

National and International Perspectives on Youth Policies and Programs
Professor Joan Dassin
Spring 2018 Module 2
Thursdays 2:00-4:50PM
HS-312f

The Heller School for Social Policy and Management
Brandeis University
Sustainable International Development Graduate Program

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Office Hours: By appointment

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1. If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have an accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.
2. You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. The University policy on academic honesty is distributed annually as section 5 of the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*. Instances of alleged dishonesty are subject to possible judicial action. Potential sanctions include failure in the course and suspension from the University. If you have any questions about this policy, please ask.

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Course Description

Youth, development and poverty are inextricably linked. An estimated 1.8 billion young people between the ages of 10-24 constitute the world's largest youth population ever. 65% of India's 1.25 billion people are 35 or under, and half are under 25. Developing countries are home to 89% of the world's 10-24 year olds (Office of the Secretary General's Envoy on Youth, 2017). The poorest, least developed countries typically have the largest proportion of young people in their populations; by 2050, 9 out of 10 young people are expected to be living in developing countries (www.youthpolicy.org). Policies and programs that connect young people to employment, quality education and health services, help them to mitigate the risks of becoming involved in violence and civil

conflict, and promote youth civic engagement, leadership and national service are therefore critical for economic growth, as well as for building stable, productive societies over the long term.

It is these policies and programs that will be the principal focus of the course. Managers, planners, policy analysts and researchers alike need to know about effective youth programs and the public policies designed to bring them to scale. To situate specific policies in the youth sector as a whole, the first session of the course will review the demographic trends that have produced a 'youth bulge' in most developing countries. We will also assess various arguments about the centrality of effective policies for youth to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the second session, we will examine the principal youth policies that currently exist at the global, national and regional levels, identifying underlying legislation, key institutional actors, and the most common types of youth-oriented projects funded by national governments and through international cooperation agencies and NGOs.

Sessions three through six will delve more deeply into research, policy and practice on a series of key topics that shape the youth sector. These include: (a) employment and entrepreneurship; (b) education and health services; (c) interventions for youth caught in situations of internal conflict and violence, and the risks of migration; and (d) efforts to build civic engagement, leadership and national service. In the course of these thematic sessions, we will pay special attention to the relationship between academic research, policy formation and program implementation and evaluation as it informs and leads to measurable social change. Intellectual and analytical frameworks such as concepts of youth vulnerabilities and positive youth development will also be introduced. In the seventh and final session, we will focus on the failings of the development sector in addressing youth issues, and introduce frameworks and assessment tools that can help to improve project outcomes in this critical sector.

Specific Goals

- To understand the demography and importance of the youth sector in developing countries
- To gain knowledge of the main characteristics of national, regional and global youth policies
- To identify the key institutional actors and principal forms of intervention in the youth sector
- To expose students to current research, policy and practice in major areas of youth policy, with a focus on employment and entrepreneurship, education and health services, interventions to mitigate the risk of youth involvement in violence and civil conflict, including during and after migration, and programs to promote civic engagement, leadership and national service
- To introduce students to some of the major intellectual and analytical frameworks in the youth sector, such as vulnerabilities and the positive youth development paradigm

- To identify “best practices” as well as the most common reasons for policy and program failure in youth programs
- To expose students to the analytic, strategic and assessment tools for understanding and evaluating youth policies and programs
- To help students apply the information they learn in the course to a youth policy area of interest to them

Core Competency Statement

This course teaches concepts and skills that have been identified as core competencies for a degree in SID, although students in all degree programs may enroll in the course.

Youth development is central to social and economic development, linking the topic of this course to SID’s required literacy in the history, concepts, and goals of sustainable development, including theories of what development is, how it occurs, and how it affects economic, social and environmental sustainability (*Competency 1*). Similarly, most youth programs and policies are subject to the interaction of ecological, social, political and economic systems and to the relationship between market forces, governance institutions, social welfare strategies and environmental management approaches to desired development outcomes, requiring awareness and understanding of these interconnections (*Competencies 2 and 3, respectively*). The course also relies on contextual analysis to determine the appropriateness of specific youth policies and programs for certain countries and groups, especially marginalized youth in poor communities (*Competency 4*).

Competency 5 on problem solving methodologies is less connected to the course outline, although we do focus on using evidence and research to frame programs, policy and advocacy. *Competency 6* on use of evidence is addressed directly in the course and opportunities will be created for students to undertake research and writing on topics related to youth development, such as the role of families, education and health services and national service programs. *Competency 7* on scarcity and distribution is only indirectly connected to the course, although the focus on youth in poor communities implicitly raises these concepts. As in any policy area, youth policies and programs may be designed to address specific problems in an incremental or comprehensive manner, thus alerting students to the function of time in social change processes (*Competency 8*). Finally, the course will help students to understand management and leadership functions in organizations promoting youth development (*Competency 9*), and will also enable students to develop and practice their communication skills (*Competency 10*).

Sustainable Development Statement:

Issues of sustainability of policy and program impacts in the youth sector are closely connected to the content of this course. Starting with an analysis of the demographics of the youth sector in developing countries, the course examines the potential contributions of youth to equitable growth and social development. Focusing on youth

from poor or marginalized communities, the course examines how specific policies and programs in key areas for intervention not only address youth vulnerabilities but also harness the energy, idealism and commitment of youth for building more equitable, stable and peaceful societies. Youth are a key demographic group for both the present and future of development, especially in low and middle-income countries where they represent a significant portion of the population.

Race and Ethnicity Statement:

This course examines youth policies and programs from a comparative perspective, as seen by researchers, policy makers and young people themselves who come from different cultural traditions. It is based on understanding the social construction of race, ethnicity, social class and other markers of 'difference' in contemporary societies, and how such perceptions lead to bias, social exclusion and marginalization in specific policy areas.

Gender Perspective Statement:

By definition, the concerns of both women and men in development need to be considered both separately and together, recognizing that different societies employ diverse approaches to gender relations. Students will learn how to incorporate a gender lens into discussions of youth policies and programs. They will investigate whether specific policies lead to discriminatory practices that impede the full participation of, or condone stigmatization and violence against, individuals or groups with diverse sexual preferences and gender identities.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance at all sessions
2. Prompt arrival
3. Preparation of all readings
4. Participation in class discussions and small group work, and leading class discussions as requested
5. Timely submission/presentation of assignments
6. Class exercises and presentations
7. Helpfulness to other students.

Your **Grade** will be calculated as follows

1. Class attendance and participation (10%)
2. Reading responses (5 responses = 20%)
3. Group project (1 = 20%)
4. Final research paper (50%)

Useful Sources:

International Labor Organization (ILO) 2015. *Global Employment Trends for Youth: Scaling Up Investments in Decent Jobs for Youth*. Geneva, Switzerland: ILO. Available

online: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_412015.pdf

Materials on: www.youthpolicy.org

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (2014). *The Power of 1.8 Billion: Adolescents, Youth and the Transformation of the Future*. UNFPA *State of the World Population 2014*. New York: UNFPA. Available online: http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/EN-SWOP14-Report_FINAL-web.pdf

Readings indicated under each session are available online. (Note that Safari does not always open the links in this document; however, they seem to open in Chrome. All reading will also be posted as PDF files on Latte under this course.)

Class Schedule and Readings:

PART I – OVERVIEW OF YOUTH ISSUES AND YOUTH POLICIES

Session 1: Demographic Trends, the Youth ‘Bulge’ and the Importance of Youth for Sustainable Development

The class will open with introductions by the participants who will explain why they are interested in youth policy and programs and what their experience has been in the youth sector. The professor will then review the syllabus, the class assignments and the grading system. She will explain the rationale, organization and scope of the course.

The substantive portion of the session will focus on demographic trends that are reshaping both the size of the youth population and the proportion of youth in the global population. Discussion will focus on the major challenges facing youth in developing countries. These include overcoming poverty, securing access to stable employment, quality education and health services, mitigating the impacts of exposure to conflict and violence, including the risks of migration, and creating opportunities for civic engagement and national service. We will examine arguments for investing in youth and placing youth at the center of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.

Readings and Resources:

Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth (2018). #YouthStats. Available online: <http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/youth-statistics/>

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (2014). *The Power of 1.8 Billion: Adolescents, Youth and the Transformation of the Future*. UNFPA *State of the World Population 2014*. New York: UNFPA. Read the following chapters:

Chapter 1: Youth: big numbers, big challenges, big possibilities, pp. 1-13.

Chapter 7: The transformation of the future and the case for young people, pp. 91-102.

Lin, Justin (2012). *Youth Bulge: A Demographic Dividend or a Demographic Bomb in Developing Countries?* The World Bank: Washington, D.C. Available online: <http://blogs.worldbank.org/developmenttalk/youth-bulge-a-demographic-dividend-or-a-demographic-bomb-in-developing-countries>

Recommended:

Lord, Kristen (2016). Here Come the Young. *Foreign Policy*, August 2, 2016. Available online: <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/08/12/here-comes-the-young-youth-bulge-demographics/>

Gribble, James and Bremner, Jason (2012). *The Challenge of Attaining the Demographic Dividend*. Policy Brief. Washington, D.C.: Population Reference Bureau. Available online: <http://www.prb.org/pdf12/demographic-dividend.pdf>

Session 2: Youth Policies and Programs

This session will continue our mapping of youth issues. First, we will examine United Nations Resolution 2250, passed in December 2015, the first ever Security Council resolution on young people. We will analyze the UN recommendations for action on youth, peace and security now recognized as the main planks in global youth policy. We will also work with resources and data on youth policies in various countries and regions.

Required:

UN Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015). Available online: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2250\(2015\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2250(2015))

Farrow, Alex (2018). Officially Tasked to Misbehave: Introducing the Second Youth Envoy Jayathma Wickramanayake. <http://www.youthpolicy.org/blog/participation-global-governance/tasked-to-misbehave/>

Karsten, Andreas (2018). Why Does the Youth Sector Fool Itself with Commitments it Fails to Live Up To? <http://www.youthpolicy.org/blog/participation-global-governance/fooling-ourselves/>

Data and reports on www.youthpolicy.org

PART II – MAJOR YOUTH POLICY AND PROGRAM AREAS

Session 3: Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship

This session will introduce the major methodological challenges involved in analyzing youth employment, including defining types of employment inadequacy, especially in

developing countries and among disadvantaged youth. It will examine the role of education and training in creating youth employment, and assess the effectiveness of different types of policies and programs designed to connect youth to labor markets. We will take a special look at entrepreneurship – often touted as the best solution to youth unemployment – and its emerging role in the developing world.

Required:

International Labor Organization (2015). *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015: Scaling up investments in decent jobs for youth*. Geneva: International Labor Organization. Available online:

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_412015.pdf

Read: Chapter 1 - Introduction, pp. 1-8

Chapter 2 - Global and Regional Outlook for Youth Employment, pp. 9-23

Chapter 5 - Policies for Youth Employment, pp. 61-72

Mourshed, Mona (2013). *Solving Global Youth Unemployment*. Mona Mourshed at TEDX UNPlaza. Available online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wDjD8iAgnR4>

Chatterjee, Siddath and Mahama, John Dramani Mahama. (2017). Promise or peril? Africa's 830 million young people by 2015). *Thomson Reuters Foundation News*, 11 August 2017.

Obonyo, Raphael. (2018). Youth Unemployment in Kenya. InfoBrief. Nairobi: The Youth Congress.

Work4Youth Project: ILO and MasterCard Foundation

<http://www.ilo.org/employment/areas/youth-employment/work-for-youth/lang--en/index.htm>

Ashoka Foundation. (2015). Learning from social enterprises. How to solve youth unemployment in Africa. Devex. <https://www.devex.com/news/learning-from-social-enterprises-how-to-solve-youth-unemployment-in-africa-86444>

Recommended:

McKenzie, David and Woodruff, Christopher (2012). What are we learning from business training and entrepreneurship evaluations around the developing world? *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper No. 6202*. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank. Available online: <http://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/pdf/10.1596/1813-9450-6202>

Session 4: Youth, Education, Health and Development: The Unfinished Agenda

This session focuses on young people's access to education and health services in the developing world. For education, what is the unfinished education agenda, and will the

emerging emphasis on secondary, vocational and tertiary education provide young people in developing countries with the skills and knowledge they need to make a successful transition to adulthood and the world of work? For health, what are the priorities for young people, especially in the areas of sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment?

Required:

Education:

UN Envoy on Youth (2016). #YouthStats. *Education*. Available online:

<http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/YouthStatseducation.pdf>

UNESCO-UNEVOC (2018). *Moving Forward*. Bonn, Germany: International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

<https://unevoc.unesco.org/up/UNESCO-UNEVOC%20Biennial%20Report%202016-2017.pdf>

Network for International Policy and Cooperation in Education and Training (Norrags) (2011). Towards a New Global World of Skills Development? TVET's turn to make its mark. No.46, September 2011. *NORRAG NEWS*. Available online:

http://www.norrags.org/fileadmin/Policy%20Briefs/NN46_PolicyBrief_EN.pdf

Read:

King, Kenneth. Editorial: Now That TVET Has the Floor – What is the Story Line, pp. 10-12.

McGrath, Simon. Skills for Development? Rethinking the Kind of Development We Want TVET to Support. pp. 16-18.

McGrath, Simon. (2012) "Vocational education and training for development: A policy in need of a theory?" *International Journal of Educational Development* 32. pp. 623-631.

UNESCO (2012). *Youth and Skills: Putting education to work. Global Monitoring Report*. Paris: UNESCO. Read Part 2, Youth, Skills and Work, pp. 174-305. Available online:

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002180/218003e.pdf>

Health:

UN Envoy on Youth (2016). #YouthStats. *Health*. Available online:

<http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/health/>

World Health Organization (2014). *Health for the World's Adolescents. A second chance in the second decade*. Geneva: World Health Organization.

http://www.who.int/maternal_child_adolescent/documents/second-decade/en/

Session 5: Youth, Violence and Political Conflict

This session examines the causes and consequences of youth involvement in armed

conflict and in post-war settings, particularly in Africa. It also explores gang violence, especially in Central America. What policy approaches and types of interventions are most effective in these situations? How central are they to youth development in general?

Required:

Somers, Marc (2015). *The Outcast Majority: War, Development and Youth in Africa*. Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press.

Read:

Chapter 1, Demography and Alienation, pp. 1-26

Chapter 2, The Wartime Template, pp. 27-63.

Chapter 3, Moving Forward, pp. 64-123.

Slutzker, Jillian (2015). Rethinking Youth Risk and Response in Central America. Creative Associates International: Washington, D.C. Available online:

www.creativeassociatesinternational.com/feature-story/rethinking-youth-risk-response-in-central-america/

Recommended:

Mercy Corps (no date). *Youth and Conflict: Best Practices and Lessons Learned*. Portland, Oregon. Available online:

http://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/youth_and_conflict_best_practices_-_hi_res_final.pdf

Session 6: Youth Civic Engagement, Leadership, and National Service

This session examines the nature of youth civic engagement, leadership and national service programs and their impact on employability, upward mobility and community engagement, especially for poor and at risk youth. We will consider various types of youth participation programs to identify those elements, such as volunteerism and group membership, which produce the strongest positive outcomes. To what degree do these programs result in quality employment, boost civic participation, and enable youth to contribute substantively to peace and development? Are they equally applicable in different national and regional settings? What priority should be given to youth civic engagement, leadership and national service programs in youth development policy?

Required:

Clement, Rachel, et al (2014). *Youth Civic Engagement and Leadership*. Washington, D.C.: Elliott School of International Affairs, The George Washington University and ChildFund International. Available online: http://youthtoday.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2017/11/Youth-CEL_FINAL.pdf

Read: A Review of Literature from Academia and Practice, pp. 2-19
Insights from Experts in the Field, pp. 19-36.

Israel, Ron and Nogueira-Sanca, Sarah (2011). *Youth Service Programs: A Study of Promising Models in International Development*. Washington, D.C.: USAID. Available online:

<http://www.equip123.net/docs/e3-YSP.pdf>

Lawson, Marian L. (2018). *The Peace Corps-Current Issues*. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RS21168.pdf>

Golombek, Silvia (2002). *What Works in Youth Participation: Case Studies from Around the World*. Washington, D.C.: International Youth Foundation. Available online:

http://www.iyfnet.org/sites/default/files/WW_Youth_Participation.pdf

PART III – ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Session 7: Assessment and Evaluation: Learning From Failures, Crafting New Frameworks

This session will consider why youth policies in developing countries often fail, and what can be done to improve the outcomes of policies and programs in specific settings. Students will be introduced to a comprehensive tool for assessing youth wellbeing, first published in 2014 by the Center for International and Strategic Studies and the International Youth Foundation. We will conclude the course with a reflection on the characteristics and ‘transferability’ of successful youth policies and programs.

Required:

Sommers, Marc. (2015). *The Outcast Majority: War, Development and Youth in Africa*. Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press.

Read:

Chapter 4, The Development Response, pp. 124-175

Chapter 5, Warlords and Stovepipes, pp. 176-186

Chapter 6, Toward Youth Inclusion: A Framework for Change, pp. 187-200

Sharnu, Ritu (2017). *2017 Global Youth Wellbeing Index*. Washington, D.C.: International Youth Foundation. <https://www.youthindex.org/full-report>

Final Paper Due the last day of class, Tuesday, May 7, by 11:55pm.

6-7 Pages, Times New Roman Font #12, Single Spaced, 1” Margins.

Option 1: Select a *youth issue* in which you have a special interest (e.g. employment, education, health care, migration, national service). What policies and programs are in place to improve life chances for youth in poor or marginalized communities? What are the goals and objectives? Are the policies and programs successful, and if so, why? Based on the readings and your own further research, what elements should be in

place to achieve positive outcomes for youth? Select one or more countries as the basis for your paper. You may select a policy area we covered in the course or another area (e.g. climate action) that you find compelling.

Option 2: Select an *organization or program* that focuses on youth development. Based on your readings for the course plus additional sources, analyze the approach taken to youth issues. How is the target population defined, and what activities are included? Are evaluation results available? If not, which frameworks should be applied? As in Option 1, you should select an organization that works in one more countries. You may select a programmatic area we covered in the course or another area (e.g. leadership development) that you find compelling.