

REPORT ON YICAS EVALUATION

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1. INTRODUCTION

During the LWF Council meeting in 2004, the Program Committee for Mission and Development “briefly discussed the vacant position of the Secretary for Youth in Church and Society (YICAS). As a response to the Assembly resolutions concerning YICAS secretary, DMD proposed that YICAS program be evaluated and new direction established. To carry out this task a youth consultant would be appointed for two years and would begin work in January 2005. The Committee encouraged a significant evaluation that would extend through the whole program and be the key focus of the two years. During these years, youth gatherings and events would be asked to assist in the evaluation process.” (Minutes, Program Committee for Mission and Development, September 2004)

A Consultant for Youth in Church and Society was appointed for 2005-2006 to assist the LWF/DMD to carry out an evaluation of the YICAS program. The evaluation is necessary in order to assess the effectiveness of the work done by YICAS and to ensure a greater participation of young people in LWF and in the life of LWF member churches.

Terms of Reference for the Evaluation were written by the Consultant with the support of four DMD staff members, who have provided constructive comments during the process. The Terms of Reference identified the following objectives for the Evaluation:

1. To assess the impact and the effectiveness of selected programs and tools of YICAS from the Assembly in Hong Kong 1997 to 2003.
This assessment has the following dimensions:
 - a) with respect to the life of those who participated in YICAS programs;
 - b) with respect to the life of the member churches; and
 - c) with respect to reaching the objectives of YICAS (as stated in the mandate of YICAS).
2. To assess the follow up given and impact of the recommendations formulated in Pre- Council Workshops, in the Pre-Assembly Youth Conference and in the Regional Youth Consultations.
3. To determine how LWF can strengthen the role and contribution of youth in the communion and in the life of the respective member churches.

4. Based on these assessments and on the outcome of the LWF 10th Assembly, to recommend key features of a realistic strategy and priorities for YICAS.
5. Based on the assessments, to recommend priority work areas for YICAS for the coming five years. These priority work areas for YICAS should be exclusively needed because other instruments (national youth work, ecumenical work or other international youth networks) do not cater for these needs.

1.2 Methodology

The collection of information from different sources like YICAS documentation and files, from participants in YICAS programs, member churches and former YICAS staff and the systematization and analysis of the information gathered formed the methodology of the evaluation. In addition, YICAS programs in 2005-2006 were used as a source for evaluation.

A questionnaire concerning YICAS activities (see APPENDIX 2) was sent to the LWF member churches, young Council members, the 2000-2003 and 2004-2007 youth liaison persons and to the participants in YICAS programs between 1997-2003. Ninety completed questionnaires were returned out of the 500 sent. (Detailed information on where answers came from can be found in APPENDIX 3: Statistics on received questionnaires.)

Even though the total number of questionnaires received is relatively good, some programs were not well covered. The more that time has passed since certain programs have finished, the more difficult it has been to reach the participants.

2. YOUTH IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY

The main objectives of the YICAS Desk have been to

- Strengthen youth ministry by means of activities promoting holistic ministry expressed in proclamation, advocacy and service, and which utilize its international network;
- Increase the participation of young people in the life and work of the communion.

Although LWF member churches are the most important partners for the YICAS Desk, this does not mean that the ecumenical dimension would have been ignored in the work.

The YICAS Desk works with and for young people and defines youth between the ages of 18-30 years. As this definition is sometimes challenged, it was felt necessary to ask in the questionnaire how youth is defined in local churches. The answer differs from region to region. In many Asian LWF member churches youth is defined according to one's personal situation (e.g. being confirmed, but not yet married), rather than according to age. In many northern churches especially, youth (age 15-18) and young adults (age 18-30) are two separate ministries. It has, therefore, been confusing that the YICAS Desk speaks about youth, but is actually working with young adults. At the same time, many African churches tend to stretch the definition of youth until 35 years. Within this variety of interpretations, the YICAS' definition of 18-30 years old is a compromise, definitely not an ideal one for all regions, but still the most practical and functional for a global desk.

The role of young people differs from church to church. In general, youth are very welcome to sing in a church choir or to help in diaconal work, for example, but when it comes to active participation in church decision-making bodies, the road is blocked. As a result, youth concerns are not fully understood or considered and when a church distributes funds youth work is often poorly covered. However, it is worth mentioning that progress has been made in some churches, where youth can bring forward their concerns to the church's highest decision-making bodies. This was expressed as a very important change of practice.

3. IMPACT AND EFFECT OF YICAS PROGRAMS FROM THE PARTICIPANTS' POINT OF VIEW

- 3.1 Pre-Assembly Youth Conferences (PAYC) & International Youth Program – Transformation through Participation (IYP-TTP)

What did participants get out of the programs ?

PAYCs and IYP-TTP were two different programs with partly different aims and objectives. However, since participants in these programs have described the strengths and what they had learnt from the programs in very similar terms in the questionnaire, they may be handled together here.

YICAS programs in general, and especially big programs like IYP-TTP and PAYCs, were greatly appreciated, especially by those participants who answered the questionnaire. Clearly, the programs have provided space and momentum for transformation and holistic learning. Even if this kind of learning is not easy to measure, it seems that the programs have made a difference to the life and, more especially, to the way of thinking of many participants. They have affected participants' values, attitudes and how they see the world and themselves as part of the world and a Communion of Lutheran Churches. The following points should be mentioned:

1. The programs have deepened participants' understanding of being part of the worldwide Lutheran Communion. It may be said that they have strengthened the identity of the LWF as a communion of Lutheran churches within the worldwide Christian communion and society.
2. Change in an understanding of the role of the youth. Participants' views of themselves and youth in general as active members of the church, who have the right to take initiatives, were strengthened greatly throughout the programs. In this respect, participants were clearly empowered by the programs.
3. The programs have increased awareness of social issues and concerns, as well as a willingness to take social action.
4. Participants have learnt a lot about the LWF, including how it functions, what it is all about, etc.
5. Many PAYC 2003 participants remarked that they had learnt a lot about HIV and AIDS, whereas IYP-TTP participants had learnt about globalization. Three respondents (out of 9) of IYP-TTP participants indicated that they had learned some leadership skills through the program.¹

3.2 Pre-Council Youth Workshop (PCYW) & Stewards Program

Pre-Council youth workshops, stewards programs, regional consultations, pilgrimages and internship programs were not very well covered in the questionnaires received. However, something may still be said about them, although less than for IYP-TTP and PAYC.

PCYWs are common programs for young council members and stewards at Council meetings. Pre-programs (both for Assemblies and Council meetings) were appreciated by some young Council members, as they provide good possibilities to prepare for the Council meeting. Some young Council members, however, questioned the meaning of writing youth messages during the Pre-Youth Programs and other YICAS activities and would have found it more relevant to put this time to better use.

The criteria for selecting member churches to nominate stewards for the Council meetings has been by rotation and giving priority to churches in close proximity to the Council meeting venue in order to save on transportation costs. As a result, European youth have much more opportunity to take part in the stewards program than youth from other continents.

3.3 Regional Youth Consultations

It seems that regional emphasis was welcomed, but the frequency of the consultations did not provide effective tools for regional youth work and networking.

3.4 Pilgrimages: Vadstena 2000 and Jerusalem 2003

Both Pilgrimages were part of a program entitled "Vision Beyond 2000". The leading question of the program

¹ One of the participants wrote: "*it was a mistake to concentrate on the training of leadership skills at the international meeting. It would have been better to do that on the regional/continental level. In that case the contexts and needs would have been more similar.*" Whereas another respondent underlined that the leadership skills he learnt were precisely because IYP-TTP was an international program.

was “What do the young people search for at the turn of the century?”

Three participants in the Jerusalem pilgrimage who answered the questionnaire found it was a meaningful and even life-changing experience. The special strength of the pilgrimages was spirituality, and both seem to have been spiritually nurturing programs. In the Jerusalem pilgrimage, there seems to have been a good balance between spirituality and social issues, which became part of the program due to the political, religious and socio-economic situation in Israel and Palestine.

The Vadstena Pilgrimage was a large program and participation was more open than in the majority of YICAS programs. Participants did not need to have an endorsement from their church in order to participate, and local youth leaders came to the pilgrimage with their youth groups. As a result, there were youth participants less than 18 years old.

Pilgrimages are somewhat different from most other YICAS programs, having different strengths (and weaknesses). Perhaps they were not in line with overall YICAS programming and one may ask if it should be the task of the YICAS desk to organize this kind of program.

3.5 Internship

All former interns, who replied to the questionnaire (5), indicated that they had learnt a lot during their internship.

The internship program is well in-line with YICAS objectives, as it increases the participation of young people in the life and work of the Communion, but it does not influence greatly the life of churches (taking into account the resources given to the program).

In recent years, LWF headquarters have welcomed many other interns and trainees, not only those coming through the YICAS Internship Program. This has increased significantly the number of young people working in the LWF headquarters and, therefore, the contribution of youth to the work of the LWF secretariat. These interns and trainees often come for a period of three to six months and are mostly from Germany, the Nordic countries and North America, as they have to find their own funding to stay in Geneva. This has created an imbalance between LWF interns and trainees from the South and from the North. For this reason, YICAS has very recently decided to give priority to youth coming from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe in the YICAS Internship Program.

3.6 Youth Magazine

The last issue of the magazine was published in 2003. Two main concerns were that not all youth received the magazine and the language barrier. People with easy access to information and the Internet felt that the magazine was not so necessary, but those with limited access to the Internet underlined the importance of the magazine as a resource for sharing experiences, perspectives and information on issues in youth ministry and church life. It was proposed that rather than having a separate Youth Magazine, the LWI should include more youth-related articles.

3.7 Youth Liaisons

Networks of Youth Liaisons were established to ensure a straight flow of information from YICAS to youth and vice versa. Churches were asked to nominate a contact person aged between 18 – 27 for YICAS/LWF and the respective church for a period of four years.

The beginning of the term of current Youth Liaisons was very much influenced by the fact that the position of Secretary for Youth in Church and Society was vacant for one year. Newly appointed Youth Liaisons had high expectations that something great would happen, but many expressed deep frustration as, in practice, being a Youth Liaison did not mean anything.

For some churches, clearly it would be more useful to have a Youth Liaison in charge of the youth ministry of the church, even if he/she is already over 27 years old, as he/she would be best placed to distribute information at the grass root level. On the other hand, the aspect of youth empowerment could be lost easily if the network were no longer for youth themselves, but for those working with youth.

The system of Youth Liaisons was criticized slightly by some respondents because it was seen as a way to maintain the hierarchical dissemination of information. They underlined the importance of YICAS keeping

direct contact with more young people and not only with Youth Liaisons.

3.8 Youth Directory

The first Youth Directory was published in 1992 in hard copy and sent out to LWF member churches and Youth Liaisons. The directory provides information on LWF member churches and their youth ministry in a nutshell. Thus, it served as a tool for information sharing and communion building, as well as showing the variety of activities of Lutheran youth around the world. Much effort was made prior to the Assembly in 2003 to publish an updated version entitled “Lutheran Youth in Mission Together: A Guide to Lutheran Youth Worldwide” on the YICAS website. However, due to other priorities, the heavy workload of the YICAS Desk and the difficulties in getting responses from some churches, the work was never finished.

3.9 General remarks

In general, it seems that the more resources were given to the program, such as time, human, and financial, then the more effective the program was. However, the internship program might be an exception in this rule.

4. HOW DID CHURCHES BENEFIT FROM THE PROGRAMS?

The impact of YICAS programs on LWF member churches seems to be more difficult to assess than the impact of the programs on the participants, or the question of how programs met the YICAS objectives. It may also be more difficult to measure these benefits and the impacts of some programs will only become visible in the long term.

From questionnaires received, one has the impression that the biggest impact on member churches was made through the IYP-TTP program due to the projects, which participants implemented in their local contexts as an integral part of the IYP-TTP program. Some IYP-TTP participants implemented an amazing number of meaningful projects in their churches and, in some cases, the impact of the projects was also extended to society. However, it is good to keep in mind that those who were able to make a remarkable contribution to their churches may also be those who were most eager to answer the questionnaire and willing to share what they had achieved.

Quite a few participants in IYP-TTP and PAYC wrote articles inspired by the program for church newsletters, and used many other ways to share the information they had gained from the program. However, PAYC was designed mainly to help young people influence the decision making of the LWF as a whole and the decision making in the Assembly in particular. The question, therefore, of the program’s influence on the churches was felt to be slightly irrelevant.

According to some respondents, the content of YICAS programs was not adaptable to the needs of local churches.

With the internship program, it appears that young theologians were most likely to go back to their churches after internship and bring their learning experiences and insights back to the local context.

The following points are crucial with regard to the impact of YICAS programs on local churches:

A. Nominating the right people for the YICAS Programs

“Selection of suitable participants is critical to the healthy functioning of a program. This requires sufficient advance notice to those involved in the selection process at the national church level (which should include the youth directly, not just the bishop or council); clear prerequisites in terms of qualifications... and a closer monitoring process between YICAS and the national selection process.”²

If, for one reason or another, churches nominate a youth, who has no knowledge of the church’s (youth) work and does not participate at any level, it is very unlikely that the church would benefit from the programs. *“Many of the young people attending these programs in fact are not part of the youth ministries in their churches. This means that when they return to their churches little or nothing is actually implemented in their youth ministry or even shared with the young people of that church.”*

² Quotations in italic throughout the report are taken from responses received in questionnaires.

It has also happened that a church sent an active young person to a YICAS program, expecting multiple effects. However, after the program the person concerned was unable or unwilling to commit him/herself to voluntary church youth ministry due to other new commitments (new job, marriage etc.).

B. Involvement of churches in the programs and ownership

Some respondents indicated that a stronger involvement of member churches in a YICAS program would have been beneficial for all. Churches which hosted different YICAS/LWF meetings were most naturally involved in the program and also most likely to benefit. However, there seems to be a lack of effective ways to involve them fully in the YICAS programs.

C. Support and follow up

Several respondents felt that they were left alone after a program. If there was no support available, either from their own church or from YICAS, it is not surprising that the outcome was not remarkable. *“One of the greatest weaknesses has been lack of continuity (or any sort of follow-up), lack of communication and further support once we have returned home from the (YICAS) programs. This tends to mean that the person who attended the program was left “on their own” and therefore the transfer of the experiences at the events to their own youth ministry is usually negligible or non-existent.”*

5. HOW DID PROGRAMS REACH YICAS OBJECTIVES?

YICAS’ main objective “To increase the participation of young people in the life and work of the communion” was very well met through the programs and the overall efforts of the YICAS Desk. This is insofar as “the life and work of the communion” is thought to mean the work of the LWF Assembly, Council and LWF Headquarters. The programs not only increased the number of young people involved in the work, but also supported the participation of youth in such a way that they could make an important contribution to the work and issues discussed in these decision-making bodies and in the LWF Secretariat. However, if the LWF member churches and the work done at the local level is also considered as “the life and work of the communion”, the YICAS programs do not seem to have made such a big difference. The same can be said of YICAS’ other main objective “to strengthen youth ministry by means of activities, promoting holistic ministry expressed in proclamation, advocacy, and service, and which utilize its international network”.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Strengths

YICAS did very well in the organization of consultations, gatherings and workshops, which were life-changing experiences for many of the youth who participated. These programs were and are meaningful. Young people are eager to learn new things, as they define their values and attitudes and seek directions for their lives. Bringing youth together provides excellent possibilities to get connected and related to each other and to learn from each other.

Youth are the biggest resource and opportunity of many Lutheran churches. Money, time and human resources invested in youth are resources well spent.

Weaknesses and how to overcome them

Facilitating and supporting longer processes has been more difficult for YICAS. The number of programs implemented by the small YICAS Desk, in addition to other work, from 1997 to 2003 is very impressive. This may be precisely the reason why there was not enough time for follow up, *“too many things have been on the Agenda”*. In the future, YICAS should put more emphasis on promoting longer processes and follow up. Proper follow up takes time and discipline. It also requires that a program be organized in such a way as to allow enough time to elaborate ideas to be implemented in a local context. Reporting half a year after a meeting should be a prerequisite for being able to continue in a YICAS program.³

³ *“...the main thing is the follow up made by YICAS office. There must be a strong follow up for the implementation of the decisions or the plans made during the workshops or training. After the participants have returned back to their churches they should know something is expected from them.”*

Another challenge to YICAS is communication. Many churches and youth were critical of information often arriving too late, making a wide distribution and identification of the right people for the places offered difficult. As a result, churches felt they were unable to follow any reasonable and transparent procedure in nominating young people for LWF events.

Related to the question of communication, continuity and follow-up was the one year vacancy in the position of YICAS Secretary. This caused great disappointment and frustration. The timing was critical, as the post became vacant soon after the Assembly. Because the position was not filled, LWF missed the window of opportunity – in terms of youth work – provided by the successful PAYC. This disappointment was expressed strongly in all parts of the Communion.⁴

This criticism and concern show very clearly the importance of the YICAS Desk and should be considered as a significant appreciation of its programs and overall work. Respondents underlined that the one-year gap in filling the position was an error not to be repeated.

Sound structures are important for effective youth work. Therefore, YICAS needs a full-time Secretary to work for and with youth and on youth issues. This position is important for advocacy, facilitating network building, communication and for the implementation of some programs. The term of employment of the Youth Secretary should be changed from four years to an initial four year term with an extension of three years. This would give the incumbent sufficient time to build good functional networks and to use the knowledge gained through the work for the benefit and greater success of the LWF youth ministry. Such continuity would be especially useful in the area of youth work, which is often characterized by discontinuity due to constant change of the youth and especially of the LWF Youth Secretary.⁵ The position should be filled continually with a person who should be under 35 years old.

Although one Youth Secretary working full time in LWF with the assistance of an Administrative Assistant working less than half time (40%) is not much, it is still very important. The DMD Area Secretaries can take care of the question of youth representation by urging LWF member churches to respect the 1984 Budapest Assembly resolution requiring that 20% of participants should be youth. However, without a Youth Secretary, other parts of the work, such as networking, communication, a big part of advocacy, promoting youth issues, etc., would be left undone, simply because they take so much time.

If it becomes impossible financially to have a Youth Secretary at the LWF Secretariat in Geneva, it would still be important to have one based in a less costly location. However, working physically with the majority of other DMD colleagues has great advantages in terms of possibilities for synergy and co-operation, not to mention the importance of advocating youth issues and youth participation in the secretariat.

Another criticism, although minor, was that YICAS programs (especially PAYCs) marginalized youth by (1) organizing separate meetings for youth, which does not help youth (issues) to be mainstreamed, and (2) having programs too strongly driven from YICAS/Geneva, resulting in participants not having enough “power” to influence the content of the program. It was proposed that participants be more involved in the planning of programs. This criticism came from a few respondents from North America and the Nordic countries.

⁴ *“After the Assembly 2003 the secretary of YICAS had completed her term and her position was not immediately filled. This position is absolutely vital to the success of YICAS. If the LWF takes the role of the youth seriously, then it also has to be prepared to ensure that the organizational structures for the youth work are in place within the LWF structures and that resources are made available for this work. If this is not done, I cannot see how the youth can fulfill a meaningful role within the LWF. ...I think the youth had a very positive influence on the Assembly 2003 through their presentation, especially regarding the issues of HIV/AIDS and sexuality. LWF had the opportunity to build on that. The main challenge for the LWF and for churches is to provide adequate structures and resources to harness this contribution in order to make full use of it.”*

⁵ *“Everywhere in youth work it seems that continuity is a problem. By nature it is a transient ministry, a ministry through which people pass at a certain stage in their lives before moving to something else. This is a great challenge to youth work – it is something we can’t do much about; yet at the same time it is vital that we attempt to improve the continuity in our youth ministries. The issue deserves attention and research to help us to bring about improvements in this area.”*

YICAS is little known, partly due to the fact that few people are able to participate in YICAS programs. Many of those who answered the YICAS questionnaire underlined that more youth should have the opportunity to be involved in YICAS. It is not easy to combine this wish with dwindling resources. With only 40% administrative support (compared to full-time support in 2004), YICAS cannot continue to implement as many programs as before. Therefore, other ways of introducing more youth to YICAS need to be sought. Even at a time when fewer financial resources are available, it is important to seek ways to increase participation. In most YICAS programs, a maximum of one youth per church has been given a chance to participate. After a program, participants are full of energy and willing to share all they have learnt, but due to lack of support, enthusiasm fades quickly. People, especially young people, are much stronger together than alone. The possibility of having more than one youth per church involved in YICAS programs could, therefore, make a big difference. They could support each other and would not feel isolated following a program, and this would facilitate a prolongation of the processes following YICAS consultations. YICAS could also look for other ways of using peer support, which is often empowering and the best form of support. For instance, former YICAS participants over the age of 30 may still be willing to advocate for youth work and to support young people in youth ministry.

Opportunities

There are many effective global actors in the field of Christian youth work, e.g. the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, the World Student Christian Federation, all of which are doing good work with and for youth. Youth who are involved in these organizations are not necessarily closely related to their churches, even if they are members of local Christian congregations. YICAS, however, seeks to empower LWF member churches by empowering youth and youth leaders endorsed by them, and who are already strongly involved in the youth work of the church. This is possible through close contact between YICAS, being located in DMD, and LWF member churches. YICAS could also use more effectively opportunities to build bridges between global youth organizations and local churches.

New information technology provides a huge opportunity to connect youth to each other and around common issues.

Threats

- The large variety of different interests and priorities within the constituency;
- how to get the best result in the most economic way in view of the financial constraints;
- huge distances;
- youth work is often seen as a priority in theory only, but not in practice when resources are distributed.

Communication

In large parts of the world Internet is the main means of communication, a place for establishing and maintaining relationships and networks, fora for expressing oneself and, sometimes, also a way of life for young people. The fact that not all young people have Internet access is not a reason not to make full use of the possibilities provided by Internet in terms of communication and information sharing. Keeping its website updated should be one of YICAS' priorities. The website could include, for example, youth-related articles, news, ideas and resource materials sharing best practices in the field of youth ministry, YICAS database, an updated content of the Youth Directory and photos taken during programs. The website should be interactive so that users might leave comments on the materials placed on the site.

Useful websites take numerous working hours to establish and maintain. An effective website may save time when it comes to answering questions. If relevant information is readily available on the web, not all questions will need to be answered individually. The website may also serve as a tool to follow up on YICAS programs: parts of program reports could be posted on the site as soon as they are available, without having to wait for the publication of a complete hard copy. It is also worth considering whether the technical part of the maintenance could be done in one of the regions by a local youth.

However, YICAS should not contribute to the problem of exclusion from communication in some regions by an over distribution of information to those areas, where there is already a surplus of information. It should find a way to reach and connect with youth, who do not have the possibility to use Internet. This could be done via a simple Newsletter, which could be published more frequently and distributed more widely than the current

Youth Magazine to those areas and youth groups not be covered by the web. In the present world, this would be a more (cost) effective way of communicating, sharing information and building youth networks than the former one. Posting Newsletters or Youth Magazines to youth, who can easily read the same articles via the Internet, is not useful.

Layout, printing, and posting of the Newsletter could be done in the region(s) by the local youth. The content and language used could also differ partly from region to region. This would not necessarily reduce the workload of the Youth Secretary, but it could enhance an ownership of YICAS communication and reduce some of the costs related to the publishing of the Youth Magazine.

Meaningful youth participation

Supporting “meaningful youth participation”, which includes advocacy for youth in the LWF member churches and in the LWF decision-making structures, has always been an important part of YICAS’ work and is still highly relevant for the future. Supporting meaningful youth participation in the LWF decision-making structures is something which has to be done by the LWF.

One tool for increasing meaningful youth participation is the provision of opportunities for youth to learn leadership skills. Pre-programs (such as PAYCs and PCYWs) provide a good framework for this kind of learning. They also enable youth to prepare themselves for Assemblies and Council meetings, and to meet with and to learn from each other. Stewards programs, including those related to Council meetings, could be part of a one to three year leadership training program and thus be used more strategically. (This has already been done in the IYP-TTP Program, when most of the IYP-TTP participants were stewards at the 2003 LWF Assembly). All YICAS programs should be more coherently youth-driven and youth should be included in the planning of all YICAS programs from an early stage.

In future, YICAS should pay even more attention to integrating and mainstreaming youth more fully in all of the LWF’s work and ensure that separate youth programs do not marginalize youth within the LWF, but support their meaningful participation in its overall work.

The YICAS Desk should hold churches accountable for their own youth-related decisions and should encourage and support churches to promote meaningful youth participation at the local level.

It could be beneficial in the YICAS frameworks to speak about young adults, rather than youth, with respect to the 18 to 30 years age range. People within that age range are no longer teenagers and many of them have a good education, areas of special interest and good general knowledge. Perhaps a change in language would encourage a change in attitudes.

Quotas

The use of quotas has proved to be an important way of enhancing participation of women and youth in the life and decision making of the LWF. However, churches should not intentionally combine the youth and women quotas at the expense of older women’s and younger men’s participation. This could be prevented if separate quotas for youth and other delegates/participants were available to ensure a gender balance within both groups.

LIST OF USED ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DMD	Department for Mission and Development
IYP-TTP	International Youth Program – Transformation through Participation
LWI	Lutheran World Information (information service of the LWF)
LWF	The Lutheran World Federation
PAYC	Pre Assembly Youth Conference
PCYW	Pre Council Youth Workshop
WICAS	Women in Church and Society (Women’s Desk of LWF)
YICAS	Youth in Church and Society (Youth Desk of LWF)
WCC	World Council of Churches

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APPENDIX 1: Financial overview of YICAS programs from 1997 to 2003

YICAS programmes	year	disbursements	totals per year
	1997		
HIV/Aids awareness		11,121	
Activities member churches		11,900	
Youth internship		36,426	
Youth publications		21,533	
International activities		6,045	
Human rights visits pr.		4,376	
Consultative services		2,233	
total year 1997		93,634	93,634
	1998		
Consult / _Workshops		61,684	
HIV/Aids awareness		11,055	
Activities member churches		25,481	
Youth internship		49,280	
Youth publications		6,291	
Leadership training		7,349	
International activities		10,278	
Consultative services		997	
total year 1998		172,415	172,415
	1999		
Consult / _Workshops		39,142	
HIV/Aids awareness		14,663	
Activities member churches		35,897	
Youth internship		68,491	
Youth publications		8,247	
Leadership training		12,972	
International activities		3,254	
Consultative services		1,168	
total year 1999		183,834	183,834
	2000		
Consult / _Workshops		1,863	
HIV/Aids awareness		3,817	
Activities member churches		8,448	
Youth internship		30,170	
Youth publications		5,555	
Leadership training		12,177	
International activities		2,692	
Consultative services		-159	
<i>vision beyond 2000 new program</i>		41,008	

total year 2000	105,571	105,571
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Yicas programmes	year	disbursements	total per year
2001			
Consult / _Workshops		15,300	
Activities member churches		7,446	
Youth internship		48,865	
Youth publications		19,973	
Leadership training		17,021	
International activities		2,228	
<i>vision beyond 2000 (Pilgrim.Vadstena)</i>	<i>new since 2000</i>	7,043	
Youth leadership training	new	22,010	
total year 2001		139,886	139,886
2002			
Consult / _Workshops		36,694	
HIV/Aids awareness		737	
Activities member churches		12,500	
Youth internship		60,537	
Youth publications		7,894	
Leadership training		10,149	
vision beyond 2000		63	
Youth leadership training		6,383	
North America Youth Consultation	new	142	
total year 2002		135,099	
2003			
Youth internship	PYD9001	60,785	
Youth publications	PYD9002	5,941	
Activ.Region.Network	PYD9003	1,730	
	new		
Participation in Ecum. Activities	PYD9004	149	
	new		
Youth Leadership training	PYD9005	15,672	
Vision Beyond 2000 (Pilg. Vadstena)	PYD9007	11,156	
North America Youth consultation	PYD9008	6,056	
Pre-Assembly youth conference	PYD9009	183,030	
	new		
Regional Cons. Leadership formation	PYD9011	905	
total year 2003		285,424	285,424

APPENDIX 2: Questionnaire concerning YICAS activities

**QUESTIONNAIRE
Concerning the Youth Work of LWF**

Please fill in and return to YICAS before July 15, 2005.

Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is making an evaluation of the work of the Youth Desk (YICAS) in order to assess the impact and the effectiveness of selected programs and tools of YICAS from the Assembly in Hong Kong in 1997 to the Winnipeg General Assembly in 2003.

Your input is highly appreciated and will make a difference to the future directions of the Youth work in LWF.

While filling in the questionnaire you should keep in mind the main objectives of the Youth desk, which are to (1) strengthen youth ministry by means of activities, promoting holistic ministry expressed in proclamation, advocacy, and service, and which utilize its international network; and (2) increase the participation of young people aged 18-30 years old in the life and work of the communion.

This questionnaire has been sent to member churches of LWF, to young people who have attended YICAS events between 1997-2004 and to the youth liaisons of 2000-2003 and 2004-2007. Question 3 applies mainly to churches and questions 4-8 mainly to participants of YICAS events.

Please fill in where applicable

Name:
Age:.....
Country:
Church:

1. What is the definition of youth (age group) in your church?.....
2. What is the role of 18-30 year olds in your church?.....
.....
.....
.....
3. What is an internal procedure (please describe the process) of your church for nominating young people to LWF events?
.....
.....
4. Have you participated in the youth work of the LWF since 1997? (participation in some program(s) and/or as a youth liaison)

If yes, which ones? (Please find below the list of the YICAS activities since 1997 which you can tick if you had attended)

.....

(b) What have you learnt from your participation in the LWF Youth Program(s)?

.....

What have you achieved for your Church and/or society since your participation in the LWF Youth Program(s)?

.....

(d) What are the long term impacts, if any, of your experiences and learning to yourself, church or society ?

.....

(e) How and to whom were you able to share the experiences you had from a YICAS program?

.....

5. Are you still involved in the church's youth ministry leadership?

(a) If yes, is your involvement connected or related to the LWF ?

.....

(b) If not, who are the key persons responsible for the youth work of your church?

.....

Concerning questions 6 & 7, please, make an assessment based on the program(s) you have attended

6. What were the strengths of these Programs, in relation to your church youth ministry?

.....

.....

7. What were the weaknesses or areas for improvement of these Programs, in relation to your church youth ministry?

.....

.....

8. Have you been later on connected to some of the youth you met at the LWF meeting?

.....

(a) If yes, how and what is the benefit of it ?

.....

(b) If not, why?

9. What are your visions for the future youth work of the LWF?

-
-
10. How could LWF strengthen the role and contribution of youth in LWF and in the member churches and in society at large?
-
-
11. What challenges and opportunities do you see for youth work in:
- (a) Your church and society?
-
- (b) LWF ?
-
-
12. What difficulties and limitations do you see for youth work in:
- (a) Your church and society?
-
-
- (b) LWF?
-
-
13. Have you received and read the LWF Youth Magazine?
- If yes, why and how has it been useful to you in relation to your church youth ministry?
-
-
14. What kind of YICAS website would benefit you and the youth work of your church most?
-
-
15. Do you have access to e-mail & internet?
- (a) If yes, what is your e-mail address?.....
- (b) Is it difficult and/or expensive to access e-mail & internet?

.....

16. Any other comment you wish to make:

.....

.....

YICAS Activities 1997-2003:

Please tick if you have attended :

Regional Consultations

- March 21-28, 1998** Regional Youth Consultation for Africa in Windhoek, Namibia Theme; “I have set before you an open door”
- September 27-October 2, 1998** Latin American Lutheran Youth Consultation in Rodeio 12, Brazil
- May 22-26, 1999** European Lutheran Youth Consultation in Strasbourg, France Theme: “We cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard”
- November 22-27, 2001** Asian Youth Consultation, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia Theme: “A Reconciling Church for the Healing of the World”
- May 1-8, 2002** African Youth Consultation Theme: “Healing is coming.... Oh yes we know!”
- January 18-22, 2003** North American Youth Consultation Theme: “A Healing Church in a Violent World”

AIDS – WORKSHOPS

- November 13-17, 1998** AIDS Workshop in Chennai, India
- October 23-31, 1999** HIV/ AIDS Workshop in Managua, Nicaragua

Vision Beyond 2000

- August 4-9, 2000** Youth Pilgrimage to Vadstena, Sweden Theme: “Stand up and walk with me”
- April 13-22, 2003** Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Israel Theme: “A Reconciling Church for the Healing of the World”

LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- June 29 - July 5, 1997** Pre-Assembly Youth Conference "PAYC", Bangkok, Thailand
- July 12-18, 2003** Pre-Assembly Youth Conference "PAYC", Toronto, Canada

A. PRE COUNCIL YOUTH WORKSHOPS & STEWARDS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

- June 5-7, 1998** Pre-Council Youth Workshop, Geneva Switzerland
Theme: "Ethical Challenges of the Information Society"
- June 8-17, 1998** Council Meeting, Geneva, Switzerland
- June 19-21, 1999** Pre-Council Youth Workshop, Bratislava, Slovakia
Theme: "Children of Reformation in times of society transformation"
- June 22-29, 1999** Council Meeting, Bratislava, Slovakia
- June 10-12, 2000** Pre-Council Youth Workshop in Kisakeskus, Pohja, Finland
Theme: "Future Hopes: Searching with Hope"
- 13-21, 2000** Council Meeting, Turku, Finland
- June 9-11, 2001** Pre-Council Youth Workshop in Geneva, Switzerland
Theme: "Let us seek peace and pursue it"
- June 12-19, 2001** Council Meeting, Geneva, Switzerland
- September 6-8, 2002** Pre-Council Youth Workshop in Wittenberg, Germany. Theme: "A Multicultural Europe: In search of a new vision"
- September 9-17, 2002** Council Meeting, Wittenberg, Germany
- August 26-31, 2004** Pre-Council Youth Workshop in Geneva, Switzerland. Theme: "Unplugging Unemployment: Youth Perspective"

B. INTERNATIONAL YOUTH PROGRAM - TRANSFORMATION THROUGH PARTICIPATION (IYP TTP)

- September 18-25, 2001** International Youth Program 2001-2003; Transformation through Participation, Orientation Conference in Geneva, Switzerland
- June 13-16, 2002** IYP TTP Regional Meeting for Africa
Theme: The Challenges and Possibilities of Economic Globalization: "The Africa Perspective"
- July 23-29, 2002** IYP TTP Regional Meeting for Latin America: El Salvador
- July – August 2002** IYP TTP Regional Meeting for Europe, Bratislava

Youth Internship Program

- _____ (please indicate the year(s) of your internship)

- Youth Liaison 2000-2003

- Youth Liaison 2004-2007

PLEASE RETURN BY July 15, 2005 by e-mail, fax or post TO:
<i>E-mail: mwr@lutheranworld.org</i>
LWF/DMD YOUTH IN CHURCH AND SOCIETY
<i>P.O. Box 2100, CH-1211 GENEVA 2, Switzerland</i>
<i>Fax: +41 22/791 64 01</i>

STATISTICS ON RECEIVED QUESTIONNAIRES

TOTAL NUMBER OF RECEIVED QUESTIONNAIRES : 90 (sent out : 500)

Africa : 21

LUCSA : 3 (Mozambique 1 & South Africa 2)

LUCCEA : 11 (DRC 1, Ethiopia 1, Kenya 3, Madagascar 2, Rwanda 1, Tanzania 3)

LUCWA : 7 (Cameroon 1, Liberia 3, Nigeria 2, Senegal 1)

Asia : 9

NEALUC : 2 (Japan & Hong Kong)

SEALUC : 5 (Indonesia 3, Philippines 2, Australia 1)

SALUC : 1 (India)

Europe : 27

Central and Eastern Europe : 6 (Croatia 1, Estonia 1, Hungary 1, Poland 1, Slovak Rep 2)

Western Europe : 12 (Austria 1, France Malagasy church 1, Germany 8, Netherlands 1)

Northern Europe : 9 (Denmark 3, Finland 4, Iceland 1, Sweden 1)

Latin America : 26

Honduras 2, Argentina 3, Chile 2, Colombia 17, Venezuela 1, Brazil 1

North America : 6

USA 2, Canada 4

PARTICIPANTS OF DIFFERENT PROGRAMS

(total number of participants, if known, is in brackets)

PAYC 1997 : 8 (133)

PAYC 2003 : 28

African Youth Consultation 1998 : 2 (21)

European Youth Consultation 1999 : 3 (36)

Asian Youth Consultation 2001 : 2 (26)

African Youth Consultation 2002 : 5 (28)

North American Youth Consultation 2003 : 3 (10)

Latin American Youth Consultation 2003 : 1 (was not in the list of the meetings)

Pre Council Youth Workshops:

PCYW 1998 : 1

PCYW 1999 : 3

PCYW 2000 : 4 (20)

PCYW 2001 : 2

PCYW 2002 : 2

PCYW 2004 : 6

IYP-TTP : 9

Pilgrimage to Vadstena : 1

Pilgrimage to Jerusalem : 3 (10)

Internship program : 5

Youth Liaisons 2000-2003 : 5 (58)

Youth Liaisons 2004-2007 : 20 (81)

Questionnaires from people who haven't participated to any YICAS programs : 19 youth, 5 adults

Questionnaires from people who indicated participation to other programs than listed in the questionnaire : 5

No questionnaire received from participants of following programs :

Regional Consultations :

Latin America: 1998, Brazil

AIDS – Workshops :

1998, Chennai, India (11)

1999, Managua, Nicaragua (14-17)

APPENDIX 4: Visions for the future (as given in received questionnaires)

This Appendix includes ideas taken from the questionnaires regarding future visions of YICAS work. They have been clustered, but kept in the form in which they were written. Only visions that were mentioned in more than

two different questionnaires are included here. These visions have influenced to the direction, substance and focus of the YICAS Strategic plan 2008-2012.

Communication and information sharing (20 responses)

“Significant improvement could be made in terms of communication.”

All levels of communication and information sharing were mentioned. There was a wish to improve communication between youth (inside of a local church and between churches), between youth and church leaders and between YICAS and member churches. Related to communication between YICAS and member churches it was recommended that:

One should get rid of hierarchical information sharing. YICAS should communicate directly with the youth. More youth should receive information.

YICAS homepage should be updated and improved.

Network (31 responses altogether)

Following ideas were mentioned:

Building and facilitating a vibrant Lutheran network for sharing ideas and innovations in youth work.

Cross-linking especially important for smaller churches.

“It would be interesting to form a continuous forum of discussion via the web, to discuss social items in various languages, and learn to know the solutions which would be presented in other regions.”

“To move beyond church leadership layers and get closer to the youth. Website is one of the best tool.”

Starting to network youth organizations in order to help them broaden their global view.

To have a forum for sharing (essential to meet).

“It would be useful for youth liaisons to come together once every 4 years in Geneva, so that they can see how the organisation works and get to know each other. They have to be stimulated to keep in touch and maybe form partnerships between youth-groups in those countries. Are we not in this world to help and learn from each other?”

Regional work (25 responses altogether)

More emphasis should be given to youth work on regional basis, which was also seen as a way of follow-up and a tool to build a regional network. On the other hand, there is also need to break the gap between the youths in the North and those in the South.

The strongest wish for a regional emphasis comes from Latin America, but many respondents from other regions also mention it.

More youth should get a possibility to participate and to get involved. (16 responses)

Training (35 responses)

- Empowering, encouraging, equipping

It was proposed that training should be organised on the continental level and not globally.

It was not always specified, what should be the content of this training, however the following aspects were mentioned:

- leadership training (to get leaders with international visions, for instance) (5 responses)
- training for youth to be change makers in local and global context (including social issues like HIV/AIDS, globalisation, human rights, democracy)
- better awareness and stronger educational emphasis on the needs of the world outside (7 responses)

Broaden the vision of youth by giving them exposure to other cultures (6 responses)

“By providing high quality training in working in multinational groups on international level and thus equipping young people with skills needed for working in and with LWF.”

Pre Youth Programs can be well used as a training instrument.

Practical aspect: youth should gain practical knowledge about particular problems and learn how to solve them in reality.

Provide youth opportunities to participate in global activities. *“Bring Lutheran youth together, to learn together and to grow together.”*

“Would probably be more useful to learn tools for discussion rather than answering the question, “what do the youth think about...?” Being of similar ages does not mean that we agree on many issues. Finding ways to have respectful conversations, and share each of our perspectives, as well as learning other tools for leadership are most helpful for encouraging young adults to be full participants within the LWF”.

Advocate for youth (31 responses)

Towards member churches:

Make available a youth desk in head offices of member churches.

- Give a voice to the youth in Geneva.
- Creating space for youth to get their voice heard in all decision making.

“To examine and high-light factors which makes it hard for the youth to contribute and play a significant role. The request to have a percentage of young people participating at the assemblies are good but it might be encouraged to implement that more strongly.”

Youth participation: not as spectators but with same rights and obligations as other people.

Mainstream youth: look for ways to integrate youth in the larger work of the LWF, facilitate the integration of youth in their respective communities.

The role of youth in our society has to be strengthened. (2 responses)

Using the capacity of youth: who may already be 30+, who have learnt a lot through YICAS programs. (5 responses)

“It would be important to create ways of keeping up with the young people who have participated in LWF activities and enabling them to have recurrent experiences with LWF so that participating in the work of LWF would be more of a process than a singular experience. One should however avoid creating closed circles of “know people” but at the same time try to make it easy for people with no LWF experience to become acquainted with it.”

Support youth workers whose task would be to activate and inspire young people to act.

“Youth who are active in their own churches (and who would be selected by truly good criteria), AND youth workers, could meet to share experiences and to develop further youth work in different churches, and if these experiences could be brought to the service of the church at large. Achieving this would require a new attitude to the importance of youth in church, and more importantly, heaps of money, which I suppose would be the major problem.”

“The Youth Desk must carry its responsibility that it doesn’t contribute in marginalizing the youth by its own action. ‘The youth’ is not a single-minded group, but contains same diversity as any other age group. Thus the image of single-minded group cannot be advocated by silencing or marginalizing the dissident among ‘the youth’ even for good purpose. The Youth must does act and be treated with dignity and respect as much as any other age group.”

“Managing a global community; youth is not an interest-group as such, young people face the same questions as “adults” and while it is important to have specific programs for youth, young people should also be integrated to all the various working areas of LWF.”

Structures for youth work (18 responses)

- Giving priority for the youth work (5).
- Strong youth desk (4).
- YICAS Secretary: Make the YICAS desk a position which is filled continually, and with continuity between people (9).

“LWF must take more seriously the suggestions that were made in the X assembly concerning the role of the

secretary, because it is necessary to have someone who leads the programmes and keep the whole youth network informed."

Supporting youth work in member churches

"To make global local"

LWF can strengthen member churches by putting in place structures that would be easy to access by churches

Accompanying

Co-operate with member churches and answer to different needs differently.

YICAS secretary must visit member churches (3)

"Diversify the ministries so that the youth have various alternatives how to serve Christ, more than just Sunday school and music, etc,"

Direct financial support for youth programs in a local church

Supporting youth to develop their social programs

Miscellaneous

Continue current programs (8)

"One must pursue with the programmes such IYP-TTP in which the involvement is big, and the projects must have a bigger place and develop because the group involves more and the relationships last longer." (2)

Enforcement of Pre Assemblies, support stewards and youth delegates.

Internship possibilities at LWF.

To have a Lutheran Youth (Prayer) Day once a year, when youth issues would be discussed in all Lutheran churches.

Ecumenical dimension (4)

Bigger degree of co-operation with the WCC and/or anglicans.

Question of quotas

"An important initiative should be to fight against the abuse of quotas. It would be of great importance that the churches could not intentionally combine the youth and women quota resulting in abuse of old women and young men. This has happened in for example council elections since the quotas were introduced." (3)

YICAS should emphasize evangelizing to youth.

What kind of YICAS web-site would benefit you and the youth work of your church most?

News, report, events from individual churches, article written by youth from individual churches. (8)

Resource material (devotion, prayer, songs, youth magazines, links, etc). (20)

Updated Information of YICAS web site (LWF events, outcome of the program and consultation etc, pictures). (22)

Contact addresses of youth and member churches, information sharing platform. (8)

Make available a discussion forum or chat room. (9)

Make available in many languages. (3)

Provide more basic information (who works in YICAS, Lutheran confession etc). (2)

APPENDIX 5: Job description for the Secretary for Youth in Church and Society

THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

JOB DESCRIPTION

Department/Unit: Mission and Development **Date:** 14.7.2006
Position Title: Secretary for Youth in Church and Society
Position No.: 9370.01
Incumbent:
Reports to: Director for Mission and Development

Basic Purpose

To assist LWF and its member churches in promoting the active and meaningful participation of young people in the life, work and decision making of the churches and LWF through advocacy, networking, information sharing, youth leadership training and workshops in line with the established policies and procedures, the recommendations of the DMD Program Committee and the decisions of the Council.

Job Qualifications

University degree in theology or other related field.

Several years of working experience in church youth work, preferably in an international cross-cultural environment.

Fluency in English. Working knowledge of Spanish, French or German desirable.

Computer skills.

Job Environment and Dimensions

This position addresses itself to accompanying the LWF and its member churches to integrate young people and youth issues meaningfully to work, life, decision making and agenda of church and society. Methods are advocacy and awareness raising, information sharing, networking, consultations, campaigns, youth empowerment and youth leadership training, like internship and stewards program - all aiming at inclusive communion and transformation through active youth participation.

This requires organizational skills, planning, facility in communication and the ability to relate to and to motivate people, especially young people, of different nationalities, cultural and social background.

The holder of this position will work closely with member churches and related agencies promoting the involvement of youth and serving as a link in matters concerning youth between them and the LWF. Contact is maintained with all desks within the department, other LWF departments/units, WCC and other ecumenical organizations.

Main Duties:

1. Plans, organizes, implements and follows-up the work of the Youth Desk in close consultation with the Director for Mission and Development and based on the recommendations of the DMD Program Committee and the decisions of the Council;
2. Facilitates and fosters full inclusion and integration of youth and youth concerns in the life and decision making of LWF in all levels (sub-regional, regional, global) and in all areas of work;
3. Accompanies member churches in searching for effective ways to strengthen the youth work and the active participation of young people in the life and work of the churches and generally promotes the ministry to youth and young adults in member churches;
4. Establishes regional and international youth networks and fosters awareness of and responses to issues relating to a greater involvement and participation of youth in churches' governing bodies;
5. With the assistance of LWF Office for Communication Services assumes responsibility for improving and updating YICAS web-site and facilitates smooth information sharing from YICAS desk

to the churches, and to young people in the area;

6. Assumes the organizational responsibility for the implementation of the LWF Youth Internship Program under which youth interns are able to develop their skills in one of the departments/units of the LWF General Secretariat or in one of the LWF regions;
7. Maintains contact with and assists elected youth members on the Council on their task of representing youth and other concerns of their churches;
8. Assists in the international selection of stewards representing various geographical regions who will provide assistance during Council meetings and the Assembly and assumes appropriate supervising responsibilities;
9. Facilitates and supports meaningful youth participation in the Assembly;
10. Performs other related duties as assigned by the director.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Applicant should be under 35 years old.
2. Endorsement by a LWF member church.

Major Challenge

To act as a focal point within the LWF Secretariat in order to give expression to LWF Assembly commitments to meaningfully include youth in the life and decision making of the LWF at all levels.

Note: The work related to the Secretary of Youth in Church and Society (YICAS) is presently being evaluated and a report will be presented to the LWF Council meeting in March 2007. Although most of the duties are expected to be continued, some realignment of the job description, its environment and dimensions may take place.

APPENDIX 6: LWF Youth Strategic Plan 2008-2012

LWF-Youth, former Youth in Church and Society (YICAS), is the Youth Desk of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) lodged in the Department for Mission and Development (DMD). The Desk was established in 1981 to serve and work with young people aged 18-30 in the LWF member churches. LWF-Youth will continue the work of YICAS towards inclusive communion in line with Assembly resolutions.

The First LWF Assembly in Lund in 1947 adopted the following resolution concerning youth: “...we call upon our Lutheran Churches everywhere to give continued and increasing attention to their youth programs...” In 60 years, the approach of the LWF and its member churches to youth concerns has changed substantially. From being an object of the churches’ concern, young people have become active participants in shaping the work and life of the LWF. Participation of youth in LWF Assemblies originates in the decision of the Second LWF Assembly in Hanover in 1952, where it was decided to give youth the opportunity to participate fully in the next and following assemblies. The next step towards stronger participation of youth was taken at the Seventh LWF Assembly in Budapest in 1984, which decided that at least 20% of the delegates at the next Assembly should be youth.

The LWF Youth Strategic plan for the period 2008-2012 is inspired by the visions of young people. It builds on work done previously, while responding to current challenges. There is a slight shift in the strategic approaches from implementing several separate programs to assuming the roles of facilitator, advocator and communicator. LWF Youth will support and facilitate mainstreaming and integration of youth within the LWF Communion. This will be done by working with existing networks, including member churches, youth organizations and other LWF departments, desks and units in collaboration with other global, ecumenical organizations, as well as with local and regional organizations which have the same values and aims. Special attention shall be given to a sustained process.

VISION :

Active, meaningful and equal participation of youth in the life of the LWF Communion and its member churches, and through this, in the holistic mission of God.

MISSION:

To work with and for youth, as well as with and for LWF member churches, to promote the full inclusion of youth and youth concerns in the life and decision-making of church and society in close cooperation with other relevant networks.

LINK TO THE PROPOSED LWF VISION, MISSION, PRIORITY AREAS AND VALUES⁶

LWF Youth shares common values with LWF as a whole. These values are dignity, justice, inclusiveness and accountability, all based on God’s grace received by faith. LWF Youth seeks intentionally to strengthen an active participation and contribution of youth in achieving the overall LWF Vision. LWF Youth, as part of the Department for Mission and Development (DMD), is well placed to work for proposed LWF Priority Areas.

LWF Youth Vision, Mission and Goals are derived from proposed DMD goals on building communion and furthering inclusiveness.

GOALS :

To ensure

- 1) that youth are recognized as significant and valuable resource people integrated within their local church structures and decision-making bodies;
- 2) Youth representation through integration in all LWF (sub-regional, regional, global) activities and youth participation is strengthened
- 3) Youth concerns, perspectives and issues are acted upon within the LWF Communion
- 4) that LWF-Youth provides a visible expression of communion in the world.

⁶ This refers to an ongoing LWF Strategic Planning Process.

STRATEGIC APPROACHES

The following paragraphs refer to the four goals of LWF Youth.

Goal 1. LWF Youth acknowledge an important role of church leaders in achieving active, meaningful and equal participation of youth and strengthened youth leadership in the life of the LWF Communion and its member churches. Advocacy, information sharing and networking will be the most important tools to achieve this end. LWF Youth will use existing opportunities to promote youth participation and adequate youth structures when meeting church leaders. In this strategic plan, youth structures do not necessarily mean an additional paid position in the church, but rather a possibility and a mechanism for youth to become organized and to make plans and democratic decisions on issues concerning and affecting youth. These structures may enhance greatly communication and collaboration between youth in churches, as well as constructive interaction and mutual accountability between local youth and local church.

Goals 2 and 3. Advocacy and youth empowerment will be the tools for working towards meaningful youth integration within LWF and towards the inclusion of youth concerns in the LWF Agenda. LWF Youth will monitor and follow-up consistently to ensure that the Assembly (Budapest, 1984) resolution concerning youth representation is followed in LWF. Youth empowerment will be built on the existing strengths and competence of youth. An inclusive and participatory approach will characterize the work, which will be implemented with and by youth.

Goal 4. Communication will be the most important tool for communion building. LWF Youth will use the opportunities provided by new information technology to connect youth to each other and around common issues. Through Internet and e-mail based communication, LWF Youth can avoid the hierarchical dissemination of information. LWF Youth will look for ways to reach and connect with youth, who have no possibilities to use Internet. Communication will be used to enhance the effectiveness of advocacy and youth empowerment and, thus, to bind together the work of LWF Youth.

OBJECTIVES and ACTIONS to reach the LWF Youth goals

1. GOAL: Youth are recognized as significant and valuable resource people integrated into their local church structures and decision-making bodies
 - 1.1. Church leadership see youth as a potential and asset and, therefore, seek actively to include youth and youth issues in the life and decision making of LWF member churches at all levels.
 - 1.1.1. Motivate and urge churches to create space for youth within existing local programs, structures and decision-making bodies.
 - 1.2. Youth structures are promoted in LWF member churches to secure and enhance interaction between local church and local youth.
 - 1.2.1. Raise awareness among the member churches about the added value of having adequate youth structures in place.
 - 1.2.2. Offer different ideas and models for organizing youth structures.
 - 1.2.3. Develop the full potential of the global network of Youth Liaisons as links between local youth, local church and LWF Youth
2. GOAL: Youth representation is ensured through integration in all LWF (sub-regional, regional, global) activities and youth participation is strengthened
 - 2.1. At least 20% youth quota achieved at all levels (Assembly, Council, Program and Project Committees, Executive Committee, LWF programs and projects and Secretariat)
 - 2.1.1. Monitor that a gender balanced youth quota is achieved through advocacy, co-operation and early follow-up
 - 2.1.2. Hold church leadership and LWF Secretariat accountable for decisions concerning youth participation
 - 2.1.3. Develop mechanisms to ensure streamlined inclusion of youth in LWF
 - 2.2. Youth are empowered to be active and contributing participants
 - 2.2.1. Prepare youth well in advance of programs
 - 2.2.2. Provide leadership training

3. GOAL: Youth concerns, perspectives and issues are acted upon within the LWF Communion
 - 3.1. Youth issues are given appropriate attention in LWF
 - 3.1.1. Ensure, that youth concerns are included in the Agenda of the LWF Assembly and Council Meetings at an early stage
 - 3.1.2. Organize PreYouth Programs to identify youth perspectives and to prepare a youth message
 - 3.1.3. Further develop systems to monitor how youth issues are acted upon

4. GOAL: LWF-Youth provide a visible expression of communion in the world.
 - 4.1. Communion is strengthened through opportunities for living with and among one another.
 - 4.1.1. Link youth networks with possibilities offered by different member churches and the Communion at large
 - 4.1.2. Provide and inform about internship possibilities within the Communion
 - 4.2. Communion is strengthened and made real through practicing faith together
 - 4.2.1. Share liturgical resources and testimonies from different regions
 - 4.2.2. Promote common prayer and the use of the LWF Sunday prayer calendar among youth networks
 - 4.3. Communion is strengthened through working together on issues of common interest
 - 4.3.1. Identify common concerns
 - 4.3.2. Facilitate a campaign on youth concerns in line with the next Assembly theme
 - 4.4. Communion is built and nurtured through communication and sharing of information
 - 4.4.1. Further develop a relevant and timely updated LWF Youth web site for sharing resources (songs, prayers, educational materials) and information on current youth issues.
 - 4.4.2. Keep youth networks informed and strengthened through e-mail correspondence
 - 4.4.3. Develop ways to reach and connect with youth, who do not have the possibility to use Internet.
 - 4.4.4. Increase the number of youth related articles and features in LWI

