

# World E-News February 2013



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WORLD YMCA NEWS

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# Equipping a New Generation of YMCA Leaders for Africa and the World

- February 20, 2013



In the first days of February, an enthusiastic and diverse group of Africa's young leaders gathered in Nairobi, Kenya, for the second phase of their training as [Subject2Citizen Ambassadors](#). In amongst greetings and embraces, 20 young S2C Ambassadors shared their experiences over the past year before settling down to continue their learning.

This round of training focused on raising awareness of current African realities, developing our voices for advocacy, honing our media skills (including news writing and video production), thinking about neuro-linguistic programming, and being prepared for the [WAY's Change Agent programme](#).

Memorable moments included:

- A heartfelt presentation by [Boniface Mwangi](#), a world renowned photo

journalist. Boniface documented the political turmoil that tore through Kenya following the 2007 elections. His determination to speak the truth in the face of often violent and oppressive opposition served as a stark testament to the strength of the youth voice in politics.

- **An inspiring introduction to the WAY's [Change Agents programme](#).** Romulo Dantas, Executive Secretary for Youth Empowerment, described the programme as a necessary step in building unity within the global YMCA movement. He helped us see the direct link between the role of S2C Ambassador who works to influence change from community to continental level, and that of Change Agent who is focused on having a global impact through the YMCA.

Young participants at the training spoke proudly of their achievements and the influence their S2C Ambassadorship is having on their communities. [The Gambia YMCA's](#) Karen Mballow believes the training has matured her thinking and encouraged her to take responsibility for her positioning as a leader. It encouraged her to contact her government directly so she wrote a letter to the President. He responded through the [Deputy Permanent Secretary of Youth Sports](#) and they eventually met to discuss the S2C programme: its impact on the lives of young people and its future in the Gambia.

**How is your YMCA developing young leaders at the community and continental level? What are your hopes for the Change Agents selected from your country to participate in the Change Agents programme?**

Share your stories about how a new generation is rising to the challenges of leadership within and beyond the YMCA. Drop us a note at [comment@ymca.int](mailto:comment@ymca.int).

*Gil Harper  
Executive for International and Corporate Affairs  
African Alliance of YMCA*

# A National-Global YMCA Dialogue on the WAY Ahead

- February 14, 2013



*The Journey from Hong Kong to Estes Park. A stop in Dunford House, England*

35 National General Secretaries are meeting with Secretary General Johan Vilhelm Eltvik and his staff this week at [Dunford House](#) near London. The highlights of their program include:

- a discussion of experiences with our [2011 - 2014 Strategic Plan](#) - highlights, challenges and hopes led by Johan Vilhelm
- an opening presentation on empowerment as Christian ministry by the [Rev. Dr. John Sentamu](#), the Archbishop of York and President of YMCA England
- a review of the [NEW WAY Playbook, our 2013 - 2014 joint workplan](#), and specific initiatives
- a presentation by Executive Secretary for Movement Strengthening Selma Zaidi and

[Dr. Fred Coalter](#) on the [One Million Voices research project](#)

- reflections on the 17th World Council of YMCA's bold challenge to focus on youth empowerment, increase our global visibility, and take collective action
- an update on the [YMCA Change Agents](#) program by Secretary-General Johan Vilhelm Eltvik and Executive Secretary for Youth Empowerment Romulo Dantas
- a presentation on plans for the [18th World Council of YMCAs in Estes Park, Colorado](#)
- a conversation on the role of small- and medium-sized YMCAs in our global work
- a presentation on the role of faith-based organizations in a secularized world by a Northern Irish professor, the [Rev. Dr. Johnston McMaster](#).

A significant amount of time has been set aside to look ahead to 2014 - 2018 - the next quadrennial - and to begin charting the course. National General Secretaries will be reflecting on these two questions:

**What does our future look like? What should be done?**

The outcomes of the discussions will be submitted to the Executive committee for further deliberation and direction for the next quadrennial Strategic directions.

We're interested in your answers too. Please share them via [comment@ymca.int](mailto:comment@ymca.int)

“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” This African proverb reminds us why gatherings like this one are so important. They are weigh stations on our long journey from Hong Kong to Estes Park and beyond - to a time when the YMCA is realizing its full potential as a global movement.

Our thanks go out to our YMCA England hosts, Ken Montgomery, Peter Jeffrey and Denise Hatton, for welcoming us warmly. Stay tuned for more pictures and stories from this milestone event.

*Carlos Sanvee*

*Advisor to the Secretary General, Communication and Branding*

# YMCA calls United Nations to more Accountability and Engagement with Youth

- February 22, 2013



*Samuel Díaz Fernández Littauer from the World YMCA at the United Nations in New York City.*

On February 11, 2013 Samuel Díaz Fernández Littauer from the World YMCA Youth Empowerment Team, spoke passionately on behalf of youth and youth organisations of the world during the [51st Session of the Commission for Social Development](#) at the United Nations in New York City. This year's priority theme was "Promoting empowerment of people in achieving poverty eradication, social integration and full employment and decent work for all"—a topic that strikes at the core of the [YMCA work and vision of youth empowerment](#).

[As one of four invited speakers \(pdf file\)](#) called to serve on the High-Level Panel for Youth, the World YMCA made recommendations on the [report](#) published by the UN Secretary General (SG) on the implementation of the [World Programme of Action for Youth \(WPAY\) \(pdf file\)](#)

In the speech, the YMCA, who was also representing the [ICMYO \(a network of youth organizations reaching over 150 million young people\)](#), welcomed the report as a positive gesture in advancing the youth agenda.

However, the speech was highly critical of the level of commitment the United Nations and its member states have shown young people to the present day.

Other concerns raised in the speech focused on:

- The low number of countries (21 of 193 member states, only 11%) that reported on the WPAY. This shows that there is still very low interest and commitment to make youth a priority in the development agenda.
- The need for more representation, particularly in the forms of an advisory council around the new UN Envoy and a permanent forum for youth.
- The need for more coherence and consistency from the United Nations as they engage with youth organizations and young people. If the UN and governments want young people to engage more then they need to increase their credibility through action and not just words.

When the speech ended the YMCA's words were applauded loudly by the commission—a rare thing in any UN setting. This message was also strongly supported by other ICMYO youth organizations who were there such as [Pax Romana](#) and the [European Youth Forum](#).



YMCA friends at the UN. (From Left to Right) Ravi Karkara (UN-Habitat), Jerry Den Haan ([European Youth Forum](#)), Christopher Dekki ([Pax Romana](#)), Vania Freitas ([European Youth Forum](#)), Samuel Díaz Fernández (World YMCA), Maya Saoud ([Pax Romana](#))

You can also [read and share the transcript of the speech in pdf format](#). We encourage you to share it with YMCA friends, family, and all people who are fighting for youth empowerment around the world!

Watch and listen to Samuel's speech at:



# More Decent Work and Better Futures for Young People

- March 1, 2013



*Women entrepreneurs in YMCA Trujillo - Peru*

Once again, YMCA leaders have raised the issue of youth employment as a high More Decent Work and Better Futures for Young People

Once again, YMCA leaders have raised the issue of youth employment as a high priority for global action. [40 National General Secretaries](#) left a meeting in England earlier this month united in their concern and commitment. They urged the WAY to continue advocating within the UN and other global arenas for what the [International Labour Organisation \(ILO\)](#) calls “decent work”, and for the full participation of young people in decisions that affect their lives and livelihoods.

The term “decent work” has to do with the quality and quantity of jobs. It refers to the health, safety and inclusiveness of workplaces, the protection of workers’ rights, and constructive communication between employers and employees. It’s concerned with employment opportunities that guarantee freedom, equity, human security and dignity.

Decent Work is all about transforming social, cultural, and economic systems that perpetuate inequality so that we may improve people's living conditions in such a way that they can flourish and actively participate in society. The ILO has produced a [short video](#) to help us understand this important idea.

The question of "Decent Work" is a very important one to all workers, but particularly to young people who are at the highest risk of working jobs that will not empower their lives.

In international forums, the YMCA helps translate the idea into action. We speak with the authority that comes from working alongside young people on every continent every day to improve their employment prospects. Here are some examples:

- **The YMCA Entrepreneur’s Club in Peru** gives young people opportunities to continue basic education, acquire technical skills, and prepare for self-employment.
- **The International YMCA Academy’s Vocational Training Programme in Sri Lanka** offers three six to eight month courses, such as motorcycle mechanics, banking and computers, and facilitates a training experience with companies.
- **The YMCA Learning to Earn Programme in the Gambia** trains young people in communications and advocacy skills using a peer education model.
- **The YMCA Youth Employment Programme in Ireland** is a 23-week course in communications, report writing, work experience, IT, personal development, health and intercultural education.
- **The YMCA Youth Employment Programme in Lebanon** offers short-term courses through accelerated learning and on-the-job training, as well as support for self-employment and income generation.
- **The YMCA Employment Resource Centre in Canada** provides young people with job search support and services, including a full range of educational workshops, coaching, basic computer skills and access to computers, Internet, office equipment.

There are many other examples. So many that we undertook [research study](#) last year to document our collective impact on the youth employment issue. Our findings will help us make a persuasive case for greater collaboration and investment in global decent work strategies that benefit individuals, communities and countries.

**What's the situation like for young people where you live? What is the YMCA doing to respond to the evidence of unemployment, underemployment and unstable employment locally and nationally?**

Please send your views, stories and photos about what “decent work” means to you to [comment@ymca.int](mailto:comment@ymca.int).