



ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL PLENARY BACKGROUND GUIDE 2012

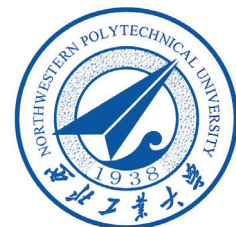
Written By: Rachel L. Johnson, Director



NMUN·CHINA

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Message from the Director-General Regarding Position Papers for the 2012 NMUN-China Conference

At the 2012 NMUN-China Conference, each delegation submits one position paper for each committee assignment. Position papers should provide a concise review of each delegation's policy regarding the topic areas under discussion and establish precise policies and recommendations in regard to the topics before the committee. International and regional conventions, treaties, declarations, resolutions, and programs of action of relevance to the policy of your State should be identified and addressed. Making recommendations for action by your committee should also be considered. Position papers also serve as a blueprint for individual delegates to remember their country's position throughout the course of the Conference.

Delegates must turn in material that is entirely original. NMUN/NCCA will not tolerate the occurrence of plagiarism. In this regard, the NMUN-China Secretariat would like to take this opportunity to remind delegates that although United Nations documentation is considered within the public domain, the Conference does not allow the verbatim re-creation of these documents. Violation of this policy will be immediately reported to faculty advisors and may result in dismissal from Conference participation. Delegates should report any incidents of plagiarism to the Secretariat.

Delegation's position papers can be awarded as recognition of outstanding pre-Conference preparation. In order to be considered for a Position Paper Award, delegations must have met the formal requirements listed below. Please refer to the sample position paper below this message for a visual example of what your work should look like at its completion, as well as how to best construct a position paper. All papers must be typed and formatted in the same manner as this example. The following format specifications are required for all papers:

- Length must not exceed two single-sided pages (use standard size for your home region: A4 or 8.5x11).
- Margins must be set at 1 inch for the whole paper.
- Font must be Times New Roman sized between 10 pt. and 12 pt.
- Body of the paper must be single-spaced.
- Country/NGO name, school name, and committee name must be clearly labeled on the first page.
- Agenda topics must be clearly labeled in separate sections.
- National symbols (headers, flags, etc.) are deemed inappropriate for NMUN position papers.

To be considered for awards, position papers need to be submitted by e-mail in .pdf or .doc formats by **1 November 2012**. As proof of submission, include yourself as an e-mail recipient. Please use the committee name, your assignment, and delegation/school name in both the e-mail subject line and in the filename (example: CSustD_Cuba_Mars College).

Send one complete set of all position papers for each of your country assignments to the Director-General at dirgen.china@nmun.org. If you have any questions, please email the Director-General.

Once the formal requirements outlined above are met, Conference staff use the following criteria to evaluate Position Papers:

- Overall quality of writing, proper style, grammar, etc.
- Citation of relevant resolutions/documents.
- General consistency with bloc/geopolitical constraints.
- Consistency with the constraints of the United Nations.
- Analysis of issues, rather than reiteration of the Committee Background Guide.
- Outline of official policy aims within the committee's mandate.

Sincerely,

Sarah Tulley
Director-General
NMUN-China

Sample Position Paper

The following position paper is designed to be a sample of the standard format that an NMUN position paper should follow. Papers may be no longer than two single-sided pages. Only the first two pages of any submissions will be considered for awards.

Delegation from
Canada

Represented by
University of Jupiter

Position Paper for General Assembly Plenary

The topics before the General Assembly Plenary are: Breaking the Link between Diamonds and Armed Conflict; the Promotion of Alternative Sources of Energy; and the Implementation of the 2001-2010 International Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa. Canada is dedicated to collaborative multilateral approaches to ensuring protection and promotion of human security and advancement of sustainable development.

I. Breaking the Link between Diamonds and Armed Conflict

Canada endorses the Kimberly Process in promoting accountability, transparency, and effective governmental regulation of trade in rough diamonds. We believe the Kimberly Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) is an essential international regulatory mechanism and encourage all Member States to contribute to market accountability by seeking membership, participation, and compliance with its mandate. Canada urges Member States to follow the recommendations of the 2007 Kimberley Process Communiqué to strengthen government oversight of rough diamond trading and manufacturing by developing domestic legal frameworks similar to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. We call upon participating States to act in accordance with the KPCS's comprehensive and credible systems of peer review to monitor the continued implementation of the Kimberley Process and ensure full transparency and self-examination of domestic diamond industries. We draw attention to our domestic programs for diamond regulation including Implementing the Export and Import of Rough Diamonds Act and urge Member States to consider these programs in developing the type of domestic regulatory frameworks called for in A/RES/55/56. Canada recognizes the crucial role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the review of rough diamond control measures developed through the Kimberly Process and encourages States to include NGOs, such as Global Witness and Partnership Africa Canada, in the review processes called for in A/RES/58/290. We urge Member States to act in accordance with A/RES/60/182 to optimize the beneficial development impact of artisanal and alluvial diamond miners by establishing a coordinating mechanism for financial and technical assistance through the Working Group of the Kimberly Process of Artisanal Alluvial Producers. Canada calls upon States and NGOs to provide basic educational material regarding diamond valuation and market prices for artisanal diggers, as recommended by the Diamond Development Initiative. Canada will continue to adhere to the 2007 Brussels Declaration on Internal Controls of Participants and is dedicated to ensuring accountability, transparency, and effective regulation of the rough diamond trade through the utilization of voluntary peer review systems and the promotion of increased measures of internal control within all diamond producing States.

II. The Promotion of Alternative Sources of Energy

Canada is dedicated to integrating alternative energy sources into climate change frameworks by diversifying the energy market while improving competitiveness in a sustainable economy, as exemplified through our Turning Corners Report and Project Green climate strategies. We view the international commitment to the promotion of alternative sources of energy called for in the Kyoto Protocol and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Control (UNFCCC) as a catalyst to sustainable development and emission reduction. Canada fulfills its obligations to Article 4 of the UNFCCC by continuing to provide development assistance through the Climate Change Development Fund and calls upon Member States to commit substantial financial and technical investment toward the transfer of sustainable energy technologies and clean energy mechanisms to developing States. We emphasize the need for Member States to follow the recommendations of the 2005 Beijing International Renewable Energy Conference to strengthen domestic policy frameworks to promote clean energy technologies. Canada views dissemination of technology information called for in the 2007 Group of Eight Growth and Responsibility in the World Economy Declaration as a vital step in energy diversification from conventional energy generation. We call

upon Member States to integrate clean electricity from renewable sources into their domestic energy sector by employing investment campaigns similar to our \$1.48 billion initiative ecoENERGY for Renewable Power. Canada encourages States to develop domestic policies of energy efficiency, utilizing regulatory and financing frameworks to accelerate the deployment of clean low-emitting technologies. We call upon Member States to provide knowledge-based advisory services for expanding access to energy in order to fulfill their commitments to Goal 1 of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Canada urges States to address the concerns of the 2007 Human Development Report by promoting tax incentives, similar to the Capital Cost Allowances and Canadian Renewable and Conservation Expenses, to encourage private sector development of energy conservation and renewable energy projects. As a member of the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership, Canada is committed to accelerating the development of renewable energy projects, information sharing mechanisms, and energy efficient systems through the voluntary carbon offset system. We are dedicated to leading international efforts toward the development and sharing of best practices on clean energy technologies and highlight our release of the Renewable Energy Technologies Screen software for public and private stakeholders developing projects in energy efficiency, cogeneration, and renewable energy. Canada believes the integration of clean energy into State specific strategies called for in A/62/419/Add.9 will strengthen energy diversification, promote the use of cogeneration, and achieve a synergy between promoting alternative energy while allowing for competitiveness in a sustainable economy.

III. Implementation of the 2001-2010 International Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa

Canada views the full implementation of the treatment and prevention targets of the 2001-2010 International Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Especially in Africa, as essential to eradicating malaria and assisting African States to achieve Target 8 of Goal 6 of the MDGs by 2015. We recommend Member States cooperate with the World Health Organization to ensure transparency in the collection of statistical information for Indicators 21 and 22 of the MDGs. Canada reaffirms the targets of the Abuja Declaration Plan of Action stressing regional cooperation in the implementation, monitoring, and management of malaria prevention and treatment initiatives in Africa. To fully implement A/RES/61/228, Canada believes developed States must balance trade and intellectual property obligations with the humanitarian objective of the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health. We continue to implement Paragraph 6 of the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health into our compulsory licensing framework through the Jean Chrétien Pledge to Africa Act. We urge Member States to support compulsory licensing for essential generic medicines by including anti-malarial vaccines and initiating domestic provisions to permit export-only compulsory licenses to domestic pharmaceutical manufacturers, similar to Canada's Access to Medicines Regime. Canada calls upon Member States to establish advanced market commitments on the distribution of pneumococcal vaccines to developing States in cooperation with PATH and the Malaria Vaccine Initiative. We emphasize the need for greater membership in the Roll Back Malaria initiative to strengthen malaria control planning, funding, implementation, and evaluation by promoting increased investment in healthcare systems and greater incorporation of malaria control into all relevant multi-sector activities. Canada continues to implement the Canadian International Development Agency's (CIDA) New Agenda for Action on Health to reduce malaria infection rates among marginalized populations in Africa, increase routine immunizations rates, and reduce infection rates of other neglected infections. Canada will achieve the goal of doubling aid to Africa by 2008-2009 by providing assistance to the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. We urge Member States to increase donations to intergovernmental organizations and NGOs that support malaria programming in Africa, exemplified by CIDA's contribution of \$26 million to the Canadian Red Cross. We continue our efforts to provide accessible and affordable vector control methods to African States through the Red Cross' Malaria Bed Net Campaign and the African Medical Research Foundation Canada by supplying insecticide-treated mosquito nets and Participatory Malaria Prevention and Treatment tool kits.

I. Promoting Partnerships to Address Youth Unemployment in Post-Conflict Nations

“Rebuilding a shattered society takes far more than bricks and mortar. Quite often, the deeper challenge is restoring people’s sense of opportunity, dignity and hope.”¹

Introduction

The progression towards stronger economies and more equitable societies is heavily reliant upon the opportunities for decent work available to youth. When a young person is gainfully employed, their family and home can become more stable and secure and their community more economically sustainable.² However, despite the need for new skills and ideas in labor markets and industries all over the world, young people are still two to three times as likely as older workers to be unemployed.³

While young people have historically had a more difficult time finding employment when they enter into the workforce, these challenging economic times have proved to exacerbate unemployment rates for youth all over the world.⁴ In both Spain and South Africa, for example, over half of all young adults are unable to find work.⁵ In 2010, 40 percent, or around 75 million, of the worlds’ unemployed were between 15 and 24 years of age.⁶ Such high unemployment rates for youth can cause long-term consequences including “wage scars”, which can be detrimental to the earning potential over one’s entire lifetime.⁷ Individuals who experience long term joblessness can also have increased risk of heart-attack, depression, and suicide.⁸ The impact on a society is also grave: high youth unemployment is a strain on economic growth and can threaten stability.⁹ The United Nations (UN) has described the effort to create more and better jobs for these unemployed youth or youth just entering the workforce as a “monumental challenge”.¹⁰

While youth around the world, both in developed and developing nations, face obstacles when entering the workforce, the challenges youth in post-conflict situations face can be all the more obstinate.¹¹ These situations further strain access to education and actively prevent the creation of jobs for young people.¹² Yet, providing greater opportunity for youth to become employed can also aid in the transition from post-conflict to peace and sustainable economic and social change.¹³ The Chairman of the UN Peacebuilding Commission has also emphasized that job creation for youth in post-conflict nations is vital to maintaining and promoting peace and preventing future conflict.¹⁴ Acknowledging this, the UN has called upon governments to promote and form partnerships with private sectors and civil society to quickly address the challenge of job creation in post-conflict situations.¹⁵

¹ United Nation, International Labor Organization, *Rethinking policies toward youth unemployment- what have we learned, Forward by the Secretary-General*, 2009, p. 3.

² United Nations, Economic and Social Council, *Employing youth for a better future*, 2012, p. 4.

³ United Nations, Economic and Social Council, *Employing youth for a better future*, 2012, p. 4.

⁴ United Nations, Economic and Social Council, *Employing youth for a better future*, 2012, p. 8.

⁵ United Nations, Economic and Social Council, *Employing youth for a better future*, 2012, p. 2.

⁶ United Nations, Economic and Social Council, *Employing youth for a better future*, 2012, p. 18.

⁷ United Nations, Economic and Social Council, *Employing youth for a better future*, 2012, p. 2.

⁸ United Nations, Economic and Social Council, *Employing youth for a better future*, 2012, p. 2.

⁹ United Nations, Economic and Social Council, *Employing youth for a better future*, 2012, p. 2.

¹⁰ United Nations, Economic and Social Council, *Employing youth for a better future*, 2012, p. 4.

¹¹ United Nation, International Labor Organization, *Rethinking policies toward youth unemployment- what have we learned*, 2009, p. 3.

¹² United Nations, International Labor Organization, *Rethinking policies toward youth unemployment- what have we learned*, 2009, p. 6.

¹³ United Nation, International Labor Organization, *Rethinking policies toward youth unemployment- what have we learned*, 2009, p. 9.

¹⁴ United Nations, *Partnerships key for creating jobs for youth in post-conflict nations, say UN Officials*, 2012.

¹⁵ United Nations, *Partnerships key for creating jobs for youth in post-conflict nations, say UN Officials*, 2012.

Post-conflict nations and youth unemployment

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), there is an estimated 1.2 billion youth in the world, a 17% percent increase compared to 20 years ago.¹⁶ These youth, defined as people between the age of 15 and 24 years old, represent 24.7% of the world's working-age population.¹⁷ Furthermore, with the increase in the share of the world population, the rate of employment has decreased.¹⁸ In the decade between 1997 and 2007, for example, the share of the youth who were employed declined from 49.2 percent to 44.5 percent.¹⁹ Unemployment rates for youth in post-conflict nations can be much higher.²⁰ Young workers often comprise a disproportionate share of the victims and perpetrators during conflict and subsequently are ill-prepared to enter into the already-limited workforce available or create a new business when a conflict has ended.²¹ These youth may also be affected by a range of highly influential factors as a result of conflict including trauma, separation from their family and community, and the inability to attend school or improve their skill-set through training.²² Young women and girls can experience further risk and trauma, including greater risk of HIV infection, rape and subsequent rejection by their own families and communities while some are forced into motherhood as a result of rape.²³ Young people with disabilities are also especially vulnerable as conflict creates new obstacles to accessibility to a number of social services.²⁴ Consequently, many youth in post-conflict nations often stay unemployed or underemployed and become trapped in a vicious cycle of illiteracy, poverty and violence.²⁵

With their weak institutions, crumbling infrastructure and severely damaged labor markets, fragile post-conflict nations that have experienced prolonged violence and instability encounter many challenges when attempting to provide economic and social opportunities to their ill-equipped youth population.²⁶ Worldwide financial crises have also made it more and more difficult to achieve the capital necessary to rebuild post-conflict.²⁷ Explaining the impact of a shaky post-conflict economy Miloš Koterec, the President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) has said that underemployment and unemployment can cause some youth to become involved in drug trades and armed groups as such activities are often the only livelihood available.²⁸ The lack of a social safety net helps to create these ever-expanding informal economies; however, there has also been a rise in the number of unemployed urban youth who turn to street crime, gangs, prostitution and other illegal activities.²⁹ According to estimates by the International Labor Organization (ILO), around 90 per cent of the jobs available in post-conflict regions of Africa are in the informal economy.³⁰

While young people are often the head of household and can also take on non-violent, positive roles in communities, their potential contribution to the economy is still often overlooked.³¹ Numerous constraints limit their potential, as well. These constraints can include lack of technical skills, information about job and market needs, and

¹⁶ United Nations, *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Promoting pro-poor growth: Employment, Youth Unemployment*, 2009, p. 119.

¹⁷ United Nations, *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Promoting pro-poor growth: Employment, Youth Unemployment*, 2009, p. 119.

¹⁸ United Nations, *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Promoting pro-poor growth: Employment, Youth Unemployment*, 2009, p. 119-120.

¹⁹ United Nations, *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Promoting pro-poor growth: Employment, Youth Unemployment*, 2009, p. 119.

²⁰ United Nations, *Partnerships key for creating jobs for youth in post-conflict nations, say UN Officials*, 2012.

²¹ United Nations, *Partnerships key for creating jobs for youth in post-conflict nations, say UN Officials*, 2012.

²² United Nations, *Partnerships key for creating jobs for youth in post-conflict nations, say UN Officials*, 2012.

²³ United Nations, International Labor Organization, *Rethinking policies toward youth unemployment- what have we learned*, 2009, p. 16.

²⁴ United Nations, International Labor Organization, *Rethinking policies toward youth unemployment- what have we learned*, 2009, p. 16.

²⁵ United Nations, *Partnerships key for creating jobs for youth in post-conflict nations, say UN Officials*, 2012.

²⁶ United Nations, *Partnerships key for creating jobs for youth in post-conflict nations, say UN Officials*, 2012.

²⁷ United Nations, *Partnerships key for creating jobs for youth in post-conflict nations, say UN Officials*, 2012.

²⁸ United Nations, *Partnerships key for creating jobs for youth in post-conflict nations, say UN Officials*, 2012.

²⁹ United Nations, *World Youth Report, Chapter 2: Preparing for Work*, 2011, p. 67.

³⁰ United Nations, International Labor Organization, 12th African regional meeting, 2011, p. 1.

³¹ United Nations, International Labor Organization, *Rethinking policies toward youth unemployment- what have we learned*, 2009, p. 41.

entrepreneurial and financial skills.³² Combined with inadequate financial savings and property and an employment track records, these constraints keep young people from becoming gainfully employed and contributing to local formal economies.³³

In order to break the cycle of unemployment that permeates youth culture in post-conflict situations, nations are looking to offer sustainable income-earning jobs to youth.³⁴ Some post-conflict employment programs provide positive and productive alternatives to violent and illegal activities, creating legal jobs for young workers.³⁵ Successful programs have been targeted and specific and demonstrate a thorough understanding of the local economy and market.³⁶ Other programs focus on beginning to provide much needed healthcare, skills training, counseling, childcare, basic education, and microfinance start-up grants.³⁷

The International community

The topic of youth unemployment has been featured prominently on agendas worldwide. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has included addressing employment needs of youth in his five year agenda.³⁸ ECOSOC has reaffirmed the importance of opportunity and access to decent work in several resolutions over the years. In the 2008 Resolution, *Promoting full employment and decent work for all* (ECOSOC 2008/18), ECOSOC emphasized the fundamental link between “full and productive employment and decent work to poverty eradication and social integration.”³⁹ The UN General Assembly has also reaffirmed the need for employment opportunities for youth to combat dire situations caused by conflict in resolution, *Policies and programmes involving youth* (A/Res/58/133).⁴⁰

Recognizing the need for regional and international partnerships between private sectors and civil society, ECOSOC has collaborated with the UN Peacebuilding Commission. This Commission, formed in 2005, was originally created to aid nations with strategic advice on how to secure expertise and financing to support projects post-conflict.⁴¹ The six post-conflict nations currently on the agenda include Burundi, the Central African Republic, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone.⁴² Promoting youth employment is frequently listed as a priority by these nations and the Commission. Recently, ECOSOC and the Commission held a joint event in 2012 at UN Headquarters on *Partnerships for Job Creation for Young People in Countries Emerging from Conflict*.⁴³ During this meeting, UN Deputy Secretary-General Migiro emphasized that without swift action, countries can relapse into violence and quick interventions can make a noticeable impact on unemployment rates.⁴⁴

In an effort to strengthen partnerships between governments, private sectors, and non-profit organizations to promote youth employment, ECOSOC also organized an event in February 2012: *Breaking new ground: Partnerships for more and better jobs for young people*.⁴⁵ This event explored the setting of policies that could positively affect youth employment rates, how to use partnerships to stimulate job creation and how to create entrepreneurship opportunities for youth.⁴⁶

³² United Nations, International Labor Organization, 12th African regional meeting, 2011, p. 4.

³³ United Nations, International Labor Organization, 12th African regional meeting, 2011, p. 4.

³⁴ United Nations, International Labor Organization, 2009, *Rethinking policies toward youth unemployment- what have we learned*, p. 15.

³⁵ United Nations, International Labor Organization, 2009, *Rethinking policies toward youth unemployment- what have we learned*, p. 16.

³⁶ United Nations, International Labor Organization, 2009, *Rethinking policies toward youth unemployment- what have we learned*, p. 16.

³⁷ United Nations, International Labor Organization, 2009, *Rethinking policies toward youth unemployment- what have we learned*, p. 16.

³⁸ United Nations, *The Secretary-General's five year action agenda*, 2012, p. 10.

³⁹ United Nations, Economic and Social Council, *Promoting full employment and decent work for all* (ECOSOC 2008/18), 2008.

⁴⁰ United Nations, General Assembly, *Policies and programmes involving youth* (A/Res/58/133), 2004.

⁴¹ United Nations, *Partnerships key for creating jobs for youth in post-conflict nations, say UN Officials*, 2012.

⁴² United Nations, *Partnerships key for creating jobs for youth in post-conflict nations, say UN Officials*, 2012.

⁴³ United Nations, *Partnerships key for creating jobs for youth in post-conflict nations, say UN Officials*, 2012.

⁴⁴ United Nations, Deputy-Secretary-General, *Later is often too late to focus on job creation after conflict ends; frustration boils over, countries relapse into violence*, 2012.

⁴⁵ United Nations, Economic and Social Council, *Employing youth for a better future*, 2012, p. 4

⁴⁶ United Nations, Economic and Social Council, *Employing youth for a better future*, 2012, p. 2

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also officially endorsed the UN Policy for Post-Conflict Employment Creation, Income Generation, and Reintegration.⁴⁷ This policy incorporates best practices for development in post-conflict areas and acknowledges the critical connection between youth employment and peace building.⁴⁸ Best practices and focus priorities include: “stabilizing income generation and emergency employment to consolidate security and stability and target conflict-affected individuals and groups; local economic recovery for employment and reintegration focusing on promoting employment at the local level, where reintegration ultimately takes place; and sustainable employment creation and decent work involving support to policies and institutional capacity building at the national level, including a framework for social dialogue”.⁴⁹

Conclusion

In post-conflict nations, employment is necessary for short-term stability, economic growth, reintegration and sustainable peace. Without employment and income, youth lack the fundamental means to take an active role in post-conflict solutions and development. In short, peace building is reliant on employment, especially for youth.⁵⁰ Recognizing this, policies that aim to break the vicious cycle of unemployment and poverty for youth must address the special challenges young people face in getting jobs. Through opportunity and employment, youth can become agents of change and economic development in their post-conflict communities. As such, partnerships that create targeted youth employment programs and projects are vital to post-conflict nations.⁵¹

As delegates begin their research on the topic, it would be beneficial to consider the following:

- Are current efforts sufficiently increasing youth employment in post-conflict nations? How can successful local and regional programs be scaled up and can they be applied on a larger scale? How can governments in post-conflict nations partner with the private sector in new ways to address youth employment? What are feasible short-term solutions for newly post-conflict nations? What has your delegation done to address youth unemployment within your own borders and can similar efforts be implemented in post-conflict nations?

⁴⁷ United Nations, International Labor Organization, 2009, *Rethinking policies toward youth unemployment- what have we learned*, p. 12.

⁴⁸ United Nations, International Labor Organization, 2009, *Rethinking policies toward youth unemployment- what have we learned*, p. 14.

⁴⁹ United Nations, International Labor Organization, *United Nations policy for post-conflict employment creation, income generation and reintegration*, 2009, p. 5.

⁵⁰ United Nations, International Labor Organization, *United Nations policy for post-conflict employment creation, income generation and reintegration*, 2009, p. 3.

⁵¹ United Nations, Peacebuilding Commission, *Working Group on Lessons Learned- youth employment in peacebuilding*, 2010, p. 1.

II. Increasing Access to Education for Children with Disabilities

*“Disability need not be an obstacle to success...In fact we have a moral duty to remove the barriers to participation and invest sufficient funding and resources to unlock the vast potential of people with disabilities.”*⁵²

Introduction

In 2011, more than one billion people were living with a disability, with prevalence expected to rise in years to come.⁵³ Living in every society, people with disabilities constitute the world’s largest minority.⁵⁴ Aside from direct health-related effects, physical and mental impairments often carry stigmas that can result in exclusion from communities and prevent people with disabilities from having the opportunity to access the same fundamental services available to everyone else.⁵⁵ This is particularly true with access to education. Studies show that adults with disabilities typically have lower rates of educational attainment and subsequently live in poorer households.⁵⁶ Youth with disabilities are significantly less likely to start school and transition to higher grades, making it much more difficult for them to acquire the necessary human capital needed to enter into higher income brackets and improve their quality of life.⁵⁷ Studies have identified this issue as a “vicious cycle”; the low rate of educational attainment amongst people with disabilities is intrinsically connected to living a life in poverty.⁵⁸

Defining disability

Over the past few decades, the definition of disability has changed and continues to be an ever-evolving concept. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines disability as “complex, dynamic, multidimensional, and contested.”⁵⁹ At present, both researchers from the social and health sciences and people with disabilities are working to identify physical barriers for people living with disabilities, while also underscoring the significant role of societal barriers.⁶⁰ In their *World Report on Disability*, authored in conjunction with the World Bank, WHO further explains, “The medical model and the social model are often presented as dichotomous, but disability should be viewed neither as purely medical nor as purely social: persons with disabilities can often experience problems arising from their health condition. A balanced approach is needed, giving appropriate weight to the different aspects of disability.”⁶¹ In practice, the *United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD) contends that the term “persons with disabilities” can be applied to people who have “long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments,” affecting their full and effective participation in society, relative to everyone else.⁶² Yet the CRPD emphasizes that perceptions of disabilities can change dependent upon resources available as well as cultures and societies and the roles people are expected to assume within different communities.⁶³ According to the CRPD, “Disability resides in the society, not in the person.”⁶⁴

United Nations, Human Rights and Disability

Since the 1970s, there have been significant changes in the way international organizations and national governments respond to disability.⁶⁵ This has largely been attributed to the self-organization of people with disabilities and the subsequent movement to view disability as a human rights issue.⁶⁶ Solutions for people with disabilities have historically been ones that segregate them from their communities, such as residential institutions

⁵² Hawking, *World Report on Disability Forward*, 2011, p. ix.

⁵³ Chan, Zoellick, *World Report on Disability Preface*, 2011, p. xi.

⁵⁴ Chan, Zoellick, *World Report on Disability Preface*, 2011, p. xi.

⁵⁵ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Education for All: Reaching the marginalized*, 2010, p. 27-28.

⁵⁶ Tembon, *Girl’s education in the 21st century gender equality, empowerment, and economic growth*, 2008, p 110.

⁵⁷ Tembon, *Girl’s education in the 21st century gender equality, empowerment, and economic growth*, 2008, p 110.

⁵⁸ Tembon, *Girl’s education in the 21st century gender equality, empowerment, and economic growth*, 2008, p 110.

⁵⁹ Chan, Zoellick, *World Report on Disability, Understanding Disability*, 2011, p. 3.

⁶⁰ Chan, Zoellick, *World Report on Disability, Understanding Disability*, 2011, p. 3-4.

⁶¹ Chan, Zoellick, *World Report on Disability, Understanding Disability*, 2011, p. 4.

⁶² UN Enable, *FAQ*.

⁶³ UN Enable, *FAQ*.

⁶⁴ UN Enable, *FAQ*.

⁶⁵ Chan, Zoellick, *World Report on Disability, Understanding Disability*, 2011, p. 4.

⁶⁶ Chan, Zoellick, *World Report on Disability, Understanding Disability*, 2011, p. 3

and special schools.⁶⁷ Asserting that people are not disabled by their bodies but instead by environmental factors, policies are beginning to shift away from medically focused solutions and more towards interactive approaches that promote community and educational inclusion.⁶⁸

After the United Nations was established in 1945, the organization spent its first few decades promoting the establishment of programs and mechanisms that concentrated on prevention and rehabilitation.⁶⁹ The Preamble to the *United Nations Charter* affirms the dignity and worth of every human being, its primary purpose being the promotion of social justice for all people.⁷⁰ The General Assembly later established the foundation for the promotion and protection of human rights in 1948, when it adopted the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.⁷¹ The main bodies promoting the rights of people with disabilities and these principals were the United Nations Secretariat and the Economic and Social Council.⁷²

In the 1970s, the organization's perspective on disability began to shift.⁷³ New approaches moved from continuing historical welfare programs and towards viewing disability as a human rights issue as well as a major factor in development.⁷⁴ This was launched publically with the International Year of Disabled Persons in 1981 and further established by the World Programme of Action (WPA) concerning Disabled Persons, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1982.⁷⁵ The central theme of the WPA was "equalization of opportunities" and full inclusion in all aspects of social and economic life for people with disabilities.⁷⁶

The WPA proved to be a global strategy and laid the groundwork for key national and international initiatives including the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities, adopted in 1993, and the CRPD, ratified in 2006.⁷⁷ The Standard Rules was not a legally binding document; however, the resolution is said to "represent a strong moral and political commitment of Governments to take action to attain equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities" and outlines the key messages of the WPA in twenty-two rules.⁷⁸ These twenty-two rules include the following chapters: preconditions for equal, target areas for equal participation, implementation measures, and the monitoring mechanism, with rule six in chapter focusing solely on the right to education.⁷⁹

More recently, the CRPD is a culmination of decades of work to change the perception of people with disabilities and advocate for inclusionary programs globally. Adopted in 2006 and entered into force in 2008, the CRPD was intended to be a "human rights instrument with an explicit social development dimension."⁸⁰ According to the CRPD, its purpose is to promote, protect and ensure that full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity."⁸¹ The Committee on CRPD was created to closely follow the implementation of the CRPD and investigate alleged violations to the CRPD and its Optional Protocol.⁸²

Children with disabilities

Children with disabilities and their families experience a multitude of barriers that can prevent them from enjoying their basic human rights and full inclusion into their communities.⁸³ These environmental barriers can result in their

⁶⁷ Chan, Zoellick, *World Report on Disability, Understanding Disability*, 2011, p. 3

⁶⁸ Chan, Zoellick, *World Report on Disability, Understanding Disability*, 2011, p. 3

⁶⁹ UN Enable, *FAQ*, n.d

⁷⁰ UN Enable, *History of the United Nations and Persons with Disabilities*, Introduction.

⁷¹ UN Enable, *History of the United Nations and Persons with Disabilities*, Introduction.

⁷² UN Enable, *History of the United Nations and Persons with Disabilities*, Introduction.

⁷³ UN Enable, *The United Nations and Persons with Disabilities, Chronology 1980s-present*.

⁷⁴ UN Enable, *The United Nations and Persons with Disabilities, Chronology 1980s-present*.

⁷⁵ UN Enable, *The United Nations and Persons with Disabilities, Chronology 1980s-present*.

⁷⁶ UN Enable, *The United Nations and Persons with Disabilities, The World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons*.

⁷⁷ UN Enable, *The United Nations and Persons with Disabilities, The World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons*.

⁷⁸ UN Enable, *The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities*.

⁷⁹ UN Enable, *The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities*.

⁸⁰ UN Enable, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.

⁸¹ United Nations, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article I*, 2006, p. 4.

⁸² Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights, *Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.

⁸³ United Nations Children's Fund, *Promoting the Rights of Children with Disabilities*, 2007, p. iv.

abilities being disregarded, their capacities underestimated and their needs appointed low priority.⁸⁴ While the world is progressing and moving towards full inclusion, there are still severe gaps. Children with disabilities have traditionally been, and in some communities continue to be seen, as less worthy of social investment than other children.⁸⁵ This mentality has led to exclusion from a variety of social programs, including school.⁸⁶ According to the World Bank, the pervasive existence of stigma towards disability in a culture has a significant impact on the rate at which children with disabilities attend and complete their schooling.⁸⁷

In total, estimates suggest that 400 million people with disabilities live in poverty in developing countries.⁸⁸ Globally, the number of children living with a disability is estimated to be nearly 150 million, around four-fifths of them also live in developing countries.⁸⁹ And according to United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), 30 per cent of street youths are disabled.⁹⁰ These children face particular hurdles in attending and completing school, whether they be physical or cultural.⁹¹ Surveys completed by the World Bank show that six to seventeen year olds with disabilities are nearly always much less likely to be in school than their peers without disabilities and explains that disability among these youth is often partly a result of poverty.⁹² Poverty is a major barrier worldwide for children with disabilities, as it is both a cause and a consequence of disability. Vulnerability to sickness and infection increase for families living in poverty, especially for infants and young children.⁹³ Compounding the issue, these children and their families are much less likely to have access and receive adequate health care or pay for school fees.⁹⁴ As such, poverty may have a direct effect on the probability of a child's school attendance.⁹⁵ The World Bank emphasizes,

*“it is particularly worrisome that children with disabilities are almost always much less likely to participate in schooling than are other children. They are also less likely to start school, and in some countries they have lower transition rates. The school participation disability deficit is typically larger than deficits associated with characteristics such as gender, rural residence, or economic status.”*⁹⁶

There are also studies showing that mortality for children with disabilities may be as high as eighty percent in some developing nations.⁹⁷ While progress has been made, there are clearly many barriers preventing children with disabilities from exercising their human rights. In their report, *Promoting the Rights of Children with Disabilities*, UNICEF summarizes,

*“In countries the world over children with disabilities and their families continue to face discrimination and are not yet fully able to enjoy their basic human rights. The inclusion of children with disabilities is a matter of social justice and an essential investment in the future of society. It is not based on charity or goodwill but is an integral element of the expression and realization of universal human rights.”*⁹⁸

Access to Education

Compared to income or living in a rural area, disability has twice as large of an impact on whether or not a child will attend school in most countries.⁹⁹ Historically, many children and adults with disabilities have been excluded from taking advantage of mainstream educational opportunities.¹⁰⁰ Many countries used to offer education or training to

⁸⁴ United Nations Children's Fund, *Promoting the Rights of Children with Disabilities*, 2007, p. iv.

⁸⁵ Chan, Zoellick, *World Report on Disability, Education*, 2011, p. 205

⁸⁶ Chan, Zoellick, *World Report on Disability, Education*, 2011, p. 205

⁸⁷ Chan, Zoellick, *World Report on Disability, Education*, 2011, p. 205

⁸⁸ Department for International Development, *Education for children with disabilities- improving access and quality*.

⁸⁹ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Education for All: Reaching the marginalized*, 2010, p. 27

⁹⁰ UN Enable, *Factsheet on persons with disabilities*.

⁹¹ Filmer, *Disability, Poverty, and Schooling in Developing Countries: Results from 14 Household Surveys*, 2008, p. 148.

⁹² Filmer, *Disability, Poverty, and Schooling in Developing Countries: Results from 14 Household Surveys*, 2008, p. 149-150.

⁹³ United Nations Children's Fund, *Promoting the Rights of Children with Disabilities*, 2007, p. iv.

⁹⁴ United Nations Children's Fund, *Promoting the Rights of Children with Disabilities*, 2007, p. iv.

⁹⁵ Filmer, *Disability, Poverty, and Schooling in Developing Countries: Results from 14 Household Surveys*, 2008, p. 148.

⁹⁶ Filmer, *Disability, Poverty, and Schooling in Developing Countries: Results from 14 Household Surveys*, 2008, p. 148.

⁹⁷ United Nations Children's Fund, *Promoting the Rights of Children with Disabilities*, 2007, p. 15.

⁹⁸ United Nations Children's Fund, *Promoting the Rights of Children with Disabilities*, 2007, p. v.

⁹⁹ Filmer, *Disability, Poverty, and Schooling in Developing Countries: Results from 14 Household Surveys*, 2008, p. 158.

¹⁰⁰ Chan, Zoellick, *World Report on Disability, Education*, 2011, p. 3.

people with disabilities but usually through separate “special schools”, such as schools for the blind.¹⁰¹ While there have been vast improvements in many countries, at present the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) estimates that nearly ninety per cent of children with disabilities in developing countries still do not attend school.¹⁰² In 1998, the global literacy rate for adults with disabilities was estimated to be as low as three percent, and one percent for women with disabilities.¹⁰³ Yet, nearly 15 years later, children with disabilities still make up one of the largest groups of youth who do not attend school and remain widely excluded from attaining a quality education.¹⁰⁴ According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), while admission is increasing, students with disabilities are also still vastly under-represented in higher education.¹⁰⁵

While not always visible, disability is one of the most significant factors in educational marginalization.¹⁰⁶ This marginalization continues into adulthood and is pervasive in both developing and developed nations. Studies have shown that people with disabilities are underrepresented in the U.S. workplace.¹⁰⁷ Although the second most common reason given for not hiring a person with a disability was the fear of costly special facilities, companies that have hired persons with disabilities report that these employees typically have better retention rates, reducing the high cost of turnover.¹⁰⁸

Recognizing that the disparaging educational gap between children with disabilities and children without will have a great impact well into adulthood, international organizations and national governments have attempted to identify what barriers created and continue to maintain the gap. Such barriers exist in national policies or lack thereof; for example, some countries do not have a provision that ensures a person who has been subjected to discrimination can seek any remedy to the discriminatory action.¹⁰⁹ Public buildings such as schools, transportation, and recreational facilities may also present physical barriers including, but not limited to, the lack of ramps or braille that exclude people with disabilities and prevent them from having access.¹¹⁰ UNICEF’s report on promoting the rights of children with disabilities further explains how barriers are not always physical, “They may also be attitudinal – widespread underestimation of the abilities and potential of children with disabilities creates a vicious cycle of under-expectation, under-achievement and low priority in the allocation of resources.”¹¹¹

Much work is being done to change perceptions and remove barriers worldwide. Through the United Nations, several guiding reports and declarations have established access to education as a right for all people. Article twenty-six of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* identifies education as a fundamental freedom and article twenty-three of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* states that assistance should be designed to “ensure that the disabled child has effective access to and receives education, training, healthcare services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child’s achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development.”¹¹² The CRPD, in Article twenty-four, also highlights inclusive education as a being crucial human right for children with disabilities.¹¹³

The *World Declaration on Education for All* (EFA), adopted in 1990 and later reinforced at the World Education Forum in 2000, created a framework for nations to universalize access to education for all children.¹¹⁴ The Forum declared that EFA must take into account the needs of all children, including children with disabilities.¹¹⁵ UNESCO subsequently created a set of guidelines to promote inclusion in education to achieve EFA. These guidelines state

¹⁰¹ Chan, Zoellick, *World Report on Disability, Education*, 2011, p. 3.

¹⁰² United Nations Children’s Fund, *Promoting the Rights of Children with Disabilities*, 2007, p. vii.

¹⁰³ UN Enable, *Factsheet on persons with disabilities*.

¹⁰⁴ UN Enable, *Factsheet on persons with disabilities*.

¹⁰⁵ UN Enable, *Factsheet on persons with disabilities*.

¹⁰⁶ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Education for All: Reaching the marginalized*, 2010, p. 8.

¹⁰⁷ UN Enable, *Factsheet on persons with disabilities*.

¹⁰⁸ UN Enable, *Factsheet on persons with disabilities*.

¹⁰⁹ UN Enable, *Handbook for Parliamentarians on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 5*, 2007, p. 51.

¹¹⁰ United Nations Children’s Fund, *Promoting the Rights of Children with Disabilities*, 2007, p. 14.

¹¹¹ United Nations Children’s Fund, *Promoting the Rights of Children with Disabilities*, 2007, p. 14.

¹¹² Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 1989.

¹¹³ UN Enable, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.

¹¹⁴ Department for International Development, *Education for children with disabilities- improving access and quality*, p. 4.

¹¹⁵ Department for International Development, *Education for children with disabilities- improving access and quality*, p. 4.

that in order to move educational systems towards greater inclusion, there needs to be: “a recognition of the right of children with disabilities to education and its provision in non-discriminatory ways; a common vision of education which covers all children of the appropriate age range; and a conviction that schools have a responsibility to meet the diversity of needs of all learners, recognizing that all children can learn.”¹¹⁶

Case Study: Vietnam’s Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children Project

In 2009, Vietnam’s Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children Project was implemented to increase school attendance for children of primary-school age.¹¹⁷ Recognizing the need to include children with disabilities in the strategy, the plan featured the Inclusive Education for Disabled Children component.¹¹⁸ This component was specifically designed to maintain a national task force that would create a multidimensional set of national guidelines to promote inclusive education for children with disabilities.¹¹⁹ This task force worked to ensure children with disabilities would have access to educational services and improve teachers’ knowledge and capacity to meet the needs of children with disabilities in their classrooms.¹²⁰ In order to do this, the task force created national guidelines that addressed the need inclusive education policy and made recommendations for structures that would support the needs of youth with disabilities.¹²¹ They also researched and dispatched surveys to identify the scope of need and pin point issues and barriers children with disabilities encountered when trying to complete their studies.¹²² Subsequently, the task force was able to create guides for teachers and host training workshops and develop a public awareness campaign to encourage parents of children with disabilities to enroll their children into school.¹²³ Funds for the program were also used to purchase materials and equipment needed to aid children while in the classroom.¹²⁴ As a result of the project, in 2009 the completion rate for children with disabilities was 71.5%, an increase from 45.6% in 2006.¹²⁵

Conclusion

Incontrovertibly, the causes and impacts of disabilities are far and widespread; furthermore, the experiences of people with disabilities are incredibly diverse and are not just dependent upon their health condition, but include a plethora of factors, including personal and environmental.¹²⁶ Education systems and classroom experiences can help to counteract institutionalized discrimination and stigma; however, as evidenced by the case study in Vietnam, multidimensional and multilateral approaches are needed. The project in Vietnam took years of implementing projects and programs to reduce stigma, on top of purchasing needed equipment and materials for children with disabilities.

While there has been much discussion about and efforts to create new policies to address the prominent disparities between children with and without disabilities in educational systems, barriers still persist for many children with disabilities. Moving forward with your research, please consider the following questions:

¹¹⁶ Department for International Development, *Education for children with disabilities- improving access and quality*, p. 4.

¹¹⁷ World Bank, *Implementation, completion and results report: Primary Education for disadvantaged children project*, 2011, p. 5

¹¹⁸ World Bank, *Implementation, completion and results report: Primary Education for disadvantaged children project*, 2011, p. 7

¹¹⁹ World Bank, *Implementation, completion and results report: Primary Education for disadvantaged children project*, 2011, p. 7

¹²⁰ World Bank, *Implementation, completion and results report: Primary Education for disadvantaged children project*, 2011, p. 4

¹²¹ World Bank, *Implementation, completion and results report: Primary Education for disadvantaged children project*, 2011, p. 4

¹²² World Bank, *Implementation, completion and results report: Primary Education for disadvantaged children project*, 2011, p. 7

¹²³ World Bank, *Implementation, completion and results report: Primary Education for disadvantaged children project*, 2011, p. 4

¹²⁴ World Bank, *Implementation, completion and results report: Primary Education for disadvantaged children project*, 2011, p. 4

¹²⁵ World Bank, *Implementation, completion and results report: Primary Education for disadvantaged children project*, 2011, p. 18

¹²⁶ Chan, Zoellick, *World Report on Disability Preface*, 2011, p. xi.

- How can ECOSOC promote programs to reduce stigma and discrimination that prevents children from accessing education?
- Are existing programs designed to eliminate physical barriers to children with disabilities sufficient?
- If not, what new policies and programs can ECOSOC support to address these barriers?
- What programs are your delegations currently implementing to increase the number of children with disabilities in school and promote retention for these youth?
- Can these programs be implemented on an international scale?

Annotated Bibliography

I. Promoting Partnerships to Address Youth Unemployment in Post-Conflict Nations

United Nations, International Labor Organization. (2009). Forward by the Secretary-General. *United Nations policy for post-conflict employment creation, income generation and reintegration*. Retrieved on August 30, 2012 from http://www.ilo.org/gb/GBSessions/WCMS_116195/lang--en/index.htm

Employment is a vital component to short-term stability, economic growth and sustainable peace. This policy paper by the United Nations explores programming being implemented on a regional level and discusses potential to scale up projects to improve employment opportunities for youth. Within this policy paper, there is a plethora of information on programming that seeks to meet the needs of specific groups in post-conflict regions, including unemployed women. There is also an operational guidance note that gives information about programming and institutional arrangements amongst different UN bodies currently in the field.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2012). *Employing youth for a better future*. Retrieved on September 1, 2012 from <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/philanthropy1/index.shtml>

In 2012, the UN Economic and Social Council held an event: Breaking New Ground, partnerships for more and better jobs for young people and this document summarizes key findings explore during that meeting. The event sought to highlight useful methods in creating sustainable partnerships between public and private sectors in post-conflict nations in order to address rising youth unemployment. Key findings included increasing the number and scope of stakeholders in these regions.

United Nations, International Labor Organization, (2012) *Rethinking policies toward youth unemployment- what have we learned*. Retrieved on August 30, 2012 from <http://labordoc.ilo.org/record/447123/>

The International Labor Organization authored this document to underscore issues facing youth when seeking gainful employment. The paper explores other issues that are both a result and contributing factors to unemployment amongst youth unemployment including violence and poverty. This paper also discusses policies that have attempted to address these issues on a regional and national level.

United Nations. (2012) *Partnerships key for creating jobs for youth in post-conflict nations, say UN Officials*. Retrieved on August 30, 2012 from

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42146&Cr=youth&Cr1=job#.UFFen41ISFk>
This news article highlights some of the key statements made by UN officials at the Economic and Social Council joint event on the topic “Partnerships for job creation for young people in countries merging from conflict”. Both the President of ECOSOC, Miloš Koterec and Deputy-Secretary-General Asha Rose Migirom underscoring the need to strengthen partnerships between the private and public sector in order to address rising youth unemployment in post-conflict nations. Ms. Migirom also noted that the international community is beginning to fully recognize the need to address unemployment immediately after a conflict has ended.

United Nations. (2009). *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Promoting pro-poor growth: Employment, Youth Unemployment*. Retrieved on September 1, 2012 from

<http://www.oecd.org/dac/povertyreduction/promotingpro-poorgrowthemployment.htm>

Promoting pro-growth: Employment is a broad policy guide to address a range of issues affecting employment and unemployment rates globally, including a chapter devoted to youth unemployment. This chapter provides numerous case-studies on policies aimed to address youth unemployment in post-conflict nations. It also describes issues and barriers youth face in labor markets including lack of education and weak economies.

United Nations. (2011). World Youth Report, Chapter 2: Preparing for Work. Retrieved on August 30, 2012 from: http://www.unworldyouthreport.org/index.php?option=com_k2&view=itemlist&task=category&id=4:sample-category-3&Itemid=70

This report examines the transitional period youth face after they have finished schooling and are entering the job market. As the report describes, the unemployment situation for youth has been exacerbated by the global economic crisis. This has subsequently produced long-term implications for both young people, their communities and nations.

United Nations. (2012). The Secretary-General's five year action agenda. Retrieved on September 4, 2012 from http://www.un.org/sg/priorities/women_youth.shtml

UN Secretary-General Ban ki-Moon five year action agenda sets out a series of actions that are prioritized by the United Nations. In 2012, he named sustainable development, prevention, enhancing partnerships, supporting nations in transition, and working with women and young people as these top priorities. In the last priority, he specifically names address youth employment as a key issue.

United Nations, Economical and Social Council. (2008). Promoting full employment and decent work for all (ECOSOC 2008/18). Retrieved on September 2, 2012 from:

<http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/2008/resolution%202008-18.pdf>

This Economic and Social Council resolution, passed in 2008, is especially relevant to this topic. It recognizes the link between post-conflict situations and the cycle of youth unemployment. Conversely, it also highlights the impact of youth unemployment on sustainable peace.

United Nations, General Assembly. (2004). Policies and programmes involving youth (A/Res/58/133) Retrieved on <http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/r58.htm>

Adopted by the General Assembly in 2004, the resolution highlights the importance of policy when addressing youth unemployment. It also calls upon nations to include and empower youth when creating these policies. The World Programme of Action for Youth, adopted by the General Assembly in 1995 as a policy framework to address issues facing youth worldwide, is also underscored in this resolution.

United Nations, Deputy-Secretary-General. (2012). Later is often too late to focus on job creation after conflict ends; frustration boils over, countries relapse into violence. Retrieved on September 1, 2012 from:

[http://www.betterpeace.org/files/Later_Often_Too_Late_to_Focus_On_Job_Creation_DSG-SM-619.%20ECOSOC-6519.%20PBC-85%20\(4June2012\).html_.pdf](http://www.betterpeace.org/files/Later_Often_Too_Late_to_Focus_On_Job_Creation_DSG-SM-619.%20ECOSOC-6519.%20PBC-85%20(4June2012).html_.pdf)

This document provides remarks from Deputy-Secretary-General Migiro made during the Economic and Social Council's and the Peacebuilding Commission's joint event on job creation for young people in 2012. While the remarks are not robust on the topic, they provide a short summary on key issues facing youth in post-conflict nations. They also highlight the need for partnerships to increase employment for youth in these regions.

United Nations, International Labor Organization. (2011). 12th African regional meeting. Retrieved on August 29, 2012 from:

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_norm/@relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_165140.pdf

In response to the global economic crisis and its effect on youth unemployment, the African Development Bank, the Africans Union, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the International Labor Organization worked together to create a joint initiative to provide support to nations in their efforts to address these issues. The initiative addresses the need for

collaboration and programmes that promote youth employment in post-conflict nations. It also calls on nations to ensure that youth employment is a priority of employment policies.

United Nations, Peacebuilding Commission. (2010). *Working Group on Lessons Learned- youth employment in peacebuilding*. Retrieved on August 28, 2012 from <http://betterpeace.org/search/keyword/PBC%20%7C%20Working%20Group%20On%20Lessons%20Learned>

This report summarizes key issues facing youth today when trying to seek employment. Importantly, this summary also attempts to explain why certain policies have failed at increasing youth employment thus far. Laying out key issues and challenges, this document provides a guide for nations looking to implement policies to promote youth employment and advises on strategies that have failed in the past.

II. Increasing Access to Education for Children with Disabilities

Tembon, Mercy. (2008) *Girls education in the 21st century: Gender equality, empowerment, and economic growth*. Retrieved on August 5, 2012 from

http://books.google.com/books/about/Girls_Education_in_the_21st_Century.html?id=EL2j2dW9ICgC

*While this book focuses on many issues facing girls today, chapter 6 focuses on the topic of educational disparities for children with disabilities, specifically. Titled *Inequalities in Education: Effects of Gender, Poverty, Orphanhood and Disability*, the chapter includes many helpful statistics and analyses of the gap between educational attainment of children with and children without disabilities. It is especially useful in showing how this particular disparity relates to other educational disparities affecting children, such as gender and income.*

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2010). *Education for all: Reaching the Marginalized*. Retrieved on August 2, 2012 from <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/efareport/reports/2010-marginalization/>

This report describes issues that affect children across the globe, highlighting a lack of access to education as a key factor. Educational For All (EFA) examines groups of children, including children with disabilities, and gives reasons as to why they have limited to no access to schooling and then aims to provide solutions.

World Bank and World Health Organization. (2011). *World Report on Disability*. Retrieved on August 1, 2012 from http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/en/index.html

*This report is both timely and relevant to the topic. The chapter on education provides ample statistics, anecdotes and background on issues facing people with disabilities. The chapters *Understanding disability and Disability-a global picture* are also valuable in that they give scope and historical information on issues facing people with disabilities.*

United Nations and UN Enable. (2007). *Frequently Asked Questions*. Retrieved on July 30, 2012 from <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/faqs.htm>.

UN Enable is the official website of the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, providing information about the CRPD as well as the committee has been charged with implementing it. The FAQ portion of the website gives basic information that will be a valuable springboard for delegates just beginning their research on the topic. The website includes basic information on the history of UN and people with disabilities, the CRPD as well as a list of relevant UN documents to the topic.

United Nations and UN Enable. (n.d.). *History of the United Nations and Persons with Disabilities, Introduction*. Retrieved on August 2, 2012 from <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=122>.

UN Enable provides a thorough history of disability and the United Nations. Through this site, delegates can view the progress made since the UN Charter was first established in 1945. The shift from viewing disability as a medical issue to viewing it as more of a societal issue is especially clear when researching the overview of the 1970's to the 1980's.

- United Nations and UN Enable. (n.d.). *The United Nations and Persons with Disabilities, Chronology 1980s-present*. Retrieved on August 2, 2012 from <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=125>
This portion of the history of the UN and persons with disability focuses on modern history and strides made within the past thirty years. Highlights include the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons from 1983-1992 and the development of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Reading a thorough historical account of everything that has happened since the UN was first established will give delegates an excellent framework for discussing this topic.
- United Nations and UN Enable. (n.d.). *The United Nations and Persons with Disabilities, World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons*. Retrieved on August 3, 2012 from <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=131>
The International Year of the Disabled Persons was in 1981 and a major outcome of that designation was the formulation of the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons (WPA), adopted by the General Assembly in 1982. The WPA is a global strategy to promote the rights of people with disabilities. It calls for full participation of people with disabilities in societies while also emphasizing the need to apply a human rights perspective to disability.
- United Nations and UN Enable. (n.d.). *The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities*. Retrieved on August 1, 2012 from <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=26>
The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities are one of the major outcomes of the Decade of Disabled Persons. The Standard Rules outline moral and political commitments of governments to move towards achieving equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities. The twenty-two rules outlined in the document are meant to be a tool for policy-makers.
- United Nations and UN Enable. (2006). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. Retrieved on August 1, 2012 from <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=150>
Authored in 2006 and adopted in 2008, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is a fundamental and timely resource and pivotal to the topic. With 82 countries signed on to the main document, it represents the first comprehensive human rights treaty of the 21st century and establishes people with disabilities as subjects who deserve to enjoy the same human rights as everyone else. It reinforces the notion that all rights apply to people with disabilities and provides areas where adaptations should be made for people with disabilities.
- United Nations Human Rights and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (n.d.) *Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. Retrieved on August 5, 2012 from <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/CRPDIndex.aspx>
The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is a body of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human rights. Its main task is to monitor and implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. States that have signed on to the CRPD must give reports to the Committee, which then examines each report and then presents its subsequent conclusions.
- United Nations Children Fund. (2007). *Promoting the Rights of Children with Disabilities*. Retrieved on August 1, 2012 from http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/children_disability_rights.pdf
In its report, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), identifies key issues facing children with disabilities today. Lack of access to education is a cornerstone of the report and is identified as a priority area. UNICEF provides concrete strategies and actions needed to address the ever-present issue of access to education for children with disabilities.
- Department for International Development, (n.d.) *Education for Children with Disabilities- Improving Access and Quality*. Retrieved on August 2, 2012 from <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications1/edu-chi-disabil-guid-note.pdf>
In this guidance note authored by UK Aid's Department for International Development, key issues regarding the topic are outlined in a historical context. This report provides valuable examples for case studies and best practices used to address lack of access to education for children with disabilities. Information on assistive technologies in this report will also be useful to delegates.

Filmer, Deon. (2008). *Disability, Poverty, and Schooling in Developing Countries: Results from 14 Household Surveys*. Retrieved on August 10, 2012 from <http://wber.oxfordjournals.org/content/22/1/141.short>. *Surveys comprise a large portion of this report; however, the analyses are valuable in drawing links between poverty and disability. The report does discuss lack of educational access as another important component when analyzing causes of poverty for children with disability. The report also gives numerous valuable regional and country-specific statistics useful to this topic.*

United Nations and UN Enable. (2007). *Handbook for Parliamentarians*. Retrieved on August 2, 2012 from <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=212>. *This handbook was jointly authored by the Department of Economic Affairs and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. It's meant to be an over-arching guide for parliamentarians around the world on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its practical uses and provide a history of the convention and the committee that monitors its implementation. Its also meant to provide a framework to guide parliamentarians in achieving the aims of the CRPD.*

World Bank. (2011). *Implementation, completion and results report on the primary education for disadvantaged children project*. Retrieved on August 10, 2012 from <http://www.worldbank.org/projects/P044803/primary-education-disadvantaged-children-project?lang=en>. *This document provided information for this guide's case study on the Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children Project in Vietnam. The project, funding by the World Bank, helped raise awareness about children with disabilities in existing educational systems in Vietnam, resulting in higher retention rates after three years of programming. The report documents best practices and outlines what elements of the project helped make a difference for children with disabilities in Vietnam.*