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OFID

THE OPEC FUND
FOR INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

Quarterly



Working with Youth toward sustainable future

- Youth as agents of change • One Young World 2011
- OFID joins UN High-level Group on Sustainable Energy
- Mozambique: pursuing development of natural and human potential

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Uniting against Poverty

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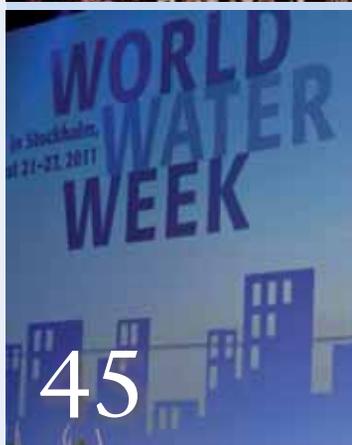
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Working with Youth toward sustainable future

The more than one billion young people (age 15-24) who live in our world today – most of them in the developing countries – are critical to sustainable development and inclusive growth. They deserve the close attention and support of development policy makers and practitioners, worldwide.

Many obstacles remain to be overcome for young people in developing countries to realize their full potential. These include unemployment, poor health, hunger and malnutrition and the digital divide.

Helping resolve problems facing youth, particularly in the world's poorest countries, is at the heart of OFID's development cooperation efforts. Central to these efforts are investment in capacity building and vocational training to build knowledge economies and help the youth meet the requirements of an increasingly competitive job market. These and related efforts were stepped up in light of the *International Year of the Youth*, August 12, 2010 – August 11, 2011.

In fostering national competitiveness and employment creation, OFID invests extensively in the education of future generations through various public and private sector schemes aimed

at enhancing the quality of both primary and secondary education, establishing centers of excellence, and building, rehabilitating and expanding schools, universities and research institutions, especially for young women. OFID also supports technical, technological, and vocational training for youth – including a vocational training and skills development project in Yemen, and skills training for marginalized youth in the West Bank.

Particular attention is paid to creating decent employment opportunities for youth in the farm and off-farm economies of rural areas in the South- in line with the international goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all. OFID further enhances food security for youth by providing access to resources including micro-credit; inputs such as seeds and fertilizers, and by providing grant support for emergency food aid and science and agricultural technology education in both urban and rural

areas. In addition to direct support to agriculture and rural development – amounting to US\$1.5 billion or 16 percent of OFID's cumulative public sector lending – OFID invests heavily in rural infrastructure, including roads

OFID invests extensively in the education of future generations to help foster national competitiveness and employment creation.

and the energy sector, which are essential for food production and transport, as well as private sector growth and employment creation, and Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs). Conscious of the importance of access to broadband and ICT provision for young women and men, OFID is intensifying its contributions to improving access to and use of ICTs for particularly African youth. Activities include E-learning on public health in the Gambia and Ghana, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO). OFID is also stepping up its public and private sector financing for the expansion of telecommunications – including mobile communications – in the South.

Poor health remains a major obstacle to empowering and maximizing the potential of youth. Whereas the majority of young people are healthy, close to two million die each year from largely preventable causes, including HIV/AIDS. OFID is a determined partner in the global battle against HIV/AIDS, providing AIDS prevention, treatment, care, and support under its *Special Grant Account for HIV/AIDS Operations*. Particular attention is being paid to containing the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), where young women bear the brunt of the HIV/AIDS burden. Activities include grant aid to help reduce the impact of HIV/AIDS on young people in Namibia in collaboration with UN AMICAALL. Other areas of assistance are advocacy, capacity

building, institutional strengthening, technical support, and measures to support blood safety, legal reform, and research and vaccine development.

Furthermore, OFID sponsors young scientists and researchers at conferences, workshops and similar events, and offers scholarships through its special *Scholarship Awards*. Initiatives include OFID sponsorship of 20 young delegates from 20 countries to the First *One Young World Summit*, London, February 2010. More recently, OFID again sponsored the participation of 25 young delegates from all developing regions in the second *One Young World Summit*, Zurich, Switzerland, September 1-4, 2011. OFID further

By investing in the health, education and computer literacy of young people, and by offering projects and learning opportunities which provide young people with crucial skills, OFID is working with the youth of the world to alleviate poverty.

sponsored the participation of 66 young economists and researchers from almost 20 developing countries to attend the July 2011 61st Meeting of Nobel Laureates and August 2011 4th Meeting on Economic Sciences, of the *Lindau Foundation*, Germany. Similar support has been provided towards the 2009 and 2010 Lindau Meetings, based on the shared ideals and a common vision that human capacity building is crucial for all societies if they are to escape the vicious circle of illiteracy and poverty.

By investing in the health, education, and computer literacy of young people, and by offering projects and learning opportunities which provide young people with crucial skills, OFID is effectively working with the youth of the world to alleviate poverty. ■

Youth as Agents of Change

Some 1.8 billion people across the world or, roughly, a quarter of the world's population, are youth or young people aged 15 to 24 years. Almost 85 percent of these youth live in developing countries; a population set to rise to 89.5 percent by 2025. The majority of them live in Asia (62 percent), followed by Africa (17 percent), where population growth will be fastest. The potential of young people in accelerating the process of sustainable growth and development was highlighted during the *International Year of the Youth*, which covered the period August 12, 2010 to August 11, 2011.

BY FATIMAH ZWANIKKEN



INTERNATIONAL
YEAR OF
YOUTH
AUGUST 2010-2011
OUR YEAR OUR VOICE

Many obstacles remain to be overcome for young people in developing countries to realize their full potential. These include high unemployment rates, environmental degradation, poor health, hunger and mal-nutrition, and the digital divide. Resolving these problems will require profound economic, political and social change involving first and foremost the youth itself.

I. Socially Responsible Entrepreneurship

Creating productive employment for youth is the most effective way to meet the poverty reduction and related United Nations *Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)*, and promote social integration. However, particularly the young face most difficulties in finding decent work, and today, more youth are unemployed than ever before. In the aftermath of the global economic and financial crisis, the number of

young people without work reached a record 81.9 million in 2010, or nearly 40 percent of the world's total unemployed.

Although the global employment crisis is affecting both young men and women around the world, young women are unduly affected by rising unemployment. Girls and young women are often disfavored and denied access to employment opportunities. The inability to find decent work can harm a young person's career prospects, with potentially lifelong implications in terms of employability and income, and create a sense of frustration, marginalization, and alienation, exacerbating social problems and political instability associated with high unemployment figures. Even those young people who are employed are subject to longer working hours with low productivity and earnings under informal and insecure work arrangements. About half of the world's 1.8 billion youth live on less than US\$2 a day. ►



◀ In 2008, some 152 million young workers or 28 percent of all young workers in the world were living with their families on less than US\$1.25 a day.

The international goal of *full and productive employment* as well as *decent work for all* remains a distant dream for millions of youth, worldwide. Despite efforts by national governments to diversify the economy and create private sector growth and employment opportunities, unemployment figures remain highest in the Middle East (25.1 percent) and North Africa (23.6 percent), followed by Central and South-Eastern Europe and the CIS (18.9 percent), and Developed Economies and the EU (18.2 percent)¹.

Problems of high youth unemployment were discussed in the September 2011 *One Young World* – a global youth leadership summit bringing together 1,200 delegates primarily under 25 from over 170 countries spread across the world. At the Summit, the majority of youth opined that youth unemployment should be addressed mainly through *socially responsible business* – rather than state intervention or the private sector – particularly through social business facilitated by innovations in information and communications technologies (ICTs) and social media networking.

II. Sustainable Food Production

Many young people enter adolescence undernourished, and are unable to reach their full potential because of poverty-related hunger and poor health. The ongoing food and climate change crises, rapid population growth, land-degradation, and a systematic neglect of investment in agriculture are exacerbating existing food security problems in the South, making food out of reach for many more young men and women, and reversing progress towards the first MDG of halving the number suffering from hunger and malnutrition by 2015 (MDG1). Without investment in modern, science-intensive commercial agricultural systems, developing countries cannot reach their full capacity, and many youth in the South will continue to struggle to increase food production using low-productivity practices.

About half of the world's youth currently works in the agricultural sector. However, rather than becoming the farmers of tomorrow, many poor young women and men in develop-

ing countries leave their rural homes in the hope for a better future in urban areas. Reversing the massive rural-urban migration trend by investing in agriculture and creating new employment opportunities for youth in small-holder agriculture and off-farm economies of rural areas in the South is key for creating vibrant rural economies in the South, and boosting food security.

III. Environmental Protection

In countries where population growth is rapid and poverty endemic, young people are particularly vulnerable to the consequences of environmental degradation, including problems of food and water security. The largest population increases and the most fragile environmental conditions are found in SSA, where 70 percent lives in rural areas and makes a living from agriculture and forest resources. The majority of the rural poor, including youth, has no choice but to overexploit their low-potential land through low-input and low-productivity agricultural practices (overgrazing, soil-mining, deforestation), which leads to land degradation.

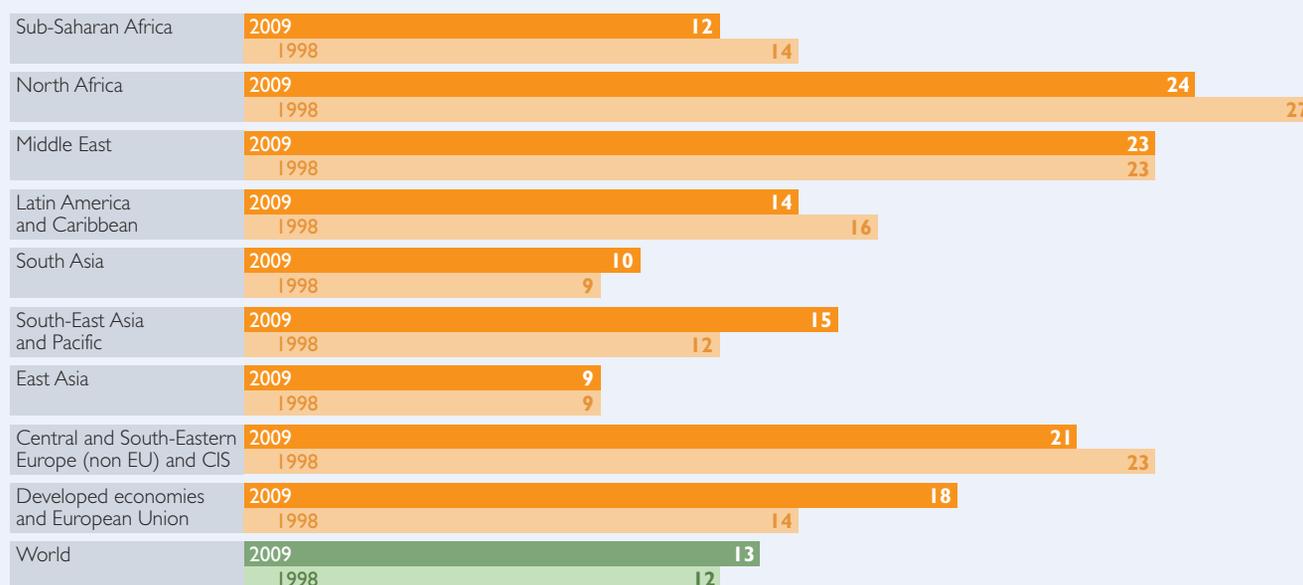
Today, about 40 percent of the world's arable land is degraded. Pressures on land and fresh water resources are likely to mount as the world's population swell from about 7 billion today to 9.1 billion by 2050. The limit of new land available for agricultural production thus is an additional concern for food security. Man-made environmental disasters and crises emanating from climate change further aggravate land degradation. As a result, agricultural productivity drops even more, water quantity and quality recedes, public health deteriorates, living standards and the quality of life decline, and progress towards the eight poverty reduction and related MDGs is seriously delayed.

Many young people are seriously concerned about the sustainability of the environment, and determined to tackle the challenges of environmental degradation and climate change through novel responses. Encouraging sustainable lifestyles and production methods by raising environmental awareness among youth, including through food security and climate change mitigation and adaptation programs, is an important first step towards constructive change. Youth will also need to be involved in the negotiations of the successor agreement to the 1997 *Kyoto Protocol* on climate change, which expires end 2012, and the RIO+20 Summit in June 2012.

¹ Global Employment Trends 2011 (2010 estimates), International Labour Organization (ILO), Geneva

Global trends in youth unemployment

Youth unemployment rate in percent



Source: International Labour Organization, *Global Trends in Youth Employment*, ILO, Geneva, 2010, Annex 1, Table A5.

IV. Universal Energy Access

Virtually no industrial or agricultural production can take place without access to safe and affordable energy – the missing “ninth” MDG, and a fourth factor of production. Yet, some 2.5 billion people worldwide are energy poor, having to rely on traditional biomass such as fuelwood, charcoal or crop residues for cooking, agro-processing and heating, and over 1.4 billion people lack access to electricity. Energy poverty is a major stumbling block with far-reaching implications for the lives of millions of youth, hindering sustainable socio-economic growth and development in the South, and obstructing efforts to reach the poverty reduction and related UN-MDGs. Instead of young people – usually girls – going to school or university, they have to spend hours collecting firewood to heat their homes and cook. They also do not have refrigerators, let alone computers for social networking with their peers and/or academic work assignment. If young people are able to study at all, they can only do so and during daylight hours because they have no light to study by at night.

The situation could worsen as energy demand rises in tandem with rapid population growth. Access to modern energy services has

emerged as a major bottleneck particularly for youth in most African countries. With a population of about one billion people – a number expected to almost double by 2050 – per capita electricity consumption is one of the lowest in the world, and 70 percent the population is not connected to a power grid. The situation in SSA is most worrisome. Unless decisive steps are taken, the number of people without electricity in SSA will rise from 526 million in 2002 to 584 million in 2030, or about half the 1.2 billion poor people worldwide that will still lack access to electricity two decades from now.

As we approach the year 2012 as the *International Year of Sustainable Energy for All*, decisive and concerted action will need to be taken towards the international goals of: (i) universal energy access, (ii) doubling the rate of Energy Efficiency improvement, and (iii) doubling the share of Renewable Energy in the global mix. Multi-faceted and innovative solutions involving youth at all levels will be needed in finance, technology and governance to mobilize the vast resources required to meet the projected increase in global energy demand, estimated at US\$20 trillion through 2030, in addition to some US\$665 billion to achieve a 100 percent electrification rate by 2030. ▶

The international goal of full and productive employment as well as decent work for all remains a distant dream for millions of youth, worldwide.

Education is a most important tool for strengthening the role of women in society by raising awareness and participation, and by creating job opportunities.

V. Gender Balance

◀ Equality for women and girls is not only a basic human right, but also smart economics with a multiplier effect on sustainable development. Girls and young women constitute about half of all youth, and possess a huge untapped potential. Developing and maximizing this potential is central to achieving the MDGs, and all other internationally agreed development goals (IADGs). Gender equality is the third MDG, and integral as such for achieving MDG 4 and 5 of reducing the infant, under-five and maternal mortality rates, and for halting HIV/AIDS (MDG6). More than a third (38 percent) of all girls in developing countries is married before age 18, and one in seven girls is married before age 15. Adolescent women account for about 16 million births each year or 11 percent of all births worldwide, and pregnancy- and child birth-related complications are the number one death cause of girls aged 15-19 worldwide.

Women continue to face gender biases in markets and institutions governing endowments of human and physical capital, and access to economic opportunities. Education is the most important tool for strengthening the role of women in society by raising awareness and participation, and by creating job opportunities. However, girls' primary school enrollment and completion rates are below 50 percent in most poor countries, and 63 percent of the one billion illiterate adults are women. Young women also face more difficulty in finding work than young men, and continue to receive lower remuneration for work of equal value across all sectors.

To lift gender biases and empower girls and young women, both formal (laws and regulations) and informal institutions (norms and values) governing the status of women and men in key areas of economic and social life need to change. Particular attention should be paid to expanding outreach and providing incentives to poor young women from ethnic minorities, and girls and women living in remote areas.

VI. Education for All

Education is directly related to national competitiveness, economic performance, standards of living, health, poverty levels, and environmental sustainability. Developed countries' greatest assets are their young women and men,

whose potential as both agents and beneficiaries of change must be fully realized to achieve inclusive growth, and accelerate sustainable development. The right to education of every young person is embodied in the 1948 UN *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, and the second MDG of achieving universal primary education (UPE) by 2015.

Broad-based access to quality education is essential to build knowledge-based economies, create employment opportunities, raise national productivity and establish stable, prosperous, healthy and equitable societies. However, for many youth in the South, development constraints limit access to resources, education and training. Consequently, more than 100 million young people in developing countries – 55 percent of them girls – do not attend school, and nearly 140 million young people are illiterate. Illiteracy, poverty, and underdevelopment jeopardize growth prospects in particularly the world's poorest countries, perpetuating the vicious cycle of poverty and inequality from one generation to another.

To break the vicious cycle of poverty and underdevelopment, it is essential for young men and women in urban and rural areas to stay in school until they can read and write. Starting at the secondary school level, education and training should be based on the changing skills requirements and job opportunities of labour markets, which are undergoing profound structural transformations as a result of globalisation, technological innovation, and shifts in consumer demand. In particular, youth should be prepared to become successful *social entrepreneurs* in an increasingly interdependent and competitive world through tailor-made education and vocational training. Unless national education systems adjust to generate a skilled and balanced labour force that can confidently face the requirements for productivity in the 21st century, youth will conflict increasingly with socio-economic realities.

VII. Information and Communication Technologies

As creative users and best promoters of *Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)*, young men and women are key contributors to bridging the global *digital divide* – or highly unequal access to and use of ICTs – building an inclusive information society, and developing

the telecommunications sector. ICTs can enhance access to education; promote literacy, awareness, and dialogue; help develop knowledge-based economies, and create business opportunities, and are essential as such for sustainable socio-economic development and poverty reduction. Social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter are used for communication and coordination among the youth, contributing to global awareness, and a sense of global citizenship and solidarity.

However, while globalization and technological innovation offer new opportunities for some, it can also deepen the digital divide and exacerbate existing inequalities and disparities. The importance of access to new technologies—particularly ICTs – for bridging the digital divide and reducing poverty is recognized in MDG8 (strengthening the global partnership for development). Additional investments will be required to reduce disparities in the distribution and use of ICTs, which remains a major challenge particularly to youth living in remote rural areas of the South.

VIII. An AIDS-Free Generation

Large youthful populations are an asset for developing countries, and should have the opportunity to participate fully in economic, social, and political life. Whereas the majority of young people are healthy, 1.8 million or one tenth of all youth die each year from largely preventable causes. The health-related MDG5 of a 75 percent reduction in maternal mortality and universal access to reproductive health, and MDG6 of halting and beginning to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015 are most relevant to the health of youth, especially young women. Adolescent women are about 2.5 times more likely to be infected with HIV/AIDS than men: of the 5.4 million youth living with HIV in 2008, 58.5 percent were female. Among young people living with HIV, some 80 percent or 4.3 million live in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Since HIV/AIDS has a long incubation period, its impact is gradual, and its full effects will be felt for decades to come. Unless adequate interventions are made backed by strong leadership and sustained financing, the virus will continue its relentless spread. Stronger and concerted measures are needed to turn the epidemic around, and ensure that the next generation can be free of the scourges of HIV/AIDS.

Conclusion

Today's youth represent 1.8 billion hopes for a future that works for all. The commitment of youth to a united world deserves the strong support of national policy and decision makers, and the global community at large. Efforts should therefore be re-doubled to strengthen the *global partnership for development* (MDG8), which remains at a crossroad, and which is key for reaching the remaining seven MDGs by the 2015 deadline. Fostering communication and dialogue with youth as drivers and primary beneficiaries of change is vital if the global partnership for development is to provide a comprehensive and international enabling environment for the MDGs.

A wide range of innovative and integrated approaches are required to create decent employment opportunities for youth, and help them prepare for a rapidly changing global economy, and increasingly competitive global labor market. Unless we harness the potential of youth through investment in education and decent jobs, the result could be socially damaging alienation, marginalization, alcohol and drugs abuse, human trafficking, disease, criminality, violence, and political instability. Beyond negative social outcomes and undue human suffering, this would come at great economic productivity and financial losses, amounting to billions of dollars.

Until recently, youth has been largely overlooked in development policies and strategies. Today, a global consensus is gradually emerging that investing in youth is smart investment, and that fulfilling the potential of youth can yield high dividends for inclusive economic growth and sustainable development to the benefit of this generation, and many future generations to come. ■

Today's youth represent 1.8 billion hopes for a future that works for all. The commitment of youth to a united world deserves the strong support of national policy and decision makers, and the global community at large.



One Young World

Agents of Change

What will the structure of the globe and international relations look like in the future? What opportunities for work, education and peaceful interactions would exist in the future? What additional threats will there be? Are social media changing the world? What are the young interested in? How do we empower the leaders of tomorrow?

BY REEM ALJARBOU AND RANYA NEHMEH

O FID was, this year, once again a part of the One Young World (OYW) summit which took place September 1-4 in Zurich, Switzerland. One Young World is the premier global forum for young people of leadership caliber. It aims at connecting and bringing together the young, bright and best to air their concerns, opinions and probable solutions. Communication technologies, especially social networking mediums such as *Twitter* and *Facebook* took a central role this time as powerful tools to network and proffer solutions to the central issues examined. More than 1,200 youth, drawn from roughly 170 countries, participated at the Summit.

The questions above were exhaustively discussed at the One Young World Summit, 2011. Young people on the rise questioned and exhibited the brave new world they envisaged for themselves and the energy and inspiration they bring to bear as they interact in a globalized digital world.

These leaders of tomorrow are applying different measurements at tackling global issues and have begun to challenge the *status quo* by creating new models and solutions. The Zurich Summit was clearly bigger, brighter and louder than the earlier inaugural summit, held last year in London. For three days, the world's leading and most established personalities, along with the rest of the connected world, heard the voices of youth presenting the changes they envisage for their future.

Respected "Counselors," selected by the youth and seen as "the leaders of today," guided the over 1,200 young delegates representing 170 countries. Their powerful and passionate messages created a buzz-filled floor during the Summit. A dynamic and energized Archbishop Desmond Mpilo Tutu stated at the opening ceremony: "You are all remarkable, because you dream." Humanitarian and Aid Activist Bob Geldof cheered on the delegates with fervor at the Opening Ceremony. He told them: "I love to be here because I want to see what you are going to do."

Other leaders presented tangible solutions for the future challenges of young leaders in their pursuit of a better world. Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Muhammed Yunus, Founder of the *Grameen Bank*, spoke about the life of a dollar. "In a charity, it has a short life span. Once you

spend it, it's gone. However, in a social business, you invest your dollar and it accumulates over time to produce more dollars. It recycles itself."

A "Women Up Panel" drew crowds at the Summit. At the session, Ms. Fatima Bhutto stated: "It's not about gender; it's about the quality of leadership. Women fight for a lot of things. But while we fight, we must ensure that we fight ethically. Gender can never be a substitute for ethics."

As OFID stands on the cusp of a new decade and looks towards the future, reality becomes to take responsibility in creating a world of opportunity where progress is equitable, accessible and sustainable. OFID believes that poverty alleviation lies at the heart of a brighter future for all and is, thus, strongly committed to supporting delegates to One Young World, ensuring that some of the developing world's most promising young leaders are exposed to international cooperation and forward-looking action like never before; an experience which they can bring back to their communities. In line with support to promote capacity building, especially towards youth, OFID sponsored 25 talented leaders from developing and Member Countries to attend this Summit. ▶

Time Change Mind Change

This initiative – Time Change Mind Change – started by One Young World is aimed to encourage the leaders of the world to rethink their actions in one hour. The thinking behind it is that leading politicians make decisions every day – decisions that determine our future – decisions that are right – but also decisions that are too hasty. So, to tell them to rethink their decisions, the world is putting its clocks back by one hour on 30 October (6 November in the USA). That's one extra hour gained. One hour to reflect on things. To contemplate decisions. To correct mistakes and to take the opportunity and tell politicians which of their decisions you don't agree with.



Wake Up Call

Inspired by Bob Geldof's speech during the Opening Ceremony of the One Young World Summit, six OYW delegates from around the world officially launched a wakeup call with a

short presentation during the OYW Closing Ceremony. This is a platform for action and reference point of motivation for all youth. Is Facebook changing the world? Young leaders to engage with one another. It is a movement for change, for people to step up and demand action... beginning now and culminating on 21/02/2012 (February 21, 2012) with a mass call for collaborative global efforts to effect good. Imagine millions of people, all over the world, uniting under one goal, one idea, one statement on the same day. Imagine governments, corporations, communities and individuals hearing one message: "This is a Wakeup Call".

Voices of Youth

OFID-sponsored delegates speak out.



**Mehdi Nassih,
21yrs from Morocco**

“The generosity your organization has showed in its different activities in the developing countries has inspired me to help others and give back to my community. I hope one day I will be able to inspire young leaders make a change in their countries as you have just inspired me.”

“OFID did not just pay for the 25 people they sponsored; they also showed great appreciation for the projects we were all working on. I was very happy to realize that the Director-General of OFID and the young creative minds working for this organization know everything about the people they sponsored and their projects. I was even happier to get from Mr. Al-Herbish his feedback about my project during the dinner they organized for us.”

“This summit gave me the opportunity to learn about the activities of OFID in the developing countries. It is very inspiring for the young people of today to see that this organization is investing in some development project in the sub-Saharan Africa, in Asia and Latin America. After their presentation during the first day of the event, the delegates got excited about their projects and realized that there is a chance for all of them to realize their dreams as well and see their countries in a better situation.”

**Yohannis Mitiku Tobo,
23yrs from Ethiopia**

“Prior to this event, I didn’t know much about my role in this world, now after the summit I understand that I am one of the young on whom this planets puts its hopes. Now, I know I can change this world together with the other young people. I finally have a great vision of my future.”



**Privedge Cheteni,
26yrs from Zimbabwe**

“I will use the experience and knowledge gained at this event and further the biogas project which I am working on and which I expect will empower a lot of rural areas people who do not have the energy source. I will put what I have leaned into practice for I believe it is through words that action becomes the determinant factor in empowering every community. Poverty can be truly eradicated in the next generation”



**Cristina Lopez Guevara,
24yrs from El Salvador**

“I feel truly blessed to have been a part of this project and I’m very grateful to OFID for believing in young leadership in Latin America. I am planning to work more on women’s visibility in El Salvador, by profiling accomplishments of women leadership in my weekly column in the newspaper. I was deeply moved by the Women’s Up Session. It was also very inspiring to learn from other female role models.”



**Maidelyn Barrera Martinez,
22yrs from Guatemala**

“I was inspired by young people who are giving their lives to serve people who are in need, and I hope to do the same in my country, Guatemala. As a developing country which has a lot of needs in areas of hunger, poverty and violence, I hope to leave my mark by being a different person.”



**Keomorakot Mam Clark,
23yrs from Cambodia**

“To me, OYW is a unique international forum which enables me to make peace with the World, unite with people from different religions, backgrounds, races, perspectives and personalities. And this summit brings up different global issues and teaches us in different ways. I have learned how to share, love and forgive.”



**Francis McLean Rodriguez,
24yrs from Honduras**

“I will utilize the network of amazing young people equally interested in working on the environment and can support my work. These are people with lots of outstanding ideas and initiatives to deal with the other topics we are addressing. The event gave me a broader sense of how the topic of the environment is being addressed worldwide and which aspects I could improve upon.”

**Nouf Al-Abbas,
24yrs from Saudi Arabia**

“Prior to the Summit, I had partnered up with two of my friends and started up a business. One Young World has inspired me to twist our business and turn it into a socially responsible business. I decided that with my portion of the profits we would be invested in a social business to build an autism center in Saudi Arabia after meeting a young delegate who was autistic and was truly inspirational to me.”



**Susan Ifeagwu,
21yrs from Nigeria**

The Summit reminded me that everyone has a story to share. Be it a project they are leading, projects they are part of, or simply experiences that they have had over time. It was a great opportunity to meet different wonderful people of countless cultures and beliefs.



**Scarlett Piantini,
24yrs from Dominican Republic**

“The one thing I will take away from this Summit is the importance of starting somewhere. It is essential to turn our ideas into actions, even if they are minute and may not be as ambitious as we’d like them to be. So, I will try and apply that to myself. Overall, this experience genuinely marked me and gave me the push to want to get involved in my research interests and to try and do something about corruption.”



James Alcime, 21yrs from Haiti

“The best way I can use my experience and knowledge gained is by taking action. I want to engage myself to take action with my projects in Haiti and by my actions I can inspire other fellow Haitian young leaders to know that we can bring change and create a better future in Haiti.”

List of OFID Sponsored Delegates: Abdel Rahman Alzorgan, 21yrs from Jordan; Madina Bahretdinova, 24yrs from Tajikistan; Hanh Vu, 24yrs from Vietnam; Januka Dulal, 24yrs from Bhutan; Scarlett Piantini, 24yrs from Dominican Republic; Maidelyn Barrera Martinez, 22yrs from Guatemala; Francis McLean Rodriguez, 24yrs from Honduras; Takum Clifford Ticha, 26yrs from Cameroon; Yohannis Mitiku Tobo, 23yrs from Ethiopia; Butul Taufik, 22yrs from Libya; Danya Bashir Hobba, 20yrs from Libya; Mehdi Nassih, 21yrs from Morocco; Priviledge Cheteni, 26yrs from Zimbabwe; Sanita Suhartono, 23yrs from Indonesia; Sarah Alfayez, 24yrs from Saudi Arabia; Mayokun Taiwo, 19 from Nigeria; Nouf Al-Abbas, 24yrs from Saudi Arabia; Susan Chinelo Ifeagwu, 21yrs from Nigeria; Keomorakot Mam, 23yrs from Cambodia; Gifty Pearl, 27yrs from Ghana; Lucia Valencia Dongo, 20yrs from Peru; Cristina Lopez Guevara, 24yrs from El Salvador; James Alcime, 21yrs from Haiti.

Panel Discussion:

The Role of Global Business in Society



Al-Herbish: *I believe the 8th MDG, to develop a global partnership for development, is your responsibility, the youth of today, where you have influence and show how you can work together.*

◀ The Director-General, Mr. Suleiman Al-Herbish participated in the Panel Discussion, *the Role of Global Business in Society* on the first day of the One Young World Summit following the Business Plenary Session. The session participants included Guler Sabanci, Chairman Sabanci Holdings; Graeme Sweeney, Chairman, Zero Emissions Platform (ZEP) and Executive Vice President CO₂ Shell International Petroleum Company Ltd.; Dirk Hoke, CEO Siemens; Paul Polman, Global CEO Unilever; Antony Jenkins, CEO, Barclays Global Banking. The session was facilitated by Vassi Naidoo, Head of International Markets Group, Deloitte.

The Director-General began his intervention by recognizing that the Summit's focus is to gather Young People; who are faced with major challenges and who face the solution to its future. He stated that the backdrop to his points are people living in poverty. Said the Director-General: "If you want to define poverty, do not listen to economists. The *per capita* is a myth. The per capita income as a measurement of wealth is ... just dividing the value by the population and you assume that people are receiv-

ing the same income which is not true." Mr. Al-Herbish pointed out that almost half of the world – over three billion people – live on less than US\$2.50 a day and approximately 790 million people in the developing world are still chronically undernourished. "These are the people we need to think of when considering how our future can be changed."

Mr. Al-Herbish then revealed that a review of the *New International Economic Order* which was agreed upon back in the 1970s has not yielded as many benefits as were envisaged. More recently, the eight Millennium Development Goals agreed upon to battle poverty and raise living standards by 2015, are yet to exhibit progress in some poor countries. He described present-day arrangements that are not quite adequate and said poverty alleviation should not be left to governments, international institutions and corporations and businesses alone. Mr. Al-Herbish said "I believe the 8th MDG, to develop a global partnership for development, is your responsibility, the youth of today, where you have influence and show how you can work together".

One of the elements he raised was that for decades, the involvement of profit-oriented businesses in social causes was limited in scope and scale. During this period, non-profit organizations such as OFID, together with governments filled the gap. However, Al-Herbish stressed that no one expects corporations to single-handedly solve society's problems or pick up the bill for doing so. However, he explained that social responsibility is the core business of OFID. "The difference between us and corporations is that even during the financial crisis, we at OFID stood by our Partner Countries and their needs even more".

The Director-General also focused on OFID's commitment to human capacity building, saying that education and knowledge are the foundations for a stable, prosperous and equitable global society. He told the audience that OFID took it as a duty to foster the development of young people through a number of ways. He mentioned OFID's Scholarship Program for students from developing countries and the sponsorship of the attendance of young professionals, scientists and researchers at conferences, workshops and similar events.

Mr. Al-Herbish concluded by stating that the focus needs to be on complementing strengths, creating partnerships in a win-win proposition. He stressed that society stood to gain if a solution is found to the problem of poverty.

OFID Presentation

Before the official opening of the Summit, the OYW organizers had arranged a *Tell Me Day* which gave the opportunity to selected organisations to present their work. The event began with the presentation of OFID. *One life, but we're not the same; we have to carry one another.*

OFID's representatives, Ms. Reem Aljarbou, Information Officer, and Ms. Ranya Nehmeh, Human Resources Officer, began the presentation of OFID by quoting the singer Bono, of the famous music group U2. The message highlighted "how we should all think of ourselves as one, a humanity that is collective, unified and together." This allowed the young audience to immediately identify with the OFID presenters and enabled a lively and interactive presentation.

The OFID representatives briefly discussed the concept and origin of sustainable development, and how it comprises the three pillars of social progress, economic growth and ►

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MalMcLoughlin Mallory McLoughlin

Today's biggest probs are terrorism, poverty, corruption & they're all related – OFID director #oyw
<http://yfrog.com/g03altj> 2 Sep

AlandaKariza Alanda Kariza

The world is in need for a #9 MDG: Alleviate energy poverty (which kills 1.5m ppl a year) – OFID #oyw

melimuses Melina B.

Really interesting presentation by @ofid – eliminating energy poverty in local #armenian communities (cc @whoisromeo) #oyw 1 Sep

allycepinchback Allyce Pinchback

Great project by OFID to eliminate energy poverty. Imagine life without electricity. It's a reality according to #OYW delegate from Chad.

jRENEEmusicj RENÉE

OFID caters to the needs of its countries to fight #energypoverty. Get up on it. 1 Sep

ElliottV Elliott Verreault

OFID talking about need for 9th MDG: Reducing Energy Poverty at @OneYoungWorld #OYW ofid.org

FelipeVD Felipe ValenciaDongo

Energy Poverty: The missing MDG according to OFID #oyw 1 Sep

erinschrode Erin Schrode

Map of where OFID works! They collaborate with others to work on #MDGs worldwide in these areas specifically. #oyw <http://yfrog.com/18lyhvj> 1 Sep

@OneYoungWorld One Young World

@OPEC's Suleiman Jasir Al-Herbish „When you want to define poverty don't listen to the economists.“ #oyw #fixbusiness

OFID_Opec_Fund OFID

Mr. Al-Herbish is explaining to OYW delegates that Terrorism, Poverty and Corruption are the three big global problems.
2 Sep Favorite Retweet Reply





Nehmeh: *The concept and origin of sustainable development embrace the three pillars of social progress, economic growth and environmental protection.*

◀ environmental protection. The audience was then introduced to the institution's goals, objectives and activities. The Millennium Development Goals were also highlighted along with their importance in reducing global poverty levels. The presenters reiterated that all OFID's projects target these goals. The presentation went on to illustrate that, as OFID along with other international institutions realized, one of the missing MDGs is Energy Access. OFID thus began to work with others toward the Alleviation of Energy Poverty. *"We believe that without this goal, none of the eight MDGs can be achieved sustainably, which is why we refer to Energy Poverty as the 9th missing MDG."*

Some energy poverty statistics were highlighted to further reinforce the message: over 1.6 million deaths per year occur from burning biomass indoors due to emissions – 44 percent of those deaths are children and 60 percent of adult deaths are women. Energy Poverty kills more than malaria and tuberculosis combined and every day more than 4,300 humans

die prematurely from indoor use of traditional biomass.

The OFID presentation went on to show a video of the institution's work in Armenia. *"There is no other way to tell you who we are than to introduce you to a live example of what Energy Poverty means to people."* The video highlighted a project co-financed by OFID and IFAD in 2009 called the 'Farmer Market Access Program' in which OFID's role was to improve gas connectivity in regions that were in dire need, and how, as a result, it completely changed people's lives in that region.

During the Q&A Session, many questions were asked mainly related to OFID's Energy Poverty Initiative. The focus on Energy Poverty set the tone for the rest of the day, and follow-up presentations also addressed this issue.

Ms. Aljarbou and Ms. Nehmeh concluded on a final note: *"We at OFID really believe in efforts that are aimed at capacity building which is why we lend our support to events such as this, the One Young World, to ensure that your voices are heard."* ■

Draft Resolutions and Calls to Action

Global Business: We call upon One Young World 2011, to create the One Young World List of the companies that we believe are transparent in their efforts to, and effective in, delivering ethical employment and training in developing nations and take all possible steps to create awareness of the list.

Media: We call upon One Young World Delegates to go to governments and request that they explain their media policies and publish and publicize their government's response using social media.

Interfaith Dialogue: We call upon One Young World Ambassadors to approach their governments and religious leaders and ask them to sign up to the Missing Millennium Development Goal and publish and publicize refusals and reasons for refusal.

Environment: We call upon One Young World Delegates to prove to our business leaders that becoming carbon neutral is good for business, and failing to see a commitment towards carbon footprint reduction by a company, to withdraw our support from these businesses.

Global Health: We call upon One Young World Delegates to withdraw support from governments or political parties, and using their networks and social media networks to publicize this withdrawal, until such time as they prove their commitment to the Millennium Development Goals for health.

Leadership: We call upon One Young World Delegates to challenge their national governments to develop and to pass legislation to facilitate transparency and to withdraw their support from governments, organizations and individuals proven to be adverse to transparency, independent scrutiny and to publicize all such instances.

Lindau Foundation holds major meetings

OFID conspicuously present

BY ANNA ILARIA-MAYRHOFER

The Lindau Foundation (*Foundation Lindau*) was founded in the year 2000. It works to educate, inspire and connect. Ranking personalities from the worlds of science, politics and industry belong in the Foundation's Honorary Senate in recognition of their commitment to scientific excellence and the encouragement of young researchers. Together, these scientific leaders work for „*Mission Education*.“ Their annual meetings, in the words of Foundation members, serve to inspire and motivate Laureates and global “best talents” and also to

“pass on the torch.” They provide an internationally-recognized forum for the transfer of knowledge between generations of scientists.

Global support

The work of the Foundation (and Lindau Council) is made possible by the support of companies, associations, foundations and private patrons, and by German federal and state ministries, as well as the European Commission. OFID has supported international efforts garnered to promote this work.

This year, OFID sponsored 66 young researchers and economists from 26 developing countries to attend the two prestigious meetings of the Foundation held in Lindau, Germany. This represented the 3rd consecutive year that OFID has provided backing so that exceptional individuals could experience what was described by an OFID-sponsored participant as a “once in a lifetime” opportunity.

The first of the two gatherings was the 6^{1st} Meeting of Nobel Laureates dedicated to *Physiology or Medicine*, which held from June 26 to July 1. Some 25 Nobel ▶



Group photograph. Nobel Prize Laureates present at the 4th Lindau Meeting on Economic Sciences.



OFID Director-General Al-Herbish and Professor Wolfgang Schürer, Chairman of the Lindau Foundation (center), with some of OFID-sponsored delegates at the 4th Lindau Meeting on Economic Sciences.

◀ Laureates and roughly 570 young researchers from 80 countries convened at this extraordinary event. The program itself comprised interdisciplinary platform discussions and lectures given by the Nobel Laureates, who shared not only their own personal experiences and passion for their work, but also offered advice to the young scientists, such as the importance of good teamwork and mentoring and staying motivated, even in the face of failed experiments; in themselves, a valuable learning experience.

Turning the Tables, which was initially introduced in the form of a pilot session in 2010, was also featured this year. The session was created to enable young scientists to “share the stage” with some of the Nobel Laureates and have the unique opportunity to engage in informal discussions.

Closing discussions

The Closing Panel Discussion focused on the issue of Global Health. The scientific meetings take place annually at the end of June, alternating each year between the disciplines of physics/chemistry and medicine/physiology. Every five years, interdisciplinary meetings are held covering all three natural sciences; namely, physics, chemistry and physiology or medicine. The 2010 meeting, at which OFID sponsored the participation of 45 young scientists from Arab and developing countries, was

the largest gathering of Laureates ever for a scientific conference. This year, OFID sponsorship was extended to 34 outstanding individuals.

An OFID delegation, led by Director-General Mr. Suleiman J. Al-Herbish, attended the second Lindau meeting; the 4th Meeting on Economic Sciences which took place August 23 to 27. During the Opening Ceremony, Mr. Al-Herbish was inducted into the Honorary Senate of the Lindau Foundation (*see box*). OFID sponsored 32 young economists to participate in the meeting, which was attended by 17 Economics Laureates and some 360 researchers/young economists from 65 countries. Meetings in economic sciences are held every three years.

Selection process

It is no mean feat to be selected from the pool of prospective candidates to attend the Nobel Laureate meetings. Young researchers must go through an extensive multi-step selection process, where a global network of around 200 Academic Partners are charged with identifying highly-talented individuals for nomination. The network includes national Academies of Science, ministries, research institutions, top-ranking universities, foundations and international scientific organizations. The fortunate few who make the shortlist are presented to the review panel of the Nobel Laureate Meetings. Out of approximately 1,500 profiles, the top 500 applicants receive an invitation to

Lindau. It is estimated that over 20,000 young researchers apply to attend each meeting. Thus, there is little wonder why the Lindau Foundation refers to the chosen candidates as “the budding scientific elite.”

Inspiring and connecting

In order to ensure that the newly-forged networks established among participants at the meetings remain active, the Council and Foundation created a Lindau community platform on *ResearchGate*, the “largest academic online platform for scientists.” *ResearchGate* combines some of the features of popular social networking sites with scientific databases. Thus, not only can fellow alumni maintain contact and continue to inspire one another, they can collaborate on their research efforts, share documents and articles, and offer advice, as well as join interest-based groups.

Participants reflect

Reflecting on their experience at the meetings, OFID-sponsored participants agreed that, without a doubt, the highpoint for them was the opportunity to interact with the Nobel Laureates – not only at the meetings but also during informal social events. They remarked that their experience would have a “profound impact” on helping guide and shape their future research. The meeting also provided a means of fostering both friendships and professional ties for collaborating on future research projects. Another viewpoint shared by the attendees was that meeting other like-minded individuals from diverse cultural and academic backgrounds enriched their overall experience.

Words from some of the OFID sponsored participants

“I took away from the Lindau meeting new thoughts in modern macroeconomics...the experience and knowledge gained at the meetings will guide my future research.” Roland Kpoder, Togo

“Interacting with Nobel Laureates about whom I had only read in books was indeed a rare opportunity.” Akash Acharya, India

“As a person who believes that diversity is a sign of strength and tolerance, the meetings achieved their goals and allowed us to meet with individuals from different cultural backgrounds and be inspired by each other’s experiences.” Majdeline El Rayess, Lebanon ■



PHOTO: ROLF SCHULTES

OFID Director-General Al-Herbish inducted into Honorary Senate of Lindau Foundation

During the 4th Meeting on Economic Sciences, OFID Director-General, Mr. Suleiman J. Al-Herbish, was inducted into the Honorary Senate of the Lindau Foundation. Wolfgang Schürer, Chairman of the Foundation, said during the induction: “Mr. Al-Herbish shares the Foundation’s conviction that human capacity-building is crucial for all societies if they are to escape the vicious circle of illiteracy and poverty.”

Mr. Al-Herbish, the first person from the Middle East to receive this honor, expressed his appreciation and said that “although the Foundation and OFID had been working together for only a brief time, their relationship was strong and based on “shared ideals and a common vision,” as well as a “total conviction in the empowerment of knowledge.” He went on to explain OFID’s role in boosting human capacity building as a means of alleviating poverty, particularly when it came to supporting the development of young people.

OFID had done this, said Mr. Al-Herbish, through its Scholarship Program and its regular sponsorship of young scientists and researchers at conferences, workshops and similar events. Mr. Al-Herbish also highlighted how this year was a special one for OFID, not only because it was celebrating its 35th Anniversary but also because it had been pledged one billion dollars in fresh resources from its Member Countries. This replenishment would therefore enable OFID to continue its mission with “even greater vigor,” said the Director-General.”

Capacity building for the youth: a perspective

In 1971, a study by Mildred Levy used data from 42 least developed countries (LDCs) to explore the relationship between social, political, economic and educational variables and variations in the dropout rate from primary schools. A conclusion was that high fertility rates and a high degree of social tension in a society tended to deter the attainment of universal literacy, while increased urbanisation and development of communications systems increased school continuation. Furthermore, economic returns to education were as important determinants of school continuation. And several characteristics of the school system were related to dropouts after the first year.

BY RANYA NEHMEH

Forty years on and the issue of primary and secondary school dropout rates is still a widespread phenomenon in developing countries. While in the countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), almost 100 percent of students enrol in secondary education and almost 80 percent of them conclude their studies, in Africa, on the other hand, about 69 million school-age children are not even in school [almost half of them (31 million) in sub-Saharan Africa], and more than a quarter (18 million) are in Southern Asia. Worse, dropout rates in sub-Saharan Africa remain intolerably high, where more than 30 percent of primary school students drop out before reaching the final grade. These statistics, as daunting as they are, highlight the great challenge that developing countries face with regard to human (and particularly youth) development.

Broadly defined, youth development is “...the ongoing growth process in which all youth are engaged in attempting to (1) meet their basic personal and social needs to be safe, feel cared for, be valued, be useful, and be spiritually grounded, and (2) to build skills and competencies that allow them to function and contribute in their daily lives“ (Pittman, 1993). The importance of youth development is indisputable. In the last years, a plethora of conferences, summits and global gatherings have pushed this issue to the forefront of the international agenda, while also involving multiple

Egypt's blind All-women Chamber Orchestra *An-Nour wa l-Amal* tours Europe

OFID an active Sponsor

In early September, *An-Nour wa l-Amal* Orchestra, the one and only blind women Orchestra worldwide and renowned as the “Light & Hope Orchestra,” gave a thrilling three-hour classical music concert at the Vienna City Hall. The concert was part of several activities of the Egyptian Cultural Office in Vienna to present the manifold cultural landscape of contemporary Egypt to the Austrian and the central middle European public.

BY HALA EL SAYED



PHOTO: EGYPTIAN CULTURAL OFFICE VIENNA

Co-sponsored by OFID, the European tour of the orchestra to Budapest, Kecskemét, Prague, Bratislava, Maribor and Venice also has the support of the Egyptian Embassy in Vienna. *An-Nour wa l-Amal* is considered to be the first centre established in the Middle East and North Africa Region for the education, vocational training and integration of blind girls in society.

Success

The 38-strong Orchestra was received in Vienna with enthusiasm and affection. The City Hall saw an impressive crowd of people of various ages and cultures. The performance included the works of Rossini, Abou l-Eid, Brahms, Verdi, Reverberi, Tchaikovsky, Khachaturian, Mozart, Bartok, Dvorak, Strauss, Bizet and other composers. It was an outstanding success for the orchestra, which certainly won the hearts and minds of the audience.

Attendance

The concert was held under the patronage of the Egyptian Cultural Office with the kind support of the City of Vienna, the City of Graz and Styria. Other backers included Egypt Air and the Egyptian community in Austria, among others. It was opened by Member of the Austrian Parliament and Municipal Councillor Dip.-Ing. Omar Al-Rawi, with the Egyptian Cultural Counsellor for Vienna, Prof. Dr. Morsy Abu-Youssef, and Vice-Chairman of *An-Nour wa l-Amal* Association, Mrs. Amal Fikry, by his side. In attendance were ranking Austrian officials and other representatives of international institutions.

Others included Austrian Women Minister, Mrs. Maria Rauch-Kallat; the Ambassador of Egypt to Austria, HE Mr. Khaled Shamaa; Ambassador, Permanent mission of Palestine to Austria and international organizations in Vienna, HE Dr. Zuheir El Wazer; Consul of Palestine, Mrs. Hussnieh Awad; Consul of Egypt, Mr. A. Shrif Lutfy; Secretary General of the Society for Austro-Arab Relations, Mr. Fritz Edlinger; Head of the Egyptian Tourism Office in Vienna, Mrs. Nabila El Banhawiy; and other ambassadors as well as heads of some international organizations based in Vienna.

Dip.-Ing. Omar Al-Rawi spoke to the audience, observing that it was an honor that the Orchestra chose Vienna as its first port of call on its tour of seven Euro-

pean cities. He referred to the orchestra as “an obvious proof of the positive role and achievements of Arab women.”

In his own statement, Dr. Abu-Youssef thanked OFID’s Director-General and said it was an honor that OFID was an active sponsor of the event. He pointed out that the event provided a further opportunity for OFID to confirm its noble message. In her own brief summary on behalf of the Orchestra, Mrs. Amal Fikry expressed deep gratitude to the organizers and sponsors of the Vienna concert and, indeed, the entire tour.

Education and literacy programs

Launched in 1945 by a group of women volunteers under the leadership of the late Mrs. Istiklal Radi, the primary aim of

An-Nour wa l-Amal Association is to establish the rights of blind girls and women. The association provides them with free education, literacy programs and vocational training to develop their potential and special abilities, such as musical talent. The association also helps to ensure their physical and psychological health, enabling them to develop their own identities and become self-dependent, integrated members of society. The musical institute of the charitable organization was set up on an academic basis by Dr. Samha El Kholy, a former President of the Egyptian Academy of Arts and Dean of the Cairo Conservatory of Music. ■

OFID Director-General receives Award from Burkina Faso

BY SILVIA MATEYKA

The Director-General of OFID, Mr. Suleiman J. Al-Herbish, was, in July, honored by the African nation of Burkina Faso at a distinguished ceremony held in the main conference hall of OFID. The Director-General was decorated by HE Mr. Salif Diallo, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Burkina Faso to Austria and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Organizations in Vienna. Mr. Al-Herbish received the *Chevalier de l’Ordre National du Burkina Faso* or Knight of the National Order.

The prestigious award was given by a decree issued by the President of Burkina Faso, HE Mr. Blaise Compaore. This was in recognition of the Director-General’s and OFID’s steadfast commitment in helping promote the country’s socio-economic development. The award is one of the most important civilian honors that one can receive in Burkina Faso. It is accorded in recognition of exceptional contributions in various fields.

At the conferral ceremony, Mr. Diallo said he was proud to be extending the recognition on behalf of his government. He thanked Mr. Al-Herbish for “his personal efforts in alleviating poverty in Burkina Faso, as well as in Africa in general.” The Ambassador noted that since OFID’s inception, the institution’s support had benefited much of Burkina Faso’s population, especially women and youth. This award is a sign of “friendship and cooperation” between Burkina Faso and OFID, he said.



HE Mr. Salif Diallo, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso to Austria and the International Organizations (left) and OFID Director-General Mr. Al-Herbish.

Recalling his visit to Burkina Faso in 2006 (one of his first missions to an African country), Mr. Al-Herbish expressed appreciation for the honor “from a partner country that stands at the front line of fighting poverty and laying foundations for a fair socio-economic development.” Mr. Al-Herbish dedicated the award to his OFID colleagues, commending their commitment to fighting poverty worldwide. “I’m honored and my colleagues also, to receive this award,” he said. The Director-General sent a message to President Compaore on behalf of OFID: “We are committed to being a real partner in the development of Burkina Faso.”

Burkina Faso and OFID have been partners in development since the institution’s establishment in 1976. To date, OFID has approved 35 projects amounting to nearly US\$180 million in support of the development of the country. Furthermore, OFID has extended a total of 30 grants to Burkina Faso in the amount of over US\$33 million.

JULY 6

Agreement signed

OFID signs *Memorandum of Understanding* with the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa that will consolidate and expand existing cooperation between the two organizations.

JULY 6-8

OFID hosts 69th Meeting of the Coordination Group

OFID hosted the 69th biannual meeting of the Coordination Group, which comprises OFID and its Sister Organizations.

Research grants approved

Foundation Lindau. US\$100,000. To support the participation of 66 young researchers and economists from Arab and emerging countries at the 61st Meeting of Nobel Laureates and the 4th Meeting in Economic Sciences, which held in June/August in Lindau, Germany.

Arab Forum for Environment and Development (AFED). US\$100,000. To support the 4th AFED Annual Conference 2011 and the 2011 Report on *Transitioning to the Green Economy*.

JULY 20

OFID Director-General receives prestigious Chevalier de l'Ordre National

Mr. Suleiman J. Al-Herbish, OFID Director-General, was presented with the *Chevalier de l'Ordre National* (Knight of the National Order).
See story page 23.

JULY 28

Emergency assistance grant approved

Somalia. US\$350,000. This grant, which was channeled through the World Food Program, helped purchase food supplies and support emergency operations for famine victims.

AUGUST 4

Public sector loan agreement signed

Tanzania. US\$10 million. Geita District Rural Electrification Project. This project will connect 15 rural villages in Geita town with electrical power, thereby enhancing both living conditions and livelihoods of the population.

AUGUST 9

Public sector loan agreement signed

Botswana. US\$40 million. Integrated Transport. This project aims at improving the efficiency and competitiveness of the transport system in Gaborone and the Southern District.

Emergency assistance grant approved

Ethiopia and Kenya. US\$400,000. This grant was channeled through the World Food Program and helped support efforts to reduce suffering in famine-stricken areas.

AUGUST 24

OFID Director-General Al-Herbish inducted into the Honorary Senate of the Lindau Foundation.
See story page 17-19.

SEPTEMBER 1-4

OFID active at the One Young World Summit

An OFID delegation, led by Director-General Al-Herbish, attended the 2nd One Young World Summit held in Zürich, Switzerland. *See story page 10-16.*

SEPTEMBER 21-25

An OFID delegation led by the Director-General, Mr. Suleiman J. Al-Herbish, took part in a number of high-level meetings in New York and Washington DC. Eight loan agreements were also signed during the mission (listed below).

Public sector loan agreements signed

Bangladesh. US\$28 million. Construction of Flyover Bridges in Dhaka. To boost socio-economic development in the capital Dhaka through the construction of a flyover bridge that will ease traffic congestion and enhance access to social services.

Belize. US\$8 million. Golden Stream – Big Falls – Guatemala Border Road Rehabilitation (additional loan). To complete rehabilitation works on a road located in the South Toledo District. Some 30,000 people are expected to benefit from improved access to social services and jobs.

Burundi. US\$11.9 million. Agricultural Value Chain Development Program. To help reduce poverty and improve food security through the development of agricultural value chains in seven provinces populated by some 3.6 million people.



OFID Director-General Al-Herbish at the inauguration of schools at the Nahr El Bared Palestinian Refugee Camp, Lebanon.

The Gambia. US\$6 million. Energy Development and Access Expansion. To expand the electricity grid to cover disadvantaged areas in the Kanifing Municipality and rural settlements in the Western Kombo Central Region.

Kenya. US\$15 million. Rural Electrification. To help boost socio-economic development through the electrification of rural infrastructure and installation of about 35,460 new household connections.

Mozambique. US\$13.5 million. Artisanal Fisheries Promotion. To improve incomes and livelihoods of poor households involved in artisanal fishing through the improvement of related infrastructure. An estimated 45,000 people are expected to benefit from the project.

Paraguay. US\$20 million. National Interconnected Electricity System Upgrading. To improve the reliability of electrical power supplies to poor and rural communities in 14 departments located in the Eastern Region and the capital Asunción.

Samoa. US\$12 million. Petroleum Bulk Storage Facility (Phase IV). To help meet the population's basic energy needs by strengthening related infrastructure, benefiting an estimated 180,000 people.

SEPTEMBER 28

OFID attends inauguration of schools at Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon

Mr. Suleiman J. Al-Herbish, OFID Director-General, and Mr. Filippo Grandi, Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), inaugurated three schools of the Nahr el Bared Palestinian Refugee Camp in Lebanon. The inauguration was attended by HE Mr. Wael Abu-Faor, Minister of Social Affairs of Lebanon, and HE Dr. Abdallah Abdallah, Ambassador of Palestine to Lebanon, as well as representatives of the local community and school students. OFID co-financed the construction of the school with a US\$5 million grant extended in 2008.



See story page 42.

Meetings attended by OFID

JUNE 30 – JULY 1

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM
2011 European Communication Summit

JULY 4-5

LONDON, UK
Arab Coordination Group Institutions (ACGI) and the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) High Level Partnership Dialogue 2011

JULY 6-8

VIENNA, AUSTRIA
69th Biannual Meeting of the Arab Coordination Group

JULY 28-29

PARIS, FRANCE
Experts' Meeting of the Deauville Partnership

JULY 28-30

BEIRUT, LEBANON
Board of Directors Meeting of Byblos Bank Africa (BBA)

AUGUST 18-21

CRANS-MONTANA, SWITZERLAND
Annual Meeting of the Council on World Public Affairs organized by the Crans Montana Forum

AUGUST 23-27

LINDAU, GERMANY
4th Meeting of the Winners of the Sverige Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel

SEPTEMBER 1-4

ZÜRICH, SWITZERLAND
Second One Young World Summit

SEPTEMBER 7

ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
Extraordinary Meeting of Council of Arab Ministers of Finance

SEPTEMBER 7-9

VIENNA, AUSTRIA
38th Annual Meeting of the International Forfeiting Association (IFA)

SEPTEMBER 9-10

MARSEILLE, FRANCE
Deauville Partnership Finance Ministers' Meeting

SEPTEMBER 19-23

VIENNA, AUSTRIA
55th Annual Regular Session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

SEPTEMBER 20

NEW YORK, USA
UN Private Sector Forum 2011: Sustainable Energy for All

SEPTEMBER 21-25

WASHINGTON DC, USA
World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund Annual Meetings / G24 Ministers Meeting / Development Committee Meeting / Meeting of the Heads of Multilateral Financial Institutions / Meeting of the Heads of Arab, National and Regional Institutions / Meeting of the Arab Finance Ministers

SEPTEMBER 27

LAXENBURG, AUSTRIA
Vienna Energy Club Meeting

www.ofid.org



136th Session of the Governing Board

Meeting in its 136th Session, the Governing Board of OFID approved new loans and grants to pursue socio-economic development in partner countries.

The loans will fund projects assisting over one million people in Africa and Asia, while the grants go to support a wide range of programs in Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, the Gambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Palestine, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Uganda.

From left: Mr. Said Aissi, Advisor to the Director-General; Mr. Fuad Albassam, Acting Assistant Director-General, Public Sector Operations and Active Head Private Sector; Mr. Suleiman J. Al-Herbish, Director-General; Mr. Jamal Nasser Lootah, Governing Board Chairman; Mr. Saeid Niazi, Assistant Director-General, Financial Operations.

HE Mr. Sulistijo Djati Ismojo,
Minister Counsellor, Indonesia.





HE Dr. Fadhil Nabee Othman,
Governor of Iraq to OFID.



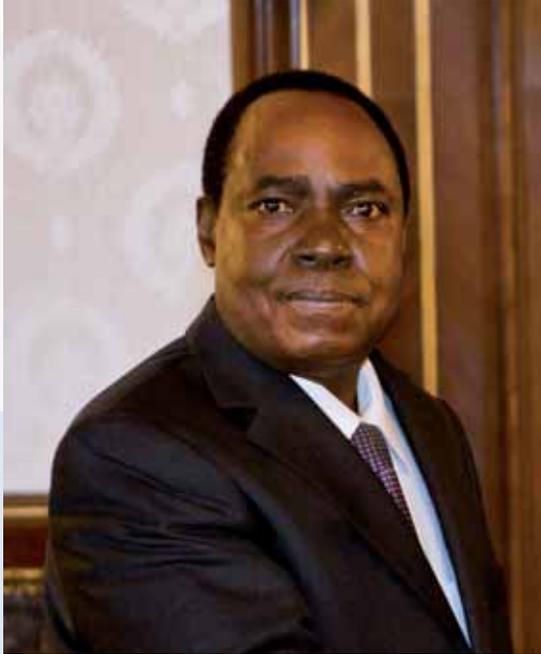
HE Mr. Ismail Omar Al-Daffa,
Alternate Governor of Qatar to OFID.

Mr. Abdul Wahab Ahmed Al-Bader,
Governor of Kuwait to OFID.



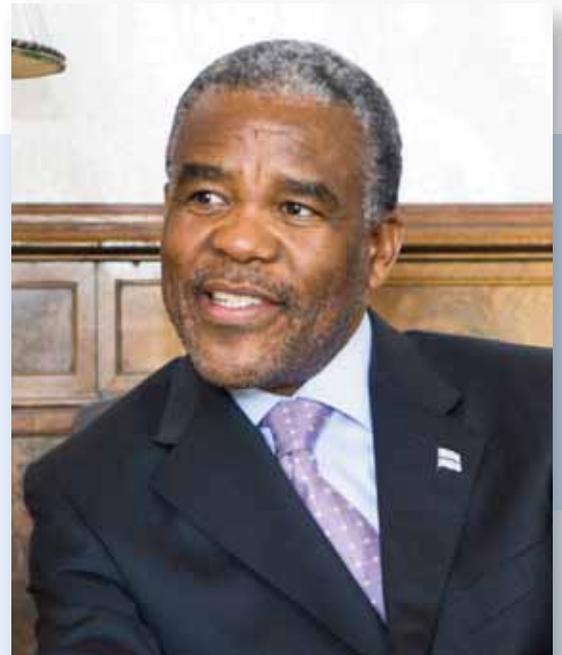
HE Dr. Hamad S. Al-Bazai,
Governor of Saudi Arabia to OFID.

LOAN SIGNATURE
 photo
 gallery



August 4

HE Mr. Ahmada R. Ngemera, Ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania to Germany, and Mr. Al-Herbish signed a US\$10 million loan agreement. The funds will help finance the *Geita District Rural Electrification Project*.



August 9

HE Mr. Mohusi Bruce Rabasha Palai, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Botswana to the United Nations, Geneva, signed a US\$40 million loan agreement for the *Integrated Transport Project*.

September 22

Mr. Joseph K. Kinyua, Permanent Secretary, Kenya, after signing a US\$15 million loan agreement for rural electrification, to help boost socio-economic development through electrification and installation of new household connections.





September 22

HE Mr. Joseph Waight, Financial Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, Belize, and Mr. Al-Herbish after signing a loan in the amount of US\$8 million toward the *Golden Stream – Big Falls – Guatemala Border Road Rehabilitation* (additional loan), to complete rehabilitation works on a road located in the South Toledo District. Some 30,000 people are expected to benefit from improved access to social services and jobs.

September 23

HE Mr. Faumuina T. Liuga, Minister of Finance, Samoa, and Mr. Al-Herbish, following signature of a US\$12 million loan agreement for a *Petroleum Bulk Storage Facility (Phase IV)*. The project is to help meet the population's basic energy needs by strengthening related infrastructure, benefiting an estimated 180,000 people.



The full list of loan signatures can be found on pages 24-25.

VISITOR highlights



July 8

OFID hosted donors' meetings, one of them for the Second Phase of the Kandadji Dam Project in Niger. HE Mr. Amadou Bubacar Cisse, Minister of Planning, Land and Community Development, headed the Niger delegation. The meetings were also attended by BADEA, KFAED and SFD.

July 20

HE Ms. Maria Oyeyinka Laose, the newly arrived Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to Austria and to Slovakia and Permanent Representative of Nigeria at the International Organisations in Vienna. She paid a courtesy call on Mr. Al-Herbish.



July 25

HE Mr. Juan Carlos Marsan Aguilera, new Ambassador of Cuba to Austria, visited OFID's Director-General.



September 15

HE Mr. Mohamed Samir Koubaa, Ambassador of the Republic of Tunisia to Austria, paid a courtesy call on Mr. Al-Herbish.





Two women are shown from the chest up, wearing traditional headscarves with a black and white diamond pattern and a row of gold coins across the forehead. They are also wearing patterned clothing with purple, black, and white designs. The woman on the left is smiling, while the woman on the right has a neutral expression.

OFID in the Field

OFID's projects and programs are designed to help make a difference in the lives and times of the poor across the world. In this edition of the *Quarterly*, the rubric "OFID in the Field" places the spotlight on education and youth empowerment.

Education is a key target of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which also see some coverage in these pages. It is a major concern of OFID to be seen in the field, alongside those with whom the institution is working to accomplish social and economic advancement.

Yemen: educating the young to tackle poverty

A least developed country with an impressive historic past, Yemen has a significantly young population. The country struggles to reach some Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), supported by international aid.

BY DAMELYS DELGADO

Working toward modernization, while not discarding its customs and traditions, Yemen is facing many challenges. The country is battling growing water scarcity, with just one percent of the land under irrigation. Although this is the largest geographical obstacle, there are others equal in gravity: unemployment, for one, which is linked to the lack of skills of the labour force. For the youth, unemployment is at 52.9 percent.

With roughly two million dwellers, 25 percent of the labor force in the capital city Sana'a is unemployed, despite the city being a gateway to Yemen, an historic and cultural centre and a hub of commerce, services and tourism. Sana'a was, in 1986, declared a *World Heritage Site* by the United Nations, because of its unique architecture dating back over 2,000 years.

According to a 2009 Statistical Year Book, Yemen's population has risen to 22.4 million, of which 23.2 percent are aged 15-24. Yemen ranks 133rd out of 177 countries in the 2010 UNDP *Human Development Index*. Despite the efforts of the Government, progress in human and other development indicators has been too slow to ensure attainment of the MDGs by 2015. However, the possibility of achieving the goals of universal primary education, under-5 child mortality reduction, and an end to malaria and tuberculosis has not been ruled out.

Education, priority in Yemen

One of the highest priorities for the Government is education. According to the census of 2008, literacy is estimated at 54.1 percent, with a gender disparity of 35.7 percent for females and 73.1 percent for males. This gender disparity is further emphasized when one looks at the ratio of male/female enrollment in vocational secondary schools and vocational training centers. Of the 3,547 students enrolled in three-year vocational secondary schools in 2008, 3,184 (90 percent) were male, as compared with 363 (10 percent) female.

Accordingly, to combat illiteracy and improve opportunities for all, basic education is a priority. In 2002, the Ministry of Education adopted a national strategy known as "Basic Education Development Strategy (BEDS)," which has involved a number of donors and stakeholders, including, besides OFID, the World Bank, UNICEF, WFP, UNESCO, UNFP, JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency), ILO (International Labor Organization), the German, UK, Dutch and French governments and the EU. The objectives of BEDS include, among others, improving the quality of teaching, reforming the administration of the schools, upgrading the curriculum, expanding school enrollment, enlarging school space for girls and building new

schools. An increase in student enrollment necessitates the creation of approximately 7.2 million new student places in schools.

Since 1976, in order to help Yemen advance on its long path to progress, OFID has supported some of Yemen's efforts in several sectors, such as transport, water supply, energy, urban development and education, among others, totaling US\$ 235 million as of July 2011. Yemen's private sector has also benefited from OFID's support, through loans to help in the development of industry. Due to the fact that education is one of the most urgent matters to be addressed, the latest project approved in 2010 by OFID's Governing Board was the "Vocational Training and Skills Development Project (VTSD)." This project is designed to improve skills development opportunities for the rural population, which constitutes 76 percent of the total population.

Mr. Turki Al-Muaikil, Senior Operations Officer at OFID in charge of Yemen's projects and programs for the public sector, summarized the social impact of this project as follows: "Enrolment of around 9,000 children between the ages of 9-15 years in classes that will enable them to complete the equivalent of primary school education; establishment of a youth vocational literacy component that will target some 4,000 unemployed youth aged 16-24 to empower them with

vocational skills and provision of training to 4,000 women in the areas of literacy proficiency, vocational training and business skills development.” This constitutes an important step in the provision of real solutions for Yemen’s people, Al-Muaikil said.

Shared vision

With a total cost of US\$21.59 million, the VTSD is a project co-financed by the Islamic Development Bank, the Government of Yemen and OFID. The share contributed by OFID is 42.15 percent. In addition to the financial component, the social component is also relevant. As Mr. Al-Muakil explained, “This is a unique project, which embraces many components to improve the employability of youth, the empowerment of women and strengthening capacity building for the poorest.”

OFID’s contribution began in 1976, with a balance of payments (BOP) loan to support an Education/Training project, followed by many successful and completed projects in vocational, technical training and social fund development as well as the skills development projects for young Yemenis. Since then, OFID’s assistance in Education has been disseminated throughout the 250 vocational and technical training centers located across the whole country, to help in reducing poverty by increasing literacy and employment opportunities.

Some of the benefits have include enabling school children to return to school after completing non-formal basic education or to join a youth vocational training program; providing youth with practical vocational skills that will enable them to join the labor market and providing women with training to develop economic activity to help support their families.

Just as water is basic to life, education is basic to progress because it provides life-giving support for societal development. OFID is proud to support the Yemeni youngsters, the promise of a better future in one of the least developed countries on the Arabian Peninsula but immensely rich in history. ■



Vocational Training center in Sana’a.

Left: two ladies engaged in the shaving and engraving of wood.

Below: Yemeni architect Mr. Ali Qaid demonstrates his high skill in cutting special stones to be used in building decoration.



PHOTOS: SFD



PHOTO: EFREN RAMIREZ CEUB

Teaching Laboratory at the Odontology Faculty of the San Francisco Xavier de Chuquisaca University. Young students, soon to be dentists, practicing with patients, using recently acquired equipment.

Bolivia: meeting challenges to build a future

The poorest country in South America has to deal with low rates of income, employment and productivity, but education can play a vital role in development.

BY DAMELYS DELGADO

Between the Andes and the Amazon is located one of the eight most biodiverse countries in the world: Bolivia, a country with several of “the mosts”, like the world’s highest navigable lake, Lake Titicaca; the largest salt deposit in the world, the Salara de Uyuni; the second largest natural gas reserves in South America and around 50 percent of world reserves of lithium. In addition, the administrative capital, La Paz, is the world’s highest, with an elevation of 3,650 m above sea level.

But despite being rich in natural resources, Bolivia, a land-locked country with a population of 10 million people, is one of the poorest and most economically segregated countries in South America, with a 65 percent poverty rate. Sixty percent of its diverse population is younger than 25. Bolivian youth need to be trained in the expertise required to develop the country’s resources.

Education is a key factor in tackling poverty. It is also one of the most effective instruments for addressing inequalities.

All governments worldwide are deeply aware of this need, and the Bolivian authorities in 2003, launched an education strategy to transform the academic system and to foster greater enrolment of youth in higher education.

In 2006, with the Bolivian President Evo Morales as a witness, financial support by OFID for the National Universities Rehabilitation and Modernization Project was signed in Vienna to provide infrastructure and equipment at nine national universities located in the Departments of Santa Cruz, El Beni, Tarija, Potosí, La Paz, Chuquisaca, Pando, Cochabamba and Oruro.

With a strong social scope

According to the Bolivian Education Strategy, the national public universities in the System of the Bolivian Universities (SUB) defined an investment program to rehabilitate and modernize the universities’ infrastructure aligned with the needs of the country.

Mr. Romulo Martinez, Operations Officer-in-charge of the Bolivian projects explained that the SUB’s Executive Com-

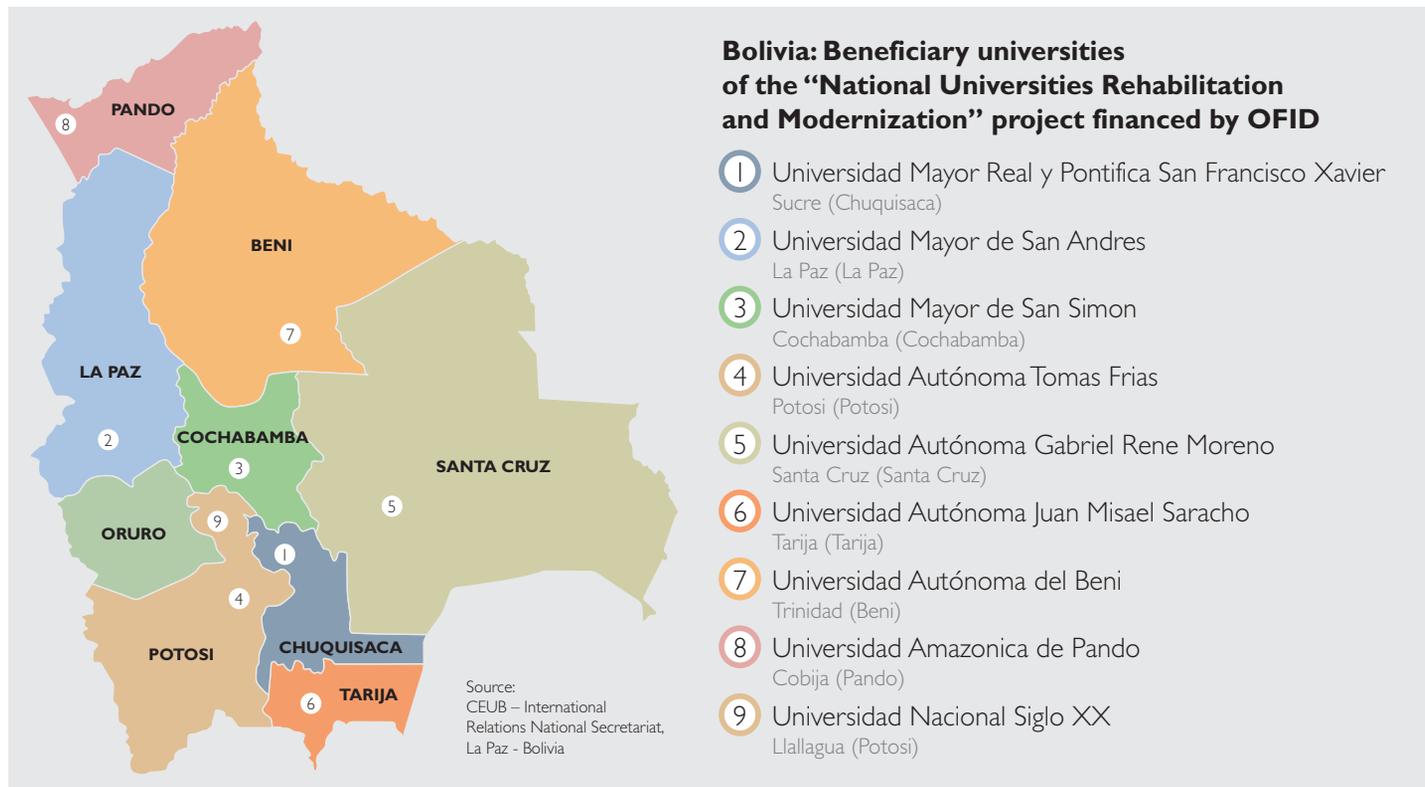
mittee of the Bolivian Universities (CEUB) submitted to the government feasibility proposals and a request for financing of the nine universities participating in the project. The proposal included a program for the institutional strengthening of each, with specific plans for infrastructure and equipment refurbishment, benefiting more than 240,000 students and an academic community estimated at about 7,400 lecturers. “All the universities were under pressure to cope with growing enrolment demand by that time,” Martinez said. “OFID met with each one of them during appraisal to identify the most pressing needs”.

Mr. Martinez added: “This is a *sui generis* project since it was the first time the autonomous universities in Bolivia were directly negotiating external financing, enabled by the introduction in 2006, of a new direct hydrocarbon tax specifically assigned to the higher education sector. OFID alone agreed to solely co-finance, with contributions from each participating university covering up to 52.6 percent of the total cost, estimated to be US\$23 million, while OFID assistance

totalled US\$10.7 million, equivalent to 47.7 percent of the investment.”

OFID has supported development in Bolivia since 1979, for a total of over US\$100 million as of July 2011, through private sector, public sector and grants financing for projects in transport, agriculture & agro-Industry, health, water supply, energy and education, among others.

The rehabilitation and modernization project at the universities encompassed several components, such as campus infrastructure expansion works, construction of teaching and library modules, modernization of audiovisual facilities, information technology and communication systems hardware and software overhauling, and the procurement of laboratory equipment and state of the art pedagogic kits. The improvements in each university throughout Bolivia is expected to help the universities improve the conditions of the nation’s higher education system, in order to prepare thousands of youngsters to fill a productive and creative role in their country’s that, according to the 2010 Human Development Report of the UNDP, ranks 95th out of 169 in human development. ■



Mozambique: pursuing development of natural and human potential

National Strategy for Higher Education accomplishing aims

Step by step, Mozambique finds ways to develop its untapped natural resources. To help achieve this goal, it is vital to educate the young people of the country.

BY DAMELYS DELGADO

After decades of armed conflict, Mozambique, once one of the poorest countries in the world, has become one of Africa's best-performing economies with greater political stability and rich natural resources of remarkable economic potential.

The *Moatize Basin* in the country's Tete province, may be the last untapped great coal reserve in the world with an estimated 2.5 billion tons of coal. Proven reserves of natural gas estimated around 127.4 billion cubic metres rank the country as 51 among 99 nations. Some 88 percent of its arable land is still uncultivated. And, for its part, the tourism industry must overcome many issues to take advantage of Mozambique's stunning beaches and wildlife. Today, agriculture makes up 80 percent of Mozambique's economy.

Peace and the road to welfare

Peace has placed Mozambique on the road to welfare, and substantial progress has been made in achieving several milestones toward the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Nonetheless, poverty remains widespread, with more than 50 percent of Mozambicans living on less than US\$1 a day. According to the World Bank, many things have changed in the country since independence from Portugal in 1975, with programs such as free education, affordable health care, child immunization, malaria control, HIV/AIDS and infrastructure improvements. The Bank points out that net primary school enrolment reached 95 percent in 2010, and infant and under-five child mortality was reduced from 201 per 1,000 new-born in 1997 to 138 per 1,000 in 2008.

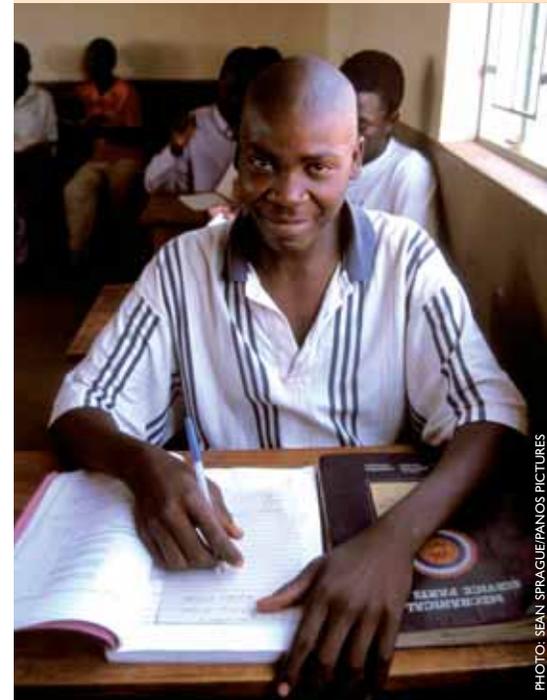


PHOTO: SEAN SPRAGUE/PANOS PICTURES

A remarkably indicator is the illiteracy rate that is expected to drop to 30 percent by 2012, according to Mozambican National Director of Adult Education, Mr. Ernesto Muianga. In 1974, it was estimated that 97 percent of the Mozambican population could not read or write. Since then, the rate has been steadily decreasing.

Challenges remain

The need to improve job creation and to sustain economic growth requires a well-educated population. With close to 22 million people, 70 percent of whom live in rural areas and 50 percent under the age of 15, Mozambique is on the way to taking advantage of its strong economic potential. Still untapped natural resources can easily support the development of this sub-tropical country bordering Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Swaziland and South Africa, and with an Indian Ocean coastline of about 2,470 km.

Despite a particularly high rate of growth in the last few years (an annual average of eight percent per year),



PHOTO: EDUARDO MONDLANE UNIVERSITY/LOURENCO DIQUE



Buildings of the Eduardo Mondlane University. With an expected 40 percent increase in graduate numbers, the University hopes to contribute to the development of professional standards.



Mozambique's economic expansion has not been accompanied by an increase in necessary human resources. According to the project appraisal report, assuming zero growth, Mozambique will need about 1,200 professionals every year to fill the available jobs in the public sector alone.

The government is aware of the importance of meeting demands for higher education, responding to labour market expectations and increasing efficient use of available resources. OFID, in compliance with the mandate to support development of the poorer countries worldwide, has supported Mozambique's *National Strategy for Higher Education*, through the Eduardo Mondlane University Project. With a total US\$13.4 million cost estimate, the project has been jointly financed by BADEA (30 percent), the Government of Mozambique (seven percent) and OFID (63 percent).

Ms. Luisa Gil, Operations Officer in charge of the Mozambique projects, and Acting Director of OFID's Africa Region, explained the conditions in the Mozambican education sector: "At first there

was only the Eduardo Mondlane University. During the civil war and after the peace agreement in 1992, student accessibility remained limited, but eventually the system expanded, but on a weak financial basis. By 1999, the number of applicants had increased five-fold over the available vacancies." Today, the university is one of 23 higher education institutions, and preeminent in terms of size, number of students and staff.

The increasing number of students had not been accompanied by a concomitant level of new infrastructure. The physical condition of university campuses has not meet the needs of a growing population concentrated mainly in Maputo, the capital city, where job opportunities are better and the standard of living more attractive.

Ms. Gil summarized the objectives of the present project: "to enhance the quality of the services rendered by the University as a whole and of the Faculty of Science, by expanding existing facilities in order to increase the enrolment of students and by improving the learning environment."

To accomplish this goal, the project has supported the construction of four buildings: mathematics, computer science, biology and administration, totalling over 11,000 square meters, with appropriate furnishings and equipment for classrooms, laboratories and offices. Today, the university community has adequate facilities, no longer deficient or dispersed as was previously the case. The Faculty of Science, for example, had some divisions located eight kilometres away from the main site. Besides the advantages of new and modern buildings, the project provides relief for an overcrowded educational location.

With the expectation of a 40 percent increase in graduate numbers, Eduardo Mondlane University will contribute to the development of professional standards, providing the best human resource training in its improved facilities in a country with a tremendous urgency to find ways toward progress. ■

Palestine: cultivating hope by empowering youth

Youth, a dynamic force behind socio-economic advancement in developing countries, face many challenges; however, the challenges confronting the youth in Palestine are seen as much greater. Sixty-three years have passed since the beginning of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Over this time, Palestinian territories have very often been subject to strict closures, blockades and curfews, which hamper all aspects of life.

BY HALA EL SAYED AND AUDREY HAYLINS

Palestinian youth

Palestinian youth are among those who are most severely hit, especially when it comes to education. Attendance at higher education levels has been severely interrupted since more than half of higher education students have become unable to reach their universities in the West Bank and Gaza. Teachers are also badly affected.

Another difficulty is the sharp decline of the economy in the Palestinian territories which has left a large percentage of university students unable to pay their fees. This situation has consequently interrupted the continuation of their studies and endangered the financial viability of universities as well.

In addition, the ongoing critical situation has caused extensive destruction to basic infrastructure and essential buildings including all educational services. As a result, the Palestinian education system has been put out of action.

The ongoing tragic situation in Palestine has called repeatedly for emergency assistance to the severely affected Palestinians. According to a damage assessment carried out in May 2002 by the international community in close cooperation with the Palestinian Authority, educational institutions were on top of the components of an emergency program where urgent assistance was required.

PHOTO: AL-NAJAH UNIVERSITY



Campus of the Information Technology College at Al-Najah University.



Education, in the view of OFID, remains a crucial tool for the accomplishment of sustainable development across Palestine.

Empowerment

Aware of the importance of Education as a crucial tool for achieving sustainable development, OFID has constantly paid special attention to it. Empowering youth as a valued asset in community development process has always been OFID's main target. Consequently, educational institutions, tuition fees for university students and the development of primary school infrastructure have always been among OFID's areas of primary concern.

Recognizing the urgent need for a good higher education system in Palestine, OFID has recently approved a project that aims at fostering higher education institutions in the country. The project forms part of OFID's ongoing support in Palestine through its special grant account, which was set up in 2002, especially to channel assistance to Palestinians.

The project is the continuation of a special emergency program launched in 2002 in cooperation with the Arab Fund for Social and Economic Development

and the Arab Monetary Fund. The direct objectives of the program are to improve access of poor Palestinian youth to higher education and support the development of Palestinian tertiary education institutions, in particular universities. The project is expected to continue improving the overall learning environment and the quality of higher education services and thus help underpin the country's socio-economic advancement.

The fifth phase of the project, covering the academic years 2010/2011 and 2011/2012, targets 12 Palestinian universities and 22 colleges. It is envisaged to cover the cost of tuition fees of approximately 110,000 college and university students as well as the living allowance of 15,000 poor students attending those institutions.

According to Ms. Ikhlass Al-Sheikhly, head of OFID's Grants Unit, progress reports show that since the launch of the program in July 2002, over 421,000 Palestinian students have benefited from this special assistance program. This represents approximately 34 percent of the to-

tal number of Palestinian students enrolled in universities and colleges during that period.

In addition to the payment of their tuition fees, 45,359 poor university and college students received living allowances. The program contributed also to the financing of 23 percent of Palestinian university professors' salaries as well as 18 percent of total universities budget. The program has supported a total of 11 universities and 24 colleges.

OFID's Special Grant Account

Since the program started, OFID has extended five grants in the amount of US\$11.5 million, which were drawn from the Special Grant Account for Palestine. The program is administered by the established Higher Committee for Selection of Affected Students, which comprises representatives of the Palestinian Council for Higher Education, the Arab Fund and the Welfare Association in addition to the heads of three major Palestinian universities. ■



Minister of Social Affairs, HE Mr. Wael Abu Faour (left), representing Prime Minister HE Mr. Najib Mikati; HE Dr. Abdallah Abdallah (second from left), Ambassador of Palestine in Lebanon; and Mr. Al-Herbish (right), inaugurating three new schools of the Nahr El Bared refugee camp.

OFID and UNRWA inaugurate new schools for Palestinian refugees

BY SILVIA MATEYKA

In May 2007, the Palestinian refugee camp of Nahr el Bared (NBC) in the north of Lebanon suffered severe attacks. Over the course of the three-month conflict, more than 95 per cent of the buildings in the camp were destroyed, including the compound of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) which housed health clinics, schools and relief offices. The 27,000 refugees registered with UNRWA were displaced.

Recognizing the need for international assistance, OFID announced a contribution of US\$5 million to UNRWA at an International Donor Conference on the Reconstruction and Recovery of NBC held in June 2008, in Vienna. The OFID grant was drawn from OFID's *Special Grant Account for Palestine* and was directed at the construction of three schools.

This September 2011, the construction works were successfully completed. After more than four years, children, who were once forced to abandon familiar classrooms and playgrounds, returned to NBC. With OFID's contribution, two schools (Mount Tabor and Amqa) were newly constructed and furnished, and one school (Toubas and Ein Karma) newly furnished and equipped. The Amqa complex hosts the only secondary school in the UNRWA compound and will provide some 150 boys and girls vocational training through the Northern Wing Sibleen Training Center. The reconstruction works allow the transfer of more than 2,400 students from prefabricated schools to new premises and classrooms in the 2011/2012 academic year.

On September 28, 2011, Mr. Suleiman J. Al-Herbish along with the Minister of Social Affairs of Lebanon representing the Prime Minister of Lebanon, HE Mr. Wael Abu-Faour, the Commissioner-

General of UNRWA, Mr. Filippo Grandi, and the Ambassador of Palestine to Lebanon, HE Dr. Abdallah Abdallah, was proud to inaugurate the first three new schools of NBC co-financed by OFID.

At the inauguration ceremony, Mr. Al-Herbish commended UNRWA and its partners for their efforts and impressive job in the reconstruction of the NBC. He reaffirmed that OFID placed the suffering of the Palestinian people at its highest priority and that the OFID Grant Account for Palestine is accorded high importance in the institution's activities. He further disclosed that UNRWA is one of the oldest partners of OFID in Palestine and that in the past decade this cooperation had taken on a new maturity. *"Today, I address the families and children of Nahr el Bared and convey to them the unwavering support of OFID. The past suffering and survival through such hardship will always resonate in our hearts and push us to continue to do more, specifically capacity building as a cornerstone of sustainable development,"* he concluded.

Cooperation between OFID and UNRWA began in 1979. Assistance was then directed at supporting vocational training programs in several Palestinian Camps. In the last 10 years, OFID has expanded its collaboration with UNRWA through the establishment of *PalFund* which finances micro-enterprises across the West Bank and Gaza. In 2009, on the sidelines of UNRWA's 60th Anniversary, OFID launched an *UNRWA Scholarship Fund for talented Palestinians* in Vienna, Austria, with a grant of US\$1.2 million. OFID's accumulated funding and commitments to UNRWA amount to over US\$28 million.



UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon established a High-level Group on Sustainable Energy for All to deliver, among other targets, a Global Action Agenda in the lead-up to the Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development scheduled for June, 2012. (Mr. Ban, first row center, is flanked on his right by Mr. Yumkella, and behind him, Mr. Al-Herbish)

OFID joins UN Group on Sustainable Energy for All

BY ANNA ILARIA-MAYRHOFER

At a United Nations Private Sector Forum on Sustainable Energy for All, hosted by the UN Global Compact in collaboration with UNIDO (the United Nations Industrial Development Organization) and UN Energy, September 20, 2011, an announcement was made that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was establishing a *High-level Group (HLG) on Sustainable Energy for All* to lay the groundwork for a “ground-breaking new energy initiative” – *Sustainable Energy for All by 2030 (SE4ALL)*. OFID Director-General Mr. Suleiman J. Al-Herbish was subsequently appointed by Mr. Ban Ki-moon to join the Group.

Charged with delivering a Global Action Agenda in the lead-up to the Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development scheduled for June 4–6, 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, other members of the Group include the Director-General of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), Mr. Adnan Amin; UNEP (United Nations Environment Program) Executive Director Achim Steiner; and UNDP (United Nations Development Program) Administrator Ms. Helen Clark. OFID will be hosting the 2nd meeting of the Group at its headquarters in Vienna, November 19-20, 2011.

Role of the Group

UNIDO Director-General Kandeh Yumkella and Mr. Charles Holliday, Chairman of the Bank of America, will lead the Group, which comprises 30 members from business, government, financial institutions and civil society from across the globe. The primary objective of the Group is to develop a strategy to combat energy poverty and achieve equitable access to energy based on three intertwined global targets: ensuring universal access to modern energy services; doubling the rate of improvement in energy efficiency; and doubling the ▶

◀ share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

Commenting on his appointment to the High-level Group, Mr. Al-Herbish said he looked forward to representing OFID and “sharing our institution’s expertise and experience in helping shape the Global Energy Poverty Alleviation Action Agenda.”

International Year of Sustainable Energy for All

In 2010, the 65th UN General Assembly declared 2012 as the *International Year of Sustainable Energy for All* in recognition that “access to affordable modern energy services is essential for sustainable development and for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.” This year, along with the Rio+20 Summit, is being referred to by Mr. Ban as a “historic opportunity” to place the issue of universal access at the forefront of the international agenda. He has called on all partners to take bold action.

Until impoverished populations have enhanced access to affordable and reliable sources of energy, there is little chance they will be able to change their situation. Those residing in remote, rural areas are the most vulnerable as the majority of them depend on agriculture for sustenance and livelihood and are unable to enjoy the benefits of electricity-powered technologies, such as modern irrigation systems and food processing and cold storage equipment that would enable them to boost yields and enhance food security.

OFID’s commitment toward energy poverty alleviation

The alleviation of energy poverty is a priority area for OFID, which, together with much of the global community, considers universal energy access to be the “missing ninth” MDG. Since the Third OPEC Summit in November 2007 and the subsequent Solemn Declaration encouraging efforts in this regard, OFID has earmarked additional resources for the energy sector. It also has assumed a key role in the international Energy for the Poor Initiative, which was launched in June 2008 to provide a structured and unified response to the problem of energy poverty.

OFID has maintained its contribution to the global energy poverty dialogue *via* involvement in a number of high-level events. In April 2011, the institution hosted the Crans Montana Forum’s High-level Panel *Energy Poverty –*

A key issue for peace, stability and development: Can Industry lead the necessary changes? In his keynote speech, OFID Director-General Al-Herbish said that the key topics being discussed at the Forum, such as sustainable development and poverty alleviation, particularly energy poverty, were at the “heart of OFID’s mission.” Mr. Al-Herbish outlined how OFID was tackling the energy poverty issue on a number of fronts, including increasing its share of energy operations under its Public Sector and Trade Finance portfolio. He also highlighted OFID’s recently-signed Memorandums of Understanding with development partners such as the Asian Development Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Bank, with the view to focusing future collaboration on energy access.

In June, an OFID delegation actively participated in the Vienna Energy Forum 2011, addressing the first High-Level Panel on *Paving the Way for Universal Energy Access* and the panel on financing universal energy access. In November, OFID will host the 2nd IEF (International Energy Forum) – OFID Symposium in Energy Poverty that will discuss, among other topics, how universal access to modern energy can be achieved by 2030 and mechanisms for financing energy access for the poor, as well as transferring local, national and regional experiences in combating energy poverty to other regions.

In keeping with its pledge to step up its assistance to energy-related projects, OFID’s Governing Board has this year approved a number of public sector loans to help bolster the energy sectors in various countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and more are in the pipeline. In 2010, almost a quarter of OFID’s commitments went to 18 energy-related projects in 11 countries, most of them in Africa, where energy poverty is the most severe. The operations financed support a mix of energy sources, including renewables.

OFID is also forging new partnerships with the energy industry, such as one with the *Shell Foundation*, a charitable institution that will, in collaboration with the social enterprise *d.light*, supply solar lanterns to thousands of the poor in remote, rural regions in Kenya and Tanzania. This represents the first grant approved under a new Energy Poverty Grant Program, which was approved by OFID’s Ministerial Council in June 2011 and set up specifically to channel financing to grassroots energy schemes. ■

For further information on SE4ALL as well as on OFID and Energy Poverty Alleviation:
www.se4all.org;
www.un.org/en/sefa;
www.ofid.org.



World Water Week, 2011

Over 2,500 delegates gathered in Stockholm, Sweden, August 21-27, 2011 for *World Water Week (WWW)*, an annual focal point for global water and related issues since 1991. Hosted and organised by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), the theme of this year's WWW was *Responding to Global Changes: Water in an Urbanising World*.

BY FATIMAH ZWANIKKEN

Rapid urbanization, population growth, and competition for scarce resources are expected to put mounting pressures on cities. Accordingly, sound urban management and planning will be increasingly important for the well-being of citizens of large cities, or cities with more than 20 million inhabitants. Today, more than half of humanity lives in urban areas, a number set to rise to 70 percent as the world population swells from seven billion by end-October 2011 to 9.1 billion in 2050. Most of this growth will take place in the developing countries, where some five million people join the urban population each month.

Urban growth control

Few cities currently control urban growth through adequate planning of both formal and informal settlements, and investments in water infrastructure generally have not kept up with the pace of urbanisation. As a result, urban growth in most developing countries goes hand in hand with the expansion of slums, and the deepening of poverty and increase in diseases. More than 800 million people today live in slums, where resources allocated to waste-water treatment and sanitation are largely insufficient. One out of four urban residents, 794 million people in total, does not have access to

adequate sanitation facilities, and 141 million urban dwellers do not have access to safe drinking water. Inadequate waste-water treatment and sanitation in turn causes water-borne diseases and epidemics such as diarrhoea, malaria and cholera, with diarrhoea causing over two million preventable deaths annually among children under five years old.

Unless urban water management and infrastructure adapt, demand for fresh water could exceed supply by as much as 40 percent by 2030. Massive urban expansion will put rising pressure on scarce water resources and could cause a breakdown in basic services, leaving ►



2011 World Water Week Opening Plenary – Panel discussion. Right to left: Mr. Anders Bertell, Executive Director, SIWI; Dr. Sheela Patel, Chair of Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI); Dr. Joan Clos, Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme; and Prof. Stephen R. Carpenter, 2011 Stockholm Water Prize Laureate.

For solutions to be sustainable, it would be helpful if water management sought to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

◀ many people without basic fresh water and sanitation facilities. Besides posing a major threat to public health, this could hamper economic growth and development, and create social and geo-political tensions in urban areas of both mature and developing economies.

Since water, food and energy security are intrinsically related, fresh water scarcity will have a profound impact on food and energy security. Climate-change-induced floods and droughts will further exacerbate these trends. At the same time, in a world where cities have become the centres of knowledge, creativity, economic growth and wealth, these challenges provide vast opportunities for innovation, efficiency gains, improved service delivery and business creation.

For solutions to be sustainable, urban water management must strive to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This entails the responsibility to avoid downstream pollution and environmental degradation by protecting and restoring the rural ecosystems on which safe drinking water depends. Cities are also advised to conduct “stress” tests to assess future risk and prepare for population increases.

WWW 2011 concluded with the „Stockholm Statement to the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro (Rio+20 Summit), to be held in Brazil, June 4-6, 2012. The Statement calls on global leaders participating in the Rio+20 Summit to deliver a new model of human and economic development that could achieve „universal provisioning of safe drinking water, adequate san-

itation and modern energy services by the year 2030“. More specifically, local, urban and national governments are called upon to adopt targets to achieve a 20 percent efficiency increase in water use and re-cycling in agriculture, the food supply-chain and energy production, as well as a 20 percent decrease in water pollution by 2020.

Kuala Lumpur

Means to improve urban water management will be further discussed at the second biennial *International Water Association (IWA) Development Congress and Exhibition*, Kuala Lumpur, November 21-24, 2011. The Congress and Exhibition is co-sponsored by OFID. The main objective of the Congress, which convenes under the theme ‘*Pioneering Water Solutions in Urbanising Areas*’, is to help communities and water professionals in urban areas of developing countries “to meet the unprecedented challenges of delivering safe and affordable water and sanitation services through innovative and collaborative solutions.”

To this effect, the Congress will focus on issues ranging from appropriate technology solutions to financial mechanisms and capacity building for water cycle management. More specifically, the Congress will foster in-depth debates on innovative solutions at the frontier of water and sanitation management and urban development; enable new partnerships across geographical boundaries and areas of expertise; provide access to the latest best-practice experiences and scientific findings; catalyse new insights and foresight through the exchange of ideas, and share lessons learned. ■

From Deauville to Busan: strengthening support for the MENA Region



Representatives of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and international and regional development financing institutions (IFIs) – including OFID – joined the Finance Ministers of the Group of Seven (G-7) industrialized nations plus Russia (G-8) in the southern French port city of Marseille, France, September 10, 2011 to discuss means to broaden and speed up implementation of the *Deauville Partnership*.

The Deauville Partnership was established at the May 2011 G-8 Summit to support countries of the MENA region that are in the process of political, economic and financial transformation. This process is being challenged by multiple internal and external pressures. A difficult global economic environment, including heightened financial risks and rising commodity prices, as well as political change have contributed to a decline in economic activity, tourism, and market confidence. The effect has also been seen in rising unemployment rates, particularly among the youth, and restricted international trade and investment flows.

In Deauville, a US\$38 billion package was agreed upon to assist countries in transition achieve macro-economic stability, sustainable and inclusive private sector-led growth and employment creation, and regional and global integration. The G-8 offered US\$20 billion in assistance through 2013 to selected countries, particularly Tunisia and Egypt. This assistance was matched by bilateral support from G-8 governments and regional donors and institutions, including the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) and individual OFID Member Countries Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, and Qatar.

Assistance from the international community could come in many forms. In addition to financial and technical support, export products from the MENA region could be granted greater access to developed country markets in order to encourage private sector- and export-led growth, and promote trade and investment flows.

In Marseille, OFID joined other IFI's and members of the international community in a partnership framework aimed at amplifying and guaranteeing the assistance offered in Deauville. OFID confirmed its commitment to increasing its financing operations in support ►



IFIs, including OFID, devised a partnership framework to amplify and guarantee the assistance offered by the international community in Deauville.

◀ of the transition process, particularly in Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco and Jordan. Besides emergency humanitarian assistance, areas of collaboration will include support for economic diversification through private sector-led growth and employment creation, trade finance, institutional capacity building and technical assistance, social safety nets and global and regional integration within the framework of the *Greater Arab Free Trade Area* and the *Arab Customs Union*.

To ensure the necessary harmonization and effectiveness of the development co-operation provided, OFID will *liaise* with sister institutions and other international and regional agencies that pledged to broaden support for the MENA region. These include the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank Group (IBRD), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFSED), the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB), and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Donor coordination and harmonization are expected to be further enhanced at the

forthcoming *Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4)*, Busan, Korea, November 29 – December 1, 2011. The Forum, to be organized by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), will provide an opportunity to strengthen collaboration between members of the OECD/DAC, institutions of the *Arab Co-ordination Group* and other relevant partners on strategies and investment plans related to the *Deauville Partnership*.

Furthermore, OFID will play an active role in the *Deauville Partnership Coordination Platform*. The objectives of the new platform will be to facilitate information-sharing and mutual understanding among all parties involved; to coordinate monitoring and reporting on implementation of the *Deauville Partnership*; and to identify opportunities for collaboration and joint action on both financial and technical assistance and policy and analytical work.

The expectation is that coordinated support by OFID and others will help transition economies of the MENA region achieve the estimated 7.5 percent annual growth rate that will be required to overcome high unemployment, improve standards of living and generate a prosperous future for people in the region. ■

More hands to serve the poor

On business adaptation and Corporate Social Responsibility

BY RAMINE SAMII

The private sector is a most important source of economic growth and innovation. The sector controls much of the world's human, financial and technological resources and has unique access to global natural resources. It also is the sector that could have considerable adverse impact on society and the environment. Thus, few governments or institutions could be indifferent to the trends prevailing and shaping the corporate world.

Governments, through regulatory efforts, do what they can to contain what is sometimes seen as the undesirable effects of the corporate world on society. Some governments try to level the playing field to ensure fair and equitable competition, treatment and behaviour. At the same time, some governments depend on the private sector for their revenues and increasingly on their technical and managerial expertise to implement and provide vital services.

Bottom of the Pyramid

The economic fate of the poor often depends largely on how well corporate decision-makers seize opportunities and can reframe challenges facing the world, turning them into opportunities. As C.K. Prahalad argued, given the size of the world's poor – four billion – there was money to be made by serving the 'bottom of the pyramid' (BoP)¹ or the forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid. Not only did poor people collectively have spending power and could adopt new technologies, but serving micro-con-

sumers, even in rural areas, could lead to product innovation and new business models based on access, affordability and availability transferable to urban areas and richer economies. Moreover, the BoP (apart from consisting of a vast market of micro-consumers) included, indeed, micro-producers and investors who, again collectively and by adopting new business models, could contribute to economic growth.

Prahalad's view was that big corporations should tap into big opportunities; a view that is aligned with the need to solve big problems. However, similar to many other scholars, Prahalad recognized that, regardless of the size of the corporation, none could single-handedly pick up the

bill and take on the challenge of addressing the specificities of the BoP. There are a number of actors who perform complementary roles and activities to ensure the functioning of society. By entering into partnerships with these institutions as well as governments, the corporate world can leverage its core competencies/resources to increase the chances of sustained success in these markets.

OFID and the Corporate World

Events shaping the thinking and operations of the corporate world are of direct relevance to development finance institutions (DFIs) such as OFID, both from the institutional and the operational perspective. From the institutional perspective, ►



PHOTO: CHRISTOPHER JONES/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

¹ The phrase 'The forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid' was first used by US President Franklin Roosevelt in 1932.

◀ for example, developments on the financial markets have a direct impact on financial resources. From the operational perspective, as a DFI supporting private sector development, OFID depends not only on the risk appetite of the domestic and foreign private sector investors to invest in underserved markets but also in their ability to bring appropriate products and business models to these markets.

As an institution active in the private sector, OFID is witnessing growing interest from the corporate world in identifying solutions to capture opportunities and respond to challenges unique to the BoP. These solutions, which are ultimately underpinned by the logic of sustainability and hence profit, fall under two headings: business adaptation as captured by Prahalad and corporate social responsibility.

Business adaptation

Those entrepreneurs and companies convinced that the BoP can be a source of revenue growth, greater efficiency and innovation, have already adapted their products and business models to serve the group.

One of the most documented and celebrated business model innovations/product adaptation has been the advent of micro-finance institutions as pioneered by the Nobel Peace Laureate, Muhammad Yunus. Through the *Grameen Bank*, Yunus, as early as the mid-1970s, reversed the traditional banking business model. Instead of extending loans to male urban dwellers in a position to provide collateral, the Grameen Bank extends loans primarily to women in rural areas without requiring any collateral.

Another well-known example is the introduction of pre-paid cards by mobile companies in emerging markets to tap into the vast aggregate purchasing power and need of the BoP to be connected; a

service innovation that found its way back to the developed economies.

Corporate Social Responsibility

For decades, for-profit corporations' involvement in social causes was limited in scope and scale. At best, select corporations made monetary contributions or established family foundations (e.g. Ford, Kellogg and Rockefeller Foundations) to respond to social needs as they arose. During all this period, non-profit organizations such as OFID filled-in the gap and made the difference by being long-standing and reliable partners to countries and communities they serve.

Today, the world is witnessing a new trend: More and more global companies are embedding the concept of sustainability and corporate social responsibility in their key business decisions. Corporate leaders have taken social issues on board and CSR has dramatically moved up on the agenda of enterprises. Corporations are also looking closely at their product range, supply chains and business models to reduce adverse impact and they are engaging in more creative ways in the resolution of social problems.

Among other approaches, under their corporate social responsibility programs, corporations with no readily available solution to the needs of the BoP, are partnering with the non-profit world. Typically, they are investing seed money in their core competencies to bring solutions in areas that can significantly improve the lives of the poor. For taking a business approach to address a social need, these companies are typically referred to as 'impact investors'. An example: a market leader in the power sector sets up a private equity fund which it intends to support (on a *pro bono* basis) through advisory services of its regular staff. The fund aims to invest in locally developed small on-grid and

off-grid electricity units that address the power needs of the semi-urban and rural populations. Another example: a market leader in the water sector is working with a number of entities with a view to identifying a waste treatment technology that can address the triple need of small rural communities in terms of access to power, water and food security. These initiatives, apart from making an impact on the BoP market, constitute valuable business experience and help deepen and develop new markets for the involved market leader.

Joining hands

The non-profit world, conscious of the complexities of issues on hand and in the context of limited resources, sees the benefits of accompanying profit making corporations in their efforts to address the unique needs of the "unserved" and underserved. There is greater recognition of the fact that a responsible market-driven paradigm to poverty alleviation – given the unique access of the private sector to resources – is the best bet for identifying solutions that address the specific needs of entire populations trapped in poverty.

At OFID, we are playing a catalyst role. OFID is ready to share the cost and risk of commercial and technological innovation by supporting initiatives and impact investors that address the BoP through grants and private sector windows. Through its private sector window, OFID has supported micro-finance institutions and mobile companies in partner countries and is actively addressing energy needs in rural and semi-urban areas. OFID is equally playing an advocacy role by encouraging market leaders with complementary core competencies required by BoP to join their efforts in identifying integrated solutions to community needs. ■

IR Iran exhibits arts and craft at OFID

BY MOJGAN SANANDAJI

The Islamic Republic of Iran, next in line with its arts and culture at OFID in the continuing OFID in-house Exhibition Series on traditional works of Member- and Partner Countries, showcased *Traces of Iranian Art on Civilization*, October 6-14. HE Dr. Ali Asghar Soltanieh and Mr. Suleiman J. Al-Herbish welcomed distinguished guests and discussed both Series and Iranian accomplishments in the realm of arts and craft. Dr. Soltanieh is Iran's Ambassador to Austria and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic to UN and other International Organizations in Vienna.

The artwork on display at the Iran Exhibition covered a wide range of Iranian art forms – from tapestry to objects and jewellery. The OFID in-house exhibition series aim at bringing the cultures of OFID nations and partner countries to communities of, and international visitors to, host-city Vienna, Austria, to build further awareness and international understanding.

Grasping full meaning

To write about the culture, literature and the art of a nation, or any other topic that deals with such great diversity necessitates several volumes to grasp the full meaning. One can engage in a never-ending quest, for the world is in constant change, and history influences art and literature; while, to some extent, art and literature equally influence history.

Art is hardly ever describing this material world. It transcribes visual metaphors driven from literature and this suffices to grasp the meaning. The poet as a prose writer says that “the sky is rugs, turquoise and gold”; and depending on the nature of light to which the poet refers, the artist paints a sky in blue lapis, blue turquoise or gold. Persian poetry is more than literary ornaments of the mind. It expresses a way of perceiving



From right to left: HE Dr. Ali Asghar Soltanieh, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the UN and other International Organizations in Vienna; OPEC Secretary-General HE Mr. Abdalla Salem El-Badri; HRH Prince Mansour bin Khalid al Saud; and Mr. Suleiman J. Al-Herbish.

the world, materially and morally. It is the spirit that celebrates God, and in the realms of Persian art rattles are not necessary.

Globally, IR Iran plays a significant role in the development of art. And the art of textile, particularly tapestry, occupies an important place in Iranian Art. Indeed, when it comes to tapestry, there is nowhere else in the world where the same intrinsic beauty, finesse, harmony of colours and durability are reproduced. Even in other forms of Art, Iran offers great masterpieces; and although complex and multifaceted, these never cease to fascinate.

Art is drawn continually from heterogeneous sources which, in turn, merge and translate into new forms and take on a Persian identity. Persian art, in its entire strand, has thus served as an inspiration to other cultures.

In the bejewelled land of Iran, the golden link of art and culture radiates from ancient to contemporary times. For centuries Iranian artists, with the love and with invigorating warmth to serve others, continue to occupy a realm of captivity for Iranians and the rest of the world.

Iranian Art is a “robust and ancient tree” that has its roots in the heart of the *Dasht-e Lut* desert and branches reaching the peak of the *Alburz* Mountains. This giant tree has never let outside influence dominate its core and at times has dissolved prevalent influences and grown new branches with an Iranian identity.

Persian Carpets are works of splendour. Iranians consider Persian Carpets an essential part of their lives. There is no other object that occupies such importance in the Iranian household, whether an old thorn or a valuable ►



Items at the Iranian arts and crafts Exhibition; prominent among them, Persian carpets with their intrinsic beauty, finesse and harmony of line and color.

◀ golden-woven Carpets. It is universally known that no country can reproduce the same intrinsic beauty, finesse, harmony of line and color which characterize the Persian carpet. Compatriots Mrs. Nafar, Mr. Hassani, Mr. Dehgahi and Mr. Ardehali, have selected, collected and prepared a unique exhibition of Persian rugs, from the traditional to the modern; from the simplicity of town rugs and the tribal gahabeh to sophisticated designs of ghom, Esphana and Naiin.

In the long and rich history of carpet making, the names of the weavers and designers of many masterworks are simply lost in history; a painting may have a signature, while cornerstones have the name of the architects, but only a few precious carpets come with the name of their master designer and weaver. One of these masters is Ostad Ressam Arabzadeh (1914-2006) whose work was featured at the OFID Exhibition. Ostad encouraged his students in his workshop to weave his designs and to pass their craft on to the next generations. After his death in 2006, his sons and daughter have continued his legacy.

Also, the art of engraving is defined, in Iran, as “the art of craving delicate

designs on metal.” In the country, this art has always been done with the invention and designs that are purely Iranian. For centuries Iranian masters have done engraving on different metals such as copper, brass, silver and gold. Engravers apply different tools to varicoloured beauty of designs. Engraving dates back to seven thousand years and in the present time there are five thousand engravers in Iran particularly in Esfahan.

One of the artists on show at the OFID Exhibition was Mansour Hafezparast. Born in 1945 in Esfahan, he started learning the art of engraving on copper and brass at his father’s workshop when he was only about eight years old. He gradually learned more and improved his skills with a lot of interest over the next 54 years. Today, he is one of the few top artists in Iran in his field. He is creative in old and new styles and familiar with different engraving styles. Various pieces of his works are already in a few museums in Iran and abroad.

The precise origin of carpets has always been a question that no historian has been able to fully answer, but no place in the world has nurtured the craft and the magic of carpet making than the

Persian world. According to “Carpet lovers and seekers” the oldest rug, is Pazyryk Rug 200x183 dating to the *Achaemenian* Dynasty (330-553 BC) and is kept in the Leningrad Museum. It was during the *Sassanid* dynasty (224-641 AD) that the magnificent carpets were woven, one such splendour was the carpet in the audience hall of the kingdom of Khosrow of the Sassanid dynasty depicting a formal garden. The rug is made with silver and gold threads and jewels and was named “Bahare-Khosrow” (spring of Khosrow). Yet another magnificent work of tapestry is the “Shirin Carpet of Ardebil” made during the reign of the *Safavid* dynasty in the mid-16th century. This Carpet is, today, in the Victoria & Albert Museum of London.

During the *Safavid* dynasty (1499-1722) the art of calligraphy, tiling, painting miniatures, architecture and carpet weaving approached its highest previous level. It is during this period that Iranian artist created designs that since have been over and over emulated in many areas of the world, where the art of carpet weaving exists. The master weavers of the Safavid Period created about 1,500 carpets, some of which are today masterpieces. These are so sophisticated that since then only a fraction of the original Safavid motives have been re-created.

Calligraphy that reached its peak during the reign of Safavid is carved in steel, bronze, gold or ivory instead of on paper. It does not require much contemplation to realise that these writings on metals invoked a new spirit in the late 16th century and beyond.

The exhibition at OFID presented a few samples of the finest engraving that exist in the museum of Iran. The stunning costume Jewellery added another dimension. For centuries they have been regarded as an enhancement to the beauty of the women of the country. Clearly, Persian art in all its forms is surrounded by a mystery that will perhaps never fully dissipate; a mystery that over the centuries travellers have tried to unfold. Yet it is one of many factors that have shaped the face of Iranian art as it appears today. ■

Our vision

To aspire to a world where Sustainable Development, centred on human capacity-building, is a reality for all.

Our mission

To foster South-South Partnership with fellow developing countries worldwide with the aim of eradicating poverty.



Uniting against Poverty



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