



Worlds of Experience

No. 39 (February 2016)

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“South-South Volunteer Exchange”

Dear friends,

Through the long-term ICYE programme, annually over 900 young people from the global north volunteer in community development projects in the global south or vice versa. Conversely, there is a remarkably low trend of south-south cultural and voluntary service exchanges for reasons that relate both to these countries limited ‘true’ knowledge and experience of each other and to the increased financial strain on potential participants. The South-South Volunteer Exchange was initiated within the ICYE Federation in 2012 to counter the long-standing north-south volunteering trend and to foster the mobility and intercultural awareness of young people in the global south. Travel subsidies through the ICYE Federation’s Training and Programme Development Fund (TPDF) are provided to lighten the volunteers’ financial burden. The 39th issue of the ICYE Newsletter focuses on the “South-South Volunteer Exchange” in order to discuss the wider benefits of south-south exchanges and to activate greater cooperation between and within regions in the global south. Such cooperation is central to the goals of ICYE as it is based on the principles of intercultural dialogue, cooperative learning and peaceful coexistence among cultures and communities.

In Volunteers Voices, six volunteers describe their motivation to embark on a south-south exchange as well as their aspirations, opportunities and learning experiences whilst volunteering in the global south. In Mexico, a Kenyan volunteer describes the bonds she created and the skills she learnt, challenging other young people in the global south to take the route less travelled. An Ecuadorian volunteer in India tells us of her decision to volunteer and learn to work in a country with limited essential resources. A short term volunteer from Viet Nam in Nepal explains that she arrived in Nepal with scarce knowledge of the country and returned with one of the most memorable experiences of her life. A Kenyan volunteer in Ecuador describe a sense of belonging in Ecuador, where at the end of her volunteer year, she felt she was simply moving house again. In Taiwan, a Mexican volunteer relates what she learnt from her young students, who helped her gain more confidence. Last but not least, an Ecuadorian volunteer in Mozambique asks you to leave your fears behind and open yourself to new experiences in the global south.

News from International Organisations, amongst others, feature: the UN Practice Note of Young People’s Participation in Peace Building; UNDESA Population Facts on youth population trends and sustainable development; the wrap-up report of the last Youth Assembly at the UNN; and how UNDP Promotes Youth as Partners in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

News from NGOs report on: Amnesty International Annual Report 2015/16; a New Alliance of NGOs warns that struggles for a better world are all threatened by the inequality crisis; Human Rights Watch World Report 2016; Think Global’s report about migration, and Global Young Voices.

ICYE Programme News include: “Voices of Young People in the Global South – ICYE Finland’s volunteers bringing the global south into Finnish classrooms; volunteers at the Cultural Exchange Weeks in Sweden; the multipliers training of the EU co-funded project “Volunteers at the Interface between Formal and Non-Formal Education” in Vienna; and the report on the 9th UNESCO Youth Forum from an ICYE France volunteer.

Wishing you an interesting reading, we look forward to receiving articles and pictures for the next issue of “Worlds of Experience”, dedicated to “Volunteering for life skills or employability?” Please send your contributions to icye@icye.org, before 30 June 2016.

Warmest regards!
ICYE International Office

This and previous issues of “Worlds of Experience” can be viewed and downloaded from: www.icye.org

The Global South Route: Life among the Mexicans

Nancy Diana Wanjiku (Kenya)
ICYE Volunteer in México

"Being a volunteer means serving without conditions, accepting certain sacrifices, and offering unselfishly one's talents," - Vilma Faustino Villasenor, UNV volunteer United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) 2008.



With one of the Project Coaches celebrating the Day of the Dead (Día de los muertos)

This statement came to life the moment I landed at Benito Juárez International Airport, México, after 25 hours of travel from Nairobi, Kenya, for my year-long volunteer experience in México. For the first time in my life I had lost all sense of anonymity; I could not hide or blend in and I was ready to experience this new life I had chosen.

My name is Nancy Diana and I was placed at *Ayuda y Solidaridad con las Niñas de la Calle, IAP*, México City from August 2014 to August 2015. I embarked on the less travelled road to volunteer in another country in the global south for several reasons. I chose México to fulfil a bucket list wish about where I always wanted to live and work in a Spanish-speaking nation so that I could experience the culture and above all learn the Spanish language, which I did surprisingly well!

The interest to leave my comfort zone, sacrifice my time and share my skills with my little "sisters" in my project was however the most fulfilling thing of all. I became part of a family despite all my differences and especially being black in this country. We developed a bond that is ongoing even 5 months after returning home. I was able to improve my adaptability skills, problem solving skills and above all I learnt how to share space with volunteers from other countries, who were also at my project.

Ayuda y Solidaridad con las Niñas de la Calle, IAP is an all girls' project, where I was placed in *The House of Hope (La Casa de la Esperanza)* a loving home that provides care and rehabilitation for girls aged 7-21 years with psychiatric disorders. My main activities ranged from accompanying the girls to school, assisting them with assignments, playing with them, and supervising them while they cleaned their rooms. Volunteering in this house helped me to learn how to live and work with children and people disabilities and

how to play a part in their inclusion, in the development of their communities and the nation at large.

Every day I took a bus or the metro to work, which was another opportunity to experience the Mexican people, their culture and above all to be able to answer their questions. The country has very few black people and even fewer women of African descent. At first, it felt weird and uncomfortable for me because people would stare a lot; others would want to touch me and mostly my hair, things I have never experienced in my life.

However, this experience started to sink in and I felt them opening up and actually wanting to know and experience more about African culture from music to food and even language. I made friends who guided me, who coached me in Spanish language on a daily basis, who corrected my mistakes and who above all made it easier for me when I missed home too much.



Awesome girls from the "La casa de la Esperanza"

México is very different from Kenya in all imaginable ways from food, language, culture and geographical location just to mention a few. However, the greatest lesson I learnt during this year is that our differences disappear the moment we come to realize that all hearts are one. South-to-South exchanges rarely happen, and I think it is okay to try the less travelled road! Global south has a lot of hidden adventures and experiences to offer. I would challenge all of us to take that chance and experience these adventures. From lessons learnt, emotions experienced, friendships made, my experience in México is a once in a lifetime thing that I would never trade for anything in this world. Take the chance, serve without conditions, accept sacrifices and volunteer your talents unselfishly!

A Story behind Bare Feet

María Paula Heredia (Ecuador)
ICYE volunteer in India

My name is María Paula Heredia, an ICYE Ecuadorian volunteer in India. Why did you decide to spend three hundred and sixty five days of your short life living in India? This is a question that I had to answer to several people more times than I answered to myself, and to be honest, I never had a worthy answer for any of us. However, after six months of living an incredible experience, I now understand the true meaning behind my decision of coming to this marvelous country.

I came to the conclusion that volunteering in another country is not only about freely offering to do something for other people who are not part of your same culture. I believe that being a volunteer means much more than working without pay in a school where you don't understand the language your children speak. There are other sacrifices that come with this experience for instance, leaving your culture behind and trying to adapt to a new one. However, there are also some benefits such as learning new perspectives that allow you to see your life from a different angle.



When I chose India as the country where I was going to live for the next twelve months, I wasn't really thinking about the South-South exchange. The only reason why this country made it to the top of my list was that it met my three basic requirements, which were: to have a diverse culture, to be far, far away from home and to have similar socio-economic conditions to Ecuador. If I was going to leave my country to live in a new one I wanted to have a complete and unique experience; full of new traditions, beliefs, habits and food of course, but I also wanted to miss my own culture so I can fully appreciate it; thus the first two conditions. Moreover, I truly wanted to comprehend the implication behind volunteering in an environment where there is a lack of resources, hence my last term. This last condition was the most important to me since one of my aspirations was to learn if I would really like to study Social Work to then work with organizations that operate under these circumstances. I wanted to be part of a project in which I have to learn how to work without the essential resources that I needed, how to help others by using only my creativity and how to be efficient in my work without spending a lot of money. India offered me these and more. Another thing that caught my attention when it came to choose this country was that I wanted to work in rural villages where education is a problem. Therefore, I saw India as an opportunity to have a better understanding of how working under these conditions is like, plus the extra benefit of facing new obstacles, such as the language barrier in a place where even the English teachers don't really speak English, to learn how to manage them.

During the past six months, I have worked with an organization called Sumana, which means good will in Kannada, the official language of the state of Karnataka. This project was funded by one nun with the idea of changing the lives of women and children in small villages. Therefore, it is divided into two different activities: meetings with women where awareness

of important themes such as hygiene and domestic abuse are discussed and classes given to children from both kindergarten and primary school. My job as a volunteer in Sumana consists primarily of teaching English classes to children aged two to twelve years old. To have a better impact on the children, I decided that each week I will cover one specific theme and that each day will be full of interactive games and activities. Therefore, throughout the day, I go from class to class teaching the children a lesson that I carefully prepared the day before, and once a week I take them to the library to practice their reading skills.

Working in a place where you can hear the other teachers are giving their classes while you are giving your own can be sometimes challenging. Noise during classes is a common thing around Indian village schools, but is not about lack of respect to the teachers, rather is about children speaking in a tone a bit higher than the one I was used to. I can't generalize by saying that all the people from India are loud, but in my school certainly is a fact. Thus, having to teach in classes that are only divided by a thin wall becomes difficult. This small limitation happens as a result of the lack of resources and it has not improved lately. Nevertheless I have learned to work with it without letting it distract me and my students.

A lot of times I had problems in finding a printer, colored paper and even normal tables and chairs. For this reason, I let my creativity explore my options to find the best and simplest solution for my every day need. A good example is a game I created for my first standard students to teach them the names of fruits and vegetables. Instead of using a printer to print twenty exact copies of a word search puzzle I drew a big one on the board. After finishing the game the kids were repeating all the words they learned how to spell and were showing me how to do it. Moreover, all of them were carrying big smiles because every single boy and girl from the class participated and had fun; besides received candies since they did a great job.

When it comes to work in a place with limited resources one has to be creative and work with what you have on hand, and I have experienced now how to do it, thus I have achieved one of my major goals of working as a volunteer in India.

My first journey - Nepal

Luu Thuy Mai Anh (Vietnam)
ICYE volunteer in Nepal

I just came back to Viet Nam after a one-month volunteering trip in Nepal. There were many reasons why I signed up for this trip. Probably, it was a dream of a twenty-year-old girl who wanted to go outside of her country for the first time to explore the world and improve herself. Or I just simply wanted to volunteer and help people in a country where I don't know anyone or speak the language like many foreign volunteers I met when working at Volunteers for Peace Vietnam. Whatever the reason was, I am happy that I did it!



Before coming to Nepal, I was really excited, delighted as well as nervous and anxious. I didn't know what would happen when I arrived in Kathmandu. I could have spent a whole month volunteering at the place with terrible conditions, trying to avoid bad people and being careful of not being robbed whenever I hung out. However, instead of these negative imaginations, I was welcomed by the warm and cozy greetings of Nepali people who are hospitable, optimistic and never blame others for their situation. Ms Santoshi, who is coordinator of ICYE in Nepal, is a supportive, responsible person who cared about me and answered to all my questions in detail. Moreover, when I was in Nepal, I stayed at a Nepali family in Kirtipur, Kathmandu. They were so nice to me. They taught me Nepali, told me about their traditions, customs, and culture and cooked a lot of "mesto" (delicious) food, especially "chia" (tea) for me. It was so comfortable that I felt like I was a member of the family, not a guest or a volunteer.

During the period of four weeks, I spent time teaching English for underprivileged children at Baishnavi Secondary School in Kirtipur, Kathmandu. However, to tell the truth, my students taught me more things about life than I taught them. These precious lessons were about caring, patience, responsibility and love, which I could not learn in school over 14 years. Talking, playing with them and seeing them living without having as many advantages or opportunities as most other people, but still being optimistic made me realize how privileged I am.

Prior to this journey, I knew little about Nepal. All I know was that the highest mountain in the world - Everest is in Nepal and two destructive earthquakes struck this country a few months ago. Now, after one month as a south to south volunteer, I have learned a new language and culture; met and made friend with many people; experienced plenty of amazing things and had one of the best memories in my life. Besides, I have recognized how beautiful this country is and how strong the people here are.

I really wanted to stay longer, but I know "all good things come to an end". Now, it's time to move on! Thank all the people who have inspired, supported and encouraged me! From Anh with love to Baishnavi Secondary School, my lovely and smart students, my host family, VPV and ICYE Nepal!

Home to Home and Back

Mogoi Nyaribo (Kenya)
ICYE volunteer in Ecuador

My name is Mogoi Nyaribo. I was a South-South volunteer in Ecuador for one year from January 2015 to 2016. Subconsciously I wanted somewhere close to home, somewhere I knew I would belong and I got just that in Ecuador - that was why I picked my now second favourite country, my second home. The people, the food, and the culture made it feel like home, especially my host mum who is the most caring and generous person I've ever met and my co-workers at the project. I think I also picked Ecuador because I thought that our countries' problems, that I know of, would be similar and it would feel like I would still be helping out at home. I lived in the capital city Quito with my host family and four other volunteers during the course of my volunteer year, and it really did feel like a family because my host mother made sure of it, family is very important in Ecuador. My utmost favourite thing about the Ecuadorians was how welcoming they were once they found out you were a foreigner and how much they loved their music and dancing. All would of course start by asking you the places you had already visited and would quickly make a list for you of the places that you should visit, and I think that is where I learnt some of my Spanish. Then they would start talking about anything and everything.



I worked at a project called Guagua Quinde in San Roque which is in the south of Quito and is considered a dangerous place to work, though I must say I met some of the nicest people there. The project I worked at was part of a foundation that helped the hawkers take care of their children and help nurture them. We worked with children from as old as ten months to six years old until they needed to start school, from eight in the morning until four in the afternoon. I worked with the four year olds for my first six months and with the youngest ones after the midterm camp, and that was by

far the best time I had at my project. The youngest of children have a way of teaching you to be persistent but to never forget to live and be happy and most importantly that laughter is more important than anything else. That was literally the first thing they would do when you walked into the room and if they knew you well enough. Patience (and an open heart) is what I learned and saw every day at my project from the kids, my co-workers, and the parents – I mean you can't work with children if you are not patient enough to teach them how to tie shoe laces, wash their hands, walk or speak or do any of the everyday things we do as adults with them, because everything must be done repeatedly and wholeheartedly! If not, what are we teaching the generations after us!

My biggest challenge was the language barrier, especially at the beginning when I didn't know any Spanish and would tend to reply 'sí' to anything that was said to me. At a point I even wanted to go home because I thought it was too hard but really once you learn the basics and put your mind to learning the language, your view towards everything will change when you can finally have a conversation in Spanish. I learned a little later that you should never be shy to speak a new language since that is the best way to learn.

My South-South experience was wonderful even though I was the only African volunteer among European volunteers. I only realised that I was different from the other volunteers when we were on the way to Colombia, and when we got to the border, I could not get into Colombia because I had a Kenyan passport and could not get a visa at the border like my German friends. So no assumptions should be made for those holding passports from the South, apply for visas at the embassy before travelling to neighbouring countries to avoid disappointment.

At the end of the volunteer year, I couldn't believe how comfortable I had gotten, especially since it didn't hit me that I was leaving Ecuador until I had already left and was waiting for my flight to Kenya because it felt just like home, like I was just moving houses again after a year!

GO Taiwan

Fernanda Ramirez (Mexico)
ICYE volunteer in Taiwan

My name is Fernanda Ramirez, I'm from Mexico and in August I lived the best experience ever; I was a volunteer in Taiwan for six months, the people I met there I will never forget, everybody was very kind to me. I made the right decision in choosing the country where I wanted to go; but everybody asked me, why Taiwan? Because everybody from my country goes to Europe, I was the only one who wanted to go to Asia.

When I was in senior high school, I went to a school where I was forced to learn German. The teacher who taught me German was very mean to us, and one day she told me something that made me very angry. She

said, "You must learn German because even if you don't want to, you will work for a German".

Because of that I started to learn Chinese to prove to her that Germany is not the only option, and I also said to myself that I will never go to Europe.

In my Chinese class, my teacher used to make us hear a lot of music and most of it was from Taiwan and I really liked it. Since that time I knew that one day I would go to Taiwan. At the beginning, I was scared because I was the only volunteer from Mexico who was there this year. I was also scared of the food because I'm very spoiled - in Mexico if I don't like something I just don't eat it-, the language was also something that scared me because Chinese is not an easy language, and the worst thing is.... I'm very shy! But now I'm proud of myself because even though I was scared at the beginning that didn't stop me.

My project was in a junior high school, I just wrote that I'm very shy, so when I had my first class I didn't know what to do as there were 30 students and only me in front of them. This is when I discovered that students are more intelligent than the teachers; when I came in to the classroom the students noticed how nervous I was so they helped me because every time I got nervous I started to speak very fast. So when they noticed that I started to speak fast, they told me in a nice way to speak slowly. Also when some of the students spoke and didn't pay attention to what I was saying, a student shouted at them to make them quiet or a student translated when they didn't know what I was talking about. All of this has made me confident and I think there's a huge difference between the first time I gave class and the last one. I will never forget my students, they were so nice to me, I will always appreciate everything they did for me.



Now that I'm back in my country, I can see how much I have changed, now I am more confident, I can eat more food or at least I'm not afraid anymore of trying new things and I really appreciate being a Mexican student... And another thing is that in Taiwan all my ICYE co-volunteers in Taiwan were from Germany so now I start to like German a little bit.

Change your image of the world

Matias Almeida Garzon (Ecuador)
ICYE volunteer in Mozambique

My name is Matias and I am an ICYE Ecuadorian volunteer in Mozambique. When I finished high school, I wanted a break from the routine and to take a little time for myself before starting with university. I didn't want to waste my time doing a so-called "gap year", but to do something productive, gain new knowledge and grow as a person. So I decided to volunteer and was clear that it wouldn't be to a developed country, which is normally a popular tourist destination. I wanted to experience something completely new and unknown. A little research and I knew my destination would be Mozambique; it seemed to be an incredible country with a charming culture. I wanted to be an agent of change, not to change the reality of the country, but the misconceptions that my country and the world have of Mozambique.

Once in Mozambique, I realized that many of the perceptions about the country are false. The modern world has damaged the image of underdeveloped countries on the African continent, as in the case of Mozambique. It is believed to be dangerous, that you'll be robbed and that good relations between races are not possible. My experience has taught me that all these stereotypes are untrue. I'm not saying that the country is perfect; clearly they face many challenges but nothing that would hinder you from having a great experience.



My project was a little different from the projects usually offered: It was a NGO called KULIMA committed to the development of the county. Since it was an office job, it was a little difficult because I was expecting to be more in contact with the local community. However, my project worked very hard and I got involved in the development of project proposals dealing with gender equality, HIV/AIDS, agriculture, nutrition, etc. Once in a while I was assigned to do field work in a province, for example to conduct a survey on nutrition for small farmers in the area. Undoubtedly, these various activities had a learning impact on me and will be of use to me in the future

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In Mozambique, Portuguese is spoken as an official language but more than 15 African dialects are also spoken in the country. I have always been one who loved new adventures and I thought this trip matched perfectly with my personality. And you may be thinking, the culture shock was immense, but the kindness of my host family made me overcome any cultural obstacle. The Mozambicans are friendly and cheerful people, although caution should be exercised because you'll never feel alone. The experience of living with a Mozambican family was for me the best way to get to know the local culture. I had a large host family: my host mother, three sisters, two nephews and a grandmother. They are so close knit, I enjoyed spending the afternoons talking with them and exchanging experiences. By the end of my stay, they joked that I am a Mozambican and I don't have to go back to my country.

I am sure that this was one of the best decisions of my life. To all the people who are considering volunteering in one of the countries of the global south, I would say: Don't hesitate, leave all your fears behind, the experience is worth it. Your image of the world will expand and you will be more open to new experiences.

NEWS FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

UN on Youth, Peace, Security & Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding



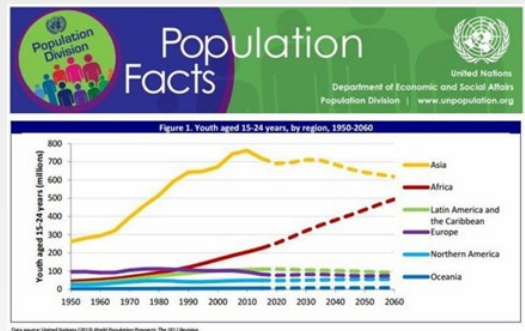
On 9 December 2015 the United Nations Security Council adopted S/RES/2250 (2015), a groundbreaking resolution on Youth, Peace and Security which recognizes that “young people play an important and positive role in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security”. [Read more.](#)

The Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding of the [Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development](#) has published the first Practice Note on Young People’s Participation in Peacebuilding. The primary objective of this Practice Note is to inform policymakers and donors of key strategic and programming considerations for supporting young people’s participation to peacebuilding. The publication will be formally launched in February, at an event on [Security Council Resolution 2250 \(2015\) on youth, peace and security](#), hosted at IPI in New York. [Read more.](#)

Youth Population Trends And Sustainable Development

Did you know? There were 1.2 billion youth aged 15-24 years globally in 2015, accounting for one out of every six people worldwide. By 2030, the number of youth is projected to have grown by 7%, to nearly 1.3 billion.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe, Northern America and Oceania, youth populations have



stabilized in size and are projected to change little over the coming decades. By contrast, Asia and Africa are in the midst of substantial changes in the size of their youth populations. To find more, check out UN-DESA Population Facts on youth population trends and sustainable development at [here](#).

Education for Sustainable Development an integral part of the climate change solution



At the 2015 [UN Climate Change Conference](#), (Conference of Parties 21 - COP21, 195 parties involved negotiated and adopted the “[Paris agreement](#)”, which marks a significant step for the reduction of climate change. As part of the conference, education for sustainable development had a spotlight for an entire thematic day. Namely, it is already included in the [Agenda 2030 \(Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 13\)](#), as well as in Article 6 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

However, as UNESCO Director Irina Bokova said, we have to continue changing mindsets, because without education we cannot have sustainable development. She laid out three crucial actions to move forward: integrating sustainable development more deeply into national education systems; giving teachers the

knowledge, resources and skills to fulfil their role as change agents, and creating stronger and more innovative partnerships.

Young leaders explore their role in UN SDGs



The Youth Assembly
at the United Nations

On February 17-18, an estimated a thousand attendees comprised of more than 600 young leaders from 70 countries gathered at the United Nations Headquarters to tackle the role of youth during a critical year in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, more formally known as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The 2016 Winter Youth Assembly at the United Nations, with the theme “Transforming Our World: The Role of Youth in the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals”, covered plenary sessions and interactive workshops that addressed where youth stand in the SDGs—with emphasis on social ventures and innovation—amidst challenges they face such as unemployment, education, health, poverty, among many others.

[View the Wrap-Up Report.](#)

[Read More](#)

UNDP: Promoting Youth as Partners in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda



Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator, delivered [closing remarks](#) at the ECOSOC Youth Forum held on 1-2 February 2016. UNDP also moderated a plenary session and interactive discussion focusing on priorities and next steps in promoting youth as partners in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; co-led breakout sessions on Youth and Peaceful and Inclusive Societies, Youth and Climate Change and Youth Employment, and supported the regional breakout sessions on Latin American and the Caribbean and on the Arab States. [Read more](#)

NEWS FROM NGO's

Amnesty International Annual Report 2015/2016



Your rights in jeopardy: The year that saw a global assault on people’s basic freedoms, with many governments brazenly breaking international law and deliberately undermining institutions meant to protect people’s rights. International protection of human rights is in danger of unravelling as short-term national self-interest and draconian security crackdowns have led to a wholesale assault on basic freedoms and rights, warned Amnesty International.

[More](#)

Struggles for a better world are all threatened by the inequality crisis – New Alliance



As the world’s rich and powerful gather in Davos for the World Economic Forum an alliance of top international charities, human rights campaigners, women’s rights groups, green groups, civil society organisations and trade unions has come together to fight the growing crisis of inequality. In a joint statement, the alliance, including ActionAid, Amnesty International, Oxfam, Greenpeace and the International Trade Union Confederation warns that growing inequality threatens progress on development, environment, women’s rights and human rights. [More](#)

The Human Rights Watch World Report 2016



The **Human Rights Watch** World Report 2016: 'Politics of Fear' Threatens Rights, summarizes key human rights issues in more than 90 countries and territories worldwide. It reflects investigative work that Human Rights Watch staff undertook in 2015, usually in close partnership with human rights activists in the country in focus. In his keynote essay, Human Rights Watch Executive Director Kenneth Roth details how fear drove global developments of 2015. Fears of terror attacks and potential impact of refugee influx led to a scaling back of rights in Europe and other regions.

[Read more](#)

Migration: Thinking again, and Thinking critically



The Development Education Association

Think Global has published a new report about migration – four presentations from our recent event exploring how to engage people in more useful dialogue

about migration. Four views on how we raise the level of discourse about migration, and encourage people to think again, and think more critically about the issue.

Global Youth Voices:

A panoply of stories that unveil issues tackled by countries worldwide from the genuine perspective of native young students



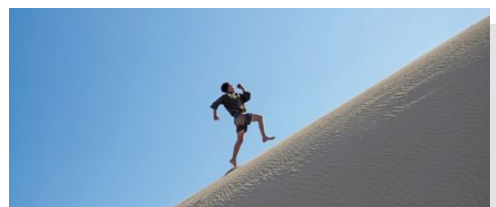
[Global Youth Voices](#) is a youth project that aims to inform people about the peculiarities and commonalities of our countries from the unique and cultured perspective of young natives.

Through stories and re-portages that refine youth's understanding of the world we strive to dispense significant content that inspires, drives and leads to actual change.

Young, Gifted And Held Back

Roughly a quarter of the world's people-some 1.8 billion-have turned 15 but not yet reached 30. In many ways, they are the luckiest group of young adults ever to have existed. They are richer than any previous generation, and live in a world without smallpox or Mao Zedong. They are the best-educated generation ever - Haitians today spend longer in school than Italians did in 1960.

Thanks to all that extra learning and to better nutrition, they are also more intelligent than their elders. If they are female or gay, they enjoy greater freedom in more countries than their predecessors would have thought possible. And they can look forward to improvements in technology that will, say, enable many of them to live well past 100. So what, exactly, are they complaining about? Read more at [here](#).



"Voices of Young People in the Global South - School Visits of Volunteers in Finland"



This school year, the volunteers of ICYE Finland are bringing the Global South into Finnish classrooms as they are visiting primary and secondary schools as well as upper secondary schools and vocational schools in different parts of Finland.

During their visits, the young volunteers, who volunteered in or are volunteering in Finland from Argentina, Armenia, Belarus, Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, India, Mexico, Nepal, Peru and Vietnam, shared with children and youth their experiences and knowledge on daily life realities abroad. The aim of the visits is to discuss daily life realities of the global south and to increase knowledge on cultures and living conditions around the world. The idea is to awaken in this way interest in countries of the global south, global thinking and international dialogue.

Through the visits, the children and young people get the chance to broaden their worldviews and to understand the complex local realities within these countries, which often, for instance, receives little attention in the traditional media. Their stories can also inspire children and youth towards active citizenship.

ICYE Finland held a school visit training for the volunteers last September, and since then the volunteers have visited schools in ten different localities. The visits have been well-received by the pupils and the teachers. "The presentation of the volunteer was very compelling, informative and funny and it aroused many thoughts. Everyone learned something for sure, and as a matter of fact many new things", commented a teacher from an upper secondary school.

The school visiting activities of ICYE Finland started in autumn 2012, and the Finnish and foreign volunteers of the organisation, among others, have participated in planning them. The visits continue to be further developed in this ongoing project, a communication and developmental education project financially supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Volunteers in Sweden participate in a Cultural Exchange Week

International and EVS volunteers from PeaceWorks/ ICYE Sweden participated in a Cultural Exchange



Week on 24th and 25th September 2015, organised by a high school in Västerås, Sweden. Ten volunteers: from Taiwan, Kenya, Costa Rica, Nepal, Serbia, Germany, Czech Rep, and Spain joined in the International Theme Week at one of the High Schools of Västerås. The school arranged cultural workshops on two days for the students (aged 16-18 years) with the aim of enabling them to experience an intercultural exchange and broadening their horizons on international topics. Over these two days, the volunteers and the students had discussions on a range of topics that they elaborated on together. Through the sharing of their different stories, the students were able to reflect on their own cultures and gained more knowledge about the lives and cultures of the volunteers.

Besides the workshops, the volunteers and the students also had study visits to museums and exhibitions in Västerås, and together they developed the evening activities, games and cultural presentations. The volunteers stayed at the homes of the teachers and thus were able to encounter more closely different Swedish cultures. The event was greatly appreciated as the volunteers gained a better understanding of the opinions and perspectives of young people in Sweden.

Volunteers at the Interface between Formal and Non-Formal Education

A Key Action 2 project and Capacity Building training for Formal and Non-Formal Education Multipliers, February 7 - 11, 2016, Vienna, Austria

Twenty-three participants from fourteen countries around the world came together in Vienna, Austria, among them youth workers from ICYE National Committees and teachers/educators from formal and non-formal education host projects.

Hosted by ICYE Austria – Grenzenlos-Interkultureller Austausch, the training is the first in the series of activities within the scope of the Erasmus+ Key Action 2 project "Volunteers at the Interface between Formal and Non-Formal Education". An EVS for 14 young volunteers for an eight-month period begins in April 2016. The EVS volunteers, along with their host pro-

jects and other local volunteers will receive training and inputs from the participant-multipliers of the Vienna training to assist them in introducing a non-formal methodology in institutions of formal education.

The overriding aim of the project is to create synergies between the fields of formal and non-formal education and to empower teachers/educators and young volunteers to open up spaces within formal education for cooperative and creative learning. The EVS volunteers will support teachers to use non-formal methods in the classroom with the aim of improving volunteers' contributions in formal education projects and simultaneously addressing quality and equity in education to benefit in particular young people from vulnerable groups in society.

In his introductory talk, Alen Maletic, Policy Officer, Lifelong Learning Platform, elaborated on the need for better links between formal and non-formal education, as well as highlighting the barriers and enablers of change. The ensuing session on experiential learning paved the way for a discussion on the kind of learning that is desired and achievable taking into account human and financial resources. An inspiring visit to the EVS host project "Wohnheim St. Martin", a home and centre for youth and adults with disabilities, presented participants with a background and the philosophy of the residential home, as well as on the efforts made to make the residents independent and at home. The tour Wohnheim St. Martin enabled insights into their working methodology and the role of the volunteer within, which set the ground for the subsequent sessions on developing non-formal methods for formal education and a training programme for implementation in 12 countries worldwide.

Photos from the local trainings for volunteers and host projects in the 12 host countries (Austria, Bolivia, Colombia, Finland, Ghana, Iceland, India, Mexico, Nepal, Poland, Slovakia and South Africa) will be published on the ICYE Federation Facebook page and volunteer articles will feature in the 41st issue of the ICYE Newsletter in October 2016.



The 9th UNESCO Youth Forum

Imagining a sustainable future...and acting today!

The 9th UNESCO Youth forum took place in Paris at the UNESCO HQs, on 26-28 October 2015, which gave young people from all over the world the opportunity to discuss about the future they would like to live in. 2015 was an important year as the COP 21 was also taking place in Paris in December. Therefore, the main concern of the forum was around sustainability



and how to protect the environment and the planet. Climate change is the biggest concern for the young generation and all of us were very convinced about that. Over 3 days, we had the opportunity to exchange and to propose solutions and projects, and raise the voice of the Youth to promote a better future. We were divided in different groups and participated in several workshops. At the end of the forum we were all gathered in the biggest hall of the UNESCO HQs to present our ideas and proposals. This moment was extraordinary! It was great to see how in such a short time we could propose so many solutions that were very realistic and that can be implemented in the near future. The main issue was to promote education around the world, because we all believed that education was the key to protect freedom and human rights. We also asked for the recognition of climate as a co-existing cultural heritage. For the future, we want to promote active global citizenship as well as new ways of producing and using knowledge. Concretely, one of the ideas was to implement a mandatory universal civil service, and to create a unified program of education of sustainable development, which could help to engage young people all over the world in the road for a sustainable future. I am so glad to have been part of this adventure. During this forum I had the opportunity to meet people from India, China, Dubai, Kenya and so many other countries, and once again, I had the feeling that behind cultural borders we are all the same, and we are all convinced that we have to be engaged for a better world. So many things still need to be done. I am happy that some International Institutions such as the UNESCO are interested in giving some room to international young people's voices. Although our generation is mostly concerned about the next century, I don't want to be actor of tomorrow, I want to be an actor of today, and the UNESCO Youth Forum gave me the opportunity to act.

-Maëlys Martinet, Jeunesse & Reconstruction/ICYE France