

Recognising young social entrepreneurs



Youth are creators and consumers of technologies ranging from mobile telephones to e-Mail, to instant messaging, radio and television. As both business and social entrepreneurs, youth are creatively using technology to address community needs. ICT

could help lay the foundation for future universal participation and help by doing so to eradicate existing disparities particularly those between youth of developed countries and youth of developing countries.

The Youth and ICT Awards recognised eight young social entrepreneurs from different regions of the world who have transformed social development opportunities into a sustainable social enterprise through innovative use of ICTs. The awards highlight successful young social entrepreneurs who can envision social enterprise through innovative use of ICTs.

Social entrepreneurs are individuals who identify a social problem and apply the entrepreneurial spirit, business insight, leadership and non-profit principles to solve the problem. Eligible applicants for the award were the youth between the ages of 17 and 30 years old, from a developing country or a country in transition, who demonstrate social impact, innovation, sustainability and commitment and passion in their social enterprise while using ICTs as a means for achieving their enterprise's social objective.

The Youth and ICT Awards 2005 are presented by the Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP), in collaboration with Canadian International Development

Agency (CIDA), Centre for Science, Development and Media Studies, MITRA Technology Foundation (MITRA), TakingITGlobal (TIG), Thai Rural Net (TRN) and Young Asia Television (YATV).

Awardees

Nominations for the award were received from all around the world. Initially, there were plans to recognize six awardees. But later the number of awardees were increased to maintain a gender balance and to increase the regional diversity.

The list of winners of the Youth and ICT awards 2005 are as follows:

- Wu Yang (China)
- Raj Ridvan Singh (Malaysia)
- Mark Okowa (Kenya)
- Salah Uddin Ahmed (Bangladesh)
- Jean-Paul Bauer (South Africa)
- Audrey Codera (Philippines)
- Rana Gulzar (Pakistan)
- Nileshni Sekar (Fiji)

Each of the six successful candidates will receive a number of important prizes that will not only allow them to network with other youth, but to also move their initiative further in their local community.

The winners will receive:

- A US\$500 cash prize
- Travel and accommodation to Tunisia for Phase 2 of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Tunis, Tunisia
- Access to an exclusive one-day capacity building workshop prior to WSIS
- The opportunity to showcase their social enterprise on a panel at the WSIS to policy makers, private sector and civil society groups during WSIS
- Media exposure through a profile in i4d Magazine and a feature on YATV.

In terms of geographic spread, there are

awardees from East Asia, South Asia, South-East Asia, Africa and Oceania. Among the eight winners, there are two women – Audrey Codera from Philippines and Nileshni Sekar from Fiji. Most of the judges are also social entrepreneur themselves. Applications for the awards opened on July 22, 2005.

Each of the winners has shown considerable effort and success in their respective field and has already carved a place of their own. They are using ICTs for diverse developmental causes like education, environmental conservation, youth empowerment, income generation, poverty alleviation, fighting HIV/AIDS, etc.

A Panel discussion has been arranged on 'Young Social Entrepreneurs and The Use Of ICTs' on 17 November 2005 at Kairouan Room in the premise of WSIS event at Tunisia. In this panel, the winners will share stories about their enterprise and discuss the role of ICT in fostering innovation and collaboration. They will share challenges, insights and best practices as well as engage in a dialogue about social development opportunities. The opening remarks will be delivered by Akhtar Badshah, Senior Director, Community Affairs World Wide of Microsoft. Jennifer Correiro of TakingITGlobal and Rhul Nainwal of iVolunteer will moderate the event. The closing remark will be delivered by Sunit Shrestha, Director and Co-founder of Thai Rural Net.

Youth and ICT Awards provide an opportunity to attract dynamic young people and organisations/projects from diverse regions. There is plan to increase the geographical spread of the award in future.

Sejuti Sarkar De, sejuti@csdms.in

Source: <http://www.globalknowledge.org/>

[youthawards/](http://www.youthawards/)

“First give the youth their livelihood”



Audrey Espinosa Codera
Philippine Youth
Employment Network
(PYEN)
Philippines
audrey.codera@gmail.com

Audrey Codera is the Executive Director of Philippine Youth Employment Network (PYEN) and Country Coordinator of YES-Philippines. The Philippine Youth Employment Network (PYEN) is a non-stock, non-profit youth-led multi-stakeholder network of community-based youth groups supported by major development partners composed of international, national and local organisations, coming from the government, non-government and private sectors aimed at bringing employment and employability to the youth in the grassroots.

Audrey has done Master's in Political Economy – International Relations and Development from University of Asia and the Pacific. She has plan to continue her work in order to build the capacity of the youth in the grassroots in pursuing employment or entrepreneurship.

What are the key activities of YES Campaign and how are you associated with this organisation?

The YES Campaign was launched in response to the enormous challenge of youth unemployment facing most countries and affecting millions of young people around the world.

The YES Country Networks bring youth organisations together with governments, NGOs, the private sector, and academic and training institutions to develop programmes and policies to provide youth with

opportunities for creating livelihoods. The YES Campaign has successfully created a platform for young people to contribute to their countries and communities with a newfound hope, vision and purpose. We know that skilled and empowered youth will to become productive, citizens in a challenging and evolving globalised world.

Aside from the Youth Employment Summit, which happens every two years, the YES Campaign assists its Youth Country Networks by providing online tools that are helpful for capacity-building. The strong relationship that YES has with its partners also assists its YCN in the advocacy of the importance of Youth Employment issues.

The Philippine Youth Employment Network is the legal name of YES-Philippines. It is the Youth Country Network of the YES Campaign in the Philippines and I function as YES-Philippines Country Coordinator.

Which focus of your organisational activities seem to be most interesting to you?

The whole concept of the Community-based Youth Entrepreneurship Programme (CYEP) is my main focus right now. Whereas there are still a lot to be done for the youth in terms of youth employment, I think the most important is to first give the youth its livelihood. Thus, CYEP was born. All other things that comes with it is a by product of the most important issue-poverty alleviation combined with security issues.

My work in PYEN enables me to pursue the YES Campaign according to the needs of the youth in the Philippines. I form part of the consultative groups on youth employment issue. At the same time, I am very much in touch with youth in the grassroots thus enabling me to relate first hand what the youth are experiencing and what they need.

Now, I don't propose that I know them

thoroughly or that I know everything they need. By virtue of being in the same environment they are during the BEDC Training sessions we have and the follow up activities, they are able to tell me and the rest of the youth volunteers what they want to do with their lives, what motivates them to want to put up their small businesses and what their main obstacles are.

I call it globalisation. You look at the problem from the global perspective, but solve it utilising the inherent resources and qualities the locality has. I get to have the global perspective of the issue, the possible solutions considering the information I am able to obtain locally and bring about the solution where it's needed and share it with the international community. If that isn't interesting, I don't know what is.

Can you share with the readers the main factors behind your recent success?

I'd like to think of success as a matter of perspective – not because there are no standards to follow nor because those standards are incorrect. It's a matter of perspective because you have to consider the impact of the project or programme on a larger scale and given a timeframe.

PYEN has been conceived in 2002. It was registered in the Securities and Exchange Commission in 2003. We were able to build our partners - the government, private sector and other NGOs. We are even considered experts on youth employment issues. Through CYEP, we were able to gain more youth volunteers. In a span of a few years, this is quite successful.

But then again, I don't want to focus on just what we have done on a policy and youth volunteerism level. The main idea is to have young entrepreneurs in the grassroots. And I must say, although we have given the youth the necessary skills to start their business enterprises, very few have

done so not because of anything else, but because the prospect that the youth can be trusted with money and will not just incur debts is still considered new or worst, people don't even consider it at all. We have a lot of eager young people wanting desperately to free themselves from poverty and help their families. Sadly, we also have MFIs unwilling to trust these young people despite government policy to support the youth. We, therefore, have to look for funding from other institutions. However, most international institutions fund conferences and not community-based projects – conferences that, although helpful in information dissemination, are not targeted at providing solutions to the problem. And I really believe it's a matter of trust. The project, and any project run by young people for that matter, will only be successful once the international and national communities-public, private and civil society accepts the fact that the youth can be trusted.

As a young member of this society, which activities do you think to be prioritised more for the development of the society?

Solutions to problems vary depending on the urgency of the problem. Any activity or project that is not in line with solving the most urgent of problems is futile and, to be very blunt about it, will never work.

Say you have people dying of hunger in African continent. You can't teach them how to make business plans. The first thing you need to do is feed them. If you have people in Cambodia dying of landmines, again you can't solve the problem by a project teaching them about HIV/AIDS.

As much as I would like to say that projects on youth employment and entrepreneurship should be prioritised, that is just not what everyone in the world needs, which I think, again, if what most international organisations are having difficulty with. They're trying to solve world problems by thinking of general solutions, which in the end does not nip the problem in the bud.

This is also what's so good about the YES Campaign. The overall theme is youth employment. Then we have the 6Es plus education as a framework. The individual projects and actions in each country are decided upon by the YCN in that country who knows the problem, its history and possible solutions while taking into account

the cultural differences. From this, the YCNs craft the action plan or projects.

So what activities should be given priority? I think the more appropriate question would be: what is the most urgent problem in your society and how do you intend to solve it? If you get the right answer to the first idea, the next one should be easier to handle.

What do you think about the prospect of ICT towards the development of youth and the prospect of youth in ICT way?

ICT is boundless. That's a fact. I think everyone knows that the younger generations know more about ICT than the older ones. ICT is a powerful tool if used for the development of the youth. New technologies always attract young people. Due to its borderless nature, ICT is a key to information dissemination among the youth. You have e-Groups, e-Newsletters, e-Volunteers and others other form of communications where young people who are willing to help others are accepted without judgment and prejudice.

And as I mentioned, younger generations are attracted to any form of technology. They also have the capacity to learn how to use the most recent technology. So, again, if used for the right reasons, the youth can benefit greatly by utilising ICT in their endeavours.

How can you help the young generation to get rid off the vicious cycle of 'digital divide' in the developing nations?

I think the first thing we need to do is make the gadgets available to the youth. People fear what they do not know. And people can't know what they cannot touch, hear, see, feel or think of. We can only do away with the digital divide if the youth have access to ICT. Without this, I have to say that I cannot help other young people. How would they know that I even exist?

Give the youth a computer. Give them a phone. Give them Internet connection. I'm pretty sure anyone will be able to solve the problem of digital divide.

If we had computers and Internet connection to use whenever we conduct our CYEP and if the trainees do not need to write their business plans by hand including financial reports, I'm pretty sure the trainings will go much faster and the youth would learn more.

As it is, the only thing I can do right now

is give more information to other young people about what we're doing in PYEN through SMS messages, e-mails, e-Groups, etc. In a way this can be one factor to bridge the 'digital divide'. But then again, by having e-Groups, cell phones and e-mails, these youth volunteers and institutions are actually experiencing the digital divide.

Again, I must go to the root of the problem – provide the youth with ICT at their disposal, then you and I can bridge the digital divide.

In what way you would like to utilise your enthusiasm and activities further, after getting inspiration from this Youth Award?

I'm crafting a proposal right now still utilising ICT as a major component of the project. I plan to submit it for GKP's YSEI so I'm not sure if I should talk about it right now. It has something to do with funding for youth and it has already started with very little funds since I was only able to convince friends and family members of its sustainability.

If there's one very hard lesson I have learnt, it is very difficult to find international organisations willing to support grassroots projects. And due to the urgency of the situation, I have managed to get private individuals to invest and trust the youth. I hope that with or without grants, this project I'm working on will reach more people.

Can you please convey your message to our young generation to make our society a better one?

First, try hard not to give the more mature generations of this world more reason not to trust us. Second, and more seriously, pursue your dreams. Make three-year plans. During the first year, work hard at achieving it. The second year, work hard at maintaining it and doing well in it. During the third year, finish what you can, discard those you haven't started and make a new three-year plan. If you didn't work on something you wanted to pursue within three years, it means you never wanted it in the first place. So make new ones. Third, stay out of drugs, anything that will unnecessarily harm you. Life is short, enjoy it. And fourth, every second is a second of happiness and fulfillment. So do what makes you happy (and I'm not talking about superficial happiness) and you'll see. You'll find yourself helping others. It's human nature and you'll feel a different kind of fulfillment doing just that. ■

Providing skilled ICT related jobs to youth



Salah Uddin Ahmed
(Sina)
XayanIT
Bangladesh
sinabd@gmail.com

Salah Uddin Ahmed is the co-founder, Chief Software Engineer and Chief Operating Officer of XayanIT, an organisation which works with the youth interested in ICT careers. The mission of the organisation is to provide, quality, customised, cost effective ICT consultation, managed services, and web/software R&D that serve clients in Bangladesh and around the world and at the same time to create self-funding, fully sustainable and socially impactful ICT employment for the skilled Bangladeshi youth.

What are the main focus of activities of your organisation?

XayanIT works with skilled youth interested in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) careers. It coordinates Human Resource Development (HRD) which uses relevant ICT training, certifications, internships, R&D projects and field work to develop students into skilled and employable individuals.

It manages HRD by working closely with organisations that have a stake in education and analyses existing curricula and assesses curriculum needs. Businesses, NGOs, and universities are key partners in making the internships, field studies, R&D projects, and relevant training curricula possible.

XayanIT's business is built upon using these skilled youth as entry level employees for providing the company's web/software

products and services. In its initial phases, XayanIT is focused on creating localised educational turnkey solutions for the education sector and web design and development for domestic and international clients.

XayanIT's business success leverages its strong connections with educational institutions, businesses, NGO, and individual mentor networks in Bangladesh, Australia, and the United States.

How long and in what way you are associated with this organisation?

Xayan IT was formed in January 2005 and I am the co-founder and Chief Operations Officer.

In which key activities of your organisation you have played a major role so far?

In 8 months of operations with no external funding, we have created part time employment for two managers and five students. Ten students and five IT professionals have expressed immediate interest in joining.

We were awarded a scholarship to attend a prestigious social venture incubator and are poised to expand in the second 6 months of our existence.

In which activities you would like to involve yourself more for the development of the society and youth?

One of our future goal is to set up a centre of ICT for Development in the University of Dhaka. My association with the university will help me set up the centre but requires a huge budget. University of Dhaka has always played the major role on every social and political critical situations of Bangladesh. Top 1 percent of the whole youth population gets the chance to admit in this university and they played the roles before. So why don't they again play the major role for the development of the

country and poverty reduction through ICT?

Do you think that 'digital divide' is a major issue in the development of the youth in the developing nations?

Digital divide is certainly one of the major issue in development of the youth in the developing nations like Bangladesh. But basic education and bare necessities of life are absent for more than 50 percent of the population who stay below poverty line earning less than a Dollar per day.

Which factors have played remarkable role as the main inspirational factors behind your recent success?

My close association with the Dept. of Computer Science and Engineering of the University of Dhaka and business mentorship from Peter Young and Jon Rodrigues have helped me achieve this success.

What message you would like to convey to the youth as a winner of this youth award?

Because of unemployment, poverty and lack of opportunities many youths fails to focus concentrating on their goals. My message to the youth is "hard work, punctuality, concentration and keeping focus always for the goal can bring you the success, no matter wherever you are and whatever the situation is."

Will this achievement help you in your future initiatives? If so, how?

This achievement will help me for all my future initiatives and activities to help our country and youths to prosper socially and economically. e-Inclusion can be more accommodated with the help of partnerships and networking opportunities arranged by GKP in Tunis. ■

Enhancing youth capacity at local level



Mark Okowa
Advocacy Behavior
Change and
Communication (ABC)
Kenya
okowa@abc.kabissa.org

Mark Okowa is the founder and Programme Coordinator of Advocacy Behavior Change and Communication (ABC). ABC was formed in February 2002 to address the poverty situation, poor governance, environmental conservation and management, and the HIV/AIDS prevalence within the lake Victoria Region of western Kenya. One of the important goals of the organisation is to improve the Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) of vulnerable young people in the lake region by bringing about a lasting positive change in their attitudes and behavior and those of the communities in which they live. Being a youthful organisation, ABC programmes generally target young people.

How much effective role can youths play in bringing about transformation in social development issues?

I think the youth has an equally big role in the society because they stand to inherit that particular society in a matter of time.

The youth have all it takes to design a better future for them and for the society because the most fundamental fact is that they stand to gain and lose everything in the long run. As young people, we really feel embarrassed and abused when after being taken to school to learn and acquire the necessary skills to enable us develop our societies, we find ourselves at the periphery of decision making and implementation of development issues which also affect us.

The youth have what it takes to bring in the fresh and relevant technological

concepts of development necessary for the progress of our societies.

How did the idea of forming a new organisation Advocacy Behavior-change and Communication (ABC) to work for the youth related issues come to your mind?

This was basically motivated by the findings of a baseline survey we did to categorise the socio economic and developmental issues the youth wanted to be done for them to facilitate their well being within the Lake Victoria basin of western Kenya.

We then decided to target the first three development and health issues as they were raised in the survey, from the first in priority coming down. Only along the line did we realise that there were some very key elements of development, which cut across the divide and those, which we could bring in as we move forward.

Basically what we set up to address when we began were:

1. HIV/AIDs prevalence among the youth and the best strategies, relevant to the local youth, which could be employed to curb the spread.
2. Poverty among the young people and their respective societies, how this could be positively addressed and what the roles of the youth were in changing the situation.
3. Governance then came third and how the youth could be empowered to get involved in leadership position and how at the local level the capacity of young people could be enhanced.

These were the three main fundamental issues we set out to be addressed in the beginning. The concept of ICT was cutting across with the emergence of MDGs and in Africa NEPAD and APRM.

How much response have you received from the youth towards the HIV/AIDS awareness program of ABC?

We have succeeded fairly since our phase one of the projects was targeting 500 youths to be directly reached through what we called Focused Group Discussions (FGDs), as potential peer educators. If they were to reach 10 people each the project was to reach effectively 5000 young people with HIV/AIDS messages. Out of the target of 500 youths, we managed a total of 591 youths. The response was overwhelming with almost any youth who heard about the project intending to be involved. Though again the challenge was that there is a poor culture developed by some of the NGOs, which have operated in this region before where by, they paid hefty allowances to all their programme participants. So as a youth initiative and with not sufficient funds to dish out to the targeted persons, we faced a lot of demands most of which we could not meet. But later in the project life, the understanding was cultivated and the project was a big success.

The phase two which is just commencing is targeting 1000 youths as potential peer educators and is moving towards policy advocacy and with emphasis on the livelihood of the people within the locality of the Lake Victoria basin.

Sensitizing the community for environmental conservation is one of the important objectives of your organisation. How are you involving the youths in this programme?

We hold clean up campaigns monthly within the city of Kisumu, where we demonstrate the best and proper waste disposal mechanism and how solid wastes can be sorted at the household level so that the recycling and dumping is made easier.

We also organise tree-planting activities within the province once every year in conjunction with main stakeholders like the forestry department, ICRAF and others.

How are you using ICT in your programs?

Networking with other like-minded organisations and youths globally has also been a main tool for our publicity and development. Though I must admit that it has been a challenge to make even the entire staff of ABC to embrace the ICT concept.

Before the initiation the ICT project we are running now, even some of our staff could take as much as a week to check their e-mails, for example. But now that we have available Internet within the ICT centre, we see most of our staffs motivated to enhance their understanding and utilisation of the Internet. The availability of the documentation and pictures of the projects we do with the easy access for those who wish to is a mile stone in making information available and easily and safely accessible.

What are you planning as the future initiatives of ABC?

We wish to see ABC grow to set up satellite centers at least one in every district we work in. These centers could work as our contact areas in these districts and hence the capacity to reach more youths within our province.

We also wish to see ABC effectively address the issues of unemployment to the youth, by enabling the youth to rediscover their self drives to initiate income generating activities besides the predominant fishing career.

We would also love to see ABC network with as many international youth organisations and movements as possible with the aim of initiating exchange programmes, which can culminate into a big world youth conference in Kisumu-Kenya in the near future.

How will the youth and ICT Award help in your future initiatives?

This Award will first of all put me and ABC on the international plat form, and enable me to get important contacts of other youth organisations doing what we are involved in and even better work that we do. Possible partners who could support the expansion of ABC activities like creation of satellite centers are likely to be met by me when I attend this ceremony.

Lastly and importantly, the cash award will go along way in making ABC organise at least something like self-evaluation forum which can make us share and evaluate our successes and short comings. ■

GKP YOUTH AND ICT AWARDS 2005 WINNER

'Global environment requires more action'



Wu Yang
Wise Use
China
wuyang_beijing2008@yahoo.com

The Household Wastewater Recycling Management Project includes an innovative design for a pipeline system that could potentially address the severe water shortage in Beijing, and ultimately, all of China. It originated in an essay competition sponsored by Bayer Corporation in partnership with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). The project's author, 20-year old Wu Yang, is a student in Beijing Jiaotong University, with his major in Electrical Engineering. When he was a child, Wu Yang wanted to persuade people to protect environment by using philosophy, ethics and

literature. But he is now resorting to politics, economics and science, since he has realised that the degradation of global environment requires more action than compassion.

Recognised as a 'Bayer China Youth Environmental Envoy', Wu Yang received the opportunity to take part in a field trip to Germany, where he learned about modern industrial product development and manufacturing based on the concept of sustainable development. Coupled with his efforts in increasing public awareness about conserving water, his long term vision is to usher in a conservation-minded society in China. He is, therefore, focusing on the Internet as a business platform for environmental protection products and technologies; as an education center, where environmental education videos can be viewed; and as a medium to demonstrate and popularize his product design.

What are the major activities of your organisation?

Promote wastewater recycling system citywide in Beijing through public environmental education and communication with construction companies.

How long and in what way you are associated with this organisation?

I founded 'Wise Use' one year ago and serve as the Executive Director.

Which key activities of your organisation is/are most interesting to you?

I like working with people, enlightening them, or straightening out differences between them.

Do you think that ICT can be a right way of developing the youth power more? If so, why and in what way it can be a reality?

Yes. First and for most, we get connected by using ICTs, that is why we outweigh our parents as they are relatively isolated. When we get connected, opportunities and

challenges will come out, and we've got to face them and make use of them, thus make us more competitive.

What are the main inspiring factors behind your recent success?

Teamwork. Two heads are better than one and five heads are better than two. We learn from each other since we are different. And because of the differences, we collaborate.

How much encouraged are you after winning this youth award?

Being highlighted more, more responsibility.

How will this award help you in your future initiatives?

I got my idea reinforced and approved. I want to establish a first-class environmental protection corporation in China, which incorporates the producer of environmental products and the supplier of energy-saving solutions. We will usher in a whole new environmental protection industry in china and construct a new value of environmental business. ■

Providing non formal education in SE Asia



Raj Ridvan Singh
Leadership Character
Development Institute
(L-CDI), Malaysia
raj@lcdi.org

In Cambodia for example, 63 percent of children who do enroll in primary schools, drop out before reaching grade VII. With little chance to improve their circumstances, these children are more likely to fall victims to threats of HIV/AIDS, prostitution, child trafficking,

domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse. With this awareness, Raj Ridvan Singh along with his father and younger brother founded Leadership Character Development Institute (LCDI) in 2000 for the less fortunate children of Cambodia.

Raj Ridvan Singh was the youngest achiever in ASEAN Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer at the age of 17. But then he shifted his focus to social work. He has won the International Youth Action Network Award in June 2004. He has represented Malaysia in International Youth Parliament at Sydney in July 2004 and World Youth

Congress at Morocco in August 2003. He is also a member of International Steering Committee of International Youth Parliament and Chairman and Coordinator of South-East Asia Youth Forum.

Today L-CDI is the nation's largest provider of non-formal education and has received positive endorsements from both the Ministry of Education and the Nation's King. In 2005, L-CDI has also transferred its activities to local Cambodian volunteers who are registered as Grassroots Development Institute in partnership with LCDI Malaysia.

What are the key activities of your organisation?

The main activity of my organisation is to train youths who are not able to finish academic school education due to poverty – youths above the age of 16 years with premium on enrolling girls. Setting up and operating Non formal education centres and also training youths to continue the system as a sustainable programme. Programmes include life skills, job employment skills and personal development skills.

How you are associated with this organization and what are your main responsibilities?

I am one of the three founders of LCDI along with my father and younger brother. My main responsibilities are external affairs and training of the staff and volunteers. Thus I network with other organisations, donors and international volunteers through the ICT medium. I prepare reports, source for information, resources besides communicating information to those associated to LCDI. I represent LCDI at other International forums like at the International Youth Parliament – OXFAM, YouthActionNet – Int'l Youth Foundation, SEA youth Forum and many more.

In which key activities of your organisation you have played a special role so far?

My special role is in communicating with youths and organisations on working together and sharing experiences and sourcing information for expansion into new countries like East Timor and Laos. I also conduct training programmes with my father on Science of Life to help youths know their potential and be able to develop the skills to achieve much more in life.

In which activities you would like to involve yourself more for the development of the society and more specifically for the development of the youth?

From the experiences of running LCDI activities in Cambodia for nearly six years and also monitoring local Cambodians who have continued the activities in Cambodia, the main thing that we have learnt is that one of the main factor that makes a programme sustainable and continuous or for a person to effectively come out of the clutches of poverty, is the leadership and character skills of the person or the leaders. Mere life skills or job employment skills do not suffice. We have been monitoring and evaluating our programmes and strategies

and have come up with a comprehensive programme for youth development called Science of Life. Now with this programme, I will teach it to youth organisations who wish to use our tested programme and also to youths in East Timor as we are extending our activates to East Timor and Laos.

If you are given a task to utilise the youth power to develop the nations in an ICT way, which steps you would like to follow to achieve that goal?

ICT for me means access to intelligent information and to resourceful people. Enthusiasm is a massive power that drive activities and all this are superbly achieved through ICT.

Through an ever expanding networking and a newsletter that encourages and educates youths, I will be able to get youths and organisations to work together to serve the less fortunate and girls.

There are thousands of youths all over the world who wish to contribute towards the betterment of humanity but have limited time or resources. Through the network and newsletter, they will be able to find ways through which this limited time and resources can be expressed with good

value. Youth possess great energy and enthusiasm. Tapping on this, will go a long way to help other youths who are not only less fortunate but also those who are disillusioned.

What are the main inspirational factors behind your recent success?

Human beings are fashioned for greatness but need to live by principles and exert effort to achieve their potential. Achievement is the biggest desire and ecstasy for human beings but material achievement does not give satisfaction or fulfillment. All humans have five areas in life namely - Physical, Intellectual, Emotional, Mental and Spiritual. Working on 5 areas of life and striving to achieve excellence in all the five areas have been both so fulfilling and also convincing that this path is far superior to

mere material achievement and acquisition.

What is your message to the youth as a winner of this youth award?

I don't know why I have been blessed to be born in Malaysia besides being born to my parents and many opportunities that have come my way to suggest that I'm very fortunate or lucky. Millions it seems are not as fortunate as me in my context. Since I am very lucky, I want to share some of my luck with others who may not be as lucky as me. In sharing my luck with others, little did I know that, so much more luck kept coming my way? Human beings are fashioned for greatness, as we strive to develop five areas we also begin to live a very fulfilling life.

How will this achievement help you in your future initiatives?

This achievement is a very powerful

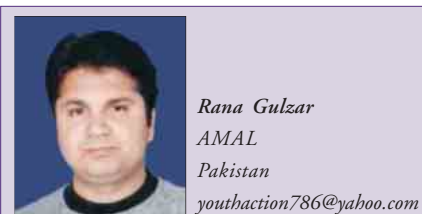
confirmation that striving to develop five areas of our life brings achievements beyond any material happiness. We not only achieve the material pleasures, but also receive lots of love and recognition from others. This achievement will help others have trust in Science of Life.

Through these achievements, it will be much easier to convince poor people of the effectiveness of LCDI programmes because many poor people are skeptical about the value of investing on education and personal development.

Trying to secure funding for projects and winning the confidence and trust of organisations or those in authority will be so much easier. As we are on the verge of extending activities to East Timor, this achievement will facilitate things. ■

GKP YOUTH AND ICT AWARDS 2005 WINNER

"Youth is not a problem, youth is a solution"



Rana Gulzar
AMAL
Pakistan
youthaction786@yahoo.com

Rana Gulzar is working as Project Manager with Amal. He is training peer educators, community/social activists and youth from public and social sectors on health education, human rights and health issues. He has the work experience in the 70 districts of Pakistan with approximately 1300 NGOs/CBOs on capacity building and health education.

He has received award from the Goi Peace Foundation Tokyo, Japan and The World Peace Prayer Society in 2003 and has also been selected for International Youth Parliament 2004 (IYP 2004).

EDC (Health & Human Development Programs) USA has made a documentary on his life history and work, "How Can Youth Work to Stop AIDS around the World" in 2003. EDC showed this documentary to 2500 delegates in Youth Employment Summit 2003, India.

What are the main areas of your interest?

Main areas of my interest are to work on youth issues particularly issues of high-risk youth/street children in Pakistan on Life skills based education, HIV prevention and role of ICT in problem solving.

What are the main activities of the organisation you are associated with?

YES! (Youth Empowerment Skills!) is a community based Life Skills, ICT and Adolescents Rights Awareness Programme. The Pakistani youth, specifically those belonging to the poorer strata of society, are vulnerable to sexual exploitation. These adolescents have little or no knowledge of matters related to reproductive health such as puberty, virginity, menstruation, masturbation and family planning, STIs and human rights. It is important that they are made aware of a variety of reproductive health and human rights issues.

Quetta City, the heart of Balochistan, Pakistan, is the largest market of automobile spare parts and carpet weaving industry in the province. It is densely populated. Socio-economic status of the people of the locality is generally very low. A lot of young people

of the city are employed as child labour or are involved in petty crimes. Most of these young people are illiterate Afghan refugees. Availability of cheap labour and the low rents attract legal and illegal businesses to this location.

AMAL Human Development Network Balochistan is piloting a youth oriented project in the area of Quetta city. The target population for YES! is out of school male and female adolescents aged between 10-17 years. The majority of labour force working in these shops, workshops and carpet weaving industry are these young children. Majority of them are paid Rs 5-10 (less than \$ 1) per day for their apprenticeships and labour. Most of them are migrant children. They are also vulnerable to physical/sexual abuse.

Under the YES! Project, AMAL provides a series of result oriented activities like child rights, ICT and legal aid, HIV/AIDS awareness and sensitisation, rights base training, life skills training, non-formal education/vocational training, assertiveness, self-protection, peer education, training of trainers, monthly social and cultural

activities, and development of community organisation.

These interventions are designed on the basis of a situational analysis and needs assessment of the area.

Which focus of your organizational activities seem to be most interesting and purposeful to you?

AMAL Human Development Network is a non-profit organisation registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860 (registration No. RS\ICT\273), established in 1994. AMAL's expertise lies in providing technical and capacity building support to NGOs/CBOs, project management assistance and communication and material development.

The mission of AMAL is to empower individuals, communities and youth organisations through provision of information and skills promoting gender/rights based approach to the social sectors throughout Pakistan. Gender responsive AMAL's interventions cover Community mobilisation support, development management trainings, project management, micro finance/enterprise development, reproductive health/HIV/AIDS, primary education (including non formal education) and rights based approach to programming (RBAP).

AMAL is a member of various bilateral and multilateral networks including UNAIDS, UNICEF, Youth Net Family Health International (FHI), CORIN, Population Association of Pakistan (PAP), Catholic Relief Services (CRS) NGOs network, Human Resource Development

(HRD), Pakistan Reproductive Health Network, National Trust for Population Welfare (NATPOW), Greenstar Social Marketing, Asia Pacific Network of Sex workers (APNSW).

AMAL enjoys a network of over 1300 CBOs/NGOs throughout Pakistan. They offer AMAL sectoral and population specific expertise. In the area of HIV/AIDS, we work closely with our provincial partners in high-risk group programmes e.g truck driver, drug user, Commercial Sex worker (CSW), men who have sex with other men (MSM) and Youth.

It has received registered work status from Government of Pakistan Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas and States and Frontier Regions Division (SAFFRON). AMAL director serves as NGO Board member Asia Pacific at UNAIDS Geneva (2002-2005). AMAL has been selected as NGO representative for Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) for Global Fund against TB, Malaria, and AIDS.

AMAL has been nominated to present Government of Pakistan (draft) youth policy paper at Manchester "Have we got it right" sponsored by British Council in 2003.

AMAL team includes pool of trainers on rights based programming approach, gender/diversity, reproductive health/HIV/AIDS, project management, community development and sustainable human development, etc. This pool is trained by UNICEF and other international organisations. It retains key facilitators with over 50,000 combined training room hours

and maintains a database of specialists and professional consultants. It also provides expert, bilingual research and administrative support.

What are the key factors behind your recent success?

From my level of commitment I believe that youth participation philosophy should be followed at every stage.. I strongly believe that nothing is impossible in the world and youth can make everything possible.

Which activities, do you think to be prioritized more for the development of the society, especially of the youth?

Time has passed when leaders/elders talk about youth problems and solutions. It's a time to talk with the youth directly and involve youth in decision making at all stages otherwise it will not work. So there is need to prioritise youth participation in all actions, planning and implementation, etc.

What do you think about the prospect of ICT in the development of youth?

ICT is key to success but still majority of youth population of third world have no access to ICT. Govts of third world particularly India and Pakistan spend money on ICT like initiatives instead of weapon of mass destruction.

What is your message to our young generation to assure a better future?

Youth should unite for positive change in the world because "youth is not problem, youth is solution". ■

GKP YOUTH AND ICT AWARDS 2005 WINNER

CSDMS was not able to secure an interview with Jean-Paul Bauer jp@bridges.org. We are presenting a brief profile and will carry an interview in the next issue of i4d.

Jean-Paul Bauer is technology administrator of *Bridges.org*, an organisation founded in 2000 by Teresa Peters, together with a group of Internet visionaries who now sit on its board of directors. Its directors and advisors are leaders in business, academia, and international organisations and they support us financially and play an active role in the work. The team brings together

practical multi-disciplinary skills, visionary perspectives on technology and business innovation, a commitment to social issues, and far-reaching international experience.

Bridges.org originates from the technology community, it understands how to put technology to work to achieve our goals. It brings an entrepreneurial attitude to the social mission, and it is committed to working with governments and the private sector and partners with local groups working on issues like economic development, government efficiency and transparency, healthcare, education, environment, and human rights. It collaborates whenever

possible and try to publish everything as open content so that others may improve and build on our efforts.

It also brings experience with the highest levels of IT policy-making through involvement in the efforts of organisations like the World Economic Forum (WEF), New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), G8 Digital Opportunity Task Force (DOT Force), United Nations ICT Task Force, Glocal Forum, and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Yet its work on the ground keeps us in touch with the daily problems of people in developing countries and disadvantaged communities.

Alleviating poverty by self employment



Nilesbmi Sekar
Foundation for Rural
Integrated Enterprises N
Development (FRIEND)
Fiji Islands
friend@connect.com.fj

Nilesbmi Sekar is working as Art Project Supervisor in Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises N Development (FRIEND) in the island nation of Fiji.

FRIEND is an NGO working towards poverty alleviation. It encourages people to use their talents, build on their skills and use existing resources to be able to earn a living. FRIEND programme includes Friend's Save Scheme (a rural banking scheme) and Governance and Income Generation Program (IGPs). There is also a pilot project on restorative justice with the prison inmates.

Nilesbmi teaches painting and card making to the deaf youths. The objective of the Friend's Fiji Style™ deaf handmade card project is to create employment for unemployed deaf community members and ultimately to create a sustainable micro enterprise for the deaf community.

How are you involving the youth in the Income Generating Programme of your organisation?

More than 20 deaf youths took part in the Governance program where they identified their challenges and made action on changing these.

The project started with two girls being trained, the number has since then fluctuated between 8-10 youths being employed. There is very flexible timing and they are able to work in a conducive environment where they can communicate in sign language with each other.

Currently, we have a group of eight

hearing impaired youths who have been trained and they make cards for orders and selling in the outlets - this is their livelihood.

Outside of card making they are also able to participate in many training programmes organised by FRIEND eg Drama, first aid training, education on human rights, etc. These programmes are not only benefiting the eight people employed but also about forty other deaf youths.

I also run a kool kids club on Saturdays teaching art to the school kids so they could have this talent to be able to earn a living if they need to. I have also conducted card making training sessions for prison inmates.

What role are the youths playing in the Grassroots Opportunities Action and Leadership (GOAL) programme?

Through the GOAL programme the youths identified their needs, one of which was unemployment. Their employment issue was solved by starting up the income generation program.

The other challenge they had identified was that they had difficulty in communicating with general public, health authorities, police, etc. So they started to teach sign language themselves with the help of an interpreter in the beginning and then without any. Two days a week deaf youths teach sign language to general public.

This programme also assisted them to access services such as obtaining driving licence from the LTA and engages them in training programmes, education on human rights, drama, etc.

How much response have you received from the youth in your programmes?

Response has been very positive. The deaf who are unemployed simply came to us to learn card making techniques and work to earn a living. They are now able to communicate with us on other challenges/issues and we assist them to work.

How are you using ICT in your programmes?

I had artistic inclination but I used to do paintings only. When I was encouraged by management to develop this into card making I searched card making on the internet and found the technique known as quilling. I further searched to learn this technique and taught them to deaf to make these cards.

We advertise all Friend's Fiji Style™ products over the internet on the FRIEND website (www.fijifriend.com) We also network with other artists, material suppliers, distributors, and potential clients via email.

What are you planning as the future initiatives of your organisation?

We find that there are increasing number of youths who have left school and are unemployed. FRIEND is working on starting various income generation with youths. A small group will be taught drama skills to entertain tourists but also do education skits for the school youths.

FRIEND is also setting up an art village for some of these artisans to work at.

During my work at FRIEND I have also learnt other skills like glass painting and craft decorating mirrors etc and I will be teaching those skills to unemployed youths for their livelihood.

FRIEND's main aim is poverty alleviation through enterprise development and the organization is focused on this aim and continues to work on this.

How will the Youth and ICT Award help in your future initiative?

It is a boost for our work. This award will be an inspiration for the other youths to see what is possible and this will also be a good marketing tool for the cards and also other Income Generation Products. ■