key social services such as health, education and justice, and are excluded from decision-making processes. It is often prevalent in contexts where inequalities are entrenched and have become institutionalised. For example: in the area of health, young people – especially young women – face significant forms of structural and institutional violence. These include experiencing barriers to independent health advice and treatment, access to abortion or reproductive health services, and mental health services.

In some countries, young men and women may be able to leave school, be employed, get married and have children from the age of 16, and still require parental consent to see a doctor for sexual advice and services. These kinds of structural barriers infringe young people's rights, but also push them into dangerous situations: an estimated 22 million women have unsafe abortions each year, resulting in 47,000 annual deaths.[40] Just as when young people's political participation is restricted they turn to protest and revolution, when youth are denied access to vital services they seek an alternative – potentially more risky – path.

Another example of institutionalised discrimination against young people is the minimum age legislation that denies or restricts their access to vital services and rights. International law encourages states to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility to 18 years.[41] Despite a near-universal legal age of majority and right to vote at 18 years, the global average age of criminal responsibility is 12.1 years. While adolescents do not have the right to act independently or express political views, they are held legally responsible for their actions. In 65 countries, the age of criminal responsibility is 10 years or below.[42] Academic research has shown that juveniles imprisoned at a young age are likely to suffer long-term mental health problems, earn less and find it harder to find and sustain employment, achieve lower levels of education and have a higher likelihood of engaging in crime and re-offending throughout their lives in comparison with juveniles who have not been imprisoned at a young age.[43] A legal framework that allows for the imprisonment of children is likely to restrict and deny their development as young people and independent adults.

4.3 How does violence affect youth development?

Violence and armed conflicts have long-lasting and wide-ranging consequences for young people and the communities they are a part of. Deaths and injuries are the most damaging outcomes of violence. Beyond these, violence can result in mental health problems and increased health-risk behaviours among young people, such as smoking, alcohol and drug use, and unsafe sex.[44] At the societal and national level, violent conflicts negatively affect access to and quality of healthcare, education, employment and judicial services.[45] A recent report estimated the impact of conflict on education in terms of direct and indirect costs and concluded that conflict reduces educational access and has significant negative impact on economic growth in the long run.[46] Similarly, another recent study shows that political unrest and civil wars have reversed much of the progress many Arab countries had made in healthcare over the past couple of decades.[47] The last five years, the study reveals, have a seen rapid deterioration of healthcare systems in Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen.

Young women and girls, as well as those who are the poorest among young people, are hardest hit by violent conflicts. While violent conflicts' mortality burden is disproportionately borne by young males, young women and children face serious psychological effects and constitute the majority

of those forcibly displaced.[48] Women and young girls are often targeted as a strategy of war. Sexual and physical violence against young girls is used as a weapon to terrorise and humiliate communities, and disrupt their social fabric.[49] Young women and girls face risks to their reproductive health and are subjected to additional workloads and care-giving responsibilities. Conflict may also lead to an increase in child marriages, as many parents see early marriage as a strategy to protect girls from sexual violence and economic hardship.[50] Although conflicts disrupt both male and female youth's access to public services, girls often end up in a more disadvantaged position compared with young boys. For example, it has been found that in certain contexts conflict has had a more adverse impact on the education of girls than boys. In countries such as Nigeria, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Mali, where some armed militant groups openly oppose female education, girls' education has been deliberately targeted.[51] The targeted attacks on girls and their schools have created an atmosphere of fear and further discouraged parents from sending girls to schools.

Forced displacement is one of the most visible consequences of violent conflict for children and young people. While many move within their country, others have been forced to make dangerous and often fatal journeys by land or sea routes to seek refuge abroad. According to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the world is 'witnessing the highest levels of displacement on record' with more than one-half of the 21.3 million refugees being under the age of 18, of whom 54 per cent come from Somalia, Afghanistan and Syria alone.[52] Since 2011, 4.9 million people have fled Syria because of the civil conflict[53] that has claimed lives through violence and isolation of towns and communities. Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan are home to approximately 4.2 million refugees, and 1.2 million people made the journey to Europe to seek help and support in 2015.[54] For many, this is a treacherous journey, and the 95,000 unaccompanied minors undertaking such a trek[55] are at increased risk of abuse and human trafficking. In early 2016, 10,000 unaccompanied child refugees disappeared after arriving in Europe.[56] Human trafficking is one of the worst manifestations of violence: the forced exploitation of vulnerable people through labour, sex or servitude.[57]

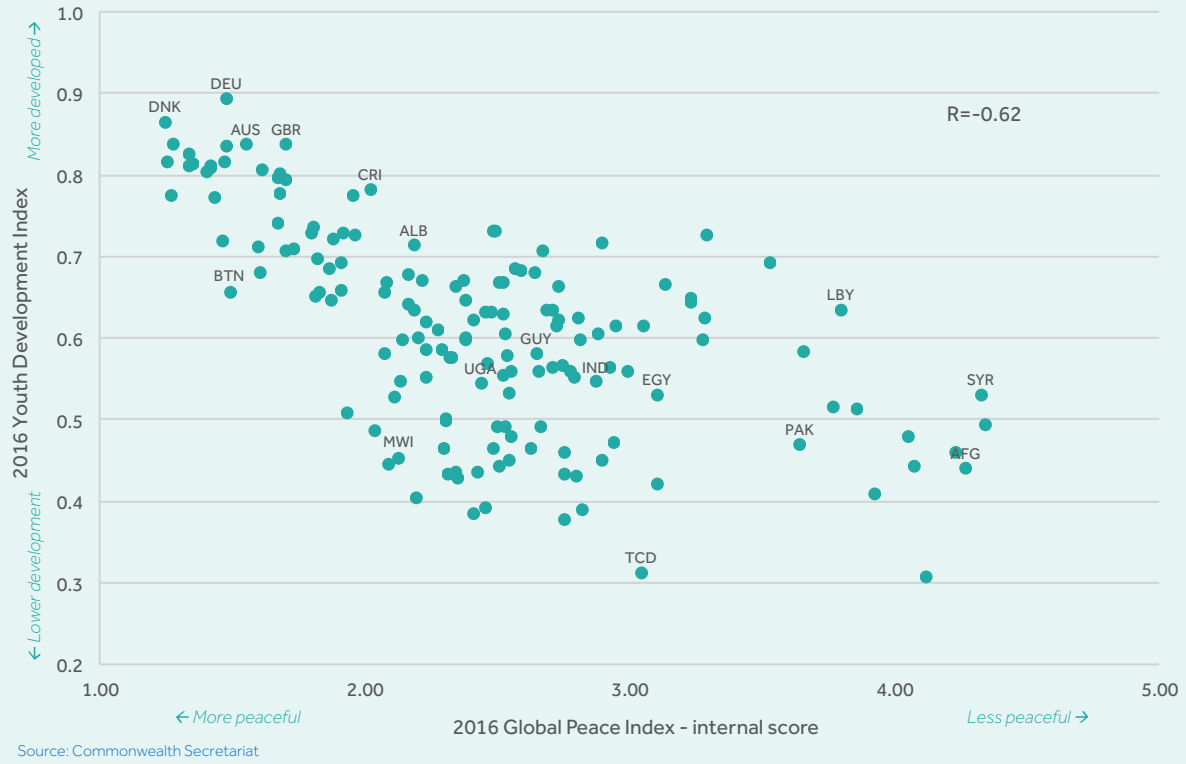
While media attention has often focused on the physical journey itself, this is neither the beginning nor the end of the story for young people. In deciding to leave their homes, they leave behind their life, families, schools, jobs and loved ones, and face legal, social, economic and cultural barriers in their host country. From not speaking the local language, to difficulties finding housing, not having the right to work, and the fear of not being allowed to stay, refugees of all ages – especially those who are young – face threats to their physical, psychological and mental health. The threat to young people's development and well-being is critically undermined through forced displacement and migration, and requires a huge response in compassion and investment from governments and civil society.

Empirical evidence also testifies to the negative impact of violent conflicts on youth development. The UN estimates that countries affected by conflict and fragility lagged behind the most in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.[58] Violence also adversely affects poverty-alleviation efforts in countries. On average, countries affected by major violence have significantly higher poverty rates than those that have not experienced violence.[59]

The 2016 YDI also confirms that violent conflict has a detrimental effect on the lives of young people. The three countries that showed the greatest decline in their YDI scores between 2010 and 2015 – Pakistan, Angola and Haiti – have all been affected by civil unrest, armed conflict and/or natural disasters in the recent past. Figure 4.2 shows the correlation between the YDI scores of countries and their levels of internal (domestic) peace as measured by the Global Peace Index. The figure shows that globally, youth development is lowest in the least peaceful countries. The GPI measures the impact of internally and externally driven forms of violence and thus captures the levels of violence triggered by, among other indicators, outright armed conflict and interpersonal violence, as measured by the homicide rate. These different forms of violence can be further disaggregated and analysed. While violent conflict does significant damage to youth development, criminal and interpersonal violence are the more pervasive forms of violence affecting many youth around the world.

To sum up, violence has an adverse effect on the development of young people. The impact is particularly acute in low and middle-income countries and fragile states, which, on account

Figure 4.2 The correlation between the YDI scores of countries and their levels of domestic peace as measured by the GPI



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

of their poor governance and weak institutional structures, are less resilient to conflicts and natural disasters than other states. The fact that most fragile states have high youth bulges further weakens their ability to withstand conflicts or to recover from them.

4.4 Youth and peace-building

Over the past few years, the role of young people in peace-building has evolved rapidly, culminating in December 2015 with the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security. The resolution states that young people can be strong and active players in creating peaceful societies, free from violence and conflict, and have the potential to be 'valuable innovators of change'.[60]

Peace-building is ultimately about securing an environment where peace can flourish. Its champions recognise the complex conflicts that states now endure – encompassing civil war, armed militias, cyber-warfare, terrorism or violent groups – and therefore promote a cross-sector agenda that integrates the political, security, human rights, humanitarian and development aspects of peace-building. However, the preponderance of large youth bulges in many conflict-ridden countries, or in areas still recovering from devastating bouts of violence, means that the responsibility to 'sustain peace over the long term' will increasingly be a burden that young people have to bear.[61]

Young people are emerging as vocal and effective actors within the peace-building movement at the global level. The community-level peace-building in which many young people are engaged, often in the face of great danger to themselves and their families, and the rejection by a majority of young people of extremist ideologies and causes, are proof that they can be highly effective agents and champions of peace.

Young people's role in peace-building at the international level is championed and framed by the Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding,[62] developed in 2014 through a consultative process led by the UN Interagency Network on Youth Development and the

Young Changemakers

Victor Ochen

Uganda

Born in a conflict-scarred part of northern Uganda, Victor grew up in refugee camps for internally displaced people. His childhood was a constant struggle to survive disease, hunger and war. His dreams were always hostage to the possibility of sudden and brutal terror. In 2005, at the peak of the violence that was ravaging his country, Victor formed the African Youth Initiative Network (AYINET) to help the innocent victims of war and mobilise Ugandan youth in support of peace in the country.

Today, AYINET is a youth-led human rights organisation that facilitates rehabilitation, surgery and emotional healing for those affected by the violence in Uganda. It also provides leadership training to young people who could not complete school because of the war. In the ten years since it was established, AYINET has supported over 9,000 people who have suffered physical or psychological damage as a result of the conflict. It also helps female victims of sexual violence and exploitation to cope with their suffering and reclaim their future.

Victor and his young team hope their work will heal divisions in the country and their efforts to build a safe and peaceful country will pay off soon. Victor was named the Commonwealth Youth Worker of the Year in 2015, the same year that AYINET was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Assmaah Helal

Australia

Young refugees are highly vulnerable to social isolation in their countries of resettlement, where they have to come to grips with learning a new language or adapting to a different culture very quickly. Through her work as the programmes operations manager at Football United, an Australian NGO, Assmaah has demonstrated that sport can assist young refugees integrate and assimilate in their new homelands.

A former football captain herself, using sport as a tool for promoting development has provided Assmaah with the motivation to transfer her success on the football field to her passion: working with young people. Through a series of football-based leadership development initiatives, Assmaah and her team have helped over 6,000 young people, particularly young refugees, women and girls, become more resilient and empowered. Since 2006, Football United's programmes have contributed to community cohesion within refugee and immigrant communities, and to fostering greater integration across ethnic and racial divisions.

Assmaah was also a member of an advocacy campaign that succeeded in persuading the Fédération Internationale de Football Association, football's governing body, to change its rules and allow the hijab to be worn by Muslim women and girls on the football field as part of the official uniform. As Chair of the Commonwealth Youth Sport for Development and Peace Network, Assmaah co-authored a youth advocacy toolkit, encouraging young people throughout the Commonwealth to explore how sport can contribute to youth development in their communities and to persuade decision-makers to adopt sports-based approaches to youth development.

Young Changemakers

Gulalai Ismail

Pakistan

More than 50,000 people have been killed and millions have been internally displaced by war and violence in north-west Pakistan in the last three decades. Held back by a lack of education, patriarchal traditions and feudal customs, young women and girls have suffered even more than others. But inspired by her father, a human rights activist, Gulalai was determined not to let her gender be a barrier.

In 2002, at the age of 16, Gulalai and her sister Saba established Aware Girls, an organisation that seeks to empower young women and girls in the region by teaching them leadership skills, educating them about their rights, and seeking equal access for women to education, employment and social services.

Aware Girls relies on digital media tools and community mobilisation techniques to promote gender equality, human rights, peace, sexual and reproductive health, and female participation in political processes. A key feature of the organisation's strategy is to encourage young men to join its cause. Gulalai is undeterred by the shortage of funds or the threats to her life. In her view, 'peace is not just the absence of war, it is about respect and tolerance', and she firmly believes women have an important role to play in that process. Gulalai was named the Commonwealth Young Person of the Year for the Asia Region in 2015.

Peacebuilding Support Office. The principles outline numerous approaches to peace-building:

- acting in accordance with human rights frameworks
- promoting economic prosperity
- strengthening civic and political participation
- fostering inclusion across generations and sections of society.

They frame young people's contribution as pivotal, and one that should be 'actively supported, solicited and regarded as essential to building peaceful communities and supporting democratic governance and transition'.[63]

On 9 December 2015, during its 7,573rd meeting, the UN Security Council agreed Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security – the first Security Council resolution specifically on young people in the history of the UN. Though not the first time the Council has discussed youth, it 'marks a milestone because it changes fundamentally how the Security Council considers young people'.[64] It commits the UN Security Council to five areas of action:

- participation of youth in conflict prevention and resolution
- protection of youth from violence
- investment in the economic, socio-political and socio-cultural spheres
- partnerships with youth as peace-builders
- reintegration of young men and women after involvement in armed conflict.

4.5 Conclusion

In the context of violent conflict, young people are often stereotyped as perpetrators of violence or innocent victims who must be protected. While it is true that young people disproportionately experience harmful effects of violent conflict and some engage in violence, there is another undeniable reality: the vast majority of young people choose not to engage in violence, and many are active agents of peace. Young people are too frequently caught in fragile and conflict zones that have a negative impact on their well-being and development. They are a majority of global refugees, they account for 43 per cent of homicides, they are recruited into the military and militia groups

Youth on the Fringes of Development

Professor Lata Narayan

Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India

A substantial proportion of young people in the world are considered marginalised and vulnerable, which means they have minimal economic, social, cultural and political rights. Marginalisation is dehumanising, leaving people with little say in the decisions that affect their own lives. Marginalised young people are often vulnerable to psychological trauma, and physical abuse and are at a relative disadvantage when accessing education, training, stable employment, healthcare and adequate nutrition. The slogan 'leave nobody behind' can ring hollow for this large group of young people.

Marginalised youth includes street children or those engaged in exploitative labour; victims of violence or abuse (physical, emotional, sexual) and human trafficking; young people who face stigmatisation because of their identity as a member of a particular religion, tribe, caste or race; those with a mental or physical disability; rural youth; urban poor; migrants, refugees and those displaced by natural and human-made disasters; those in detention or the care of the state (the youth population in prisons, shelter homes, orphanages and remand institutions); young soldiers forced into taking up arms; socially ostracised groups such as young people in detention, sex workers, HIV-affected youth and the LGBTI community. For many young people, these forms of marginalisation are complex and multidimensional, which compounds the inequalities they experience.

It is critical to emphasise that marginalisation occurs within the context of structural inequalities: the monopolisation of power, resources and opportunities by some can actively push others to the periphery of society. Youth development policy and practices often focus on addressing capacity development and empowerment of the individual to help them mitigate their vulnerabilities. However, it is important to also acknowledge how the socio-economic and political context, ranging from the hierarchy of power to the laws and policies that permeate all levels of society, can contribute to the exclusion and isolation of some categories of youth. The marginalisation of a young person is not primarily a 'deficit issue' that can be mitigated by capacity and resilience-building programmes alone. It is also necessary to address the structural and systemic factors that propagate the inequalities in the first place.

More finely disaggregated data will help highlight different forms of marginalisation and inequality faced by young people, but primary data on marginalised youth are hard to come by. The current invisibility of many youth sub-groups results in policies that are often misguided and fall short of supporting those who need it the most.

At the community level, creating spaces for dialogue, building resilience, encouraging civic and political engagement through education, and exploring marginality through cultural action are some of the initiatives that can help engage and empower marginalised youth. At the national level, young people and their advocates must press for change of the structural inequalities that leave young people on the fringes of society. A large cohort of young people who cannot find 'meaning' in their lives will result in a frustrated 'youth bulge', which could become yet another source of social and political unrest across the world.

and they remain vulnerable to radicalisation and extremism.

The youth bulge that a number of countries are experiencing can be a risk, particularly if adequate investments are not made to harness and develop the capabilities of young people. The narrative around high youth populations continues to focus on security and the threat of idle young people. Finding decent employment opportunities is a clear priority for most young people, but their political, social and cultural demands – their desire for democracy, peace, equality, transparency and good governance – must also be recognised as legitimate factors in the effort to build peaceful and tolerant societies.

Youth and Peace-Building: Evidence and Guiding Principles

Lakshitha Saji Prelis

Director, Children and Youth Programs, Search for Common Ground, and Co-Chair, Inter-Agency Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding

The international community has embraced the idea that young people can be partners for peace and agents of positive change, moving beyond youth as victims or perpetrators of violence. The most concrete evidence of this is the passage in December 2015 of the landmark United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250, which codifies the role of young people as partners in peace-building. It was the culmination of over five years of effort by a coalition of cross-sector stakeholders. Their collective efforts have set out a path for governments and civil society organisations to partner with young people in promoting stability and security around the world.

Working with young people as partners ushers in a major shift in the way governments, media, civil society and other actors engage with conflict: away from adversarial approaches (pitching one side against the other) towards co-operative solutions (allowing parties to focus collectively on issues rather than each other). For this shift to happen, change needs to be targeted at various levels:

- Change perception of self: transform from the identity of perpetrator of violence to peace- and bridge-builder.
- Change perception of 'the other': challenge stereotypes and prejudices by giving people an opportunity to hear each other's stories and witness one another's humanity.
- Change perception of the issues: help parties focus on the sources of conflict by increasing their knowledge and understanding of the issues.
- Transform the process: model and demonstrate inclusive, participatory processes; train people to participate in them; and support the creation of new, more collaborative institutions at community, national, regional and international levels.

To promote the idea of young people as partners in peace, and roll out related policy and programming, an Inter-Agency Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding,[65] composed of international organisations including the Commonwealth Secretariat, civil society stakeholders and scholars, launched *Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding* in April 2014.[66] These Guiding Principles articulate the ways in which young people can be made partners in peace-building. The next collective task for the world is to take meaningful action on Resolution 2250 locally and nationally. The resolution contains some concrete recommendations for the path ahead.

Since the marginalisation of youth is detrimental to peace, young people must be given the opportunity to participate in decision making, including in peace processes and the implementation of such processes. Young women and men must be protected during conflict, including from sexual and gender-based violence. Youth from diverse backgrounds should be provided with adequate support in the form of policy and education so they can engage constructively in peace-building efforts. The state should promote a culture of peace, tolerance, intercultural and inter-religious dialogue that involves youth, and it must also take an active stand against acts of violence, terrorism, xenophobia and all forms of discrimination.

Resolution 2250 calls for recognition of the fact that many young women and men perform non-traditional roles during conflict but need support if they are forced back into traditional roles when they have to demobilise or reintegrate into society. Investing in sustainable partnerships with youth-led organisations could be a critical factor in ensuring the success of all such initiatives.

Many young people desire to be part of, and at times fight for, something greater than themselves. This aspiration of the young is sometimes exploited by criminal gangs and extremist movements but it can also be channelled into ensuring that young people support constructive narratives that sustain peace over violence. The message 'we need you, you are strong, if you join our cause we can succeed' can be a clarion call for transforming the youth bulge (including over 600 million young people who live in conflict and fragile settings) into a peace bulge, particularly if it is accompanied by efforts to invest in young people as partners and leaders in peace-building.

Notes

1 Institute for Economics and Peace 2015.
2 Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth. n.d.
3 OECD 2015.
4 Sen *et al.* 2007.
5 *Ibid.*: 27.
6 WHO 2002: 5
7 Sen *et al.* 2007.
8 Özerdem and Podder 2011.
9 UNDP 2016.
10 *Ibid.*
11 Sukarieh and Tannock 2015.
12 SOS Children's Villages 2015.
13 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers 2004.
14 CIA World Factbook n.d.
15 WHO 2015:13.
16 *Ibid.*
17 Cauffman, Steinberg and Piquero 2005:133–75.
18 Nordås and Davenport 2013.
19 Urdal 2012.
20 Urdal 2004.
21 Urdal 2006.
22 Bricker and Foley 2013.
23 Barakat and Urdal 2009.
24 Cramer 2010
25 Schomaker 2013; see also Institute for Economics and Peace 2014; USAID 2012.
26 Farzanegan & Witthuhn, 2016.
27 Blair *et al.* 2011. Also see: Bergen and Lind 2007; Blair *et al.* 2012; Sen *et al.* 2007.
28 Gambetta and Hertog 2016; see also Hussain 2010.
29 Economic and Social Research Council 2015.
30 Maher 2015; Sirseloudi 2012; Victoroff *et al.* 2012.
31 Al Raffie 2013
32 Peace 2016.
33 WHO 2015.
34 *Ibid.*
35 WHO 2016a.
36 WHO 2015.
37 Galtung 1969.
38 Sen *et al.* 2007
39 *Ibid.*
40 WHO 2016.
41 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 2007, Art. 32.
42 Youthpolicy.org. n.d.
43 Holman and Ziedenberg 2006.
44 WHO 2015. Ttofi *et al.* 2011.
45 Justino 2010. See also: Kokko *et al.* 2006.
46 Jones and Naylor 2014.
47 Mokdad *et al.* 2016.
48 Buvinic *et al.* 2013.
49 World Bank 2011. Also see: Bastick *et al.* 2007.
50 World Vision 2013.
51 Jones and Naylor 2014.
52 UN High Commissioner for Refugees 2016.
53 *Ibid.*
54 Save the Children 2016.
55 UNICEF CEE/CIS Regional Office 2016
56 Townsend 2016.
57 UN Office on Drugs and Crime 2016.
58 UNDESA 2015.
59 World Bank 2011.
60 UN Population Fund 2014.
61 *Ibid.*
62 UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development's Subgroup on Youth Participation in Peacebuilding 2014.
63 *Ibid.*
64 Youthpolicy.org 2015.
65 The working group is co-chaired by UN Peacebuilding Support Office, Search for Common Ground and United Network of Young Peacebuilders.
66 UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development's Subgroup on Youth Participation in Peacebuilding 2014.

These are the principles:

* Prioritise young people's participation and promote the reality that the majority of young people worldwide do not participate in violence.
* Respect the experiences of all young people and develop targeted strategies to include young people from different backgrounds.
* Avoid stereotypical assumptions about gender norms and the roles that girls, boys, young men, young women, and young transgender individuals can play in peace-building.
* Enable young people's ownership, leadership, and accountability in a peace-building process or project.
* Create a safe environment for participation and be sensitive to inequalities.
* Involve young people in all stages of programming or policy creation.
* Enhance the knowledge, skills, competencies, and attitudes of youth.
* Create or increase opportunities for inter-generational or inter-group dialogue so young people may bridge divides in their communities.
* Support policies that address the full needs of young people.

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5

Building A Youth-Friendly World: A Long Way to Go

This chapter summarises the key findings – positive and negative – from the 2016 Global YDI, as well as the policy-relevant insights on youth development emerging from the research undertaken for this report.


KABURRA

Chapter 5
Building A Youth-Friendly World: A Long Way to Go

Youth is a critical phase in the life of every person; no longer a child but not yet a full adult. It bookends the years when identities are shaped and destinies are forged. There are more young people today than ever before, but on the whole the world population is ageing, so the youth will only become an ever smaller proportion of the global population in the future. The SDGs have set ambitious targets for the global community but they can only be achieved if young people are empowered enough to participate in and contribute to national development to the fullest.

For all the hope and aspiration they embody, young people also face daunting challenges in every part of the world. The purpose of the YDI and this report is to help all concerned understand the current levels of attainments and capabilities of young people, identify the dimensions and intersections in the youth development process that are less than ideal at the national level, provide a rallying point for advocates of youth development and facilitate the evolution of more evidence-based policies underpinned by data such as those in the YDI.

Youth development is multidimensional and cross-sectoral in nature. And given the varying socio-economic, political and cultural context within which it takes place at the national or local level, it is beyond the scope of a report like this one to offer specific policy proposals that may or may not have universal relevance. However, the data and insights revealed by the YDI are of critical importance to policymakers, development workers, researchers and young people.

The state of global youth development, as revealed by the 2016 YDI, can be said to be modestly encouraging in some spheres and worryingly inadequate in others. On the positive side:

- Of the 1.8 billion young people in the world, *more than 1.2 billion are living in countries where youth development has shown some improvement over the past five years*. Youth development in Commonwealth countries is improving at a higher rate than it is across the world in general.
- *The region with the lowest level of youth development in the world – Sub-Saharan Africa – has recorded the largest improvement in its YDI score between 2010*

Youth: A Wonderful Resource for Africa

Dr Mo Ibrahim

Founder and Chair, Mo Ibrahim Foundation for Good Governance in Africa

Africa is a continent of young people; our demography is completely different from the rest of the world. Within three generations, 41 per cent of the world's youth will be Africans. By 2030, Africa's labour force will be larger than China's; by 2035 it will be larger than India's.

This is a wonderful resource for our continent if this resource is skilled and employed.

We need to overhaul our education system, to focus on education for employment. Education must match the job market. We need to develop the skills required by business and our national development plans. Currently we produce the lowest number of engineers in the world, less than 2 per cent of our youth is studying agriculture. This simply will not do.

In Africa, we mostly mismanage our natural resources – and then the blessing of our abundant natural resources somehow turns into a curse.

I hope we do better with our abundant human resource, and avoid a potential curse.

and 2015. This implies that inequalities between countries in youth development, especially in the Health and Well-being domain, are narrowing, though at a very slow pace. Of the 46 countries in the region, five – Kenya, South Africa, Niger, Togo and Malawi – registered an improvement of more than 15 per cent in their YDI scores between 2010 and 2015. And at least one-half of the countries in the region improved their scores by more than 5 per cent. Given the high proportion (28 per cent) of young people in Sub-Saharan Africa and the estimated increase in their share of the total population of Africa in the coming decades, these findings bode well for young people in the region and the world at large.

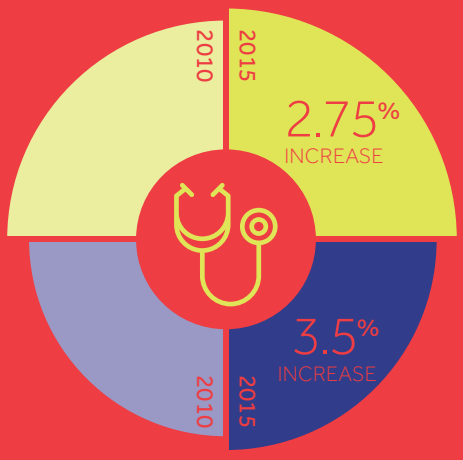
- While there has been progress in all the five youth development domains of the YDI, the most significant progress has been made in the Civic Participation and Political Participation domains. Given that the Civic Participation domain measures the extent to which youth interact positively with their communities, *the large improvement in the domain globally is heartening, not least because it disproves a widespread stereotype that portrays young people as more apathetic or self-centred than other age groups*. Although the Political Participation domain doesn't directly reflect young people's participation in political processes, the significant gains in YDI scores in this domain nevertheless indicate that there has been a remarkable improvement in the environment in which youth participation takes place.
- Of the five YDI domains, Education has the highest average score, indicating the *significant improvement in young people's access to education*, especially since the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000. Gender gaps in education have narrowed and, in fact, education levels for young females and males is on par in most high YDI countries.

On the flip side of the scorecard, the YDI also highlights some serious shortcomings in youth development at the global and national levels, most visible in the levels of inequality and deprivation that blight the lives of so many young people around the world. The findings that should attract particular attention from policymakers include:

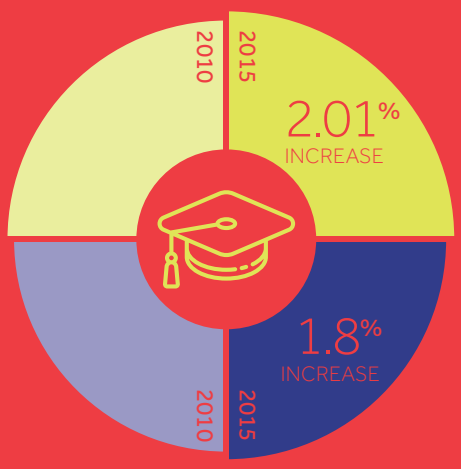
- *Despite narrowing of gaps, glaring inequalities in levels of youth development persist within and among countries*. Nearly three-quarters of the world's youth population is living in countries with a low or medium level of youth development. In other words, the socio-economic and political contexts in which the lives of an overwhelming majority of the world's young people – including almost the entire youth population of Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia – are being shaped are still far from conducive to their well-being.
- *Gaps between low and very high YDI countries are most pronounced in the access that young people have to education, health services, financial inclusion and digital technology*, indicating that these should be the top priority areas for policy focus in countries falling in the low and medium

2016 Youth Development Index Highlights

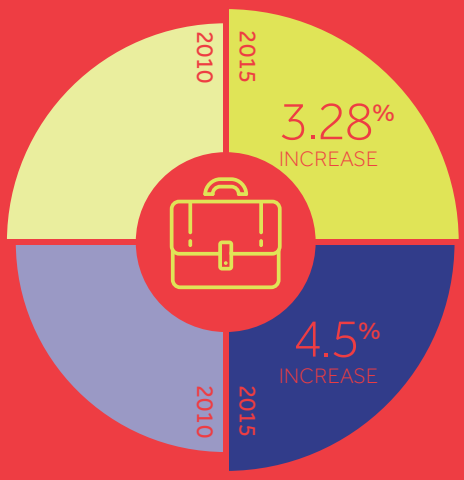
Global and Commonwealth Averages:



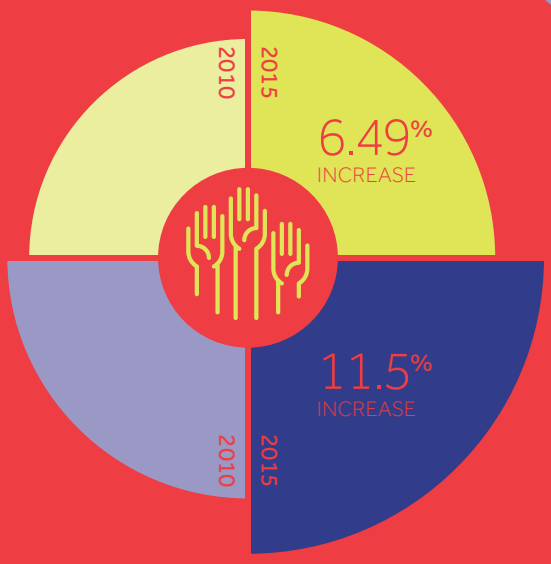
HEALTH & WELL-BEING



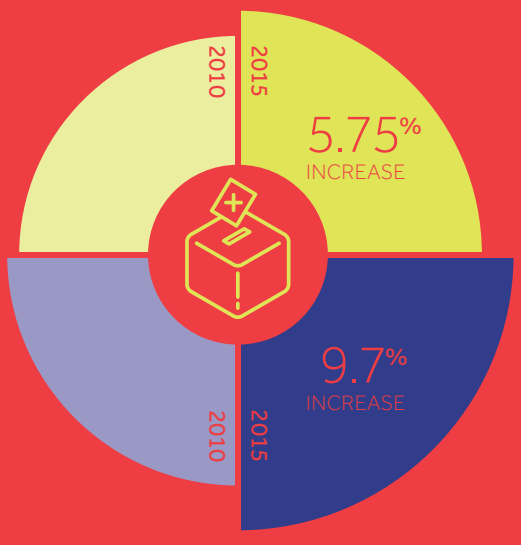
EDUCATION



EMPLOYMENT & OPPORTUNITY



CIVIC PARTICIPATION



POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Source: **Commonwealth Secretariat**

YDI category. Within the youth cohort, young females are significantly less likely to have these opportunities than their male peers.

- *The YDI results show that even for countries with high overall levels of youth development, all is not well*. The ten highest-ranking countries in the YDI scored worse than the ten lowest-ranked countries in the scores for indicators on drug abuse YLL and mental disorder YLL. These findings suggest that countries with higher levels of youth development need to prioritise young people's mental health and their vulnerability to drug abuse in policies and development planning.
- *A spectre that looms just as threateningly in developed countries as it does in the developing world is youth unemployment*. Young people are at least twice as likely as adults to be unemployed. In many developed countries, the ratio of youth-to-adult unemployment is even higher. Youth unemployment is one of only two indicators in the YDI to show a deterioration from 2010 to 2015. Millions of young people are entering the labour market every year, and will continue to do so for the next few decades. Yet job creation is slowing down everywhere, a challenge that is being compounded by the aftershocks of the global financial crisis, structural changes in the global economy, climate change and increasing geo-political instability. The fact that a majority of employed young people in developing countries are doing precarious or dangerous work in the informal sector should also be a cause for alarm. Without bold moves from policymakers, employers and young people, a large proportion of today's youth will be denied a path to upward social mobility and sustainable livelihoods, despite being more educated and more qualified than their parents' generation.
- *Youth development tends to be most sluggish in countries where young people constitute a large proportion of the population*. Since young people between the ages of 15 and 29 currently make up approximately one-quarter of the total population in nearly all developing countries, this finding should give cause for concern to everyone. A large population of disaffected or frustrated young people could provide the spark for socio-economic alienation, turmoil and instability. Encouragingly, the YDI results also show that many countries such as Costa Rica, Malaysia, Brunei, Qatar, Colombia and Bahrain have achieved relatively high levels of youth development despite significantly large youth bulges in their population. Similarly, the impressive progress Sub-Saharan Africa has made in the past five years in many aspects of youth development and the remarkable improvements in youth development in Indonesia in the Education domain are also laudable. These examples demonstrate that high levels of empowerment, development and social inclusion are possible for large populations of young people if the right policies and programmes, as well as effective checks and balances, are in place.
- *Despite impressive improvement in civic participation and the environment in which youth political participation takes place, young people's participation in formal politics is declining*. Most young people are increasingly taking part in informal modes of participation such as digital activism, protests and volunteering. Recourse to street protests by significant numbers of young people underscores growing frustration and unmet aspirations among the young; they may have come to the conclusion that direct action is the only way in which they can trigger meaningful change. The youth-led protests and civil disobedience movements that have spread through many countries in recent years are also symptoms of the fact that young people suffer disproportionately from policy failures such as housing shortages, poor quality of education and anti-austerity measures. They may also highlight the importance of investing in mechanisms and institutions that encourage young people to get involved more with formal channels of participation and decision making.
- *Young people suffer disproportionately as victims of violent crime and conflict*. The spike in violent extremism and ethno-religious conflict in recent years, and the proliferation of non-state actors who actively recruit young people as their foot soldiers, threaten to negate many of the hard-won gains the world has been able to achieve in different domains of youth development.
- *There is currently a paucity of data on the world's young people, particularly data disaggregated by age or gender, to guide policymakers and facilitate the prioritisation of those sectors that require the greatest attention of the state*. Unless more effort is made at national and international levels to gather and use more representative data on the many dimensions of youth development to

inform policy processes, entrenched inequalities that divide young people within and across countries will be hard to dismantle.

Taken together, the insights thrown up by the YDI lead firmly to the conclusion that building the capabilities of young people and including them in the decision making that has an effect on their lives is absolutely vital at every level. Otherwise the 'demographic bulge' that much of the world is enjoying today could easily change from a blessing into a burden. Inequalities in young people's health, education, human rights and employment between high and low YDI countries are already deep and widespread, and girls and young women continue to suffer disproportionately in comparison with their male peers.

Over the next few decades, the median age of the population in developed nations is projected to reach 46 years, while in developing countries it is expected to increase by more than ten years to reach 35 in 2050.[1] In other words, over the next few decades, fewer and fewer young people will be responsible for supporting more and more older people. The shrinking proportion of young people means that the world has a limited window of opportunity to reap the benefits of a demographic dividend. However, the YDI makes it clear that youth bulges do not automatically result in a demographic dividend.

The improvements in YDI scores for the vast majority of developing countries – home to nearly 90 per cent of the global youth population – are a reflection of the aspiration of young people to build and live in a more equitable, inclusive and sustainable world. They are also conclusive proof that smart policies, and investments in the building blocks of youth development such as health, education, digital skills and economic opportunity, can yield positive results for entire countries. But 'Generation Hope' is also making it increasingly clear that it is ready to fight for change if change is too slow in coming. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure that young people, on whom so much will depend in the years to come, are invested in and included at the heart of democracy and development.

Note

1 Bloom 2016.

Reference

Bloom, D. 2016. 'Demographic Upheaval'. *Finance and Development*. 53(1): 6–11.

6

2016 Global Youth Development Index: Country Rankings and Domain Scores

This chapter presents in detail the YDI rankings and domain scores for the 183 countries in the 2016 Global YDI, including 49 of the 53 Commonwealth countries.

Chapter 6
2016 Global Youth Development Index: Country Rankings and Domain Scores

6.1 Domain ranks and scores for the Youth Development index, 2016

Table 6.1 YDI and domain ranks and scores, 2016

State	Global Rank	2016 YDI Overall Score	Health & Well-being Rank	Health & Well-being Score	Education Rank	Education Score	
Germany	1	0.894	28	0.817	8	0.981	
Denmark	2	0.865	18	0.831	4	0.989	
Australia	3	0.838	69	0.743	32	0.933	
Switzerland	4	0.837	24	0.821	16	0.969	
United Kingdom	4	0.837	39	0.790	24	0.956	
Netherlands	6	0.836	3	0.870	1	0.994	
Austria	7	0.826	84	0.722	26	0.954	
Luxembourg	8	0.825	51	0.766	21	0.964	
Portugal	9	0.816	29	0.816	22	0.959	
Japan	10	0.815	35	0.801	7	0.982	
New Zealand	11	0.813	83	0.724	19	0.968	
Slovenia	12	0.811	62	0.751	11	0.977	
Sweden	13	0.810	55	0.763	20	0.966	
Canada	14	0.809	57	0.761	16	0.969	
Ireland	15	0.806	75	0.732	32	0.933	
Norway	16	0.804	93	0.708	10	0.978	
Belgium	17	0.802	49	0.771	14	0.972	
South Korea	18	0.797	45	0.782	12	0.976	
France	19	0.795	79	0.727	15	0.970	
Malta	20	0.794	12	0.850	41	0.893	
Costa Rica	21	0.782	5	0.868	48	0.861	
Spain	22	0.776	25	0.820	26	0.954	
United States	23	0.775	106	0.664	13	0.974	

	Employment & Opportunity Rank	Employment & Opportunity Score	Civic Partici-pation Rank	Civic Partici-pation Score	Political Partici-pation Rank	Political Partici-pation Score	2016 YDI level	2010 YDI Overall Score
	2	0.899	37	0.692	1	1.000	Very High	0.871
	4	0.885	54	0.635	22	0.833	Very High	0.805
	12	0.803	3	0.957	29	0.814	Very High	0.821
	8	0.814	63	0.606	17	0.836	Very High	0.841
	31	0.728	23	0.765	4	0.949	Very High	0.806
	1	0.910	35	0.704	123	0.480	Very High	0.868
	6	0.848	36	0.700	22	0.833	Very High	0.761
	13	0.801	42	0.680	25	0.828	Very High	0.798
	17	0.781	87	0.517	22	0.833	Very High	0.794
	3	0.889	163	0.236	27	0.825	Very High	0.811
	27	0.743	7	0.918	49	0.746	Very High	0.800
	7	0.839	15	0.822	93	0.582	Very High	0.793
	18	0.779	52	0.639	34	0.794	Very High	0.780
	10	0.806	3	0.957	114	0.525	Very High	0.803
	16	0.782	15	0.822	47	0.748	Very High	0.767
	21	0.764	25	0.755	38	0.771	Very High	0.779
	20	0.765	32	0.731	58	0.681	Very High	0.725
	40	0.699	47	0.656	36	0.780	Very High	0.779
	19	0.767	84	0.534	17	0.836	Very High	0.777
	22	0.757	18	0.813	93	0.582	Very High	0.765
	68	0.586	51	0.647	6	0.926	Very High	0.745
	23	0.756	90	0.512	84	0.616	Very High	0.760
	32	0.727	1	1.000	105	0.559	Very High	0.753

(*continued*)

Table 6.1 YDI and domain ranks and scores, 2016 (continued)

State	Global Rank	2016 YDI Overall Score	Health & Well-being Rank	Health & Well-being Score	Education Rank	Education Score	
Chile	24	0.774	27	0.818	39	0.899	
Finland	25	0.773	108	0.656	2	0.993	
Iceland	25	0.773	14	0.847	6	0.986	
Hong Kong	27	0.753	114	0.624	25	0.955	
Barbados	28	0.749	51	0.766	23	0.958	
Hungary	29	0.740	15	0.842	29	0.951	
Latvia	30	0.737	121	0.598	3	0.991	
Israel	31	0.731	1	0.904	34	0.926	
Brunei	31	0.731	13	0.848	37	0.917	
Sri Lanka	31	0.731	95	0.700	108	0.721	
Malaysia	34	0.729	58	0.759	59	0.831	
Romania	35	0.728	19	0.827	44	0.871	
Colombia	36	0.727	92	0.710	61	0.829	
Italy	37	0.726	10	0.851	38	0.903	
Republic of Cyprus	38	0.722	3	0.870	42	0.886	
Czech Republic	39	0.719	26	0.819	30	0.944	
Macedonia	39	0.719	20	0.822	56	0.843	
Bahrain	41	0.717	36	0.796	52	0.849	
Albania	42	0.713	32	0.806	74	0.787	
Singapore	43	0.712	9	0.854	35	0.924	
Croatia	44	0.709	68	0.744	31	0.941	
Slovakia	45	0.708	45	0.782	28	0.953	
Jamaica	46	0.706	87	0.718	79	0.775	
Estonia	47	0.697	155	0.432	4	0.989	
Serbia	48	0.693	20	0.822	45	0.866	
Mexico	49	0.692	38	0.791	75	0.785	
Samoa	50	0.687	61	0.755	113	0.694	
Taiwan	51	0.684	47	0.773	85	0.763	
Dominican Republic	51	0.684	43	0.786	94	0.743	
Uzbekistan	53	0.683	100	0.692	90	0.751	
Poland	54	0.681	72	0.739	16	0.969	
Saudi Arabia	54	0.681	20	0.822	43	0.874	
Kuwait	56	0.678	2	0.884	56	0.843	
Cuba	57	0.670	8	0.859	77	0.778	

	Employment & Opportunity Rank	Employment & Opportunity Score	Civic Partici-pation Rank	Civic Partici-pation Score	Political Partici-pation Rank	Political Partici-pation Score	2016 YDI level	2010 YDI Overall Score
	57	0.639	115	0.442	5	0.938	Very High	0.750
	10	0.806	27	0.745	104	0.564	Very High	0.762
	9	0.811	83	0.536	145	0.393	Very High	0.763
	28	0.737	39	0.690	57	0.696	Very High	0.727
	120	0.500	56	0.623	10	0.871	Very High	0.731
	48	0.664	128	0.385	93	0.582	Very High	0.712
	15	0.789	133	0.341	52	0.723	Very High	0.717
	24	0.751	160	0.238	140	0.412	Very High	0.732
	54	0.649	70	0.577	128	0.465	Very High	0.714
	24	0.751	17	0.820	54	0.703	Very High	0.650
	30	0.734	11	0.837	136	0.426	Very High	0.630
	72	0.578	114	0.450	45	0.757	Very High	0.656
	100	0.527	63	0.606	1	1.000	Very High	0.692
	67	0.592	102	0.471	88	0.613	Very High	0.695
	36	0.711	53	0.637	163	0.275	Very High	0.721
	26	0.748	158	0.240	132	0.446	Very High	0.729
	63	0.618	92	0.495	70	0.658	Very High	0.696
	125	0.489	11	0.837	68	0.667	Very High	0.641
	102	0.525	82	0.551	11	0.859	Very High	0.646
	29	0.735	26	0.753	181	0.056	Very High	0.664
	62	0.623	69	0.587	119	0.491	Very High	0.672
	49	0.662	174	0.185	90	0.602	Very High	0.712
	102	0.525	5	0.945	53	0.715	Very High	0.675
	14	0.796	68	0.589	107	0.556	Very High	0.676
	40	0.699	155	0.248	123	0.480	Very High	0.636
	87	0.553	125	0.389	31	0.802	Very High	0.683
	44	0.688	70	0.577	76	0.632	Very High	0.641
	50	0.657	91	0.510	100	0.568	Very High	0.658
	133	0.481	34	0.712	51	0.734	Very High	0.670
	81	0.566	20	0.803	66	0.669	Very High	0.665
	37	0.710	120	0.430	170	0.223	Very High	0.716
	76	0.575	47	0.656	157	0.314	Very High	0.644
	127	0.486	62	0.620	139	0.415	Very High	0.671
	134	0.480	8	0.909	156	0.333	High	0.655

(*continued*)

Table 6.1 YDI and domain ranks and scores, 2016 (continued)

State	Global Rank	2016 YDI Overall Score	Health & Well-being Rank	Health & Well-being Score	Education Rank	Education Score	
Panama	57	0.670	39	0.790	88	0.757	
Uruguay	59	0.669	80	0.726	47	0.863	
Peru	59	0.669	86	0.719	58	0.839	
Kazakhstan	61	0.668	115	0.621	100	0.727	
Turkey	62	0.665	31	0.810	49	0.858	
Maldives	62	0.665	17	0.834	110	0.714	
Kyrgyz Republic	64	0.664	104	0.684	86	0.762	
Federated States of Micronesia	64	0.664	6	0.862	99	0.728	
Greece	66	0.662	54	0.764	36	0.922	
Bahamas	67	0.660	73	0.736	63	0.823	
Bulgaria	68	0.659	34	0.802	40	0.897	
Mauritius	69	0.657	76	0.731	65	0.815	
Bhutan	69	0.657	94	0.701	122	0.647	
Mongolia	71	0.656	148	0.475	100	0.727	
Antigua and Barbuda	72	0.655	48	0.772	68	0.803	
Grenada	73	0.654	98	0.694	60	0.830	
Tonga	73	0.654	89	0.712	104	0.724	
Qatar	75	0.650	7	0.860	67	0.810	
Lebanon	76	0.649	10	0.851	108	0.721	
Nepal	77	0.647	85	0.720	135	0.570	
Lithuania	78	0.646	136	0.537	9	0.979	
Philippines	79	0.645	89	0.712	112	0.698	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	80	0.642	41	0.789	45	0.866	
Suriname	81	0.639	109	0.649	102	0.726	
Libya	82	0.635	37	0.795	97	0.733	
Saint Lucia	83	0.635	55	0.763	66	0.813	
Brazil	84	0.634	96	0.699	50	0.854	
Montenegro	84	0.634	65	0.747	53	0.848	
Trinidad and Tobago	84	0.634	119	0.603	54	0.845	
Bolivia	87	0.633	100	0.692	105	0.722	
Viet Nam	87	0.633	50	0.769	76	0.780	
Ecuador	89	0.632	111	0.638	83	0.768	
Paraguay	90	0.629	65	0.747	115	0.683	

	Employment & Opportunity Rank	Employment & Opportunity Score	Civic Partici-pation Rank	Civic Partici-pation Score	Political Partici-pation Rank	Political Partici-pation Score	2016 YDI level	2010 YDI Overall Score
	140	0.472	89	0.515	42	0.760	High	0.647
	154	0.429	125	0.389	17	0.836	High	0.650
	93	0.537	139	0.315	45	0.757	High	0.633
	35	0.712	67	0.594	81	0.624	High	0.608
	71	0.581	177	0.175	100	0.568	High	0.614
	100	0.527	95	0.487	72	0.648	High	0.669
	86	0.556	30	0.736	90	0.602	High	0.629
	52	0.656	70	0.577	159	0.298	High	0.693
	47	0.666	136	0.327	161	0.280	High	0.623
	114	0.510	56	0.623	111	0.538	High	0.640
	70	0.582	168	0.212	132	0.446	High	0.641
	131	0.483	96	0.481	62	0.678	High	0.648
	137	0.475	22	0.779	27	0.825	High	0.642
	5	0.881	87	0.517	105	0.559	High	0.647
	137	0.475	56	0.623	111	0.538	High	0.631
	122	0.499	56	0.623	99	0.575	High	0.608
	78	0.570	70	0.577	76	0.632	High	0.641
	66	0.593	43	0.678	179	0.113	High	0.656
	118	0.506	155	0.248	56	0.701	High	0.673
	60	0.624	123	0.392	11	0.859	High	0.605
	33	0.724	182	0.094	117	0.511	High	0.658
	158	0.419	28	0.738	42	0.760	High	0.669
	116	0.509	144	0.303	125	0.469	High	0.635
	69	0.585	94	0.488	66	0.669	High	0.598
	97	0.532	10	0.841	168	0.237	High	0.629
	123	0.494	56	0.623	149	0.371	High	0.619
	89	0.545	157	0.245	100	0.568	High	0.635
	81	0.566	147	0.288	134	0.435	High	0.607
	179	0.303	14	0.825	42	0.760	High	0.575
	84	0.557	85	0.531	93	0.582	High	0.669
	84	0.557	86	0.529	152	0.356	High	0.604
	65	0.595	172	0.195	49	0.746	High	0.609
	76	0.575	181	0.127	39	0.768	High	0.648

(*continued*)

Table 6.1 YDI and domain ranks and scores, 2016 (continued)

State	Global Rank	2016 YDI Overall Score	Health & Well-being Rank	Health & Well-being Score	Education Rank	Education Score	
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	91	0.626	80	0.726	71	0.794	
Venezuela	92	0.625	113	0.631	70	0.796	
Honduras	93	0.624	53	0.765	121	0.657	
Iran	94	0.623	44	0.783	105	0.722	
Azerbaijan	95	0.621	64	0.749	72	0.792	
Timor-Leste	96	0.620	98	0.694	137	0.549	
Thailand	97	0.615	138	0.517	77	0.778	
Tajikistan	98	0.614	63	0.750	111	0.713	
Oman	99	0.611	20	0.822	80	0.772	
Belize	100	0.606	80	0.726	118	0.667	
Belarus	101	0.605	153	0.444	62	0.824	
Guatemala	101	0.605	135	0.540	126	0.614	
Kiribati	103	0.602	146	0.476	84	0.767	
Argentina	104	0.601	91	0.711	50	0.854	
Georgia	104	0.601	111	0.638	89	0.755	
Fiji	106	0.600	133	0.546	105	0.722	
United Arab Emirates	107	0.599	69	0.743	64	0.818	
Solomon Islands	107	0.599	125	0.570	150	0.499	
El Salvador	109	0.598	144	0.479	118	0.667	
Russia	110	0.597	160	0.414	55	0.844	
Tunisia	110	0.597	33	0.805	80	0.772	
Vanuatu	112	0.588	129	0.565	128	0.608	
Moldova	113	0.587	117	0.607	69	0.801	
Jordan	114	0.586	30	0.811	82	0.770	
Ukraine	115	0.583	146	0.476	87	0.760	
Guyana	116	0.582	150	0.465	95	0.742	
Ghana	117	0.581	149	0.466	129	0.602	
China	118	0.578	59	0.757	73	0.791	
Liberia	119	0.576	138	0.517	177	0.335	
Morocco	120	0.575	107	0.657	103	0.725	
Nicaragua	121	0.570	71	0.740	125	0.617	
Turkmenistan	122	0.566	105	0.666	120	0.665	
Seychelles	123	0.564	125	0.570	124	0.645	

	Employment & Opportunity Rank	Employment & Opportunity Score	Civic Partici-pation Rank	Civic Partici-pation Score	Political Partici-pation Rank	Political Partici-pation Score	2016 YDI level	2010 YDI Overall Score
	112	0.512	56	0.623	149	0.371	High	0.654
	112	0.512	165	0.219	35	0.791	High	0.562
	175	0.345	81	0.567	17	0.836	High	0.591
	79	0.568	116	0.438	143	0.404	High	0.613
	148	0.452	140	0.313	88	0.613	High	0.653
	99	0.528	70	0.577	33	0.798	High	0.587
	72	0.578	164	0.224	25	0.828	High	0.600
	162	0.415	80	0.572	97	0.579	High	0.610
	135	0.478	28	0.738	177	0.125	High	0.604
	176	0.329	104	0.469	11	0.859	Medium	0.576
	39	0.701	145	0.298	107	0.556	Medium	0.624
	168	0.396	21	0.801	7	0.915	Medium	0.591
	50	0.657	70	0.577	128	0.465	Medium	0.552
	120	0.500	168	0.212	137	0.424	Medium	0.603
	127	0.486	97	0.478	107	0.556	Medium	0.598
	105	0.523	70	0.577	76	0.632	Medium	0.583
	124	0.490	43	0.678	178	0.124	Medium	0.543
	34	0.717	70	0.577	76	0.632	Medium	0.569
	59	0.627	131	0.373	36	0.780	Medium	0.543
	45	0.677	136	0.327	113	0.534	Medium	0.571
	79	0.568	160	0.238	165	0.246	Medium	0.623
	46	0.670	70	0.577	128	0.465	Medium	0.536
	139	0.473	140	0.313	100	0.568	Medium	0.607
	143	0.456	152	0.252	153	0.345	Medium	0.573
	60	0.624	132	0.349	107	0.556	Medium	0.617
	94	0.536	23	0.765	125	0.469	Medium	0.552
	95	0.535	65	0.599	31	0.802	Medium	0.565
	40	0.699	179	0.166	183	-	Medium	0.588
	88	0.549	1	1.000	17	0.836	Medium	0.552
	108	0.518	129	0.382	140	0.412	Medium	0.565
	145	0.455	118	0.433	119	0.491	Medium	0.539
	107	0.519	121	0.411	138	0.417	Medium	0.563
	149	0.450	106	0.463	62	0.678	Medium	0.518

(*continued*)

Table 6.1 YDI and domain ranks and scores, 2016 (continued)

State	Global Rank	2016 YDI Overall Score	Health & Well-being Rank	Health & Well-being Score	Education Rank	Education Score	
Myanmar	123	0.564	124	0.581	141	0.540	
Kenya	125	0.563	162	0.398	130	0.601	
State of Palestine	126	0.560	88	0.713	90	0.751	
Algeria	126	0.560	16	0.837	92	0.746	
South Africa	126	0.560	179	0.070	93	0.745	
Papua New Guinea	126	0.560	131	0.564	165	0.423	
Gambia	130	0.555	128	0.566	147	0.507	
Ethiopia	131	0.552	142	0.494	170	0.388	
Laos	132	0.551	118	0.605	139	0.544	
India	133	0.548	116	0.616	132	0.592	
Armenia	134	0.547	73	0.736	98	0.731	
Uganda	135	0.544	168	0.301	159	0.456	
Cambodia	136	0.533	129	0.565	149	0.504	
Syria	137	0.531	41	0.789	126	0.614	
Egypt	138	0.530	60	0.756	96	0.735	
Indonesia	139	0.527	96	0.699	115	0.683	
Sudan	140	0.515	77	0.730	142	0.537	
Nigeria	141	0.514	156	0.429	157	0.469	
Botswana	142	0.509	181	0.063	117	0.679	
Senegal	143	0.500	122	0.597	162	0.452	
Togo	144	0.498	158	0.421	145	0.520	
Iraq	145	0.494	103	0.689	152	0.492	
Swaziland	146	0.492	183	0.025	131	0.596	
Bangladesh	146	0.492	102	0.690	145	0.520	
Rwanda	148	0.491	154	0.438	159	0.456	
Sierra Leone	149	0.486	159	0.418	168	0.401	
Sao Tome and Principe	150	0.485	123	0.595	114	0.685	
Haiti	151	0.479	152	0.451	123	0.646	
Yemen	152	0.478	67	0.746	140	0.541	
Burundi	153	0.472	144	0.479	158	0.468	
Pakistan	154	0.470	77	0.730	156	0.474	
Namibia	155	0.464	180	0.068	133	0.587	
Guinea	155	0.464	151	0.458	179	0.302	
Burkina Faso	155	0.464	143	0.481	181	0.277	

	Employment & Opportunity Rank	Employment & Opportunity Score	Civic Partici-pation Rank	Civic Partici-pation Score	Political Partici-pation Rank	Political Partici-pation Score	2016 YDI level	2010 YDI Overall Score
	53	0.655	13	0.832	165	0.246	Medium	0.488
	110	0.513	6	0.930	84	0.616	Medium	0.463
	136	0.477	175	0.183	148	0.379	Medium	0.594
	89	0.545	167	0.214	182	0.045	Medium	0.607
	110	0.513	19	0.808	3	0.983	Medium	0.465
	56	0.642	70	0.577	76	0.632	Medium	0.528
	143	0.456	106	0.463	15	0.845	Medium	0.530
	38	0.709	127	0.387	39	0.768	Medium	0.525
	58	0.631	99	0.476	145	0.393	Medium	0.558
	152	0.439	142	0.310	54	0.703	Medium	0.494
	170	0.379	149	0.274	147	0.390	Medium	0.564
	64	0.613	46	0.671	8	0.893	Medium	0.508
	55	0.643	176	0.180	97	0.579	Medium	0.533
	164	0.401	97	0.478	172	0.212	Medium	0.548
	174	0.354	134	0.337	169	0.234	Medium	0.490
	161	0.416	102	0.471	173	0.201	Medium	0.462
	173	0.361	47	0.656	161	0.280	Medium	0.517
	158	0.419	33	0.721	47	0.748	Medium	0.494
	119	0.504	40	0.685	11	0.859	Medium	0.467
	171	0.371	105	0.466	70	0.658	Medium	0.445
	83	0.561	170	0.209	58	0.681	Medium	0.421
	183	0.149	37	0.692	84	0.616	Low	0.432
	74	0.577	50	0.654	15	0.845	Low	0.480
	177	0.321	99	0.476	140	0.412	Low	0.492
	40	0.699	180	0.161	116	0.514	Low	0.469
	146	0.453	43	0.678	68	0.667	Low	0.438
	172	0.369	106	0.463	174	0.178	Low	0.451
	158	0.419	112	0.457	151	0.359	Low	0.519
	181	0.232	171	0.202	115	0.523	Low	0.479
	91	0.542	183	0.060	81	0.624	Low	0.450
	154	0.429	154	0.250	165	0.246	Low	0.571
	166	0.399	41	0.683	9	0.881	Low	0.440
	96	0.533	118	0.433	73	0.647	Low	0.415
	105	0.523	148	0.284	39	0.768	Low	0.444

(*continued*)

Table 6.1 YDI and domain ranks and scores, 2016 (continued)

State	Global Rank	2016 YDI Overall Score	Health & Well-being Rank	Health & Well-being Score	Education Rank	Education Score	
Comoros	158	0.462	137	0.528	138	0.545	
Djibouti	158	0.462	132	0.556	159	0.456	
Zimbabwe	160	0.460	172	0.244	134	0.581	
South Sudan	160	0.460	166	0.378	176	0.345	
Malawi	162	0.452	177	0.200	164	0.425	
Cameroon	163	0.449	174	0.239	143	0.525	
Eritrea	163	0.449	163	0.390	154	0.482	
Madagascar	165	0.445	120	0.601	173	0.380	
Angola	166	0.443	161	0.399	168	0.401	
Afghanistan	167	0.440	140	0.507	167	0.413	
Tanzania	168	0.436	164	0.380	151	0.495	
Gabon	169	0.435	175	0.236	136	0.556	
Republic of Congo	170	0.434	167	0.346	148	0.506	
Lesotho	171	0.432	182	0.036	144	0.521	
Mauritania	172	0.430	127	0.568	175	0.350	
Benin	173	0.429	141	0.495	172	0.385	
Mali	174	0.421	133	0.546	174	0.352	
Democratic Republic of the Congo	175	0.408	164	0.380	155	0.476	
Zambia	176	0.406	173	0.243	163	0.440	
Mozambique	177	0.392	176	0.207	171	0.386	
Guinea-Bissau	178	0.389	171	0.255	166	0.422	
Equatorial Guinea	179	0.384	169	0.298	153	0.485	
Niger	180	0.378	110	0.641	183	0.165	
Cote d'Ivoire	181	0.357	170	0.296	178	0.334	
Chad	182	0.312	157	0.426	180	0.284	
Central African Republic	183	0.308	178	0.195	182	0.199	
Global Average		0.616		0.636		0.714	
Commonwealth Average		0.606		0.555		0.686	

Note: *Rankings and scores compiled by Institute of Economics and Peace on the basis of data available in the 18 indicators of the YDI.*

	Employment & Opportunity Rank	Employment & Opportunity Score	Civic Partici-pation Rank	Civic Partici-pation Score	Political Partici-pation Rank	Political Partici-pation Score	2016 YDI level	2010 YDI Overall Score
	109	0.514	113	0.452	176	0.136	Low	0.477
	75	0.576	151	0.260	164	0.260	Low	0.470
	146	0.453	117	0.435	73	0.647	Low	0.463
	142	0.460	55	0.625	62	0.678	Low	0.430
	131	0.483	9	0.846	90	0.602	Low	0.385
	92	0.538	99	0.476	118	0.503	Low	0.425
	97	0.532	106	0.463	153	0.345	Low	0.443
	117	0.507	123	0.392	170	0.223	Low	0.412
	166	0.399	166	0.216	29	0.814	Low	0.495
	178	0.314	130	0.380	81	0.624	Low	0.407
	180	0.294	121	0.411	58	0.681	Low	0.434
	150	0.446	135	0.329	84	0.616	Low	0.431
	114	0.510	93	0.493	160	0.294	Low	0.380
	102	0.525	66	0.596	62	0.678	Low	0.429
	163	0.414	150	0.269	127	0.467	Low	0.446
	151	0.445	158	0.240	119	0.491	Low	0.436
	130	0.484	146	0.296	158	0.302	Low	0.403
	153	0.434	178	0.173	131	0.456	Low	0.387
	169	0.384	30	0.736	134	0.435	Low	0.388
	126	0.488	152	0.252	73	0.647	Low	0.357
	129	0.485	106	0.463	153	0.345	Low	0.375
	141	0.461	106	0.463	174	0.178	Low	0.368
	182	0.203	160	0.238	58	0.681	Low	0.318
	156	0.428	138	0.325	144	0.401	Low	0.330
	164	0.401	172	0.195	180	0.102	Low	0.336
	157	0.426	143	0.308	122	0.483	Low	0.316
		0.567		0.509		0.573		
		0.554		0.637		0.621		

6.2 YDI ranks for Commonwealth countries, 2016

Table 6.2 2016 YDI rankings and scores for Commonwealth countries

Global Rank 2016	Commonwealth Rank 2016	State	YDI score 2010	YDI score 2015
3	1	Australia	0.821	0.838
4	2	United Kingdom	0.806	0.837
11	3	New Zealand	0.800	0.813
14	4	Canada	0.803	0.809
20	5	Malta	0.765	0.794
28	6	Barbados	0.731	0.749
31	7	Brunei	0.714	0.731
31	7	Sri Lanka	0.650	0.731
34	9	Malaysia	0.630	0.729
38	10	Cyprus	0.721	0.722
43	11	Singapore	0.663	0.712
46	12	Jamaica	0.675	0.706
50	13	Samoa	0.641	0.687
62	14	Maldives	0.669	0.665
67	15	Bahamas	0.640	0.660
69	16	Mauritius	0.648	0.657
72	17	Antigua and Barbuda	0.631	0.655
73	18	Grenada	0.608	0.654
73	18	Tonga	0.640	0.654
82	20	Saint Lucia	0.619	0.635
84	21	Trinidad and Tobago	0.575	0.634
91	22	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	0.654	0.626
101	23	Belize	0.576	0.606
104	24	Kiribati	0.552	0.602
107	25	Fiji	0.583	0.600
108	26	Solomon Islands	0.569	0.599
113	27	Vanuatu	0.536	0.588
117	28	Guyana	0.552	0.582
118	29	Ghana	0.565	0.581
124	30	Seychelles	0.518	0.564
126	31	Kenya	0.463	0.563
127	32	Papua New Guinea	0.528	0.560
127	32	South Africa	0.465	0.560
134	34	India	0.494	0.548

(*continued*)

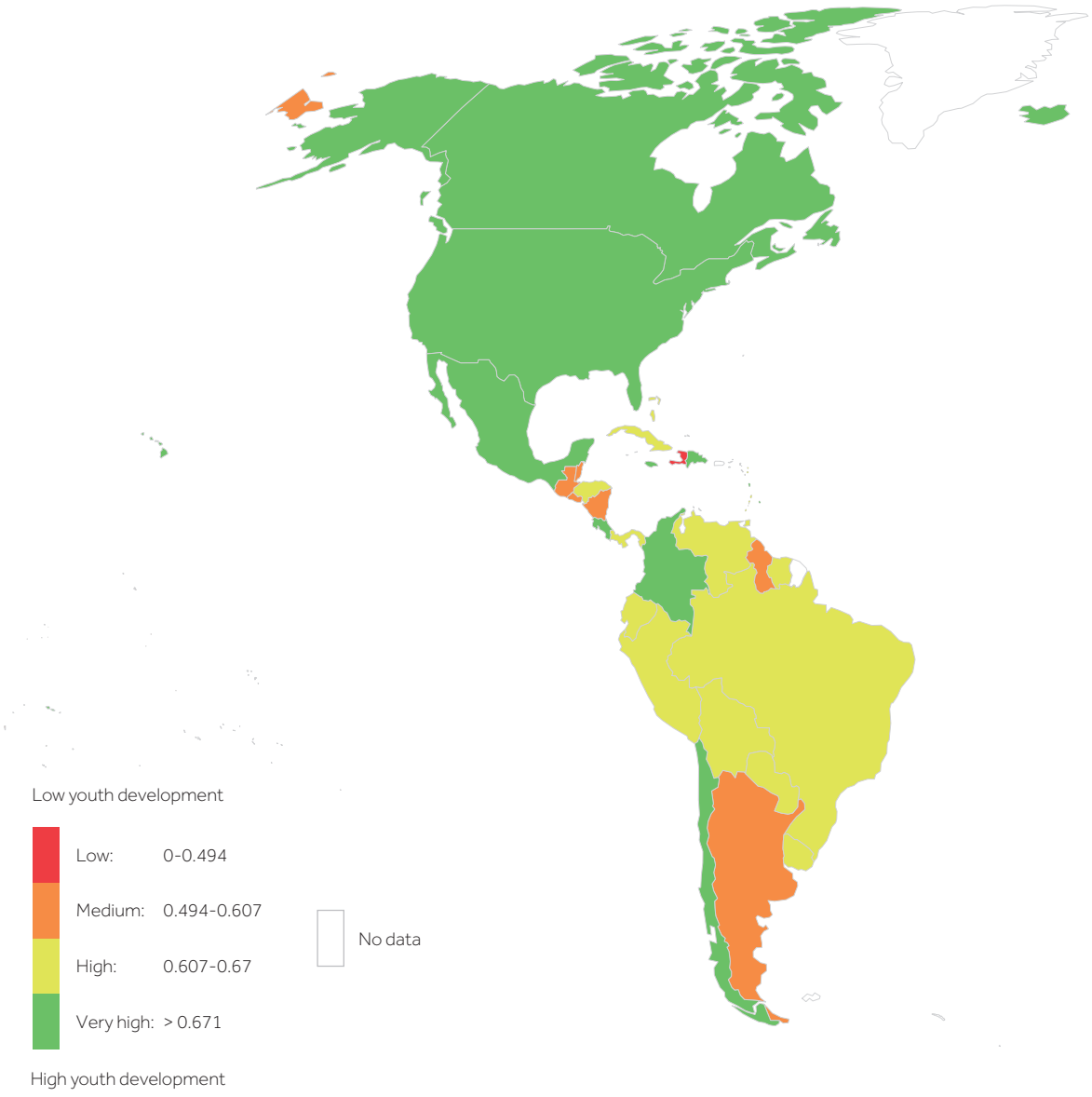
Table 6.2 2016 YDI rankings and scores for Commonwealth countries (continued)

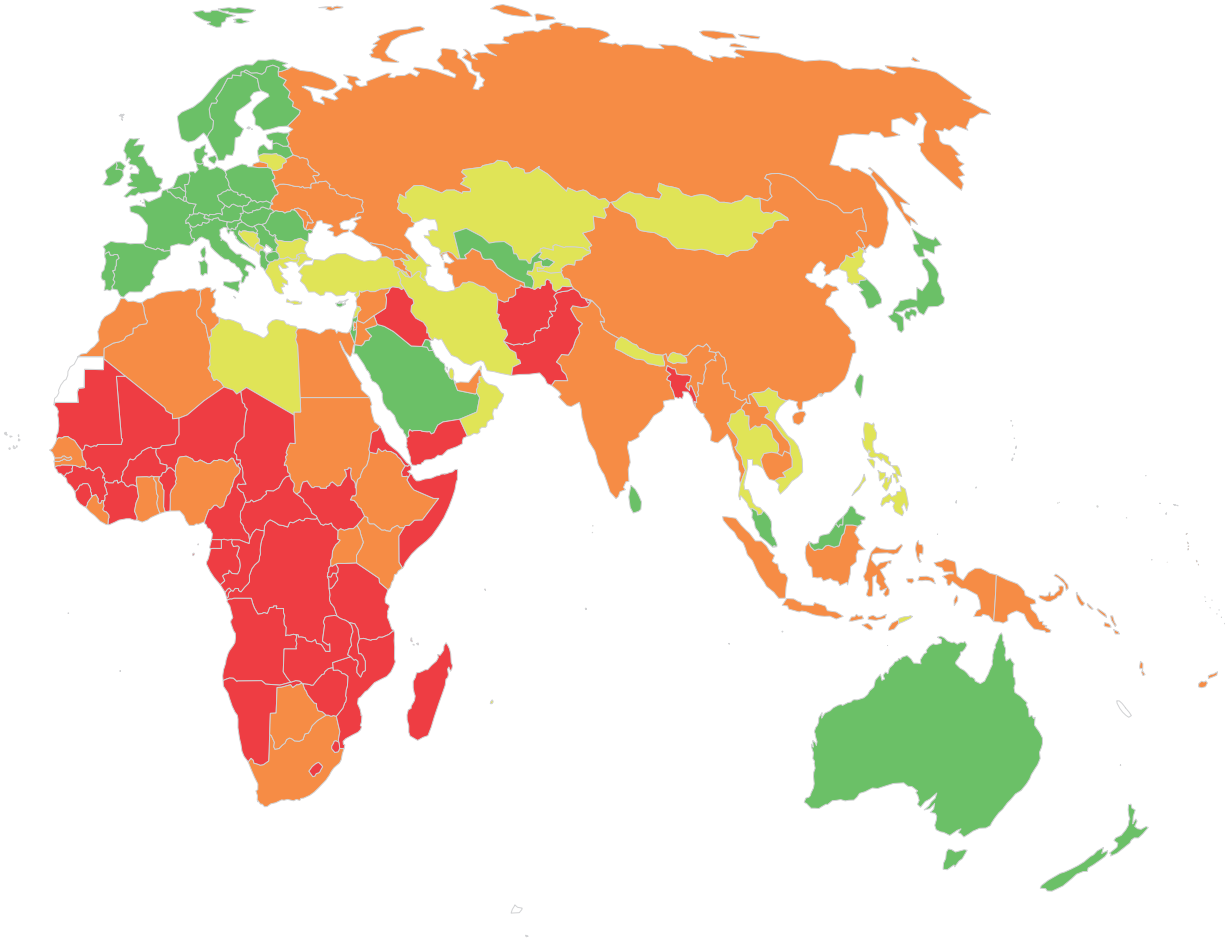
Global Rank 2016	Commonwealth Rank 2016	State	YDI score 2010	YDI score 2015
136	35	Uganda	0.508	0.544
142	36	Nigeria	0.493	0.514
143	37	Botswana	0.467	0.509
147	38	Bangladesh	0.492	0.492
147	38	Swaziland	0.480	0.492
149	40	Rwanda	0.470	0.491
150	41	Sierra Leone	0.438	0.486
155	42	Pakistan	0.571	0.470
156	43	Namibia	0.440	0.464
163	44	Malawi	0.385	0.452
164	45	Cameroon	0.425	0.449
170	46	Tanzania	0.434	0.436
173	47	Lesotho	0.429	0.432
178	48	Zambia	0.388	0.406
179	49	Mozambique	0.357	0.392
Commonwealth Regional Averages				
Pacific region			0.630	0.660
Caribbean and Americas region			0.642	0.665
Africa region			0.465	0.500
Asia region			0.610	0.635
Commonwealth Average			0.577	0.606

Four Commonwealth countries – Dominica, Nauru, Tuvalu and St Kitts and Nevis – could not be included in the 2016 YDI due to lack of adequate data.

6.3 YDI overall score by country, 2016

Figure 6.1 2016 YDI overall score





Annexes


CHOGM 2013
Sri Lanka

Annexes

Annex 1 YDI Technical Advisory Committee

Table A1.1 Members of YDI Technical Advisory Committee

	Name	Designation / Institution
1.	Professor Lata Narayan	Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India
2.	Professor Jo Boyden	Department of International Development, University of Oxford, and Director, Young Lives
3.	Dr Claudia Stein	Director, Division of Information, Evidence, Research & Innovation, World Health Organization
4.	Professor M. Ramesh	Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, Singapore
5.	Charles Dan	Special Representative on Youth and Social Inclusion, International Labour Organization
6.	Kim Bradford Smith	Senior Statistics and Evidence Lead, Inclusive Societies Hub, Department for International Development, UK
7.	Mattias K.A. Lundberg	Senior Economist and Director of Global Partnership on Youth Employment, World Bank
8.	Professor Robyn Broadbent	Discipline Leader Youth Work, Victoria University, Australia
9.	Dr Adil Najam	Dean, Pardee School of Global Studies, Boston University, and Lead Author, 2016 Human Development Report for Pakistan
10.	William Reese	President and CEO, International Youth Foundation, Washington DC
11.	Kuiniselani Toelupe Tago	Deputy Director, Social Development Division, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Fiji
12.	Cleviston Hunte	Director of Youth, Ministry of Culture, Sport and Youth, Government of Barbados
13.	Emmanuel Etim	Executive Director, Observatory for Policy Practice and Youth Studies (Ethiopia), and former Senior Programmes Manager, Youth Division, African Union Commission
14.	Nicola Shepherd	UN Focal Point on Youth, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)
15.	Nils Fietje	Research Officer, Division of Information, Evidence, Research & Innovation, World Health Organization
16.	Sarah Huxley	International Youth Policy Adviser, Action Aid
17.	Robert Johnston	Advisor, United Nations Statistics Division, New York
18.	Maria Kypriotou	Youth Focal Point, Ethics, Youth and Sport Division, UNESCO
19.	Moritz Ader	Policy Analyst, Middle East and North Africa Governance Programme, OECD
20.	Dr Godfrey St. Bernard	Institute of Social and Economic Studies, University of the West Indies
21.	David Gordon	Professorial Research Fellow, Centre for the Study of Poverty and Social Justice, University of Bristol, UK
22.	Katie Acheson	Chair, Australia Youth Affairs Coalition
23.	Sarah Haynes	Policy and Research Coordinator, Restless Development
24.	Kishva Ambigapathy	Chairperson, Commonwealth Youth Council
25.	Nikoli Edwards	Vice Chairperson (Policy and Advocacy), Commonwealth Youth Council

Annex 2 Methodology of the Youth Development Index

Any composite index is constructed from an initial set of disparate data. These datasets measure different aspects of the index that are incommensurable by themselves. To take raw country data and combine them into a composite index requires a number of procedural steps.

The general process for creating a composite index follows the following stages:

- sourcing and collecting raw data
- filling or imputing data gaps
- banding
- weighting
- aggregating.

This annex will explain step by step the process of constructing the YDI.

A2.1 Sourcing and collecting raw data

The YDI is designed to measure youth development based on the following five domains:

- Domain 1: Education
- Domain 2: Health and Well-being
- Domain 3: Employment and Opportunity
- Domain 4: Political Participation
- Domain 5: Civic Participation

These domains and likely indicators were decided and agreed through consultation with the YDI Technical Advisory Committee. To be able to gauge youth development within each country in these domains, 18 indicators were sourced that measure an aspect of one of the five domains, as shown in Tables A2.1 to A2.5.

Table A2.1 YDI indicators for the Education domain, 2010–15

Code	Indicator	Source	Latest year	Global coverage of countries	Number of countries with only one single data point in the YDI
D1.1	Enrolment in secondary education (gross)	UNESCO	2015	177	15
D1.2	Literacy rate (15–24)	UNESCO	2015	151	34
D1.3	Digital native rate	International Telecommunication Union	2013	178	178

Table A2.2 YDI indicators for the Health and Well-being domain, 2010–15

Code	Indicator	Source	Latest year	Global coverage of countries	Number of countries with only one single data point in the YDI
D2.1	Youth mortality rate	Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation	2013	184	0
D2.2	Drug abuse rate by YLL (15–29)	GBD	2013	184	0
D2.3	HIV rate (15–24)	World Bank	2013	108	1
D2.4	Alcohol abuse rate by YLL (15–29)	GBD	2013	184	0
D2.5	Mental disorder rate by YLL (15–29)	GBD	2013	184	0
D2.6	Score on Global Well-Being Index (15–29)	Gallup World Poll	2014	144	23

Table A2.3 YDI indicators for the Employment and Opportunity domain

Code	Indicator	Source	Latest year	Global coverage of countries	Number of countries with only one single data point in the YDI
D3.1	Youth NEET rate	International Labour Organization (ILO), World Development Reports, OECD	2014	141	34
D3.2	Ratio of youth unemployment rate to adult unemployment rate	UNDATA	2014	151	33
D3.3	Adolescent fertility rate (births per 1,000 women 15–19)	World Bank	2014	184	0
D3.4	Existence of account at a financial institution, young adults (% 15–24)	World Bank Findex	2014	131	0

Table A2.4 YDI indicators for the Political Participation domain

Code	Indicator	Source	Latest year	Global coverage of countries	Number of countries with only one single data point in the YDI
D4.1	Existence of a youth policy	Youth policy labs	2015	182	0
D4.2	Existence of voter education	ACE Electoral Knowledge Network	2014	183	183
D4.3	Expressed political views; answered 'yes' to questions 'Have you done any of the following in the past month?' and 'How about voiced your opinion to a public official?' (15–29)	Gallup World Poll (15–29 responses only)	2014	154	17

A2.2 Improvements to 2016 Youth Development Index indicators

As data have improved in quality and accessibility since the first YDI was published in 2013, the indicators included in the 2016 YDI have been updated accordingly. Changes to the indicators and the reasoning behind them are summarised below.

Education

Public spending on education as a percentage of GDP has been dropped from the Education domain, as it fluctuates from year to year based on national budget priorities. It is also not necessarily an indicator of the quality of education.

'Mean years of schooling' has been replaced with 'Enrolment in secondary school' (gross), as the latter better captures access to minimum goals in education. It is important to note that it is possible to score above 100 per cent in this indicator as all people enrolled in secondary schools are counted and then divided by the population officially of secondary school age. Where second chance opportunities are taken by older youth this can inflate the figures to above 100 per cent.

'Digital natives' has been added to the Education domain. With the use of technology becoming more important in social and professional realms, access to and knowledge of how to use digital tools and

Table A2.5 YDI indicators for the Civic Participation domain

Code	Indicator	Source	Latest year	Global coverage of countries	Number of countries with only one single data point in the YDI
D5.1	Volunteered time; answered 'yes' to questions 'Have you done any of the following in the past month?' and 'How about volunteered your time to an organisation?' (15–29)	Gallup World Poll (15–29 responses only)	2014	161	12
D5.2	Helped a stranger; answered 'yes' to questions 'Have you done any of the following in the past month?' and 'How about helped a stranger or someone you didn't know who needed help?' (15–29)	Gallup World Poll (15–29 responses only)	2014	161	13

technology is of growing importance in educating and preparing youth for the future.

Health and Well-being

'Teenage pregnancy rates' has been removed from this domain and 'Adolescent fertility' has been added to the Employment and Opportunity domain, recognising that early pregnancy substantially diminishes young women's opportunities to study, gain employment and participate in their community.

'Alcohol abuse', 'drug abuse' and 'mental disorder' (YLL) have been added to the Health and Well-being domain as they help give a nuanced picture of the state of health for youth. YLL is a summary measure of premature mortality (early death). It represents the total number of years not lived per 100,000 youth.

The Global Well-Being Index produced on the basis of the Gallup World Poll has also been included in the 2016 YDI. The index looks at purpose, social, financial, community and physical domains within the youth cohort.

Employment and Opportunity

One of the major factors in developing the 2016 YDI was the availability of more and better data on youth NEET. At the time of writing, these data have three main sources: statistical tables of the World Development Report 2013 on Jobs, covering 120 countries;[1] OECD NEET figures, covering 36 countries;[2] and the International Labour Organization, covering 48 countries.[3] To include NEET in the YDI, a global dataset has been compiled from the three main sources. Whenever merging data from different sources, care needs to be taken to ensure that the sources are comparable. Though the definition of NEET was consistent across the sources, it was noted that NEET data varied substantially from one source to another at the country level.

To minimise the computational challenges associated with compiling a global dataset from three different sources, preference was given to the World Development Report 2013 as the source covering the most countries. For countries not in the WDR, data from OECD were used.

These data on those who are NEET are now widely accepted as a stronger indicator of employment and opportunity levels in comparison with measures that don't take education into account, as NEET reflect the positive impact that study can have on future opportunities, making further education a viable option for young people in addition to employment.

There are, however, some risks related to this indicator that are worth bearing in mind. For example, some countries can have a good NEET score when many young people drop out of school early to find employment, but this lowers their ability to upskill and gain more skilled or highly paid employment later on in life. Thus, a good NEET score at any moment in time need not necessarily be a positive sign for the long term, particularly for developing countries.

As discussed above, the adolescent fertility rate has been included in this domain as it has a significant impact on young mothers' opportunities to participate in learning and earning.

Civic Participation and Political Participation

Indicators in these two domains remain unchanged from the 2013 YDI. But there is an improvement in the quality and coverage of the data in the 2016 YDI.

A2.3 Overview of data limitations

There were many data limitations to overcome in developing the 2016 YDI. Many of the same challenges are likely to be encountered in the production of national or regional YDIs. Data limitations include:

- data not being available on all 18 indicators for all the countries in the YDI
- some data being for the 15–24 age group and others for the 15–29 age group
- finding representative data on political participation and civic participation – the greatest challenge when seeking data on the domains in the YDI
- national averages hiding regional variations, which could mask serious inequalities in a country with a large population or land mass
- the impossibility of disaggregating some data in the YDI by gender.

Data availability issues and imputations

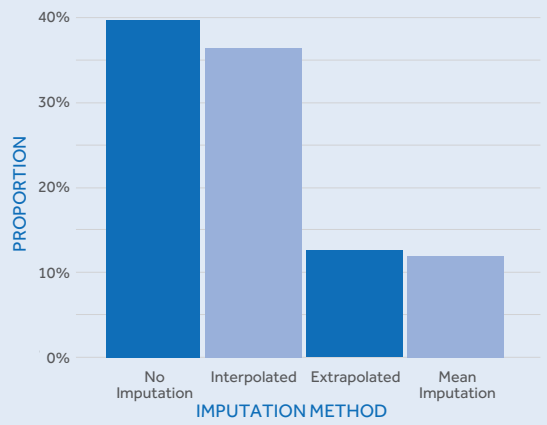
The methodology has been designed to be in line with other prominent global indicators, and substantial effort has been made to populate the index with the best existing country information. However, the major challenge to developing a harmonised youth development index is in attempting to overcome the paucity of consistent and comprehensive data coverage across countries varying significantly in land mass, population, level of economic development and location. Data difficulties are particularly acute for civic and political indicators where the best available attitudinal data have been selected. One of the major outputs of this process is a summary not only of the available data, but also of the data that cannot be currently sourced from the existing stock of data.

The issue of low availability for current or historical data has been a factor in a number of the methodological decisions made, from what indicators to include to how to calculate the final scores. Many empirical and statistical techniques can be employed to deal with the challenge of finding missing data when creating a composite index.[4] Table A2.6 lists them and explains how these applied, or did not apply, to the YDI.

Table A2.6 Data imputation methods applied in the YDI, in order of application

Imputation method	Description	Application in YDI
Time series imputation	Replace missing values using linear interpolation	When at least two data points exist in time for an indicator-country pair, linear interpolation is used to estimate data for unreported years.
Cold deck imputation	Replace the missing value with a value from another source	When only one data point exists for an indicator-country pair, these data are extrapolated for all years.
Hot deck imputation	Assign missing data the value of a 'similar' data point	Where time series and cold deck imputations fail, indicator-country pairs are assigned averages of other countries in the same year in the following order of preference: 1. the average of the country's region 2. the average of other countries in the same income bracket as the country as defined by the World Bank 3. the average of all other countries with the same government type as the country as defined by the Economist Intelligence Unit 4. the global average. Only the most preferable of the four hot deck imputation techniques listed is used for any single missing data instance.

Figure A2.1 The proportion of data available and imputation methods of the YDI



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

In using hot and cold deck imputation methods, the YDI uses the best possible data without an overly complex methodology.

Countries with more than 50 per cent of data missing are not included in the YDI. On average 87 per cent of the YDI score of remaining countries is based on existing country data imputed by either time series or cold deck techniques. Some 88 per cent of the 2016 YDI is either original data or interpolated or extrapolated from original data. The remaining 12 per cent is based on hot deck imputation techniques. Figure A2.1 summarises data availability and imputation methods of the YDI.

Figure A1.2 shows the proportion of data available and gives an imputation summary of the YDI between 1990 and 2015. Of the original data used, 96 per cent are later than 2010 and no data before 1990 are included.

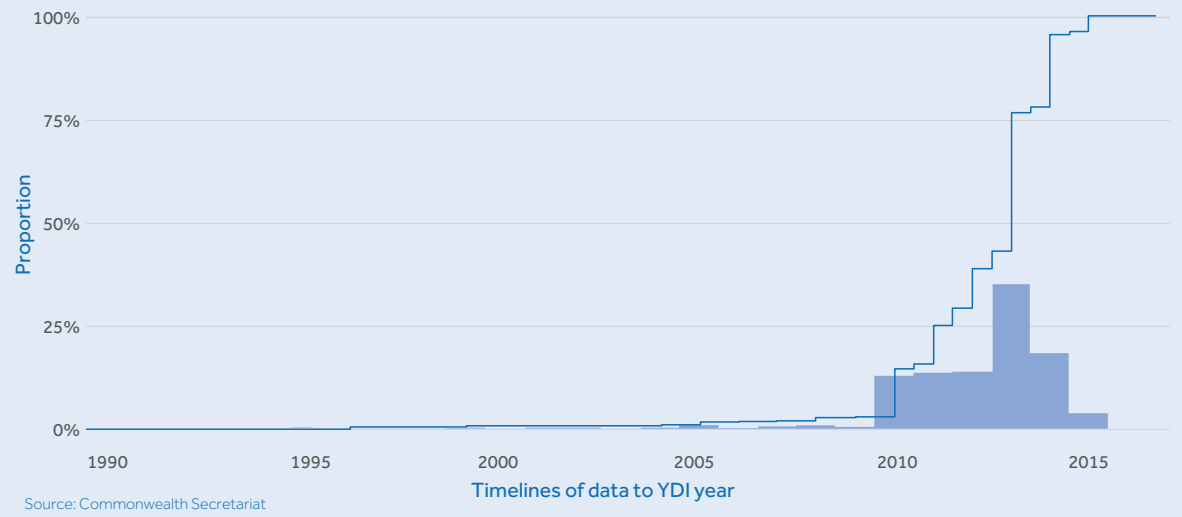
The construction of the YDI makes the best use of all data available to estimate the level of youth development. However, caution must be exercised when analysing YDI scores for a country over time. The large drop in original data in the years between 2010 and 2015 shows that sometimes countries can have just a single data point in the time period for one or more indicators.

One of the findings in this report is that youth development has improved since 2010. In full, this should be interpreted as 'given the availability of new information for each year, the evidence suggests that youth development has improved since 2010'. The paucity of data prohibits anything stronger being claimed as a result and highlights that collecting more and better age-disaggregated data needs to be made a priority to further understand country and global trends.

A2.4 The banding process

In order to allow aggregation of non-commensurable indicators, a process of normalisation or banding was undertaken. Under this process each indicator is scaled between a score between 0 and 1, relative to a global dataset. To do this, appropriate minimum and maximum

Figure A2.2 The proportion of data available and timeliness of data to YDI year, 1990–2015



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

values for the dataset are decided such that anything below the minimum is assigned 0, anything above the maximum is assigned 1, and everything else is scaled evenly between 0 and 1. Depending on the nature of the data, the banding process can take different forms.

For example, in the 'Secondary school enrolment' indicator, a higher score reflects a more desirable situation. Therefore, in this case the banding process requires the largest data point to be assigned a value of 1. Conversely the lowest data point in the indicator is assigned 0, while all other data are scaled relative to these two points. This process is referred to as forward banding. On the other hand, in the indicator 'Youth mortality', a lower score reflects a more desirable situation. In this case, the data are reverse banded, so the lowest value is assigned 1 in the banding process, while the highest is assigned 0.

Therefore, in year *y*, a forward banded score is calculated for indicator *i* by Equation 1. A reverse banded score is calculated by Equation 2.

Equation 1. Banding equation

$$Banded_i = \frac{Country\ indicator\ value\ in\ year\ y_i - Mininum\ cutoff_i}{Maximum\ cutoff_i - Mininum\ cutoff_i}$$

Equation 2: Reverse banding equation

$$Reverse\ Banded_i = 1 - \frac{Country\ indicator\ value\ in\ year\ y_i - Mininum\ cutoff_i}{Maximum\ cutoff_i - Mininum\ cutoff_i}$$

An integral part of this process is to set appropriate minimum and maximum cutoff values for the banded scores; empirical and normative methods are available to do this. While some data may be distributed normally and therefore lend themselves well to standard and well-defined mathematical techniques, such as defining outliers as those greater than three standard deviations from the mean, other datasets do not follow well-behaved trends. The final choice of which technique to use must depend on a number of considerations: the nature of the data, the underlying distribution, the purpose of the index, what information is being conveyed, and so on. When investigating the global datasets used in the YDI, very few of the distributions can be classified as normal. The presence of outliers affects not only the average, but also the variance, skewing both the minimum and maximum values.

To account for this, the Institute for Economics and Peace in some instances set artificial minimums and maximums to ensure results are not too heavily influenced by outliers. In the cases where outliers are present, the lower bound set for the banding process are set as the lowest data point that is within 1.5 times the inter-quartile range below the first quartile (where the inter-quartile range is defined as the distance between the first and third quartiles). Similarly, the upper bound set for the banding process are set as the largest data point that is within 1.5 times the inter-quartile range above the third quartile. The following section details where this process has been used and illustrates the application of the process to the distributions of the indicators. The bands obtained by this process are shown in Table A2.7. Outlier results have been trimmed.

A2.5 Weighting indicators and domains

Table A2.8 shows the indicators and weights used in the YDI. The YDI assigns equal weight to the domains of Education, Health, Employment, and Participation (civic plus political participation). Within domains, each indicator is weighted by its relative importance to the other indicators in the domain. There are a number of methods available[5] to decision-makers, including data envelopment analysis, benefit of the doubt approach and unobserved components.

The YDI uses a set of three primary indicators to align overall scores with broader human development priorities: youth literacy rate, youth mortality rate and youth NEET rate. Primary indicators are weighted more heavily than others in the index. It is important to note that these primary indicators have a major impact on domain scores, in some cases giving countries a more pronounced domain score regardless of their overall rank in the YDI.

A realignment of weightings to better represent the current development issues has resulted in rank changes for many countries in this iteration of the YDI. The only time series comparison recommended by IEP is to use this iteration across the years provided.

Table A2.7 Banding limits used in the YDI, by domain

Variables		Summary statistics of indicators				Banding information			
Domain	Indicator	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Standard deviation	Is more better?	1st quartile	3rd quartile	Outliers trimmed
Education	Enrolment in secondary education (gross)	13.5	163.1	80.9	27.3	Yes	7.4	132.5	No
Education	Literacy rate (15–24)	23.5	100.0	91.2	14.6	Yes	71.5	100.0	Yes
Education	Digital native rate	0.6	99.6	38.7	32.4	Yes	0.6	99.6	No
Health and Well-being	Youth mortality rate	21.4	887.0	158.7	134.9	No	23.5	393.5	Yes
Health and Well-being	Mental disorder rate by YLL (15–29)	7.1	3013.1	687.8	531.8	No	8.4	1502.0	Yes
Health and Well-being	Alcohol abuse rate by YLL (15–29)	1.0	711.1	53.7	83.5	No	1.0	138.0	Yes
Health and Well-being	Drug abuse rate by YLL (15–29)	3.8	1231.5	164.2	170.8	No	3.8	484.7	Yes
Health and Well-being	HIV rate 15–24	0.1	10.6	0.9	1.8	No	0.1	0.7	Yes
Health and Well-being	Score on Global Well-Being Index (15–29)	0.0	0.6	0.2	0.1	Yes	0.0	0.6	Yes
Employment and Opportunity	Youth NEET rate	0.5	52.5	16.3	9.0	No	0.9	49.8	Yes
Employment and Opportunity	Ratio of youth unemployment rate to adult unemployment rate	0.5	10.4	3.2	1.4	No	0.9	4.9	Yes
Employment and Opportunity	Adolescent fertility rate (births per 1,000 women 15–19)	0.6	210.4	50.8	41.9	No	0.6	153.8	Yes
Employment and Opportunity	Existence of account at a financial institution, young adults (% 15–24)	0.0	100.0	41.3	31.9	Yes	0.0	100.0	No
Political Participation	Existence of a youth policy	0.0	1.0	0.7	0.4	Yes	0.0	1.0	No
Political Participation	Existence of voter education	0.0	1.0	0.5	0.4	Yes	0.0	1.0	No
Political Participation	Voiced opinion to official (15–24) (yes) (%)	2.0	47.0	16.6	7.9	Yes	3.0	32.5	Yes
Civic Participation	Helped a stranger (15–24) (yes) (%)	15.0	85.0	48.5	13.3	Yes	22.5	74.5	Yes
Civic Participation	Volunteered time (15–24) (yes) (%)	2.0	60.0	19.8	10.6	Yes	2.0	43.6	Yes

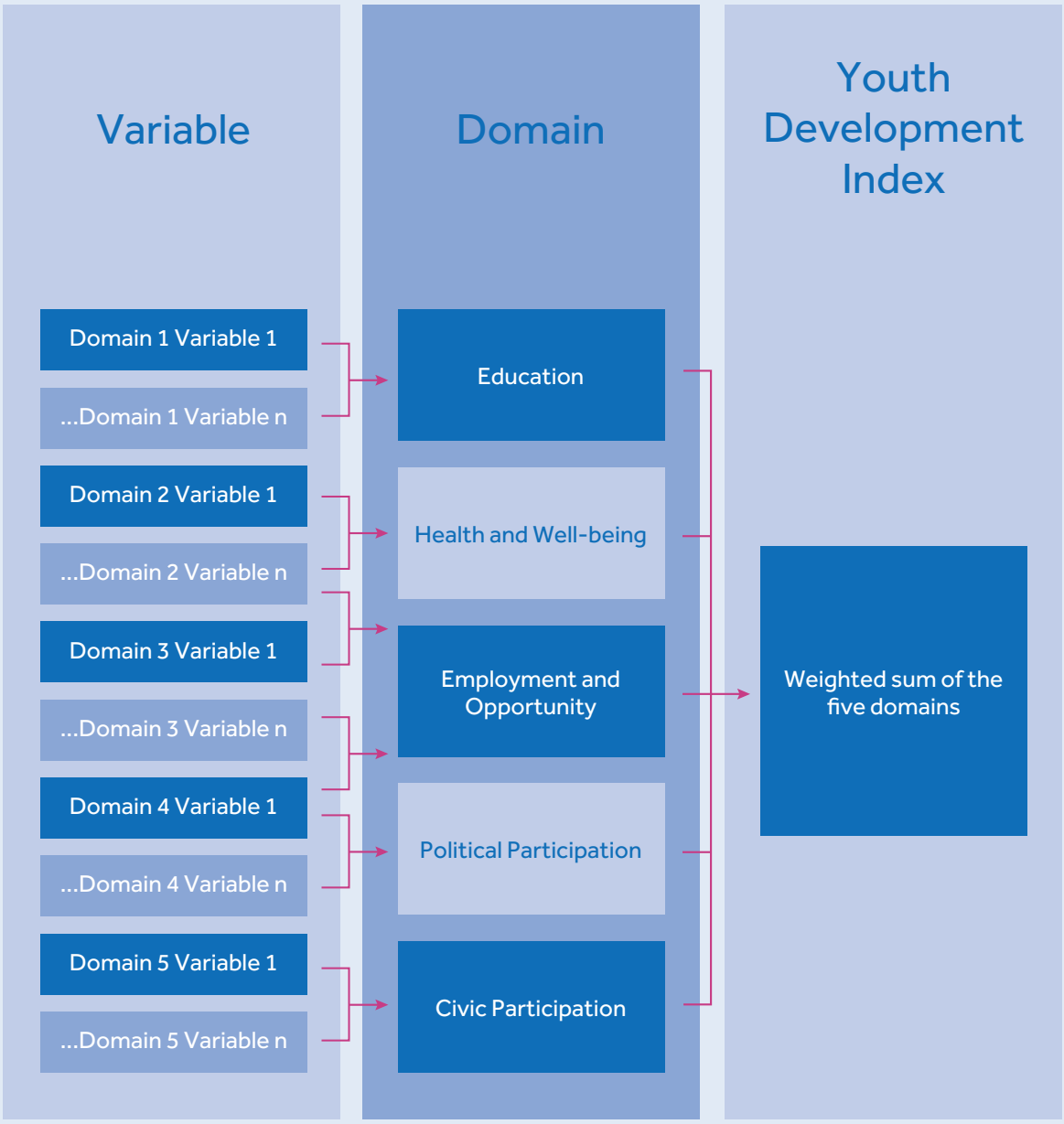
Table A2.8 Indicators and weights used in the YDI

Domain	Indicator	Indicator weight	Domain weight
Education	Enrolment in secondary education (gross)	7.50%	25%
	Literacy rate (15–24)	10.00%	
	Digital natives (15–24)	7.50%	
Health and Well-being	Youth mortality rate	10.00%	25%
	Mental disorder rate by years of life lost (YLL) (15–29)	3.00%	
	Alcohol abuse rate by YLL (15–29)	3.00%	
	Drug abuse rate by YLL (15–29)	3.00%	
	HIV rate (15–24)	3.00%	
	Score on Global Well-Being Index (15–29)	3.00%	
Employment and Opportunity	Youth not in education, employment or training (NEET) rate	10.00%	25%
	Ratio of youth (15–24) unemployment rate to adult unemployment rate,	5.00%	
	Adolescent fertility rate (births per 1,000 women aged 15–19)	5.00%	
	Existence of an account at a formal financial institution, young adults (% aged 15–24)	5.00%	
Political Participation	Existence of a youth policy	5.00%	15%
	Existence of voter education	5.00%	
	Voiced opinion to official (15–24) (yes) (%)	5.00%	
Civic Participation	Volunteered time (15–24) (yes) (%)	5.00%	10%
	Helped a stranger (15–24) (yes) (%)	5.00%	

A2.6 YDI aggregation and calculation

Once data have been banded and weights assigned, the final stage is to multiply each banded indicator with its corresponding weight and add each country's performance to arrive at an overall score. Final scores are calculated by combining scores for individual domains into the overall YDI (Figure A2.3).

Figure A2.3 How final scores are calculated from raw indicators



Source: Commonwealth Secretariat

Annex 3 Regional Youth Development Index indicator scores in 2015

Table A3.1 Regional YDI indicator scores, 2015

Indicator	Asia-Pacific estimates	Central America and Caribbean estimates	Europe estimates	MENA estimates	North America estimates	Russia and Eurasia estimates	South America estimates	South Asia estimates	Sub-Saharan Africa estimates	Global estimates	What does it mean for youth?
Existence of account at a financial institution	69%	35%	70%	38%	93%	23%	34%	31%	17%	42%	Sub-Saharan African youth are far less likely to have an account at a financial institution than globally.
Adolescent fertility rate	28:1,000	58:1,000	12:1,000	29:1,000	17:1,000	30:1,000	63:1,000	43:1,000	96:1,000	48:1,000	Europe has the lowest adolescent fertility rate, eight times lower than Sub-Saharan Africa.
Alcohol abuse rate by YLL	52 years per 100,000 youth	58 years per 100,000 youth	28 years per 100,000 youth	7 years per 100,000 youth	21 years per 100,000 youth	111 years per 100,000 youth	38 years per 100,000 youth	9 years per 100,000 youth	82 years per 100,000 youth	51 years per 100,000 youth	
Digital native rate	40%	39%	81%	36%	92%	25%	43%	12%	8%	38%	Sub-Saharan African and South Asian youth are far less likely to be proficient in using the internet than the rest of the globe.

Table A3.1 Regional YDI indicator scores, 2015 (continued)

Indicator	Asia-Pacific estimates	Central America and Caribbean estimates	Europe estimates	MENA estimates	North America estimates	Russia and Eurasia estimates	South America estimates	South Asia estimates	Sub-Saharan Africa estimates	Global estimates	What does it mean for youth?
Drug abuse rate by YLL	112 years per 100,000 youth	47 years per 100,000 youth	230 years per 100,000 youth	200 years per 100,000 youth	356 years per 100,000 youth	132 years per 100,000 youth	83 years per 100,000 youth	37 years per 100,000 youth	214 years per 100,000 youth	163 years per 100,000 youth	North American youth lose the most years of life through drug abuse; Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa also lose more than 200 years per 100,000 youth.
Enrolment in secondary education	84%	88%	110%	83%	103%	98%	92%	68%	47%	81%	Over 80% of children are enrolled in secondary schools in all regions except Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.
Existence of a youth policy	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.3	0.3	1	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	Russia and Eurasia is the only region completely covered by youth policies.
Score on Global Well-Being Index	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.2	Youth do not, on average, score well in the purpose, social, financial, community and physical domains analysed by the Global Well-Being Index.

Helped a stranger	52%	54%	52%	56%	83%	43%	45%	85%	50%	52%	South Asian and North American youth are far more likely to have helped a stranger than the rest of the globe.
HIV rate	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.1%	1.8%	0.6%	Sub-Saharan Africa has six times more youth with HIV (1.8%) than Central America and the Caribbean (0.3%) and far more than South Asia (0.1%).
Literacy rate	95%	96%	99%	96%	99%	99%	99%	85%	75%	91%	Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia have the highest rate of illiterate youth in the world.
Mental disorder rate by YLL	772 years per 100,000 youth	598 years per 100,000 youth	628 years per 100,000 youth	268 years per 100,000 youth	778 years per 100,000 youth	1119 years per 100,000 youth	842 years per 100,000 youth	1050 years per 100,000 youth	633 years per 100,000 youth	675 years per 100,000 youth	Russia and Eurasia suffers more lives lost through mental disorders than any other region. All regions lose more years of life to mental disorder than to drug or alcohol abuse.
NEET rate	15%	27%	14%	29%	15%	23%	15%	23%	20%	20%	Close to a third of MENA's and Central America and Caribbean youth are NEET.

(*continued*)

Table A3.1 Regional YDI indicator scores, 2015 (continued)

Indicator	Asia-Pacific estimates	Central America and Caribbean estimates	Europe estimates	MENA estimates	North America estimates	Russia and Eurasia estimates	South America estimates	South Asia estimates	Sub-Saharan Africa estimates	Global estimates	What does it mean for youth?
Voiced opinion to official	15%	21%	19%	14%	22%	10%	17%	16%	19%	17%	Russia and Eurasian youth are the least likely to have voiced an opinion to an official; North American youth are the most likely.
Volunteered time	26%	29%	21%	15%	43%	23%	16%	22%	18%	21%	Youth from MENA and South Asia are least likely to volunteer time and those from North America the most likely.
Existence of voter education	0.4	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.8	0.4	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.5	South America has the highest level of voter education while MENA has the least.
Youth mortality rate	120 per 100,000 youth	121 per 100,000 youth	52 per 100,000 youth	77 per 100,000 youth	61 per 100,000 youth	131 per 100,000 youth	126 per 100,000 youth	149 per 100,000 youth	298 per 100,000 youth	149 per 100,000 youth	Europe and North America have the lowest rates of youth mortality while Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest by far.
Ratio of youth unemployment rate to adult unemployment rate	4:1	3:1	3:1	4:1	3:1	3:1	3:1	4:1	2:1	3:1	Youth in Asia-Pacific, MENA and South Asia are four times more likely to be unemployed than the adult population.

Annex 4 Correlations to development indicators

Table A4.1 Correlations between development domain and development indicators

Development domain	Indicator	Source	Description	Correlation with 2016 YDI
Corruption	Freedom from corruption	Heritage Foundation Index of Economic Freedom	Scores perceptions of corruption, based on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index.	0.74
Demographics	Refugees and internally displaced persons	Fund For Peace Fragile States Index	Evaluates the pressures associated with displacement.	–0.74
	Human flight	Fund For Peace Fragile States Index	Assesses negative human capital flows.	–0.77
	Demographic pressures	Fund For Peace Fragile States Index	Evaluates pressures on the population such as disease and natural disasters.	–0.86
Economic development	Internet users	World Bank	Internet users are individuals who have used the internet (from any location) in the last 12 months. Internet can be used via a computer, mobile phone, personal digital assistant, games machine, digital TV etc.	0.82
	Infrastructure	World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report	Assesses the quality and availability of transport, electricity and communication infrastructure.	0.78
	GDP per capita	Economist Intelligence Unit	GDP per capita.	0.61
	Multidimensional Poverty Index overall score	Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative	Measures experiences of deprivation across three dimensions: health, education and standard of living.	–0.68
	Poverty and economic decline	Fund for Peace Fragile States Index	Evaluates the extent that poverty and economic decline constrain the ability of the state to provide for citizens.	–0.76
	Uneven development	Fund for Peace Fragile States Index	Evaluates ethnic, religious or regional disparities in development.	–0.81
Education	Education	Legatum Prosperity Index	Measures countries' performance in access to education, quality of education, and human capital.	0.86
	Higher education and training	World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report	Assesses the quality and quantity of higher education and quality and availability of on-the-job training.	0.82
	Primary school enrolment ratio	Economist Intelligence Unit	The ratio of the number of children of official school age who are enrolled in school to the population of official school age.	0.61

(*continued*)

Table A4.1 Correlations between development domain and development indicators (continued)

Development domain	Indicator	Source	Description	Correlation with 2016 YDI
Entrepreneurship and innovation	Entrepreneurship and opportunity	Legatum Prosperity Index	Measures a country's entrepreneurial environment, its promotion of innovative activity, and the evenness of opportunity.	0.86
	Innovation	World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report	Assesses capacity for and commitment to technological innovation.	0.65
Gender equality	Gender equality rating	World Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment	Assesses the extent to which the country has installed institutions and programmes to enforce laws and policies that promote equal access for men and women in education, health, the economy and protection under law.	0.59
	Gender Inequality Index	UNDP Human Development Index	Measures gender inequality in three aspects of human development: reproductive health, empowerment and economic status.	–0.86
Governance	Government effectiveness	World Bank World Governance Indicators	Reflects perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality and independence of the civil service, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government.	0.81
	Functioning of government	Economist Intelligence Unit	Measures functioning of government based on democratic processes, transparency and accountability, capability of the civil service and influence of the military, interest groups and foreign powers.	0.7
	Voice and accountability	World Bank World Governance Indicators	Captures perceptions of the extent to which a country's citizens are able to participate in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association, and a free media.	0.69
	Political Democracy Index overall score	Economist Intelligence Unit	Qualitative assessment of the state of democracy in a country.	0.67
	Democratic political culture	Economist Intelligence Unit	Assesses the extent of a culture for democracy using citizens' perceptions of the roles of social actors, including the military, the executive and religious institutions.	0.6
	Civil liberties	Economist Intelligence Unit	Assesses civil liberties based on human rights, redress from the government and freedom of expression, religion and press.	0.59
	Electoral process	Economist Intelligence Unit	Assesses the freedom and fairness of elections.	0.54
	Legitimacy of the state	Fund for Peace Fragile States Index	Measures indicators of corruption or representativeness in the state structure.	–0.74
	Public services	Fund for Peace Fragile States Index	Measures the state's provision of health, education and sanitation services.	–0.86

Health	Health	Legatum Prosperity Index	Measures countries' performance in three areas: basic health outcomes (objective and subjective), health infrastructure and preventative care.	0.87
	Life expectancy	UNDP Human Development Index	Number of years a newborn infant could expect to live if prevailing patterns of age-specific mortality rates at the time of birth stay the same throughout the infant's life.	0.85
	Prevalence of malnutrition	World Bank	Percentage of children under age 5 whose weight for age is more than two standard deviations below the median for the international reference population.	–0.59
	Infant mortality	Economist Intelligence Unit	Number of infants that have died before reaching age 1 per 1,000 live births in a given year.	–0.81
Human development	Inequality adjusted life expectancy	UNDP Human Development Index	Assesses the inequality in distribution of expected length of life.	0.87
	Overall prosperity score	Legatum Prosperity Index	Measures prosperity as a function of wealth and well-being across eight subdomains.	0.87
	Inequality Adjusted Human Development Index	UNDP Human Development Index	Assesses the level of human development in a country relative to the level of inequality.	0.87
	Overall human development score	UNDP Human Development Index	Scores a country's achievement in income, education and health outcomes.	0.86
	Health and primary education	World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report	Assesses the state of public health and quality and quantity of basic education.	0.83
	Social capital	Legatum Prosperity Index	Measures countries' performance in social cohesion and engagement and community and family networks.	0.59

(*continued*)

Table A4.1 Correlations between development domain and development indicators (continued)

Development domain	Indicator	Source	Description	Correlation with 2016 YDI
International relations	Political stability	World Bank World Governance Indicators	Captures perceptions of the likelihood of political instability and/or politically motivated violence, including terrorism.	0.63
	Group grievance	Fund for Peace Fragile States Index	Measures the extent and severity of grievances between groups in society, including religious, ethnic, sectarian and political discrimination and division.	–0.53
	Regional integration	Economist Intelligence Unit	Extent of a nation's integration with other states.	–0.58
	Intensity of organised internal conflict	Institute for Economics and Peace Global Peace Index	Assessment of the intensity of conflicts within the country. Scored by the Economist Intelligence Unit Country Analysis team.	–0.59
	Global Peace Index overall score	Institute for Economics and Peace Global Peace Index	A composite measurement of negative peace (the absence of direct violence) across three domains: ongoing conflict, societal safety and security and militarisation.	–0.65
	Factionalised elites	Fund for Peace Fragile States Index	Assesses the factionalisation, competition and potential for deadlock and brinkmanship among leaders and elites.	–0.66
	Internal peace	Institute for Economics and Peace Global Peace Index	A composite measurement of internal negative peace, based on the Global Peace Index indicators that pertain to dynamics inside a country.	–0.71
	Positive Peace Index overall score	Institute for Economics and Peace Positive Peace Index	A composite measurement of the attitudes, institutions and structures that underpin the absence of violence.	–0.85
Safety and security	Safety and security	Legatum Prosperity Index	Measures countries' performance in national security and personal safety.	0.78
	Rule of law	World Bank World Governance Indicators	Reflects perceptions of the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society, and in particular the quality of contract enforcement, property rights, the police and the courts, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence.	0.78
	Likelihood of violent demonstrations	Institute for Economics and Peace Global Peace Index	Assessment of the likelihood of violent demonstrations. Scored by the Economist Intelligence Unit Country Analysis team.	–0.51
	Level of violent crime	Institute for Economics and Peace Global Peace Index	Assessment of the likelihood of violent crime. Scored by the Economist Intelligence Unit Country Analysis team.	–0.63
	Homicide rate	Institute for Economics and Peace Global Peace Index	Number of homicides per 100,000 people.	–0.66
	Human rights and rule of law	Fund for Peace Fragile States Index	Assesses the extent to which human rights are violated or unevenly protected.	–0.74

Notes

1 World Bank 2013.

2 OECD 2016.

3 www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page67.jspx?_adf.ctrl-state=15c6wobysi_337

4 OECD 2008: 1–162.

5 *Ibid*.

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