



✓ In Today's Bulletin

<p>GAMBIA: Youth Forum, Youth Employment Is Top Govt Priority - PS Trade</p> <p>NIGERIA: OONI Unveils Plans For Youth In Sports, Tourism</p> <p>RWANDA: Youth Complete Job Creation Training</p> <p>UGANDA: Govt Told To Interest Youth In Manufacturing</p> <p>ZAMBIA : Youths Facing HIV/AIDS Challenge</p> <p>BERMUDA: Funding Available For Youth Groups</p> <p>CANADA : Canada's Less-Educated Youth Need Job Opportunities, Too</p> <p>DOMINICA : DSC Equips Dominica's Youth For Vocational Work</p> <p>JAMAICA: Youth Ministry Rolls Out New Social Intervention Initiatives</p> <p>TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO : NESC Grads Told, 'Discipline Is Key</p> <p>AZERBAJAIN: Gov't Develops New State Program On Youth Education</p> <p>BAHRAIN: Support To Youth Centres Hailed</p> <p>KUWAIT: Excellence, Creativity Awards Attracts Kuwait Youth</p> <p>MALAYSIA: Sabah To Start Index To Measure Youth Development, Says CM</p> <p>QATAR: Empowering Youth With Skills</p> <p>BELGIUM: Brussels: Youth Unemployment Falls To 24 Year Low</p> <p>GERMANY: Vocational Schools Can Slay Youth</p>	<p>Unemployment</p> <p>NETHERLANDS: Youth Underemployment A Growing Concern</p> <p>ROMANIA: Romania Youth Think Mobile Internet Will Dominate – Study</p> <p>TURKEY: Employment Opportunities Waiting Turkish Youth</p> <p>AUSTRALIA: Momentum Builds For Youth</p> <p>FUJI: Youth Join Poverty Housing Campaign</p> <p>NEWZEALAND: PM's Programme Helps Youth Succeed</p> <p>SOLOMON ISLAND : Youth Sports And Life Skills Development</p> <p>TONGA: Young Tongans Lack Motivation At Home, Says Youth Leader</p>
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- [AFRICA](#)
- [AMERICA](#)
- [ASIA](#)
- [EUROPE](#)
- [PACIFIC](#)
- [INFO](#)

✓ UPCOMING EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY 2016

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
4 February 2016	World Cancer Day	Melaka, Malaysia
6 February 2016	International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation	Melaka, Malaysia
20 February 2016	World Day of Social Justice	Melaka, Malaysia
21 February 2016	International Mother Language Day	Melaka, Malaysia



✓ GAMBIA: YOUTH FORUM, YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IS TOP GOVT PRIORITY - PS TRADE

Banjul, 5 January 2015 - MRS NAFFI Barry, the permanent secretary at the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment, has said that addressing youth unemployment is a top government priority.

Employment PS Barry made the remarks recently at the national forum on youth unemployment, jointly organized with the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

The forum was funded by the UNDP as part of efforts to address the youth unemployment situation in the country, and it was held at the Kairaba Beach Hotel.

The objective of the forum was to share with stakeholders the data on youth unemployment in order for collective action to be taken to address the situation.

It was also meant to map out the opportunities available for youths within different institutions, and to as well identify the

challenges and propose solutions to create and promote youth employment.

Give the youths the opportunity to interact with potential employers and employment agencies to help them understand the dynamics of the labour market was also one of the forum's objectives.

The forum provided an opportunity for national reflection on the issue of employment, especially at a time when every country is challenged by the issue of unemployment, according to PS Barry.

"A lot of efforts have gone into organising the forum, which was only possible through sacrifice and dedication to duties."

She thanked the UNDP for their support, without which it would have been difficult to hold a forum like this.

This was the second time the UNDP has been sponsoring the national employment forum, including the regional

consultations, she continued.

PS Barry pointed out that over the years the Gambia government through the Ministry of Trade and other partner institutions had initiated a series of programmes and projects directed towards solving youth unemployment.

She said the launching of the national medium-term development plan called the programme for accelerated growth and employment (PAGE) - in 2011, clearly demonstrated the government's commitment to addressing the issue of unemployment, and that recent data shows significant progress registered in this area.

"PAGE has redefined the focus of public policy by bringing to the forefront the issues of employment in national development planning, implementation and management, which has never been the case."

Therefore, she went on, the issue of mainstreaming employment in national

development is no longer an issue, but rather how to sustain the commitment.

She pointed out that the task before them is what could they do or make different that would improve the lives of the young people in the country, with particular reference to employment opportunities.

"The success of the gathering would be best measured by showing what we are able to do differently that would impact significantly in addressing the youth unemployment and underemployment situation in the country.

"I challenge all of us present in the gathering to focus on the task, and come up with realistic recommendations/strategies that would help to implement or addressed our concerns, both in short-and medium term."

[The Point]

✓ NIGERIA: OONI UNVEILS PLANS FOR YOUTH IN SPORTS, TOURISM

Abuja, 3 January 2015 - THE Ooni of Ife, Oba Adeyeye Enitan Ogunwusi, has dedicated the New Year to youths with a promise to engage three thousand of them at the ongoing construction of a Tourist Resort in the ancient town.

In a statement by his Director of Media and Public Affairs, Moses Olafare, the monarch said that his plan for 2016 was to turn around the fortune of the youths.

According to him, he would soon unfold a new programme that will "open a vista of hope in terms of gainful employment for the youths."

Felicitating with the people of Ile-Ife, Osun State and Nigeria for the New Year 2016, the Arole Oodua said: "No fewer than 3,000 youths would be engaged at the ongoing project site of Ife Grand Resort spanning over 1000 hectares of land

to provide job opportunities for the people."

Oba Ogunwusi said that his focus was beyond the shores of Ile-Ife, disclosing that an arrangement had reached advanced stage to take the unemployed youths off the streets.

He noted his efforts were geared towards checkmating the growing crime rate in the society.

He said: "40 squares miles of land have been acquired at Ife reserves to drive massive agricultural revolution, which would pave way for cocoa, oil palm and rubber plantation.

And this scheme would also create job opportunities for nothing less than 20,000 people.



I have also set up a working committee on the Youth Sports Drive and Talents Hunt, which is being coordinated by the renowned former Super

Eagles coach, Chief Adegboye Onigbinde and ex-Secretary General of the Nigerian Football Association (NFA), Chief Taiwo Ogunjobi.

The programme will come out with a template of bringing back the old glory of sport competition. It will be tagged Oduduwa Cup and it will take place in all

parts of the Yorubaland."

[Daily Independent]

✓ RWANDA: YOUTH COMPLETE JOB CREATION TRAINING

Kigali, 3 January 2015 -

THE Youths have been urged to create more jobs to contribute to the country's sustainable development.

Kizito Habimana, the Vice Principal of Administration and Finance, of Integrated Polytechnic Regional Institute (IPRC) of Ngoma District made the call during the closure of one month training of youth in job creation last Thursday.

The programme dubbed "Make them Job Creators" was attended by a number of students on long vacation from schools across the country.

Habimana said the new programme would help trigger youth innovation and entrepreneurship as they move towards job creation.

He said the programme targeted students in long holidays who would otherwise be idle in communities.

"A one month long interactive training and workshop for budding young entrepreneurs from across Rwanda, is an opportunity for youths to gain ideas and entrepreneurial skills.

It will help jobless graduates to have business planning skills important for job creation. Any business project developed should uplift the people's lives," he said.

Kizito encouraged students to join technical and vocational training schools, noting that they were vital for economic development.

He explained that the purpose of the programme was to increase awareness of using ICT and raise the ICT literacy by enabling the youth to have access to the existing technological devices and services.

"We empower them with access, information, choices and opportunities. Entrepreneurs usually rejuvenate innovation, create jobs, grow economies and create wealth for all," he said.

"We are in a new era where TVET schools are no longer regarded in the traditional way in the past; they were for those students who failed the classical formal education.

Previously, it was thus the last option to survive and a preserve for uncompetitive people. Today things have changed and they are the first option for many seeking personal economic development."

Ngoma District Mayor Aphrodise Nambaje said the centre gave chance to the youths to avoid being idle, adding that it would help create jobs through innovation and entrepreneurship among beneficiaries.

The mayor cautioned the youth against expecting government to always do everything for them or to give them jobs but instead work hard to create own jobs.

"The government will not always provide jobs but only ensures an enabling environment for investors," he said.

"I appeal to the young generation to make use of their talents along with acquired skills and knowledge to create jobs for themselves and others.

In order for our country to emerge as vibrant economy, we must transform the youths from being job seekers to job creators."

Hundreds of youth who attended the course told The New Times that the opportunity presented by the knowledge and practical skills acquired was enormous, noting that they were ready to harness this into tangible ways to advance their own lives and those of communities in future.

"As we acquire the hands on skills, we want our minds to be focused on finding solutions that address issues communities face.

Our goal will be improving the living standards of everyone, using our knowledge and skills to create jobs," said Agnes

Butambuka, one of the beneficiaries.

Alfred Rutinduka, 21, said he had lost hope of getting a job until he started the training at the school.

"I completed high school a couple of years ago. I was not lucky to get government sponsorship to the university; neither did I have the money to pay privately.

So, I lived on street for three years. I m now so happy that with the technical skills I acquired, I can start my own garage if I get small capital. I am highly motivated that life will not be as bad as it was," he said.

Rwanda has set a target to create over 200,000 off-farm jobs every year.

[The New Times]



✓ UGANDA: GOVT TOLD TO INTEREST YOUTH IN MANUFACTURING

Kampala, 5 January 2016 - GOVERNMENT has been asked to promote manufacturing among the youth interested in entrepreneurship as a way of creating employment.

The call was made by the manager, Food Technology Business Incubation at Makerere University, Prof. William Kyamuhangire in a meeting aimed at tackling challenges of unemployment among the youth.

He said that majority of the

youth entrepreneurs are into buying and selling products from countries like China, which limits their creativity.

"Government needs to go in and encourage them to move into manufacturing, if you buy a commodity from china, and sell in Uganda, few people will be employed but if you start manufacturing products here, so many will be employed and that is what we want to see," said Kyamuhangire.

He added that in the long

run, it will encourage private sector growth and investment into the manufacturing sector hence increasing the tax base for the country at the same time improving the lives of youth.

Kyamuhangire emphasised that some of the areas that youth should be encouraged to embrace in manufacturing include value addition because these will then be exported as finished products, attracting a higher income than when exported in their raw form.

A recent study by the Uganda Manufacturer's Association (UMA) shows that overall, unemployment rate among the youth aged 18 to 30 in Uganda is 5%.

It's even higher among females at 6.3% compared to males at 3.8%.

Further analysis shows that the youth unemployment has been increasing since 2005 to 5.1% in 2011 and now 11.2% in 2012.

[New Vision]

✓ ZAMBIA: YOUTHS FACING HIV/AIDS CHALLENGE

Lusaka, 5 January 2015 - ZAMBIA'S population is largely made up of young people, with the youth those between the ages of 18 and 35 constituting 36.7 percent of the total national population, of which 17.7 percent are male and 19 percent are female.

According to statistics (United Nations Population Division Report, 2005), nearly 50 per cent of the developing world's population is youthful.

As such, it has become imperative for Government to critically invest in the youth as a means of addressing the challenges they face if the country is to have meaningful and sustainable development.

This is because the youth form a large part of the productive population of Zambia's economy.

One of the many challenges facing the youth today, apart from high levels of unemployment, is HIV/

AIDS.

The fact that the youth are at the prime of their sexuality, means that they are the most exposed group to the risk of getting infected with HIV.

Currently, about 1.2 million people in Zambia are reported to be infected with HIV.

Young girls have been identified as being particularly at risk of infection due to vices such as early marriage and gender-based violence, which includes defilement and rape.

Zambia has a very high rate of defilement cases, despite various efforts meant to curb the vice, including stiffer punishment of those convicted of the offence.

In 2013, the country's biggest referral hospital, the University Teaching Hospital, recorded 1,225 cases of defilement.

The following year, that

number had risen to 1,243. And according to official statistics by Government, the prevalence of child marriage has reduced from 42 percent in 2007 to 31 percent currently, although some key stakeholders doubt the accuracy of such data.

The reason is simple; a lot of cases involving child marriage still go unreported.

Statistics indicate that Eastern Province has the highest incidence rate for early marriage at 60 percent, while Lusaka has the least at 28 percent.

Last year alone, World Vision withdrew 150 girls from homes where they had been married, with a good number of them being put back into school.

Inevitably, women have a higher HIV prevalence rate of 16.1 percent compared to men at 12.3 percent.

Through the recently revised National Youth

Policy, Government seeks to address both those at risk and those living with the pandemic by identifying measures that can help youth prevent HIV, live positively with HIV, and reduce related stigma and discrimination.

Among the objectives of the policy is to promote the provision of comprehensive sexuality education and sexual reproductive health services that meet the specific needs of the youth.

The policy also encourages youth participation in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of comprehensive sexuality education programmes and youth-friendly health services; and promote access to health testing and counseling services by the youth at clinics and youth organisations.



According to Minister of Youth, Sport and Child Development Vincent Mwale, the policy is built on the premise that Zambia, like most African countries, has a significant proportion of its county's population comprising people under the age of 35.

This youthful demographic variable presents an opportunity for national development by harnessing the potential that the youth have.

The key policy priority areas under which interventions have been crafted include employment and entrepreneurship development; education and skills development; health and cultural, creative industries and sport.

Cementing these policy areas are crosscutting issues such as gender, disability, environment, HIV and AIDS and participation.

It is envisaged that the latter can be harnessed by inclusion and active participation of youth in decision-making processes, policy development, programming and project-implementation.

However, it has been observed through a survey by the United Nations Population Fund that condom use and HIV testing among young people is very low.

And Mwelwa Chibuye, who has been living with HIV for 12 years, having acquired the virus when she was a student at Evelyn Hone College, says many young people do not adhere to their prescribed medical regime due to the fear of

being stigmatised.

One of the specific objectives of the policy is to reduce social, cultural, religious and economic factors that make people vulnerable to HIV and AIDS, and advocate increased access to interventions for the prevention and treatment of HIV and AIDS/STIs through integrated youth-friendly programmes.

But like every good policy, the youth policy shall not yield results until it has been fully implemented to the benefit of young people.

[Zambia Daily Mail]

NEWS



✓ BERMUDA: FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR YOUTH GROUPS

Hamilton, 7 January 2016 - THE Bermuda Silver Jubilee Trust is welcoming applications for funding under its ongoing grants scheme.

The trust supports local organisations that enable young people under the age of 25 to work together to

help others or get involved with projects that contribute to the community.

According to a statement from Government House, applicants are encouraged to be imaginative in coming up with ideas how young people can make a useful, voluntary contribution to

the community.

A total of \$15,000 are expected to be shared between several recipients. The deadline for the next round of grants is January 29; application forms can be obtained from the secretary to the Trust at tmdavis@gov.bm.

All applications will be reviewed by the Trust in early February and applicants will be notified shortly afterwards.

[Royal Gazette

✓ CANADA: CANADA'S LESS-EDUCATED YOUTH NEED JOB OPPORTUNITIES, TOO

Ottawa, 5 January 2015 - YOUTH unemployment is never far from the headlines in Canada.

Getting a good start in the labour market is critical for a young person's future prospects.

And from a collective point of view, especially in an aging society, creating good job opportunities for young people is necessary for our future economic outlook to say nothing of social inclusion, as events elsewhere have shown.

Most Canadians recognize all of this, but the discussion and the policy debate are dominated by what is happening to our postsecondary graduates.

Without minimizing the difficulties those young people face in getting good jobs, the really bleak situation concerns those who don't go on to postsecondary education or don't even finish high school.

They are often overlooked, but they are being effectively shut out of the 21st-century labour market.

This group needs to be a priority for the new federal government and for the

provincial governments that hold many of the relevant policy levers.

It is true that going on to college or university is now the norm in Canada.

But we are still talking about sizable numbers who don't. Roughly 20 per cent of today's young people do not go beyond secondary school after graduating and another 10 per cent drop out before finishing.

These figures are much higher among certain segments of the population, notably aboriginal youth, a rapidly growing group.

The evidence shows that education matters a lot. In 2013, the unemployment rate for 15-to-29-year-old males no longer in school with less than a high school education was nearly 20 per cent and 13 per cent for those who had completed high school but had not gotten a higher diploma or degree.

For young men with university degrees, the unemployment rate was much lower: between 6 per cent and 9 per cent, depending on the degree.

The story for young women

was essentially the same. Only one in two women and two in three men between 15 and 29 without a high school education are working.

Despite a certain scepticism that prevails about the economic value of schooling, a Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce analysis shows that there are still substantial earnings advantages for those young people who go on to postsecondary education, and that these advantages only widen with time out of school. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, among 25to3 year-old Canadians, relative earnings of postsecondary graduates are 37 per cent higher than they are for high school graduates and 60 per cent higher than for those without high school completion.

To put all of these numbers in perspective, a minimum of high school completion and, increasingly, some college or university education is required for admission into our increasingly knowledge-based economy.

Although we are already

among the leading countries in terms of postsecondary education attainment, we could always do better. Colleges, and especially universities, need to be more responsive to what all young people really want and need from higher education. But there will always be some who are not interested in formal schooling after high school.

Prioritizing less-educated youth also puts the onus on second-chance education opportunities for those who have not completed high school.

The good news is that Canada does fairly well in keeping learning options open for these young adults.

Where Canada performs less well is in offering active labour market programs, such as training and job search assistance, to young people who are no longer in school and need help in making the transition to work, often because of a lack of skills.



These employment programs cannot fully overcome deficits owing to a lack of education, especially in a sluggish market. But there is plenty of evidence from Germany and other northern European countries that, if they are well designed and implemented, they can benefit young workers who need help.

Relative to these countries, Canada does not place much emphasis on training and other active labour

market programs outside the formal education system.

Spending is low and activation strategies are not well developed. While the federal government and most of the provinces have youth employment strategies, they have mostly not demonstrated that these offer adequate support to vulnerable young people.

It does not help that rigorous evaluations are relatively scarce. This kind of evidence is critical so that

policy-makers can allocate resources on the basis of what works.

Youth employment deserves a lot of attention.

Certainly, we should not dismiss the concerns about our postsecondary graduates and their uncertain prospects. But policy-makers must not forget the other young people who, without postsecondary education, face prospects that unfortunately may be more certain.

Countries that are successful in creating opportunities for all young people, including the less advantaged, reap the benefits of more dynamic economies and more inclusive societies.

[The Globe and Mail]

✓ DOMINICA: DSC EQUIPS DOMINICA'S YOUTH FOR VOCATIONAL WORK

Roseau, 11 January 2016 - THE Dominica State College is on a mission to equip and certify young Dominicans wishing to pursue a career in vocational fields.

On Friday, January 8th the DSC's Department of Continuing Education Launched Its CARICOM Education for Employment (C-EFE) Youth Skills Development Pre-Technology Project.

Director of Continuing Education at the DSC, Merril Matthew explained.

"The programme comprises five elements: bartending, landscaping, housekeeping, facilities maintenance but in addition to that, we have a life skills component because we believe that skilled persons need basic skills to strengthen and support them in life.

He listed customer service, numeracy and basic computer skills.

President of the Dominica

State College, Dr Donald Peters says the role of the college is to educate the entire nation-not only those who have achieved academic success.

"We are a national college and our business is to provide all citizens with the skills they require to attend college or develop skills that will enable them to make a comfortable living. That is economic development," he said.

The programme is designed to target Dominica's youth, aged 15-29.

Matthew said, "We are particularly interested in youth who have three or less CXC subjects or no CXC subjects.

This is because people with CXC subjects have access to many things in Dominica like the State College, the Business Training Centre and others.

It is those who have no CXC subjects who have nothing to show that we

want to capture and let them showcase themselves as people with knowledge, skills and positive attitudes."

The first course of the project will run for 12 weeks from January 18th. Sixty participants will be trained in landscaping and hospitality.

The second course will begin in June of this year.

Matthew says it is a pilot project and continuity will depend on the success of the first two modules.

He says although at the end of the programme participants will receive full Caribbean Vocational Qualification, elements of CVQ competence will be incorporated in the programme and participants will be certified for the workforce.

The students will create their portfolios which will be sent to St. Vincent for assessment and certification.

The programme is funded primarily by the Government of Canada.

[GIS Dominica]



✓ JAMAICA: YOUTH MINISTRY ROLLS OUT NEW SOCIAL INTERVENTION INITIATIVES

Kingston, 18 January 2016 - SINCE 2012 the Ministry of Youth and Culture has impacted and trained over 51,000 young people through its programmes at the Youth Information Centres, the National Youth Service (NYS), the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC) and other cultural agencies.

In keeping with its mandate the Ministry will this month introduce a number of new programmes and initiatives which will focus on personal development for Jamaica's young people in areas such as: health and wellness, social graces and etiquette, social media practices, wardrobe presentation, skin care, public speaking, Self-discipline, self-motivation and critical thinking.

These initiatives will work in tandem with existing technical training.

The Ministry's decision to focus on these issues has

resulted from the Minister's day to day interactions with young people.

"Based on my interactions on the corners and in the schools I have seen that, the lack of exposure and low self-esteem are hindering many young people.

Our Jamaican youth have tremendous talent, what many lack is the right attitude, discipline and value system.

In a number of instances their low self-esteem has led many, especially our young girls, to get involved unconsciously in dangerous practices that lead them into abusive relationships," said the Honourable Lisa Hanna, Minister of Youth and Culture.

She added that they then develop deluded concepts of what they need to do in order to become successful.

"Many of them don't have persons to help with guidance and mentorship in

these areas and that is why as their Youth Minister I am leading this charge.

Once we help to correct their low self-confidence we will produce more well-rounded and outstanding citizens who would have developed a renewed level of positive self-image and identity," she added.

The programmes and activities that are offered by the Ministry have aided many young people; however, the Ministry has realized that it needs to go further and more practical in solving various social issues.

On January 29, 2016, the Ministry will host its first training course on health and wellness at its offices in New Kingston with a group of 30 young persons, while each YIC will conduct its own set of monthly sessions.

For the courses being held at the Ministry persons will be asked to register online.

In addition, there will be a social media campaign; running throughout each month giving young people the opportunity to learn from the videos uploaded from the various sessions that will be conducted. In an effort to save valuable resources the Minister will conduct the training and the sessions at the Ministry, with a host of volunteers.

Each monthly session will be used to empower and encourage the nation's youth to mature into their best selves.

Over the years the Ministry has sought new and innovative ways of addressing the issues affecting young people and therefore the roll out of these new initiatives should come as no surprise.

[Jamaica Gleaner

✓ TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO: NESC GRADS TOLD, 'DISCIPLINE IS KEY

Port of Spain, 18 January 2016 - "DISCIPLINE is the key thing. Without discipline, you'll have problems in any field," said president of the National Education Skills Center (NESC) Kern Dass during a graduation ceremony for students enrolled in the Military Led Youth Programme of Apprenticeship and Reorientation Training (MYPART).

This is a social intervention programme started under the Ministry of National Security in 2007.

The event which saw 48 of 117 students graduate from the first phase of the three phase programme, took place at NESC's Point Lisas campus.

Dass said that the programme comprises young people from all different walks of life and most are high-school dropouts.

As a result, they must first be reoriented in their approach to life before they can be sent out into the working world. In fact, the discipline aspect of the

course comes first, followed by academics and then the learning of a trade.

Dass commented that many of these young people come from backgrounds where discipline is not taught, so much so that many are accustomed to waking late in the morning.

Therefore, when they begin at NESc, discipline is the first thing that they are taught.

"The first phase is the induction phase.

That lasts for three months.

That's the phase in which we actually instil that discipline."

She said the emphasis is on discipline during the three-month programme as officials seek to change the mindset of youths involved.



“You have to remember you’re taking youths from an environment where they sleep until 12 midday and now they have to wake up at four in the morning, do PE (physical education), wash your own clothes, do all your own things a difficult, difficult phase for them indeed.”

The graduation marked the successful completion of the discipline phase and the next phase is the academic phase.

“As you can imagine, a lot of them are school dropouts and so on, which means they lack academic skills. So for the remaining nine months, our emphasis is solely on academics.

We have teachers drilling them on math, English, social studies, life skills.” Dass said in the second year, the students begin their trade at the NESC.

The centre offers training in a range of different fields including welding, carpentry, air condition and refrigeration repair and music and sound production.

Of significance, is the fact that 12 of the programme’s cadets have secured jobs in the TT Defence Force.

[Trinidad News]

NEWS



✓ AZERBAJAIN: GOV'T DEVELOPS NEW STATE PROGRAM ON YOUTH EDUCATION

Baku, 8 January 2015 - A COMPREHENSIVE education has always been among key tools for securing better future. Over the past decade, many Azerbaijanis favored education abroad citing the attractive prospect of the benefits of living overseas, familiarizing with a different culture and widening job opportunities.

The government of Azerbaijan realized a state program on education of youth abroad in 2007-2015, which allowed many to study overseas.

However, 2015 was the last year of the state program. Those who dream to study or continue education abroad ask one question-will the government develop and adopt a new program for 2016 and subsequent years?

The Education Ministry told local media that the ministry takes necessary

measures to educate talented youth abroad and develop a draft program. The Ministry hinted that there will be innovations in the new program as well.

"Draft state program is being developed given the fact that the State Program on education of Azerbaijani young people abroad for 2007-2015 ends.

The scope of the previous program has been expanded in the new program, innovations such as to involve foreign professor-academic staff to education process in Azerbaijan's higher education institutions, and to conduct joint scientific-research works together with their participation have been included in the new program. Currently, the program is at the stage of agreement," a source in the ministry said.

Being a fast developing

nation in the region, Azerbaijan has opened up significant opportunities for its youth for receiving education abroad.

The government sees education as a major source of investment, and is pursuing a policy of investing in the youth.

Investing in the human capital means gaining educated people - highly qualified professionals who can help push the country forward and boost growth in many fields. In this regard, the state program is of significant importance for Azerbaijan.

In 2015, 373 Azerbaijani students got a chance to be included in the list of scholars. Last year, the students who aimed to get master degree in the world's leading universities, were given priority. In particular, 176 student got a right to study at the master degree education level, 25

PhD, 70 - residency, 102 higher medical and bachelor degree. In general, 3,558 students benefited the state program.

The top five countries where Azerbaijani students preferred to get education were Great Britain, Turkey, Germany, Canada and the Netherlands, while the Harvard University, Cambridge College, Oxford University, London Imperial College, Moscow State University of International Relations, Middle East Technical University, Toronto University, Nanyang Technology University, and Kyoto University were the most opted higher education institutes.

Some 60 percent of Azerbaijani students, who have studied abroad, are currently involved in the private sector, and the remaining 40 percent in the state sector.

[AzerNews]

✓ BAHRAIN: SUPPORT TO YOUTH CENTRES HAILED

Manama, 8 January 2015 - DIRECTOR of Youth Commissions and Centres at the Ministry of Youth and Sports Affairs Nawar Abdulla Al-Mutawa has received the Chairman of the Isa Town Youth Centre Isa Monther Ibrahim.

He discussed with him ways to the centre's needs and ways to its youth-oriented activities and programmes.

Al-Mutawa highlighted the Youth and Sports Affairs Ministry's keenness on supporting youth centres,

given their key role in embracing Bahraini youth and activating their role in enhancing the kingdom in various fields.

Chairman of the Isa Town Youth Centre expressed sincere thanks to the Youth

and Sports Affairs Minister Hisham bin Mohammed Al-Jowdar for his support to youth centres.

[Bahrain News Agency]

✓ KUWAIT: EXCELLENCE, CREATIVITY AWARDS ATTRACTS KUWAIT YOUTH

Kuwait, 9 January 2016 - KUWAIT's Award for Youth Excellence and Creativity, launched last November, has seen huge turnout by Kuwaiti youth, a Ministry of State for Youth Affairs official said on Saturday. More than 250 Kuwaiti

young men and women have submitted their works in the ten categories of the Award, Assistant Undersecretary for Youth Development in the Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi said in a press statement on Saturday.

These include entrepreneurship, education, media, culture and arts, voluntary work, sciences and technology, sports, boosting health, architecture, urban planning and, housing, and sharia sciences.

Only Kuwaitis aged 14 to 34 are eligible to apply for the award, launched last November as the first of its kind in the Arab World. January 14.



Al-Mutairi stressed that the Kuwaiti youth have a spirit of entrepreneurship and creativity, and once they are offered a favourable environment, they can make achievements to enrich their society.

The higher organizing committee of the Award includes institutions like the Kuwait University and the

Ministries of Information, Education, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, and health, besides the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NACCL), the Public Authority for Youth (PAS), the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), the Kuwait Voluntary Work Center (KVWC) and the National

Fund for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

The Award boasts significant support from Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, who also chairs the higher organizing committee, Al-Mutairi said.

Launching the excellence and creativity award reflects the state's keenness on supporting youth and their projects, giving their ambitions a priority in the government work, he said.

[Kuwait News Agency]

✓ MALAYSIA: SABAH TO START INDEX TO MEASURE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, SAYS CM

Kota Kinabalu, 7 January 2015 - AFTER Putrajaya rolled out the Malaysia Youth Index 2015, Sabah is looking to follow suit with a state specific benchmark for its youngsters.

Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman who made the announcement today said the Sabah Youth Index will help his administration tailor programmes that will better reach the state's youth demographic group for their development and nation-building efforts.

"It's vital that we give due attention to the youth where they need it, and the index will be pivotal in providing a reference to our direction.

"We are happy to be the

first state to do it.

We have discussed this at the Cabinet meeting on how we are going to follow up now that we have a better understanding of how they feel," he told a news conference after launching the state initiative here, referring to his state executive board.

Musa said that it was important to give due attention to youth development and there was always a big allocation in the state budget towards activities in the sector.

Federal Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin, who was also present at the same news conference, lauded the state

initiative and encouraged other states to follow suit.

"All this while we have been shooting in the dark, we do programmes that doesn't quite reach its target so with this reference, we have a better direction," he said.

Khairy said that such an index would be most useful for the states, despite there already being a national youth index as it would provide more in depth understand of the youth culture in a particular state.

"States could tweak the survey and customise certain indicators to reflect the issues and challenges in that particular state.

For instance, security in Sabah could be different along the eastern corridor.

"I hope that we can go to the next phase to analyse the results and work together with the respective ministries and agencies," he said.

"Towards this end, we will encourage more infrastructure and development for productive activities in rural areas during after school hours while encouraging more programmes to expose them to the political process in the country and how it can bring benefit," said Khairy.

[Malay Mail Online]

✓ QATAR: EMPOWERING YOUTH WITH SKILLS

Doha, 4 January 2016 - WITH a focus on providing innovative developmental opportunities for young students in Qatar, the AlFaisal Without Borders (ALF) Foundation has taken the initiative of conducting skills development workshops in electrical engineering, technology, theatre, project management, photo editing, costume creation and scenery creation.

Assisted by 33 volunteer presenters, a total of 57 workshops were conducted among 900 students from various independent and international schools, including those participating in the 'Destination Imagination' programme. The workshops were hosted by Stenden University and by the Qatar National Convention Centre (QNCC) in collaboration with

Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar.

"The ALF Foundation is steadfast in actively promoting education and youth enablement," said Sheikh Faisal bin Qassim al-Thani, ALF Foundation's founder and chairman.

"Our goal is to provide additional learning opportunities that will empower the youth to

positively contribute towards the betterment of humanity and society."

On December 12, a total of 19 workshops were conducted in English at Stenden University for 240 students. From December 13-15, a total of 38 workshops were conducted at QNCC in Arabic for 660 students.



"Education and skills development are key components in the realisation of a knowledge-based and sustainable economy in Qatar as contained in the country's National Vision 2030 Plan," said Abdullatif al-Yafei, general manager of the ALF Foundation.

"Within our mission of developing, employing and managing programmes including the area of education, we aim to offer programmes that can help remedy any skill gaps or deficiencies."

Among the volunteer presenters of the workshops were Ammar Khorshed, Derick Osayormwanbor, Fahed al-Baker, Hossein Heyder, Mohamed al-Jarrah, Abdelrahman Romaihi, Saber Harkati, Don Rikley, Trish Slade, Nickil Ravi, Dr Fuad Abdelaziz, Meriem Boudoukha, Noorul Firdhouse, Sinchai Zonpath, Mohana Rajakumar, Nirmala Shanmugapandian, Lina Lotfi, Maryamasser, Leila al-Haj, Ahmed Ali, Mahmoud Elkhishy, Aisha Ghaleb, Rawan Ismail, Noor Qussini, Waleed Hassan and Ahmad Hassan.

"The ALF Foundation brought the DI programme to Qatar in November 2013 because it shares the programme's philosophy of providing a quality platform that encourages inquisitive thinking and creative problem solving skills," said Ali Talal al-Mar'e, ALF Foundation's executive director.

"Accordingly, we have conducted these workshops in order to promote independent learning and

skills development among students, particularly to those who need them most. Destination Imagination Qatar focuses on the development of skills and talent among students of all ages and economic status. It aims to inspire students to be actively interested in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) and for them to learn more about their concepts.

It also gives students the chance to know and experience the creative process, which is about thinking and doing in no prescribed order.

With their newly acquired skills from the workshops, students who are participating in the Destination Imagination Challenge will then be able to apply, share and teach these skills to their respective teams.

Their effectiveness of incorporating such skills will then be assessed during the DI Qatar 2016 Invitational Tournament, which will take place from February 25-28, 2016 at the QNCC.

As trained appraisers meticulously observe tournament participants and teams, they will be assessed on how effective such newly acquired skills have been incorporated into their DI solution.

Appraisers establish a welcoming atmosphere as teams first present their eight-minute solution and then discuss the creative process they went through during their 10-week long DI season.

DI Qatar also welcomes anyone interested and willing to be among the appraisers for the tournament.

This includes those who wish to support the skills and talent development activities within the Qatar community.

[Menafn.com]

NEW



✓ BELGIUM: BRUSSELS: YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT FALLS TO 24 YEAR LOW

Belgium, 7 January 2016 - THE number of young jobless in Brussels has reached its lowest level in 24 years.

This being said according to figures from the Brussels employment agency Actiris 26% of under 25s are unemployed in the Belgian and Flemish capital.

By the end of December 11,065 under 25s were

jobless and receiving full benefit in Brussels.

The figure is down 1,244 on the year.

The figure has now been falling for 31 months in a row.

The 26.8% unemployment rate among under 25s contrasts with 28.2% in December 2014 and over 30% in December 2013.

Jobless totals in Brussels were down in all categories last December.

In Brussels the jobless total was down 6.7%, a fall of 100,718.

The jobless rate for Brussels as a whole stood at 18.3%. It's the lowest figure for fourteen years.

The employment agency is worried about the increase

in the number of job seekers reliant on local social services for a benefit as well as the rise in the number of refugee job seekers.

The number of jobseekers in these categories rose by 6.3% last year.

[Expatica Belgium]

✓ GERMANY: VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS CAN SLAY YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Berlin, 18 January 2016 - IF recent history is anything to go by, the newspapers will be full of stories over the next few weeks of matriculants with B passes desperate to get into universities being turned away because the universities are full.

The media usually portray this as a disaster for the matriculants, making out that they have no other option and that unemployment and poverty stare them in the face.

This need not be the case and can be avoided by having a proper system of vocational education and training in place.

Technical and vocational

training should be seen as a viable and desirable route for matriculating students who fail to qualify to get into universities.

In Germany, one of the most successful economies, this certainly is the case.

There are 1.4-million students receiving technical and vocational education and training in 329 recognised occupations in Germany.

After a compulsory 10 years of schooling, students can decide either to continue with a general academic education or to switch to technical and vocational education and training at a vocational school.

What is more, if they choose the technical and vocational route, they start working at the same time.

This is possible because 6,000 German companies take in trainees.

They are based in all the major sectors of the economy including engineering, motor manufacturing, building and construction, energy and water provision, agriculture, mining, transport, warehousing, information and communication technology, financial and legal services, and more.

The trainees receive theoretical and practical training at the same time.

Various models range from school in the morning and work in the afternoon, to two months of school followed by four months of work at a company.

The trainees are paid by the companies they work for.

Pay is much less than that of qualified artisans in Germany, but it still covers their cost of living. Attendance at the vocational schools is free, as they are government schools.

About half the trainees stay on at the companies in which they have received their training, while others move on to new companies.

[BDlive]

✓ NETHERLANDS: YOUTH UNDEREMPLOYMENT A GROWING CONCERN

Amsterdam, 19 January 2016 - A LARGE number of young people in the Netherlands are working below their education level. In the third quarter of last year, about half of highly educated young people worked in positions generally filled by people with a medium or low education, according to

research done by statistics Netherlands.

One in six young people with a mid-level education were overqualified for their jobs.

This involves young people under the age of 25 who are no The overqualified for-their-job phenomenon is

present in all directions of studies, but most prevalent in services, engineering, manufacturing and construction.

The phenomenon disappears as people get older.

From the age of 35 workers are less likely to be

overqualified. But from this age group there is a notable difference between the genders.

Women over the age of 35 are more likely to work below their education level than men.



In the age group 35 and older, one in three highly educated women work in a position below her level, compared to one in four men.

Statistics Netherlands attributes this to the fact that there are often kids involved when you reach the age of 35.

In general women move

over to part-time work after the birth of their first child.

As a result women build up less work experience, reducing career opportunities.

Most of the people below the age of 35 do not have any children.

[NL Times]

✓ ROMANIA: ROMANIA YOUTH THINK MOBILE INTERNET WILL DOMINATE – STUDY

Bucharest, 19 January 2016 - ROMANIA's young residential users of up to 30 years of age and residents from rural areas think that fixed internet usage will decrease while mobile internet grows, according to a survey conducted by telecommunications authority Ancom whose aim is to establish a set of relevant information on the users' perception of the electronic communications services and their consumption needs.

Believers in fixed internet growth are only

representatives from the business and media segments and representatives of authorities and academia. According to the end-users' perception, mobile telephony use will keep growing once with the ever younger age of first use with the release of high performance terminals at lower prices and with the growing usage of mobile internet.

On the other hand, some of the interviewed groups consider that data services will inevitably replace

mobile telephony concomitant with the advance of applications that enabling real time communication via the internet such as Facebook, WhatsApp, or Skype.

The respondents also perceive fixed telephony and linear television as being on a downward trend or even on the way to extinction and see their replacement by mobile and by internet access services as imminent.

The survey's results were announced at the

international conference '2020: A telecom odyssey' organized by Ancom on 17 November.

The conference brought together regulatory authorities in Europe, electronic communications associations, operators, online content providers and consumers.

[Telecompaper]

✓ TURKEY: EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES WAITING TURKISH YOUTH

Ankara, 1 January 2016 - DESPITE the employment problems around the world, the government has kept its promise and provided employment to 1 million youngsters.

Through SMEs, 3 million jobs will be offered to youngsters in the next three years.

The Turkish Employment Organization has also broken a record and exceeded its target targeted number of 850,000 employed people.

Within the first 11 months of the year, it employed 950,000 people. While the need of employers for qualified personnel was covered, placement increased by 45 percent compared to the previous

year.

The government plans to reduce the unemployment rate to 5 percent in 2023 and decrease the unemployment of young people as well.

Those who receive social aid will be provided with job consultancy service and 25 percent of that training will be conducted in one year.

Furthermore, job opportunities for more than 1 million young people will be created each year.

The government's agenda in 2016 is all about employment.

The Turkish Employment Organization is going to extend its scope and

activate jobs that are open, further arranging programs that will increase basic and professional capacities.

Within the next two years, the employment capacity will increase by 2 million and employee premiums will be lowered along with various other employment incentives.

Part-time jobs will be promoted and more people will be recruited through the İŞKUR's employer pool.

Young entrepreneurs will also be supported within the scope of SMEs, which are considered to be the locomotive of Turkey's exports.

SMEs plan to employ 3 million people until 2018 and the government will

provide easier access to exporters in the international market. İŞKUR will also offer income opportunities to university students and offer job opportunities in all cities from Hakkari to Edirne.

While university students will earn around TL 1,000, they will also gain experience.

Also, the scholarships or education loans of these students attending the program will not be cut and general health insurance premiums will be covered by the government.



In so doing, the chances of recruiting suitable candidates will increase and part-time and contract workers will be registered.

İŞKUR serves municipalities at 4,000 points, Social Solidarity Associations and district governorates and those looking for work can register with the institution via their smart phones, tablets and PCs.

The institution also supports young people who are making their career plans through consultancy services at job fairs arranged at schools.

Furthermore, as of June, major service points have been established at ports for those looking for jobs in the marine sector, including cities such as Istanbul, İzmir, Mersin, Antalya, Samsun and Trabzon.

Young people seeking employment in the marine sector can directly apply at the designated points or benefit from the active work power program.

[Daily Sabah]

NEWS



✓ AUSTRALIA: MOMENTUM BUILDS FOR YOUTH

Canberra, 1 January 2016 - AUSTRALIA's top tennis stars and the arrival of the Australian Open tournament are motivating young players in Mackay.

More people show interest in the sport because of events like the Australian Open and the Brisbane International.

Kids clinics are under way in January where young players develop new skills for the game.

Two hundred youngsters are involved every week at the Mackay Tennis Association

undergoing coaching. Joyce Wallace from the club is confident it's because of the idols the kids have in the sport.

"We all have idols in life but the simple fact that Australian stars are younger and getting even better definitely drives home if you work hard you can reach that level," Wallace said.

Many young players have to move to pursue their game often times to Brisbane due to higher level of coaching and competition being there.

"Young players are showing promise.

This stems from the love of the game because if you love it you will do it," she said.

Wallace is adamant that the benefits from the sport and the life you can have if you work hard really do motivate people to participate.

"Tennis is a great game; you stay fit and travel the world.

Being a single person game it all comes down to the individual; what you put in

you get out," Wallace said.

Although the development of young players is moving forward Wallace would like to see numbers of all ages increase in the sport.

"There is a drop in numbers in recent years but I think that this is slowly improving as we move forward with more people enquiring about fixtures," she said.

"Anyone is welcome down at the club."

[Mackay Daily Mercury]

✓ FIJI: YOUTH JOIN POVERTY HOUSING CAMPAIGN

Suva, 4 January 2015 - IT was a day that brought smiles to many young faces.

Habitat for Humanity Fiji, in an effort to advocate on poverty housing among the young generation, marked the Habitat Young Leaders Build 2016 campaign with the youth of Lautoka on December 5 at Churchill Park.

Habitat Young Leaders Build (HYLB) is an annual campaign driven by concerned, motivated and socially responsible youth who take action and rally together to address poverty housing.

The youth-driven campaign taking place for the fifth consecutive year aims to educate, encourage and empower our youth so they feel motivated and become socially responsible to address poverty housing issues.

HYLB is an initiative of Habitat for Humanity

International that engages young people to raise funds, grow awareness and advocate for decent housing in the Asia-Pacific region with the theme "Play, Lead and Share".

The regional movement expects to rally more than one million youth, celebrities and corporate participants to volunteer, fundraise and speak out for the need for decent homes as a way out of poverty.

The campaign launched on International Volunteer Day culminates on April 2, 2016 when hundreds of thousands of young people in multiple countries across the region build homes, raise funds and awareness, and advocate for decent shelter.

The popularity of the event grows from year to year.

Last year over 600,000 youth volunteers were involved in 16 countries to help more than 13,000

families begin their journey to secure safe, decent homes.

Volunteers worked on 9498 houses, and raised \$559,173 towards programs to alleviate poverty housing.

HFH Fiji organised a poster competition with the theme "Right to Decent Shelter" and sports activities for youth in Lautoka.

About 50 youth under 20 years of age participated in the day program and were awarded with many prizes such as iPods, shopping vouchers, recharge cards, trophies and sports equipment.

The event was kindly supported by Telecom Fiji Ltd, Post Fiji Ltd, Digicel Fiji, Sports World, Shalom Office Works, Capricorn International Hotel, MWH Young Professionals Group, APTC, Frezco Beverages Ltd, Getrix Fiji Ltd and Paone's General Works and Hardware Supplies.

The youth shared their experience and what decent shelter meant to them.

"I took part in the poster competition because it was very interesting.

I feel that we all have the right to decent shelter because it is our basic need.

The theme is very meaningful and is based on our basic need. As a young person, it is important for us to know this," said 14 year old Sonia Krishnan.

"I won an iPod and shopping vouchers and it made my day," said Sonia.



Nineteen-year-old Komal Karishma said every child must feel secure in their home environment.

HFH Fiji national director Masi Latianara said it was extremely important to listen to and involve young people in the decision-making process.

"We must pay close attention to what their concerns are and to be able to see things from their perspective as well. We are trying to get young people to volunteer, fundraise and speak out for the need for decent homes as a way out of poverty and toward self-sustainability.

"The campaign also motivates youth to take the lead in building homes and communities," said Mr Latianara.

HFH Fiji encourages and calls on the youth to actively take part in the largest global youth movement.

"We would like to see more youth groups or clubs to take a proactive approach and stand up to address this issue that is a concern to all.

We welcome the youngsters to join us in advocating for this worthy cause," said HFH Fiji's national director.

For the first time, Habitat is also calling for youths to submit proposals for raising awareness and advocating for steps to help eliminate poverty housing in the region. Seed funding is available to student groups, youth organisations and like-minded individuals to implement their proposals.

To request for an application form, leave a comment on the HYL B Facebook group or visit <http://www.give2habitat.org/contest/hylb16grant>

As part of the 2016 campaign, an online contest has also been launched to

solicit designs for the official flag for Habitat Young Leaders Build and determine the best design by popular vote. For more information, visit <http://www.give2habitat.org/contest/HYLB16flagdesign>.

The Young Leaders Build campaign will reach its peak on April 2, 2016, when hundreds of thousands of young people will take part in simultaneous house builds across Asia-Pacific, or will go online in support of the campaign.

[Fiji Times]

✓ NEWZEALAND: PM'S PROGRAMME HELPS YOUTH SUCCEED

Wellington, 20 January 2016 - A PROGRAMME for disadvantaged youth is helping build confidence in kids across South Auckland.

The Prime Minister's Youth Programme was established in 2010 and is aimed at youngsters aged 14 to 17 from diverse backgrounds who are rising to the challenges of being teenagers with extraordinary circumstances.

They take part in a week-long series of activities such as go-karting, caving, cooking and visiting big New Zealand companies. They also get the chance to spend time with and learn from high-achieving prominent Kiwis.

Eva Fuemana and Izaac Anitelea say the Prime Minister's Youth Programme is more than just a bit of fun.

Otara teenager Eva Fuemana knows that it isn't

easy growing up in a low socioeconomic area.

The 15-year-old wanted to be part of the programme because of what "I've been through in the past" and hopes it will help her gain more self-confidence and friends.

Rising to the challenges of growing up in Otara and breaking "the South Auckland stereotype" is her focus this year.

"Judgement [is the biggest challenge]. Because you know, from South Auckland, people kind of look at it like, 'oh it's so ghetto' I guess."

But she believes achieving even the "small stuff" will help to change people's perceptions.

Past participant Izaac Anitelea, 14, spends a lot of his time caring for his sick father and says it's challenging being a teenager and having big

commitments.

He loves that the programme gave him a "brotherhood".

Ad Feedback

"I thought it was just a programme that you just go on to have fun but then I realised there was a lot of people independent like me..."

He's already made positive changes to his life since taking part in the programme last year and has thanked his church and mentor Maliena Jones for their support.

Jones, a manager at Village Community Service Trust, has been delivering the programme since 2010.

"The aim at the end of the programme is that they come out just feeling really valued and it's just awesome we're able to do something like that."

She says the best thing about the programme is celebrating the kids' success.

Go myd.govt.nz/young-people/prime-ministers-youth-programme.html for more information about the programme.

[Stuff.co.nz]



✓ SOLOMON ISLAND: YOUTH SPORTS AND LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Honiara, 18 January 2016 - THE DCCG reportedly paid some \$80,000 to facilitate the 20 young Futsal players to travel to Australia and participate in the Australian National Futsal Championships.

The young players did extremely well in the Championship games and have returned home to a heroes' welcome and a reward of \$1,500 each in recognition of their achievements on the field of sport and as representatives of the Solomon Islands.

The Prime Minister, Manasseh Sogavare told the players, "You have made your government, parents, friends and the country as a whole, very proud with your

outstanding results. You have shown our friends in Australia that you too can do it. Your winning the games has once again put Solomon Islands in the Futsal World."

The recognition of the youth accomplishments is well deserved and I trust that the Solomon Islands Government will continue to support youth sports, including those that have some degree of disability but capable of physical activity.

Apart from enjoying physical exercise when playing sport and having fun there are several life time lessons and skills to be learned from participation in sport, apart from the

importance of keeping fit. Gaining self-esteem comes with getting better at sport and this gives one a real sense of accomplishment.

Praise from friends, parents and, in this case the DCCG, can only work to positively add self-confidence.

Success and goal setting go hand in hand and therefore participation in sport offers a practical way to setting goals in life and works to give a better chance at succeeding in life.

Participation in sport also encourages team spirit and team playing.

Sport, therefore, teaches young people important

lessons about working together, putting differences aside and getting a job done.

Adding extracurricular activities to a youth's schedule encourages development of and time management and prioritization skills.

A youth formulates a plan which enables him or her to efficiently handle their responsibilities while still leaving time for sports practices and competitions.

Participation in sport also helps youths deal with adversity when it comes.

[Solomon Star]

✓ TONGA: YOUNG TONGANS LACK MOTIVATION AT HOME, SAYS YOUTH LEADER

Nukualofa, 18 January 2016 - A LACK of motivation and attention provided at home was one of the main reasons for school failure and widespread laziness among Tongan youth, believes a prominent youth leader and community social worker, Vanessa Heleta.

Vanessa runs the Talitha Project, a young women's development organisation.

The Talitha Project provides social support, employment opportunities and workshops to single mums and children aged 10- 25 years.

However, Vanessa stated that one of the biggest challenges faced by her NGO was the lack of drive to succeed among many of its participants.

"Young people become lazy and dependent because they don't get the support and encouragement that they need at home they are scared to stand out of the crowd because people will try to cut them down."

Vanessa said an example was one of her NGO's past development projects, which was abandoned despite being donor funded and well planned.

"In 2010 we ran a scholarship program for 30 students starting from Class 6 up to Form 7.

The kids were identified from low-income families with single mothers or parents who could not afford to pay for schooling. We covered nearly all the schools in Tonga."

"The scholarship included school fees for the whole of the year, three sets of school uniforms, school supplies, bus fares if they lived out of town yet only six of the kids did well at school we had to stop the scholarship because it wasn't working."

Vanessa blamed the lack of drive among the children to succeed, citing failures at home.

"The parents at home don't push them.

They don't tell their kids to study hard, to be grateful and appreciative that you have people to pay for your education, to motivate them to succeed.

"Very important is the environment where you grow up. No matter how smart you are, if you grow

up in an environment that does not motivate, you end up not going anywhere.

If you are not given motivation you are unlikely to succeed...it all comes from home."

Vanessa also believed that students needed to be well supported and motivated at school, where young people spent most of their time.

"I think we should have two counsellors at school, one female and one male that the students can talk to.

If they can't get good mentorship at home, then they can get it at school.



School is where kids spend most of their time; they are there from 8:30 to 3:30. It's where they are moulded and shaped for life."

Examination (Form 5).

[Matangi Tonga]

Vanessa said that a poor work ethic among many young Tongans was partially fuelled by a culture of dependency and over-reliance on remittances.

"Our people are so dependent; especially on people overseas. It's okay if I don't have money today because I can always just ring up my uncle or my cousin tomorrow.

It's that attitude of dependency in our culture because we are very small.

It's alright to share but there's a fine line between sharing and you at some point having to get up and do something."

"There are simple things that our people can do rather than depending on others," she added.

Tonga faces an alarming increase in secondary school drop-outs, combined with declining pass rates for the Tonga School Certificate examination.

Last year Queen Nanasipau'u Tuku'aho urged Tonga's teachers to save students from what is becoming "an epidemic" of failure after research showed that nearly 3,000 students dropped out from Tonga's secondary schools.

Over the same period student pass rates dropped from 44 percent to 36 percent in the Tonga School Certificate

NEWS

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