

'We, the youth of Small Island Developing States, came to Mauritius in 2005, we shared our ideas, and'

{youtube}JOiMPJW-gdA{/youtube}

WHAT is Youth Visioning?

Youth Visioning seeks to empower young people in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to take action for sustainable living and development, and by doing so encourage locally-based development of new skills and opportunities. The concept is based on the capacity of young people to conceptualize, develop and implement their own projects, thus envisioning and taking action for the sustainable future for their islands. YV operates as a small grants program providing support to activities developed and implemented by and for young people. Since 2006, a diverse range of youth-led projects have been implemented from fish farming to community radio.

OBJECTIVES of Youth Visioning

The objectives of Youth Visioning are to:

- Create awareness and encourage participation by youth in shaping and advancing the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Programme of Action;
- Develop educational resources to increase the ability of young people to be able to implement their own sustainable development projects;

- Create partnerships with youth organisations to increase awareness of the initiative as well as to provide greater support for the implementation of youth led projects;
- Facilitate the implementation of youth proposals for sustainable island living;
- Encourage young islanders to work together especially inter-regionally.

HOW did Youth Visioning start?

Small islands, big stakes. The unique and diverse challenges facing small island states, combined with their vulnerability, have prompted special action from the world community.

In 1994, the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), held in Barbados, set out a specific Programme of Action. In January 2005, governments, civil society and youth representatives met in Mauritius to evaluate progress and chart a way forward.

As islands with different affiliations began to prepare for the review of their Programme of Action during the two-year period 2003-2004, it became increasingly apparent that the review process had to encompass the entire spectrum of island society, from the very young to the very old, and from organized to unorganized groups.

While other organizations led the way in the consultations among governments and civil society, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research in Mauritius, the host SIDS country for the review meeting, posed the question to a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) representative in July 2003: 'How are youth to be involved in this process?'

This was the catalyst for UNESCO, through its cross cutting project, Small Islands Voice, and in association with their Bureau of Strategic Planning Youth Section, to start a process that has become known as Youth Visioning for Island Living.

A project document was prepared during the second half of 2003 and circulated among national, regional and inter-regional organizations. The document basically outlined three phases:

1. [Preparatory activities \(January - Dec 2004\)](#);
2. [Meeting for youth representatives in Mauritius parallel to the main governmental UN meeting in Mauritius \(7-12 January 2005\)](#) ; and
3. Youth project implementation ([2005-08 report PDF](#))

By the end of March 2008 thirty-five micro-projects led by youth for youth in the Caribbean, Pacific and AIMS (Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea) regions had been implemented.

During the four years of developing the initiative, there were varying challenges but for the most part outcomes were positive. A solid foundation was built where there is now a recognised platform where young people from SIDS have access to a source of information and tools that can assist them in implementing grassroots projects. There existed a real opportunity to extend the network and further increase awareness of the initiative to create a larger impact.

For more information about the activities and results of Youth Visioning projects see the [PROJ ECT](#) pages.

YOUTH VISIONING TODAY

Youth Visioning intends to build on the successes and lessons learnt during the first phase of project implementation. The next phase of Youth Visioning focuses on further creating awareness and encourage participation by youth in shaping and advancing the SIDS programme of action, with a more holistic approach to sustainable development. It will involve new target islands, regional cooperation and larger country level impact. As well, greater emphasis will be placed on developing capacity building tools to further empower young people and to enhance their experience with the initiative. It encourages youth organisations to tackle all aspects of making their lives more sustainable, in particular in the following areas:

- **Life & Love in the islands** - island lifestyles and cultures
Cultural diversity | Cultural Expressions | Traditions & Beliefs | Civic Engagement | Gender Equality | Digital Stories | Media Skills | Life Skills |
- **My island home** - safeguarding island environments
Environmental Sustainability | Climate Change | Disaster Preparedness Planning | Digital Stories |
- **Money in my pocket** - economic and employment opportunities
Digital Stories | Cultural Industries | Free & Open Source Software for e-commerce|

- **HIV and AIDS** - Through the funds provided by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Youth Visioning also provides support to projects tackling HIV/AIDS related issues.

This process will lead to a consolidated youth contribution to the next High-level review meeting on the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Mauritius +10/Barbados +20) to be held in 2015.

Pacific Youth Visioning for Island Living – 2010 Small Grants

To commemorate International Youth Year: Dialogue & Mutual Understanding 2010, the UNESCO Office for the Pacific States decided to encourage young people and/or youth organizations from member countries to submit applications to support projects in the following areas:

- Life & Love in the islands
- My island home
- Money in my pocket

UNESCO Office for the Pacific States provided funding assistance of between USD\$1,500 – USD\$3,000 per project to young people and/or youth organizations to implement their own projects in their own communities. The best quality projects were selected for funding consideration. Please see [PROJECT](#) pages to find out more.