

The Earth Charter Initiative

EARTH CHARTER YOUTH NETWORK 2009

Activities and Resources for the Development of Youth Activism



Honor and support the young people of our communities, enabling them to fulfill their essential role in creating sustainable societies.

The Earth Charter
12.C.

The Earth Charter Initiative

EARTH CHARTER YOUTH NETWORK

2009

Activities and Resources for the Development of Youth Activism



January 2010

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Introduction

The year of 2009 was a new start in several ways. First of all, from the beginning of February the Earth Charter Initiative got a new coordinator for the Earth Charter youth network, when Dominic Stucker left his position and Jaana Laitinen became his successor. Also the name of the of the position changed – what used to be International Youth Coordinator turned to be International Youth Facilitator. This was done to emphasize that this job is not about coordinating the network but more to give support for the activists to self-coordinate their actions. This supports Earth Charter Initiative’s Strategy on Decentralized Expansion.

The aim for the year was to bring the focus area ‘youth’ more tightly to the initiative, instead of emphasizing it as an own entity. One of the concrete changes on this was that the youth -focus area did not have its own budget during the year 2009. This naturally set some limitations on the activities compared to the earlier years.

With generous support from Plan Netherlands, Earth Charter International was able to undertake the following matters to expand awareness of sustainable development and the Earth Charter among young people.

I. **One Youth Leadership, Sustainability and Ethics**

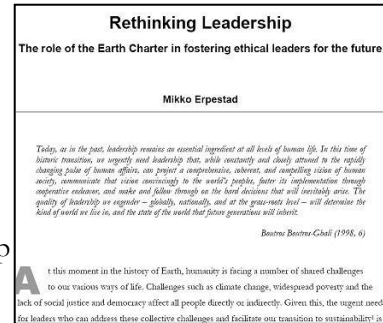
The theme ‘**Youth Leadership, Sustainability and Ethics**’ was given a high emphasis during the year 2009. ECI developed a workshop under this theme, which involves interactive sessions with meaningful discussions, music, photos and videos combined with eye-opening individual, group activities.

ECI facilitated this workshop in various venues such as: *the 5th Annual International Leadership Training Programme: A Global Intergenerational Forum*, organized by the UNESCO Chair & Institute of Comparative Human Rights and in the *International Youth Conference on the Environment, “TUNZA”*, organized by UNEP. Both of these sessions were successful and raised lively discussions and interest following the session.

Article in the youth blog: [UNEP's Tunza Youth Conference; a life changing experience](#)

The goal of this workshop is to help youth to realize their role as leaders for more sustainable future, and to give them tools and an opportunity to learn about the widely shared values for building a more just, sustainable and peaceful future. The aim is that after the session the participants are aware of the principles for sustainability and they will comprehend how those can be used as a tool on individual and organizational level. The session drives for positive change in participants’ everyday lives and creates a sense of global responsibility. Length of the workshop is anything from 1.5 hours to 4 hours.

To support this workshop ECI released [an essay on sustainability leadership and ethics](#): “*Rethinking Leadership – The Role of the Earth Charter in fostering ethical leaders for the future*”. The essay is written by Mr Mikko Erpestad during his internship at the Earth Charter International’s secretariat in Costa Rica and supported by the ECI staff.



The essay explains the differences between the traditional leadership model and sustainability leadership. It goes into fundamental leadership skills, such as systemic thinking, teamwork and need for collaboration and innovation. The essay claims that the sustainable leadership is strongly based on ethics and proposes the Earth Charter as an ethical blueprint for leaders.

This essay is intended for all activists working with leadership, and specifically for those who guide young people to live sustainably and become responsible local and global citizens in the 21st century. ECI has been using this essay as a background reading material for the workshops and online course on sustainability leadership.



By far the biggest effort in focusing in Youth Sustainability Leadership has been ECI’s online course, e-GLO [Earth Charter Global Learning Opportunity]. e-GLO is a semester-long, online leadership course inspired by the Earth Charter. It was organized for the first time in April - June, 2008. Because of its great success, the Earth Charter International organized an e-GLO 2 in September 2009 - January 2010!

e-GLO is a joint collaborative vision between the 3 entities: ECI, Beatboard and **Heart In Action Enterprises**. It is implemented in Heart In Action Enterprise’s interactive virtual platform called “**e-GLO Global Online Live & Interactive Seminar Room**”, a product of Heart In Action Enterprises and Asita Informatica.



e-GLO 2 was called *'Earth Charter Guiding Leaders Towards Sustainability Action'*. The reasoning behind this theme is that the problems of today's world are more complex than ever, highly interconnected and interdependent. In order to be able to respond to these challenges future leaders need a new and innovative interdisciplinary approach. And this is why there is a need to train the next generation of sustainability leaders. The sustainability approach to leadership requires special competencies compared to traditional leadership; knowledge about the challenges of globalization, capacity for innovation, dialogue and communication skills, systems thinking, global mindset, peer networking ability and strong capacities in Information and Communication technologies (ICTs), to mention few. In sustainability leadership values are a distinguishing factor – therefore training young professionals is no longer solely about deepening their understanding of sustainability issues – the actual essence is on strengthening values and specific skills.

With this structure e-GLO 2 aimed to make a positive impact on society by familiarizing participants with sustainability leadership skills and shared ethics. Furthermore, it equipped them with innovative skills in sustainability project planning, management and fundraising, as well as facilitated the effective use of new media. The ultimate aim was to further develop the capabilities necessary to conduct Earth Charter inspired action projects in the participants' own communities. All together 21 project ideas were developed.



In order to fulfill this objective an online course was carried out that gathered every second Saturday, starting on September 19th.

The session overview:

Session 1: Earth Charter, Sustainable Development and Youth Leadership

Saturday, September 19th, 4pm GMT

Session 2: Innovation

Saturday, October 3rd, 4pm GMT

Session 3: Intercultural / Interpersonal Communicative Competence

Saturday, October 17th, 4pm GMT

Session 4: Learning from the successful projects Saturday, October 31st, 4pm GMT

Session 5: Planning for Sustainable Action Projects inspired by the Earth Charter

Saturday, November 14th, 4pm GMT

Session 6: Fundraising for Sustainable Action Projects inspired by the Earth Charter

Saturday, November 28th, 4pm GMT

Session 7: Tutoring Session with e-GLO Graduates and Earth Charter Representatives

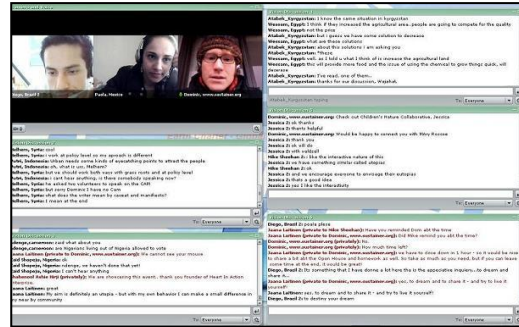
Saturday, December 12th, 4pm GMT

Session 8: Open House

Saturday, January 30th, 5pm GMT

The need for this type of course is recognized by the Earth Charter Initiative's activists whom have been actively asking for funds to implement their Earth Charter inspired project ideas. Consequently e-GLO 2 was designed for the activists from the Earth Charter youth network. This innovative program supports the belief that newly learned skills will stay in the Initiative and that the participants will be more motivated to take local level Earth Charter related actions.

ECI reported all sessions and outcomes online on the e-GLO webpage. In this way the information is shared and others are empowered to learn as well – not just to limit the information for a small group that is participating to the e-GLO 2. The PowerPoints and readers are available for everyone to read and the sessions are widely reported in ECI News with pics, personal stories, minutes etc.



e-GLO 2 had 30 active participants from 21 different countries. 90% of them live in the global south.

II. Youth Activism

The Earth Charter youth network is active in more than 80 countries. Young people and youth organizations can affiliate themselves with the Earth Charter youth network through three different ways:

- being an **individual activists** on issues related to sustainability and using the Earth Charter as a tool
- **launching an Earth Charter Youth/Student Groups**
- Partnering with their youth organization with the Earth Charter Initiative

Individual activists do several matters individually, such as promote the EC among their peers, take part in global EC activities (such as **e-GLO online leadership course**), help the secretariat to define potential youth organizations in their home countries, organize workshops on the EC etc. Their work is reported on the Wikispaces to encourage the others to join their work.

Earth Charter Youth/Student Groups (ECYGs) work to bring alive the vision of the Earth Charter in their local communities; they study the declaration, get inspired by it and then organize small action projects on sustainability.

As of January, 2010, there are 69 official Earth Charter Youth and Student Groups in 41 countries around the world. This means 25 new groups were formed during 2009 and 10 of them come from new countries: UK, Ukraine, Germany, Croatia, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, India, Somalia, Israel and The Gambia. Out of these countries Ukraine, Somalia, Croatia and The Gambia are countries that do not have other Earth Charter activities than ECYGs.

Wikispaces

A Wikispaces for Earth Charter youth activists was created during 2009. The purpose of these online Earth Charter Youth / Student Group Profiles is to provide a communication and sharing platform, to facilitate the familiarization of potential new members with current ECYGs, and to serve as an information channel from one group to another. The profiles consist of basic information of



the ECYGs, activity reports, project proposals, calls for partners, and pictures of the group and events. In this way the profiles also help other ECYGs when brainstorming new ideas and projects to be implemented in their respective areas.

In addition this wiki includes a collection of the Earth Charter youth resources, new youth/student group online applications and serves as a homepage for [Earth Charter Radio Campaign](#).

This wiki has been a great success! When counting together all the entries, it has been visited more than 40 000 times from 135 different countries! In addition, in December 2009 the [ECI wiki was acknowledged by Wikispaces](#) –it presented the Earth Charter Youth / Student Group Wiki as a great example of how non-profits are using wikis!

The actions of ECYGs are also occasionally reported in [the youth blog](#). This is done to share the good practices and innovative approaches also with the wider Earth Charter Initiative. Some examples of the articles on youth actions in 2009 are:

- [Walk for Peace and the Earth Charter in Brazil](#)
- [Football competition and the Earth Charter](#)
- [ECYG OGUN presents the Earth Charter to their paramount ruler](#)
- [Youth in Uganda take action!](#)
- [Earth Charter Youth Group holds democracy and participation workshop](#)
- [Helping People Apply the Earth Charter Principles](#)
- [Ghanaian and Nigerian Earth Charter youth activists meet](#)
- [EC Action Planning Manual](#)
- [Earth Charter in Action in Nigeria - again!](#)
- [Global Governance and Global Civil Society Debate in Amsterdam](#)
- [ECYG Warri Promoting Culture of Tolerance, Nonviolence, and Peace](#)
- [Earth Charter action day in Northern Costa Rica](#)
- [NYSC and Earth Charter start a strategic partnership in Nigeria](#)
- [Earth Charter in Action in Daugavpils, Latvia](#)
- [Delegation of the German Earth Charter Youth Initiative at the UNESCO World Conference on ESD](#)

Youth organizations can also partner with the Earth Charter Initiative by actively promoting the EC in their work.

A great example of a youth organization that is implementing the Earth Charter in their work is Reto Juvenil Internacional. RJI is a Costa Rican based organization working in collaboration with Australia, Canada and Guyana to carry out volunteer programs where community development is complemented by personal growth, group work and community service.

Reto Juvenil Internacional uses the Earth Charter as an educational tool but also as a compass for sustainable ways of living. It has fully embraced the Charter as part of its work. RJI trains all their volunteers on the Earth Charter before they go to the field. During their volunteering the youth will organize events that will promote the idea of sustainable living.



Read more:

[Earth Charter youth network partners with Reto Juvenil Internacional](#)

[Earth Charter action day in Northern Costa Rica](#)

[Earth Charter in action in rural Costa Rica](#)

EC youth activists elected to UN CSD Major Group on Children & Youth

The youth activists from the Earth Charter Initiative strengthened their position in the global discussion during the year 2009. A great number of EC youth were selected for the UN CSD Major Group on Children & Youth leadership for the year 2009 -2010. Out of the 6 regions, 3 are now coordinated with Earth Charter youth network activists and 2 out of 4 steering committee members are EC supporters!

Steering Committee:

Fatoumata S. Baldeh - The Gambia

[Ivana Savic - Serbia](#)

Julia Wong- USA

[Kiara Worth - South Africa](#)

Elected Regional Coordinators:

Asia Birendra Kumar - India

Africa [Esther Agbarakwe – Nigeria](#)

Europe European Youth Forum

Latin America Shiba Andre – Haiti

North America [Anantdeep Singh Dhillon - Canada](#)

Oceania [Didier Gleyzes – France](#)



The Earth Charter and the social networking sites

Social networking sites attract millions of users on daily basis. The use of them is a global phenomenon that is bridging online and offline networks. Recognizing their significance is important for worldwide movements, such as Earth Charter Initiative. Therefore ECI Secretariat aimed to spread the word on the Earth Charter as widely as possible through the social networking sites. The youth facilitator and the youth interns have paid a high attention on these sites. The Earth Charter is now being promoted on the following online fora:

Wikispaces [Earth Charter Youth Groups Profiles](#)

Wikispaces [Intergenerational Partnership for Sustainability \(IPS\)](#)

Facebook [Earth Charter Page - become a fan!](#)

Facebook [Earth Charter youth network group](#)

Facebook [Earth Charter Cause](#)

Facebook [e-GLO Group](#)

Facebook [Earth Charter Volunteers](#)

Facebook [La CARTA de la TIERRA en ACCIÓN](#)

Facebook [Earth Charter International](#)

TakingITGlobal (TIG) [Earth Charter youth network group](#)

YouTube [Earth Charter International](#)

WikiPedia [Earth Charter Entry](#)

Wiser Earth [Earth Charter Group](#)

Orkut [Earth Charter Youth Network](#)

Friendster [Earth Charter youth network](#)



Vkontakte [МОЛОДЕЖНОЕ сообщество Хартии Земли](#)
MySpace [Earth Charter youth network Earth Charter Group](#)
Hi5 [Earth Charter youth network in Hi5](#)

So far nearly 3500 members of different social networking sites have joined these groups promoting the Earth Charter. In these sites the activists share their stories, learn from each others, connect with people with the same interests etc. These online groups and causes are often formed in a highly decentralized way.

Participating in the Climate Discourse

ECI participated in the Climate Discourse throughout the autumn 2009. This was done in order to remind people that climate change is ultimately an ethical issue; mitigation and adaptation to climate change requires a change of our mindsets (based on the best available information) and a change of our hearts (based on a sense of universal responsibility). The Earth Charter provides an approach for educating and motivating people and governments to act with the necessary sense of shared universal responsibility.

ECI Secretariat participated in Climate Action Day

[350.org](#) is an international campaign dedicated to building a movement to unite the world around solutions to the climate crisis. Also Earth Charter International Secretariat took part on this important cause. On Saturday October 24th, together with the students and staff of the University for Peace, ECI organized **a clean-up parade** in town of Ciudad Colon, Costa Rica. Big posters were designed with 350-related messages to carry through the town; garbage from the streets, football field and churchyard was collected to recycle boxes; **flyers** were and handed over through a busy farmers market; “**Solutions**”-posters were taped to the phone booths and groceries...

See also a video on this Earth Charter event in Ciudad Colon, Costa Rica in [EC YouTube Channel](#).

Launching an EC Radio Campaign

On October 24th 2009, on International Day of Climate Action and United Nations Day, **the Earth Charter Youth Leadership Team** launched the Earth Charter Radio Campaign. Mainly the campaign was pulled together with Namir Nava and Didier Gleyzes. This campaign consists of **4 radio spots** introducing the Earth Charter and its principles in sustainability. The length of each spot is 15 – 20 seconds and they are free to download in English, French and Spanish.



The Radio Campaign has a section at the EC website that provides ideas how to create local level action projects around these spots. In addition a Radio Campaign has a **Wiki** that is designed to promote the exchange of experiences and best practices when using the EC Radio Spots.

Movie and discussion evenings at the UN mandated University for Peace

ECI also organized two movie and discussion evenings at the UPeace. The evenings provided a platform for discussion on the climate issue and presenting the Earth Charter as an ethical approach to tackle it. The movies showed were ‘Age of Stupid’ and ‘Home’.

three III. New Resources

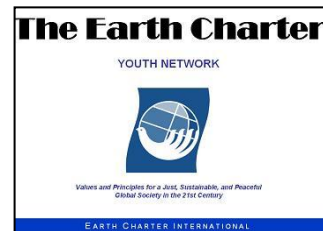
The emphasis was given on creating supporting resources for the youth network. These resources were available at the Earth Charter website, on a specific **Youth-page**. This page has had nearly 25 000 visitors during the year February – December 2009.

The newly created resources were supposed to answer to the frequently asked questions by the youth network: “What can I do”, “Do you give any financial support for the projects”, “From where can I get the support” etc.

With a valuable help of fulltime interns ECI secretariat was able to develop following support materials for the Earth Charter youth activists:

PowerPoint presentation on the Earth Charter youth network and instructions on how to use it

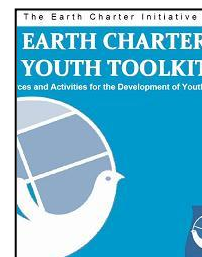
In this presentation The Earth Charter, the Earth Charter youth network and Earth Charter Youth Groups are presented. Also the instructions how to present this PowerPoint in a participatory manner were created. The youth network is encouraged to use this as a resource for the further development and inspiration of youth activism associated with the Earth Charter.



Earth Charter Youth Toolkit

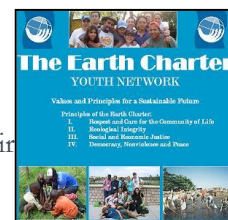
The toolkit is a new, further edited version of **Earth Charter Youth Initiative Handbook**, published on 2007. This version is a very valuable resource for youth activists who are, or who want to be, associated with the Earth Charter. Among other things the 21-page toolkit contains:

- information on how to start an Earth Charter Youth Group (ECYG)
- suggested activities for ECYGs
- a list of other important resources from the Earth Charter Initiative.



Earth Charter youth network poster for distribution

An Earth Charter youth network poster was created to help the youth groups to promote the Earth Charter and their activities. It has a text box for information about meetings, upcoming events, local contact information, or whatever else is needed to add. ECYGs are encouraged to download the poster, modify it for their group's purposes and distribute it. All the pictures are from active Earth Charter youth groups from different parts of the world.



Sponsorship Solicitation Template for Earth Charter Youth Groups

A **Partnership / Sponsorship Solicitation Template** was created for the ECYGs to give them guidelines for writing letters to possible partners or sponsors. The youth groups are encouraged to modify it for their own purposes and use it.

Support to solicit local partnerships and funds

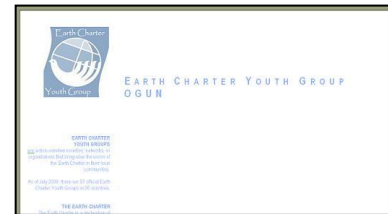
Youth Leadership Team states in its **Plan of Action 2008-2009** that it aims to create strategic partnerships with other organizations and thus secure funds and resources necessary to carry out the Earth Charter youth activities. In order to realize these objectives it created two supporting documents with a support of the International Youth Facilitator. These documents are distributed to the youth in Earth Charter Initiative to solicit funds for their local activities:

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIP PROPOSALS-document gives short guidelines how to start when looking for funds and partnerships for small projects.

ECYG PROJECT PROPOSAL TEMPLATE gives a structure for the project proposal writing. With this support the Earth Charter Youth Groups and other youth activists are encouraged to start to look for partnerships within their own regions.

ECYG Letter Paper

An **Earth Charter Youth Group letter paper with ECYG-letterhead** was also created for ECYGs to use. The need for this was raised by the ECYG coordinators, when they are approaching their contacts in their home countries.



Websites

High emphasis was given for the website. Several new pages were created to support the decentralized expansion of the Earth Charter youth activism.

Youth Resources

All resources that are directly designed for youth are listed under a webpage that is called **Youth Resources**. This is supposed to help the youth to find the support materials designed for them easily.

Earth Charter Youth Groups page introduces the idea of the ECYGs and all the countries where there are ECYG and links to those countries ECYGs profiles. In addition it links a visitor to the page, how to start a youth group and ECYG Wikispaces.

Form an Earth Charter Youth Group

Step-by-step instructions how to start a youth group.

Suggested Activities

This page aims to answer to one of the most asked questions “so what can we do to with the Earth Charter?”. It lists several different ideas of low-cost activities that could be easily organized by the youth activists. It also leads the reader to a **Previous ECYG Activities**, to a page that introduces in different categories what the ECYGs have been doing earlier. In addition, this page leads the readers to a page that lists all the articles that are written on projects organized by the youth on the Earth Charter. These articles are pulled to the page ‘**Earth Charter youth activities in the Youth Blog**’ to give the other youth inspiration to take actions in their local communities. From these articles, that are now easy to access without going through all hundreds of articles, the youth can see that there are other youth just like them all over the world, who wants to take action and change the way people think.

IV. Special Projects Fund

In 2008 Earth Charter International (ECI) developed a “Special Projects Fund” (SPF) to financially support our Youth Groups in promoting and applying Earth Charter principles among youth. SPF was generously funded by Plan Netherlands. These Earth Charter action projects were implemented in February – April 2009, with resulting action projects lasting, in many cases, for an additional year. The grants varied from 700 to 5000 dollars.

The two main goals of the SPF were:

- 1) to help build youth leadership capacity for promoting sustainability and the Earth Charter; and
- 2) to increase the number and impact of youth-led, Earth Charter inspired projects that promote a more just, sustainable, and peaceful world.

Project Summaries are presented below.

Congo AZUR Special Projects Fund, Congo

Strengthening Youth Activism on Sustainable Development Using the Earth Charter as a Tool for Change

This project was organized by AZUR Development in five schools located in the poor and economically disadvantaged areas of Pointe-noire, Congo. The project objectives were to raise awareness about the Earth Charter among young women and men leaders in Congo, to strengthen youth leadership in sustainable development using the Earth Charter as a tool for change and to build the capacity of the young leaders in the use of radio activism and empowerment.

To start this project, students took part in the interactive discussions in five schools on themes from the Earth Charter and sustainable development. The subjects of ecological integrity, social justice and economy, democracy, peace and non violence were presented by the project team and other professionals. Each school had two talks concerning three themes, including volunteerism and leadership. AZUR development then initiated a number of projects based on the principles of the Earth Charter, distributed book that had been donated by Books for Africa and did video documentation during various stages of the project. Furthermore, at the request of the Earth Charter youth clubs, the project team organized two essay contests on the World Day of Women and the World Day of Water. These essays provided the children and youth with a space to show their creativity and also to develop their research skills on the issues of gender equity, women’s and girls rights and access to safe drinking water. The winners of the essays participated in radio programs organized by the project team and were proud to present their work and deliver their messages to a larger audience.

The final results of this project were: increased awareness and access to the Earth Charter, the establishment of five new Earth Charter clubs in five schools involving 300 students, the creation of libraries in two schools serving over 600 students, the installation of garbage bins and planting of trees to improve the hygiene of two schools, giving 1000 students increased access to clean drinking

water at school and the youth clubs increased their skills in youth advocacy, awareness and activism through participatory radio programs. Overall, the program instructed more than 350 students from ages 10 to 25 about the principles and values of the Earth Charter and sustainable development, and it also enabled the implementation of small projects practicing those principles and values. Almost 1,600 students from the schools have benefited from the activities of this project.



Read the full [report](#). English and French blog articles available in the [AZUR webblog](#).

Togolese Foundation for Peace / Fondation Togolaise pour la Paix, Togo:

Promotion of Youth Leadership for Sustainable Development in Central Togo Based on Values and Principles of the Earth Charter

"The project showed that when young people's capacities are strengthened and that they are encouraged and supported, they are capable of designing, developing and implementing innovative and relevant activities."

"We are confident that this project has raised awareness about the Earth Charter and will be the starting point for new ways of life among youth in the central region, in Togo and possibly beyond."



Fondation Togolaise pour la Paix organized a workshop, from January to April 2009, to provide knowledge, develop attitudes and build the skills of youth in the use of the Earth Charter in order to promote their leadership and participation in the sustainable development of their communities in

the central region of Togo. The 25 participants of the workshop were exclusively young men and women between the age of 15 and 35. This project was implemented in two main phases: organization and conduction of a workshop and support for the implementation of four youth-led activities in the four prefectures of the central region of Togo (Blitta, Sotouboua, Tchamba and Tchaoudjo). The project was implemented in partnership with Construire Ensemble and RESODERC, and benefited from the technical support of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Togo (OHCHR-Togo).

The workshop was held from the 19th through the 22nd of February, 2009, in Sokode, the main city of the central region of Togo. Three specialists were invited to give presentations at the workshop. These included a specialist in the management of natural resources, an agronomist who is also the Director of RESODERC and the Project Manager at Plan International Togo. In total, six papers were presented on different issues relevant to sustainable development and three sessions were run on project development. Following the presentations, many participants noted that more similar capacity building should be done on project design, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. A number of them suggested an increase of the budget allocated for youth-led micro-projects and that the youth should initiated to fundraising to finance their future projects. Finally, participants recommended that the number of participants to such a workshop could be increased.



At the end of the workshop, the young participants were encouraged to design micro-projects as part of the follow-up of the training they have received. The participants opted to work in four groups, one group per prefecture. At the end of the project-planning session, a committee chose **four of the best projects to receive funding**. These projects were the promotion of the Earth Charter through hygiene and sanitation activities and a female football match, revalorization of traditional techniques of seed treatment, promotion of clean public areas and the promotion of clean public areas. These projects were implemented in the prefectures of Tchaoudjo, Tchamba, Sotouboua and Blitta respectively and included youth leaders affiliated with a number of organizations. The projects raised awareness about the Earth Charter and showed that when young people's capacities are strengthened and that they are encouraged and supported, they are capable of designing, developing and implementing innovative and relevant activities.

Read the full [report](#).

Youth International Education Club NEWLINE, Belarus:

Winter School in Sustainable Development

The Winter School in Sustainable Development was organized by the Youth International Education Club NEWLINE in cooperation with a few other youth organizations. The three day event gathered 40 representatives of school initiative groups from various regions of Belarus. The membership of all the initiative groups was required to be comprised of both students and educators.

The Winter School, which was held on March 4-6, was aimed on deepening the participants' knowledge about their role and place in initiation and support of sustainable development processes of their region through implementation of the Earth Charter principles in work and life of their school communities. A small group of international and domestic experts was invited to train and advise the participants of the Winter School. Their combined expertise was in the integration of minority groups, youth participation in decision-making processes, project management, planning sustainable regional development projects, international projects on civil education, global citizenship, youth policy-making and Internet education.



On the first day, a presentation of the Earth Charter was followed by discussions and reflection on the ways sustainable changes are organized and defining the role of schools in the development of regions. Reflecting on principles that make our world sustainable, the participants came to the conclusion that a “functioning community” is the key to successful development of a region. During the second day, the participants proposed and reflected on various mechanisms that enable the values of integrity, peace, democracy and tolerance to be realized within our communities. This session involved a more detailed look at the Earth Charter and examples of previous Earth Charter projects. The general goal of these groups was to define what actions have to be done in schools in order to implement major principles of the Charter and what criteria can help measure the effectiveness of these actions. Additional classes were given which aimed to provide participants with resources to think of their own initiatives and concrete project proposals to work with within their school community. After a project management workshop students and their teachers developed and presented collaborative project proposals designed to improve issues related to their community. On the third day, nine joint initiatives were successfully formed by students and teachers and they found participants and partners among the other participating schools. The partnerships, a total of 13 new working groups, were formed in all the regions of Belarus (Grodno, Minsk, Vitebsk, Brest and Gomel areas) with the exception of Mogilev.

After the Winter School, the implementation of the projects began. The overall project design is that in March students and educators participated in the Winter School, in June they evaluate the first results related to implementation of their project proposal and in December they will conduct the final research and evaluation about the methods, educational content, skills, community resources provided by the project and their successful implementation by the participants of the school. In December, they will also collect materials and outcomes of the action projects the participants were undertaking, as well as receiving a general feedback on the project idea. For more information on the Winter School visit its [website](#). Read the full [report](#). See 15 videos from the event [here](#).

Asociacion Peruana de Escultismo, Peru

Cuzco Countryside Project - 2009

The Asociación Peruana de Escultismo organized a project with the objective of doing something concrete that would have a positive impact on the environment and would allow them to learn about and recognize the value of their cultural heritage and the existing living cultures.

The project was organized as a six day trip around Cuzco with numerous different scout groups. The trip encourage learning and appreciation of Peruvian cultural heritage by travelling through small local villages, night hikes in Incan ruins, trying traditional drinks, listening to traditional music, visiting archaeological sites and by visiting the UNESCO World Heritage of Macchu Picchu. The cultural learning was enhanced by a guided tour and explanation of Incan techniques of building which allowed such precise construction at the archaeological site Ollantaytambo and by visiting many other important archaeological sites.

The trip also allowed the scouts to learn more about the importance of the natural environment and to realize how previous cultures lived in harmony with nature. They saw the techniques used by the local population to reclaim and return their land to its original state through tree-planting and other hard work. In addition, they also became more familiar with ecological problems such as overgrazing, desertification and the need to stop deforestation and take care of the existing trees.

After their experiences the scouts said they feel their inclusion in a large and diverse community that is doing concrete things to improve their surroundings. This experience stimulated and motivated the youth group to realize that there is much they can do to help out. The project also helped them speak about the Earth Charter in a clearer way and they contributed to the Spanish translation of an Earth Charter brochure.

Read the whole report [here](#). To see more **videos** and **photos**, visit **Boletín digital del Grupo Scout APE Huellas Profundas**. From this **document** you can find more links to APE's online visibility.



Cowichan Intercultural Society, Canada

“Forging Inclusive Solutions”

In Canada, the Cowichan Intercultural Society organized a “Forging Inclusive Solutions” project that brought together youth and adult leaders “for mutual learning and practice facilitating introductory Earth Charter activities and Earth Charter action planning.” The project had two sessions: the first was held from February 20 to 22 and the second took place on March 11-15. The sessions were held in the heart of a coastal rainforest ecosystem at the Cowichan Lake Education and Conference Centre.

The “Forging Inclusive Solutions” project had a Mutual Learning and Facilitator Training workshop where they built leadership capacity to facilitate Earth Charter workshops and Earth Charter Action Planning Sessions. There were a total of 27 leaders of Earth Charter and Inclusive Leadership activities who participated in this workshop. The diverse group came from many different schools, organizations, communities, age groups and cultural backgrounds. In addition, they gained practical experience by putting their skills into use by co-facilitating an Inclusive Leadership Adventure. The Inclusive Leadership Adventure was comprised of four days of participatory education activities that focused on the Earth Charter and Inclusive Leadership. This learning community consisted of 18 Inclusive Leadership Guides and 30 participants from different generations and backgrounds.

The Cowichan Intercultural Society says: “*We feel we have developed a highly effective set of experimental education activities for introducing youth and people of all ages to the Earth Charter.*” They also produced tools for people to “develop Earth Charter projects and to apply the principles in the Earth Charter to their everyday lives.” Read more from the Cowichan Intercultural Society SPF [project page](#).

Read the full [report](#). Photographs can be found from here: [1st workshop](#) and [2nd workshop](#).



ECYG Calabar, Nigeria:

“Understanding and discovering the purpose of the Earth Charter in achieving the MDGs: Towards environmental sustainability and peace building in Niger Delta”

The project was organized by Earth Charter Youth Group Calabar, Nigeria with the intention of engaging youths and promoting dialogue and action for a more just, sustainable and peaceful world and promote youth dialogue in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and Peace building in Niger Delta of Nigeria. The project objectives were to raise awareness about the Earth Charter among youths in Nigeria especially in Niger Delta as a tool for achieving sustainable peace and development, to bring more youths in Nigeria into the Earth Charter Youth Initiative and stimulate the formation of New Earth Charter Youth Groups, to strengthen the existing Earth Charter Youth Initiative in Nigeria, to devise and design a comprehensive early warning system on impending violence in the Niger Delta, Youth participation in Environmental Governance: Preparing the youths

in the next level of political leadership.

The project involved two activities: Workshop in Delta State University and forum with the Elders on Earth Charter.

Workshop in Delta State University

The workshop attracted a total of 51 students (27 male, 24 female) from different departments of the university. Three facilitators were on hand to take up various sessions.

The event had 5 sessions targeted at meeting the objectives of the workshop:

1. An interactive session
2. A workshop on the MDGs and the role of youths at achieving it
3. A call to action and the Earth charter document was extensively reviewed
4. Understanding Earth charter towards achieving environmental sustainability and peace building in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria
5. The fifth session was for interaction, questions and feedback.

“A strong public enlightenment and advocacy should be employed in order for more people to understand and adopt the earth charter and the MDGs.”

Katherine, Treasurer, Student Union Government

Forum with the Elders

In the forum facilitators provided Elders with information about Earth Charter by giving insight what actually Earth Charter stands for. Education, sustainable development and care of the community/environment were mentioned as the main focus areas in order to build just, sustainable, peaceful societies. Later an Earth Charter song was presented by students of African School of Excellence.

The final achievements of this project were: increased awareness of the Earth charter amongst the youths from the Niger Delta Region, formation of more Earth charter Groups, promoting dialogue as a tool for achieving the Millennium development goals.

Read the Project Report [here](#).





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