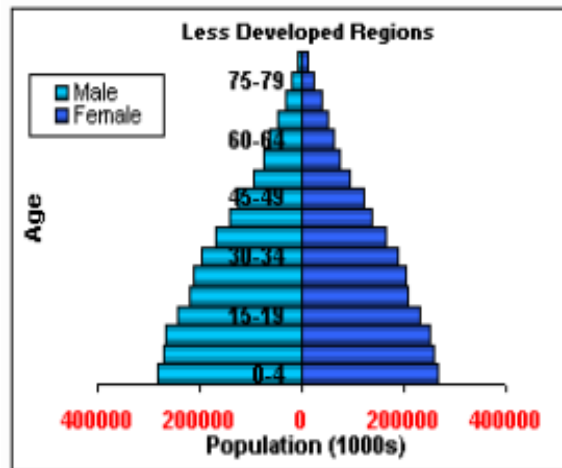
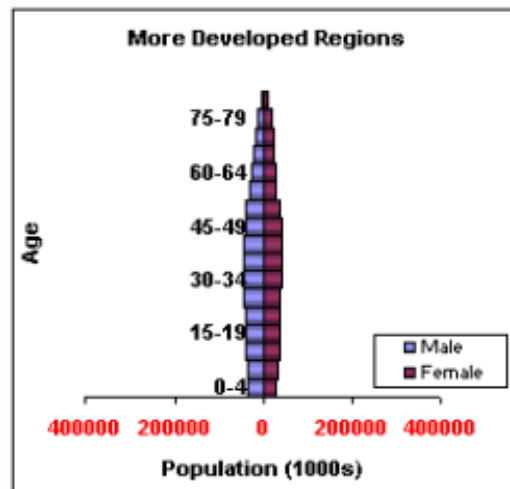


Executive Summary - International Youth

- Young people are the citizens, leaders, parents and workers of our global future. Investments in their education and health will shape the economic and social well-being of each nation and the world. Providing them with employment opportunities will impact worldwide poverty rates and regional political stability.
- The United Nations estimated that in 2000 there were 1.1 billion young people between the ages of 15 and 24, representing an unprecedented 18 percent of the global population. Eight out of ten members of this age group live in the developing world. Their total number is projected to increase to 1.2 billion by 2025 and 1.3 billion by 2050, with the proportion in the developing world remaining approximately the same.



- The size of the young population in developing countries is the result of high rates of fertility during the 1960's and 70's, combined with declining mortality rates among children under five, particularly among infants. In the four decades from 1960 to 2000, infant mortality in the developing world fell from 141 to 63 deaths per 1,000 births.



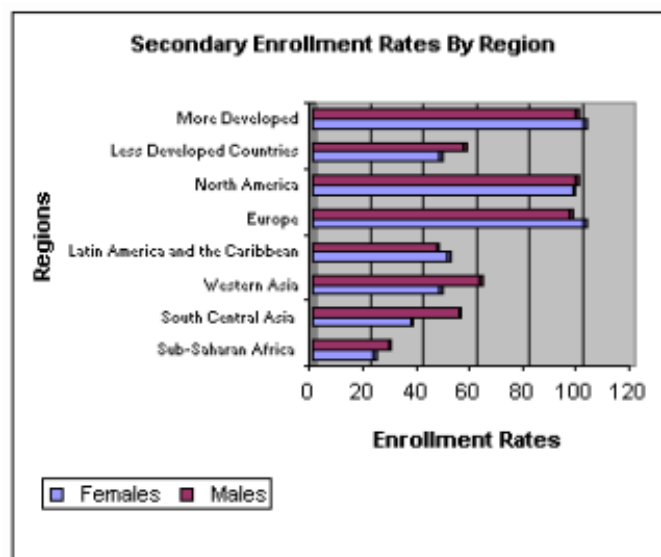
- Not only are there a great many young people in the developing world, but they represent a very large proportion of the total population. Almost a third of the population is below age 15 in both Asia and Latin America, 30 and 32 percent respectively. (This is a decline from 43 and 36 percent in 1995.) Africa, with 43

percent of the population or 338 million young people under the age of 15, continues to be the youngest region.

- Despite the drop in fertility that has occurred in many countries since 1970, the large numbers of children born to the preceding "high fertility generation" ensure that the "youth bulge" will continue for several decades. This creates an extraordinary demand for social services, such as health and education, as well as for jobs in the developing world.
- The developed world presents a striking contrast. Persons under the age of 15 account for only 18 percent of the total population. The United States, with 21 percent under age 15, has one of the highest proportions of young people. The lowest proportion is 15 percent, found in Japan, Spain, and Greece.

Youth and Education

- Participation in primary education is a critical component of development. It reduces illiteracy, lays the foundation for labor force participation, delays the onset of fertility and is a prerequisite for secondary education. Dramatic progress has been made in recent years toward the goal of universal primary education, particularly in the developing world. From 1970 to 1998, the number of pupils in primary school rose from 411 million to 681 million. Almost 80 percent of the world's children reached the 5th grade. Global statistics, however, conceal significant disparities among various regions around the world.
- While primary school enrollment in the developed world is virtually universal, the comparable figure for the developing world is about 80 percent. Only 75 percent of the latter reach the 5th grade. Moreover, as many as 113 million children remain out-of-school, 97 percent of whom live in less developed countries. Sub-Saharan Africa (42 million), the Arab States and North Africa (10.3 million) together account for half of these children and are the only regions where, because of population growth, the numbers of out-of-school children have not declined.
- Enrollment figures also mask a persistent gender gap in education. Despite almost a doubling of female participation in primary education, girls still account for sixty percent (approximately 68 million) of out-of-school children.



- Secondary school enrollment increased world wide from 49 percent in 1980 to 60 percent in 2000. The enrollment ratio for women rose from 44 percent to 56 percent. In the developed world secondary school enrollment became almost universal, and significant progress was made in the developing world, where enrollment increased from 37 percent in 1980 to 53 percent in 2000. The female enrollment ratio in the developing world rose from 30 percent to 48 percent.
- As access to education has improved in developing countries, the benefits of postponing childbearing have become clearer, helping to spur declines in adolescent fertility. Women with a basic education are about half as likely as those with less schooling to start a family before the age of 18. In North Africa and the Middle East adolescent childbearing has been reduced by about one-quarter to one-half; smaller declines have occurred in Sub-Saharan Africa. Likewise in Asia women aged 20-24 are 20 to 50 percent less likely to report that they had a child before turning age 18.
- Education results in similar differences in adolescent childbearing in developed countries. In the United States, teenagers with less than 12 years of schooling are about six times as likely to give birth by age 18 as those who have at least a high school education.
- Nevertheless, lack of education continues to have negative consequences for many young people throughout the world. Almost one quarter (22 percent) of the teenage population (ages 15-19) remains illiterate with teenage women disproportionately affected. Only 17 percent of teenage men versus 30 percent of teenage women are illiterate. In Niger, 88 percent of teen women cannot read compared to 72 percent of their male peers.

Youth and Employment

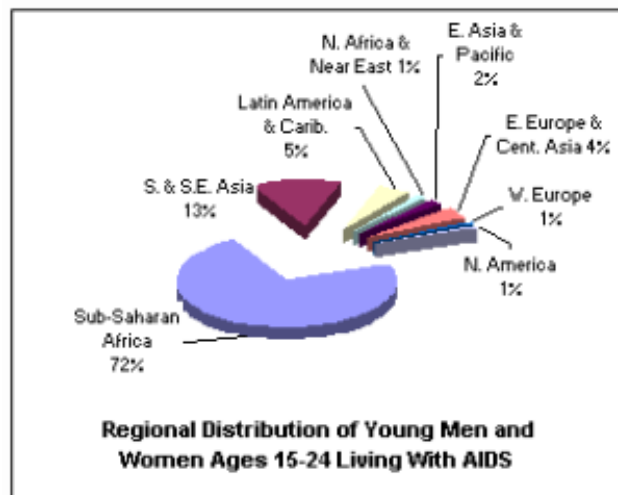
- Measuring labor force participation is extremely difficult, especially in developing countries. Many young people who work in the informal sector of the economy or are employed part time are not included in overall measures of the size of the labor force. Moreover, the rising numbers of street children in the world's major cities are generally excluded from labor statistics.
- Despite these limitations, available statistics show that, because of substantial growth in their numbers worldwide, more young people than ever before in history are about to enter the labor market. In the developing world there will be 700 million new entrants to the labor force between 2002 and 2010.
- According to the International Labor Organization, more than a billion jobs must be created to accommodate these new workers and reduce unemployment. Particularly in the developing world, where minimal economic growth is forecast, economies are unlikely to be able to absorb the available labor supply.
- The task is further complicated by the fact that already today significant proportions of young persons of working age are either unemployed or underemployed. Worldwide over 70 million young people are unemployed. Eighty percent of them are in developing countries or economies in transition. Young people are more than twice as likely as adults to be unemployed. Stark examples include South Africa, where unemployment among young people reaches 56 percent while adult unemployment is 23 percent, and Indonesia, where the comparable figures are 19 percent and 6 percent. Nor is the developed world immune: in Italy, 30 percent of 20 to 24 year-olds were

unemployed in 1998. Unemployment data also indicate that, among persons aged 15-24, teenagers and women are disproportionately affected in most countries.

- Furthermore, although the majority of young people (approximately 80 percent) are economically active, many are underemployed in the non-formal economy. UNICEF estimates that 100 million youngsters work on the streets collecting garbage, hawking goods, washing cars, shining shoes and begging. One out of ten of them are "street children" and have no permanent home or connection to family.

Adolescent Health and Fertility

- Within the broader category of youth, adolescence is a distinct phase that differs by gender and from country to country but, in the developed world, is generally taken to encompass ages 13-19. It is characterized by experimentation and risk-taking behavior that has direct implications for the health of young people. Adolescent alcohol and drug consumption are examples of these behaviors; both have been increasing around the globe.
- Young people between the ages of 15 and 24 have the highest rates of sexually transmitted infections (STI) worldwide. In the United States, three million teens - about one in four - acquire an STI yearly. In the developing world this trend is exacerbated by growing urbanization.
- As of 2001 an estimated 40 million people, including adults and children, were infected with HIV. Approximately 11.8 million are between the ages of 15 and 24, and 62 percent of them are women. Moreover, half of all new HIV infections occur to persons aged 15-24. Among the newly infected, young women outnumber men two to one.



- Sub-Saharan Africa has been hardest hit by the HIV pandemic: Seventy-two percent or 8.5 million infected young people reside there, as do 90 percent of the children orphaned by AIDS. The disease is also spreading rapidly in South and Southeast Asia, where a million and a half young people carry the infection, 13 percent of the worldwide total.
- For young women, the duration of adolescence—defined as the time interval from menarche until marriage—is lengthening and gaining importance. Improved nutrition has led to a lower average age at menarche, while the

average age at marriage has risen, thus increasing, by 10 to 12 years, the period during which premarital pregnancy may occur.

- Thirty-one percent of females worldwide have had a child by age 20. More than three fourths of the 15 million women aged 15-19 who give birth each year live in less developed countries. Thirty-three percent of women in less developed countries bear a child before the age of 20, ranging from a low of 8 percent in East Asia (including China) to 55 percent in West Africa. In more developed regions, roughly 10 percent of women have given birth by age 20. In the United States, however, the level of teenage child bearing is significantly higher, 19 percent.
- Among developing regions, adolescent fertility is highest in Africa. The rates for Sub-Saharan African countries are projected to average 127 live births per 1000 women aged 15-19 annually. Considering the region as a whole, however, there is considerable variability, with Niger the highest at 233 births per 1000 women and Tunisia the lowest at 17 births per 1000 women. The East Asia/Pacific region has the lowest teenage fertility rate within the developing world, an average of 18 births per 1000 women. The teen birth rates for South Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean are 56 and 71 per 1000 teens, respectively.

This Executive Summary was prepared by Judith Himes and Angelique Olmo at the Population Resource Center in the summer of 2002 and reviewed by Elise Jones. Sources include AGI, [Teen Sex and Pregnancy; Into a New World Young Women's Sexual and Reproductive Lives](#) (1999), EFA, [Education For All, Year 2000 Assessment](#); Harvard University Gazette-[Fat, Fertility, Exercise and Cancer Linked, Says Frisch](#); ILO- [Young People in Today's World](#); ILO-[Labour Market Challenges](#); PRB, [Women of Our World 2002](#), ; PRB: [The World Youth 2000](#); United Nations Statistics Division; United Nations-[Freedom from Want Speech](#); United Nations [World Population Prospects, The 2000 Revision Volume II, Sex and Age](#); United Nations Population Division, 2000; UNICEF, [The State of the Children](#) (2002); UNICEF-[End Decade Database-Child Mortality](#), UNICEF-[Fertility and Contraceptive Use](#); UNFPA-[State of the World Population, 1988](#); World Bank, [Data on Poverty](#); , Population Resource Center Executive Summary; [Youth in the Developing World](#) (1989), For more information, contact the Population Resource Center at (202) 467-5030, 1725 K Street, NW, Suite 1102, Washington, D.C. 20006 or (609) 452-2822, 15 Roszel Road, Princeton, NJ 08540