

YOUTH AT THE CROSSROADS: A GENERATION WITH UNTAPPED POTENTIAL

THERE ARE MORE YOUTH (AGES 15-24) IN THE WORLD TODAY THAN EVER BEFORE.

While many of today's youth inhabit a world of unprecedented opportunity and possibility, millions more are being left out.¹

87%
OF YOUTH LIVE IN
DEVELOPING
COUNTRIES



The world is experiencing an unprecedented youth unemployment bulge.

NEARLY HALF OF ALL THE WORLD'S YOUTH 621 MILLION are not employed, in school or in training.² Today's youth are **3X MORE LIKELY** to be unemployed than adults.³



120 MILLION more youth entered the workforce in 2013, but...



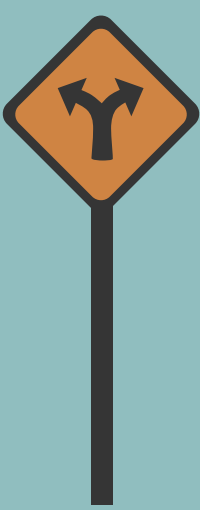
One key driver is **LACK OF EDUCATION AND LITERACY.** In nearly all developing countries, the highest unemployment rate is among people with a primary education or less.

1 IN 5 young people have not completed their elementary education.⁵



Globally, there are **123 MILLION** illiterate youth **TWO-THIRDS** of who are girls.⁶

These youth are stuck: left at a crossroads where they are trying to choose their identity and place in society, but with little opportunity to reach their full potential. They should be the future leaders, workers and citizens of their communities and nations. Unfortunately, with few choices, many disenfranchised youth are vulnerable to a life of poverty or violence.



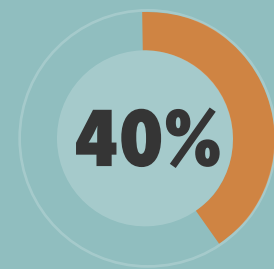
Unemployed, out-of-school and idle, millions of youth have a negative sense of their future and are at risk for early pregnancy, substance abuse, suicide or participation in gangs, militias, trafficking and extremist groups.

MORE THAN 200 MILLION YOUTH ARE WORKING-POOR, EARNING UNDER **US \$2 A DAY**,



mostly employed in the informal sectors of developing countries.⁷

In search of an income and an identity, many youth join violent movements. A 2011 World Bank study found that **40% OF THOSE WHO JOIN REBEL MOVEMENTS** in Africa are motivated by a lack of jobs.⁸



WE MUST INVEST IN YOUTH SKILLS AND VIABILITY, INCLUDING:



Basic skills including literacy, financial literacy and digital literacy



Access to capital including savings, microloans and insurance



Life skills including critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity



Relational support including peer support, mentors and business coaches



Productive capacity including technical and vocational skills

THE WORLD IS AT A CROSSROADS: WILL WE INVEST IN THE NEXT GENERATION?

The Millennium Development Goals expire this year. World leaders are proposing numerous Sustainable Development Goals to guide development over the next 15 years, including the following goal indicators:



Ensure that all youth and adults have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship



Ensure that all youth and adults, both women and men, reach a proficiency level in literacy and numeracy sufficient to fully participate in society



Substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training

The real test of this pledge will be whether it has an impact on the most vulnerable children, who live and die unseen, unheard and uncared for.



Sources:

1) UN World Youth Report 2012, The UN Focal Point for Youth, 2012.

2) World Development Report 2013, World Bank.

3) Global Employment Trends for Youth 2012, May 2012, Geneva: International Labour Organization.

4) International Youth Foundation 2013 Annual Report.

5) (a) "Progress in Getting All Children to School Stalls, but Some Countries Show the Way Forward!" UNESCO Institute for Statistics and Education for All Global Monitoring Report, June, 2014.

(b) "Youth and Skills: Putting Education to Work," Education for All Global Monitoring Report, UNESCO, 2012.

6) "Adult and Youth Literacy: National, regional and global trends, 1985-2015" UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2013.

7) The Youth Employment Crisis: A Call for Action, Resolution and Conclusions of the 101st Session of the International Labour Conference, 2012, Geneva, ILO.

8) World Development Report, 2011 "Unemployment and Participation in Violence".