



PRESS RELEASE

Nairobi, 15 February 2010: The UN-HABITAT Urban Youth Fund will this year provide one million dollars to projects led by young people aged 15-32 years who are piloting innovative approaches to employment, good governance, shelter and secure tenure. Small development initiatives are eligible for grants of up to \$5,000, while larger projects may be able to secure up to \$25,000.

Mrs. Anna Tibaijuka, UN-HABITAT's Executive Director, believes that young people are uniquely placed to solve the problems faced by their communities. She created the fund to provide direct financial support to youth-led initiatives, with the intention of helping combat the challenges of urban poverty, while at the same time creating more sustainable and inclusive cities and towns.

Of the one billion slum dwellers in the world today, it is estimated that more than 70% are under the age of 30. These young people have few resources available to improve their own living environments. There are many youth-led initiatives in slums and squatter settlements around the world that require support in their efforts to transform their communities

The UN-HABITAT is now calling for young people based in cities or towns from the developing world to apply for grants from the fund. The deadline for applications is April 15th 2010. Details are now available at www.unhabitat.org/youthfund.

Background:

This initiative sprang from the 21st session of the UN-HABITAT Governing Council and has so far awarded grants to 67 projects led by young people from all over the world.

In 2009 the winning projects from 33 countries were feted in Washington at the global celebration of World Habitat Day on 5 October. Many of the project ideas were aimed at alleviating poverty, improving employment prospects, improving the environment and increasing youth participation in decision-making.

The fund promotes the poverty-reduction aims of the Millennium Development Goals, and the Habitat Agenda for better, more sustainable and equitable towns and cities throughout the developing world.

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