

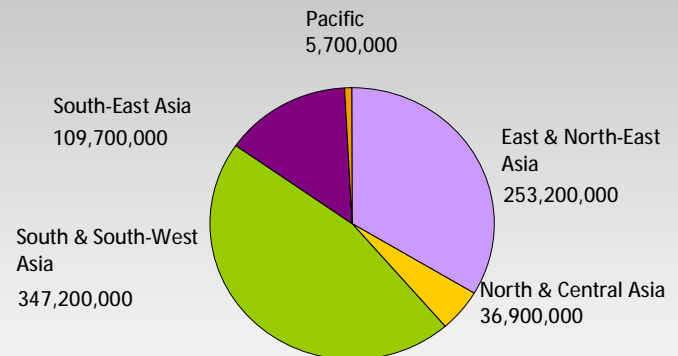
Youth in Asia-Pacific



Situation of youth in Asia-Pacific

- Over 60 per cent of the world's youth live in Asia-Pacific. This translates into more than 750 million young women and men aged 15 to 24 years.
- Almost half of these youth are concentrated in South and South-West Asia, which is in a prime position to eventually tap the youth dividend.
- Due to rapid population ageing, the number of youth in East and North-East Asia has already begun to decline.
- Overall, the youth population in the region reached its peak in 2010, and in the coming years is expected to drop.
- These demographic changes will profoundly impact the socio-economic development of the Asia-Pacific region.

Over 60% of the world's youth live in Asia-Pacific
= 750+ million



Distribution of youth by subregion, Asia-Pacific, 2010

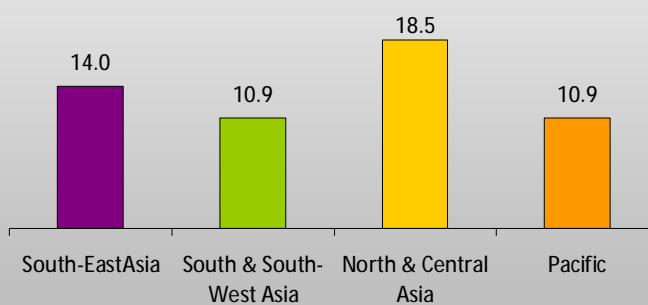
(UNDESA, *World Population Prospects: the 2010 Revision*)

- With such a large youth population, it is imperative for the region to invest in youth education.
- As a whole, the region is on track to achieve, or has already achieved, most of the MDG targets on education, including universal access to primary schooling.
- Gender disparities in primary, secondary and tertiary education have been reduced.
- However, barriers in accessing education remain due to: persistent rural-urban disparities; rising socioeconomic inequality; and continuing exclusion of children with disabilities, which contributes to a large number of out-of-school youth.

Asia-Pacific will achieve the MDGs on education



Youth unemployment is 3 to 5 times higher than non-youth unemployment



Youth unemployment rates by Asia-Pacific subregion

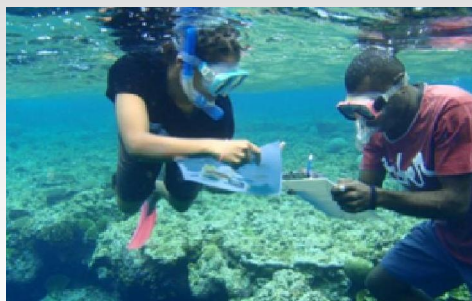
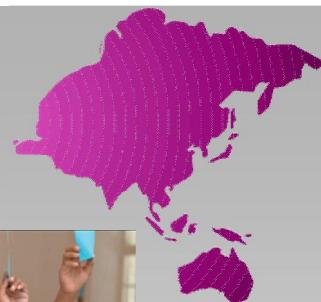
(ESCAP, *2011 Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific*)

- Currently, young women and men are spending more years in school, delaying their entry into the labour market.
- While youth unemployment in Asia-Pacific is relatively low compared with other regions of the world, youth are generally still three to five times more likely to be unemployed than adults in some parts of Asia-Pacific.
- Women, particularly young women, are also substantially underrepresented in the labour market in some subregions, particularly South Asia, South-East Asia and the Pacific.
- However, in East Asia, the labour force participation rate for young women is slightly higher than that of young men.

Good practices in Asia-Pacific

Youth are participating in national development

- **Timor-Leste:** The Youth Parliament is influencing decision making processes at the national level
- **Sri Lanka:** The National Youth Services Council provides multiple platforms for youth engagement in national development processes



Youth are defining the future sustainable development agenda

- **India:** Youth volunteers promote awareness on water, sanitation & hygiene issues
- **Pacific:** Youth leaders address climate change and the vulnerabilities of Pacific environments
- **Central Asia:** Youth-led initiatives preserve biodiversity

Invest in youth: it makes economic sense

- Link education & training programmes to labour market demands
- Increase government spending on quality education & training
- Strengthen education & employment support for out-of-school youth

Enhance inter-generational contracts

- Generate decent jobs for youth in the formal sector
- Create a sustainable tax benefit system
- Promote universal social protection through a life-cycle approach



Enhance regional cooperation to strengthen the youth agenda

- Support evidence-informed policies through knowledge sharing & data collection
- Promote multisectoral cooperation
- Engage young people in policy processes
- Build leadership, mutual understanding & respect among youth throughout Asia-Pacific

Let us invest in youth for a more inclusive, resilient & sustainable future!

