



15 December 2010

Kathryn Smith
Committee Assistant
Education Select Committee
House of Commons
7 Millbank
London SW1P 3JA

Dear Ms Smith,

Response to inquiry into services for young people

Please find attached evidence submitted for this inquiry jointly by DEA and Oxfam. DEA would be happy to supply further evidence on any of these areas if required.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hetan Shah".

Hetan Shah
Chief Executive

Submission of Evidence from DEA and Oxfam to the Education Select Committee into services for young people

1. About DEA

- 1.1 DEA is an education charity that promotes global learning. We work to ensure that people in the UK learn about global issues such as poverty and climate change and develop an open-minded, global outlook. DEA defines global learning as education that puts learning in a global context, fostering:
 - critical and creative thinking;
 - self-awareness and open-mindedness towards difference;
 - understanding of global issues and power relationships; and
 - optimism and action for a better world.
- 1.2 DEA is a membership body, with over 150 organisational members including subject associations, universities, local authorities and many development and environment NGOs in the UK.
- 1.3 DEA is submitting this evidence in partnership with Oxfam. This submission has been developed in consultation with Oxfam's UK campaigns department, and represents the views of both organisations.

2. Summary

- 2.1 Young people live in a global society and need to be given opportunities to think globally. This is important if they are to secure employment and develop skills in a globalised labour market. It is especially important for young people who experience disadvantage and social exclusion because these young people are less likely than their peers to have opportunities to learn about global issues through their personal lives.
- 2.2 In this submission we respond to three of the inquiry topics.
- 2.3 In relation to how services for young people can meet the Government's priorities for volunteering, including the role of National Citizen Service, we highlight the strong benefits of incorporating global issues into these services, particularly for disadvantaged young people.
- 2.4 In relation to what young people want from services and their role in shaping provision, we highlight extensive research showing that young people want to find out more about global issues, and to have the opportunity to take action for a more just and sustainable world.

2.5 We also highlight the severe impact that public spending cuts are having on those offering services to young people, including in relation to global issues.

2.6 We therefore recommend that:

- Those offering services for young people are encouraged to consider how their offer can encourage active global citizenship amongst service users, to meet the demand that exists from young people.
- As the Government develops the National Citizen Service, it considers the Connect, Challenge, Change model as an example of good practice in meeting its priorities for volunteering.
- The Government urgently reviews its public spending cuts in relation to services for young people, particularly in terms of funding for small, voluntary sector service providers, to ensure that all young people, including those who are disadvantaged, have the opportunity to learn about global issues and make sense of the wider world.

3. Evidence

3.1 Our evidence relates to several of the inquiry topics: How services for young people can meet the Government's priorities for volunteering, including the role of National Citizen Service; what young people want from services and their role in shaping provision; and the impact of public spending cuts.

3.2 How services for young people can meet the Government's priorities for volunteering

3.2.1 The Government wants young people to 'become active and responsible citizens' through volunteering.¹ One way to achieve this is through offering services for young people that help them to make sense of global interdependence; how their actions and choices in their day-to-day lives can impact on global challenges such as climate change and international poverty, and in turn how these global issues impact on their own lives. In an interdependent global society, bringing a global aspect into services for young people is vital to encourage them to be active, responsible *global* as well as local citizens. If young people are to contribute to solving the global challenges we face, such as climate change, it is not enough for them to become active, responsible citizens in their own community; we need to encourage them to look beyond their immediate surroundings to consider their role in the wider world and to think globally.

¹ http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/newsroom/news_releases/2010/100722-citizenservice/national-citizen-service.aspx

3.2.2 It can be challenging for those offering services for young people to understand how to offer this encouragement. This is particularly true for disadvantaged young people, who are less likely than their peers to have opportunities to learn about global issues in their personal lives.

3.2.3 To respond to this challenge, DEA and partners have developed a model of 'global youth work' that, through a two-year pilot, has proven to be effective in creating opportunities for young people to take action on global issues, and motivating them to take up these opportunities. This model, summarised as Connect, Challenge, Change, encourages those offering services for young people to:²

*"Help **connect** young people to the global issues that matter to them. We support them to make the links between the personal, local and global, and to **connect** with peers who share their passions and concerns.*

*Encourage young people to **challenge** themselves, to gain a more critical understanding of the world around them, and to **challenge** inequality and injustice.*

*Support young people to plan and take action to bring about positive **change** towards a more just and sustainable world."*

3.2.4 Examples of services for young people that follow the Connect, Challenge, Change approach include *Dig for Sustainability*. The project, based at the Harambee Centre in Cambridge, worked with a core group of 30 young people to discover how the World War II 'Dig for Victory' campaign could influence current efforts to pursue sustainability and respond to climate change. Participants were recruited from local schools, and spent time after school tending a local allotment. The project included making links with older people in the local area who were directly involved in the 'Dig for Victory' campaign. The young people involved acted as both local and global citizens directly through the project, as well as being inspired to take further action to tackle climate change and strengthen their local community and encouraging others to do so.³

3.2.5 An independent evaluation of DEA and partners' work in this area has found a range of positive impacts, helping young people to meet all Every Child Matters outcomes. In addition, the work is seen to be effective at inspiring active and responsible citizenship amongst hard to reach groups, such as those with specific learning needs.

3.2.6 Additional research from DEA and Ipsos MORI highlights the impacts that learning about global issues can have on young people. For example amongst those who

² Williams & Edleston (2010) *Connect, Challenge, Change: A practical guide to global youth work*. London: DEA

³ Case study available at: <http://www.dea.org.uk/resources/item.asp?d=3146>

have learnt about the climate whilst at school, only one in six people feel it is pointless to take personal action to tackle climate change. By contrast, amongst those who have not learnt about any global issues at school, a third of people feel it is pointless to take personal action to tackle climate change.⁴

3.2.7 Taken together, this evidence highlights that in order to fully meet the Government's priorities for volunteering, services for young people must offer opportunities to become active, responsible global citizens. The Government proposes to do so through an International Citizen Service. However, this will be limited to a small number of participants and it is important to ensure a wider group of young people are able to access similar opportunities. The Connect, Challenge, Change can help service providers to offer such opportunities in a manner that is proven to be effective.

3.3 **What young people want from services and their role in shaping provision**

3.3.1 There is strong evidence that young people are concerned about the wider world and need support to act on those concerns.

3.3.2 For example, research in 2006 from Lemos and Crane highlights that:⁵

"The evidence is, in fact, that young people are concerned about what's going on in their communities and indeed in the wider world.

They are also concerned about what the world will be like in the future...They are keen to understand and participate as decision-makers in institutional and power structures.

Most importantly, they are willing to become activists for a different, better world...They want to work together on projects in their local communities and they want also to act on international concerns and issues. Young people are, in short, ready to be active, diverse, global citizens."

3.3.3 DEA's own research with Ipsos MORI finds that in a representative sample of young people:⁶

"...more than half (55%) of young people are keen to understand why there are problems in the world, while nine per cent say they do not want to understand."

3.3.4 However, it is also clear that young people need more support to act on those concerns. For example, the International Broadcasting Trust finds that:⁷

⁴ Hogg, Shah, 2010, *The impact of global learning on public attitudes and behaviours towards international development and sustainability*. DEA: London

⁵ Lemos and Crane (2006) *Different World*, City Parochial Foundation. Available at: <http://www.lemosandcrane.co.uk/home/index.php?id=204289>

⁶ DEA/Ipsos MORI (2008) *Young People's Experiences of Global Learning*, DEA: London. Available at: <http://www.dea.org.uk/resources/item.asp?d=915>

"Many young people in the UK are interested in international events and how people in other parts of the world live their lives. Many are also well informed about the developing world, but there is a strong sense of disengagement."

3.3.5 Research from the volunteering charity V suggests that young people feel disempowered:⁸

"...young people say they:

- *don't know how to get involved and take action on issues they care about*
- *don't think they have anything to offer"*

3.3.6 Taken together, this research highlights that young people want services beyond the school/college day to help them to think globally and to take action on global issues. Incorporating the Connect, Challenge, Change model into services for young people can be an effective way to respond to this demand, because it uses a youth work model to encourage participants to take a strong role in shaping the services that they receive.

3.4 **The impact of public spending cuts**

3.4.1 Cuts in public spending are having a severe impact on services for young people (for examples see NCVYS' recent report *Comprehensive Cuts*).⁹ In this environment there is a real danger that services for young people which encourage active global citizenship will be lost entirely. Many of DEA's members are reducing their services for young people and funding for global youth work is extremely scarce.

3.4.2 At a time when young people are suffering enormously from a global financial crisis that was not of their making, it is more important than ever that the services we offer them beyond the school day help them to make sense of global interdependence and the wider world. This is particularly true for disadvantaged young people who may not have the opportunity to learn about global issues at school, or through the personal lives and travel habits.

3.4.3 In the current context there is a real danger that a generation of young people will grow up paying the price for a crisis they did not create, and lacking the tools and knowledge to make sense of what has happened or to protect themselves from a similar crisis in the future.

⁷ International Broadcasting Trust (2010) *Global Generation*. Available at: <http://www.ibt.org.uk/>

⁸ V (2007) Barriers preventing passionate young people acting on their concerns. Available at: <http://vinspired.com/about-us/research>

⁹ <http://www.ncvys.org.uk/UserFiles/Comprehensive%20Cuts.pdf>

4. Recommendations

4.1 We therefore recommend that:

- Those offering services for young people are encouraged to consider how their offer can encourage active global citizenship amongst service users, to meet the demand that exists from young people.
- As the Government develops the National Citizen Service, it considers the Connect, Challenge, Change model as an example of good practice in meeting its priorities for volunteering.
- The Government urgently reviews its public spending cuts in relation to services for young people, particularly in terms of funding for small, voluntary sector service providers, to ensure that all young people, including those who are disadvantaged, have the opportunity to learn about global issues and make sense of the wider world.

Submitted by DEA and Oxfam on 15 December 2010