

Questions

a) In your town or city, what sectors of the economy (both formal and informal) are young women and men engaged in? What kinds of work are they doing?

Response: Most of the young people in Ghana are engaged in the informal sector. Most of them are serving as head porter what is popularly called Kayayei in big cities and suburban communities. Most of the young people who want to enter into the formal sector do not have the capacity to get through that and since the Government does not have the means to get them through to the formal sector and their parents can not do more because of the high cost of training requirements to be able to get into the formal sector most of the youth divert to the informal sector. This argument is supported by the fact that in the age of globalization, every opportunity that will lead an individual to the form sector is full of the “who you know” phenomena and also competition.

b) What do you see as the consequences of urban economic inequality for youth? Are the consequences different for young women compared to young men?

Response: I think that when there is inequality in urban economies youth who suffer, suffer to the horror of urban economies. Victims who are young and have suffered inequality will engage in social vices such as armed robbery.

c) What three strategies or initiatives would you recommend to your municipal government to increase the economic options for young women and men in your town or city?

Response: Governments should have a clear National Youth Policy with programmes and projects for youth development and also to cater for rising unemployment situation of graduate students and other vocational/technically trained young people. For countries like Ghana, a National Youth Policy is long over due.

d) What should be the role of young women and men in the above mentioned strategies or initiatives?

Response: I think young people should be ready to take up the challenge of being enterprenures. There is the rising number of youth population in most developing countries and institutions are training more young people who graduate and expect to be employed and given wages by the government. Government can not do it all alone and as such young people must be ready to take risk and create their own employment. In this sense the rate unemployment and underemployment in most developing economies will reduce.

Questions

a) What are the major urban environmental issues in your town or city? Do you see a differential impact of these issues on women and men?

Response: In my city there is the pollution of the environment by the industries who release fumes and other harmful gases into the environment. Others people like unprofessional fishermen uses poisonous substances like DDT to get their seafood/fish.

I think men and women suffer alike as men and women are equally involved in activities like Agriculture. Climate change has impacted on the weather in Ghana and in some cases people have lost their farm products to floods.

b) Are young women and men in your town or city engaged in urban environmental issues? Please elaborate how. If not, why do you think they are not engaged?

Response: Most of the young people in Ghana, for me are not doing creditability well as compared to what other young people in other countries are doing. My interaction with most young people has shown that most of the youth are of the perception that you don't need to take practical issues such as this when you are in school or you are still a student. Some also see themselves to be young. Those who are also into youth work and advocacy work are not undertaking the real practical activities that will address some of the challenges that confront societies and cities. But thanks to the work of youth groups like Young People We Care (YPWC), this year the main theme its Global Youth Service Day (GYSD) was on addressing climate change. The GYSD is an annual event that celebrates the contributions of young volunteers, and the contributions made by the community (public, private, and nonprofit sectors) to empower youth. Today we need to empower, tomorrow's generation. They are the ones who are most threatened by climate change and they need to be at the forefront of the fight to solve it.

The YPWC team and the youth participants to the GYSD issued a declaration to call on developed economies to:

- ✚ implement emission cuts and abide by current targets;
- ✚ Meet their aid commitments towards the achievement of the MDGs;
- ✚ Provide additional aid for people in the developed world to be able to adapt to the ever worsening climate situation.
- ✚ Create attractive incentives for poor countries to limit their emissions while safeguarding their right to development.

For the developing and underdeveloped economies a call was made to them to:

- ✚ Ensure the ban (or high taxing)of machines that produce CFCs
- ✚ Integrate climate change concerns in the school curriculum
- ✚ Prioritize the use of renewable energy resources;
- ✚ Support communities at a local as well as national level.
- ✚ Incorporate disaster risk reduction strategies into the MDG development plans.

The event presented a big challenge, but was highly successful. Thank you to the volunteer support that young people gave to this project. 100 tree seedlings were planted and are now

being cared for by the student participants with guidance of the project coordinator of this project and an Agriculture tutor of Gyinyase Junior High School.

c) As a young woman or young man, what do you think are the three major urban environmental issues that could enable harmonious urbanization?

Responses:

- Education on climate change, its impact on communities and how young people can take local action to address the climate change crisis;
- Proper urban planning that incorporates the fact that human populations are going to increase and the need to have proper waste disposal strategies.
- Increased opportunities for young people

d) What do you see as the role of young women and men in bringing this about environmental change?

Response: Young people should act as change agents wherever they find themselves and advocate for environmental change.

Responses from:

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