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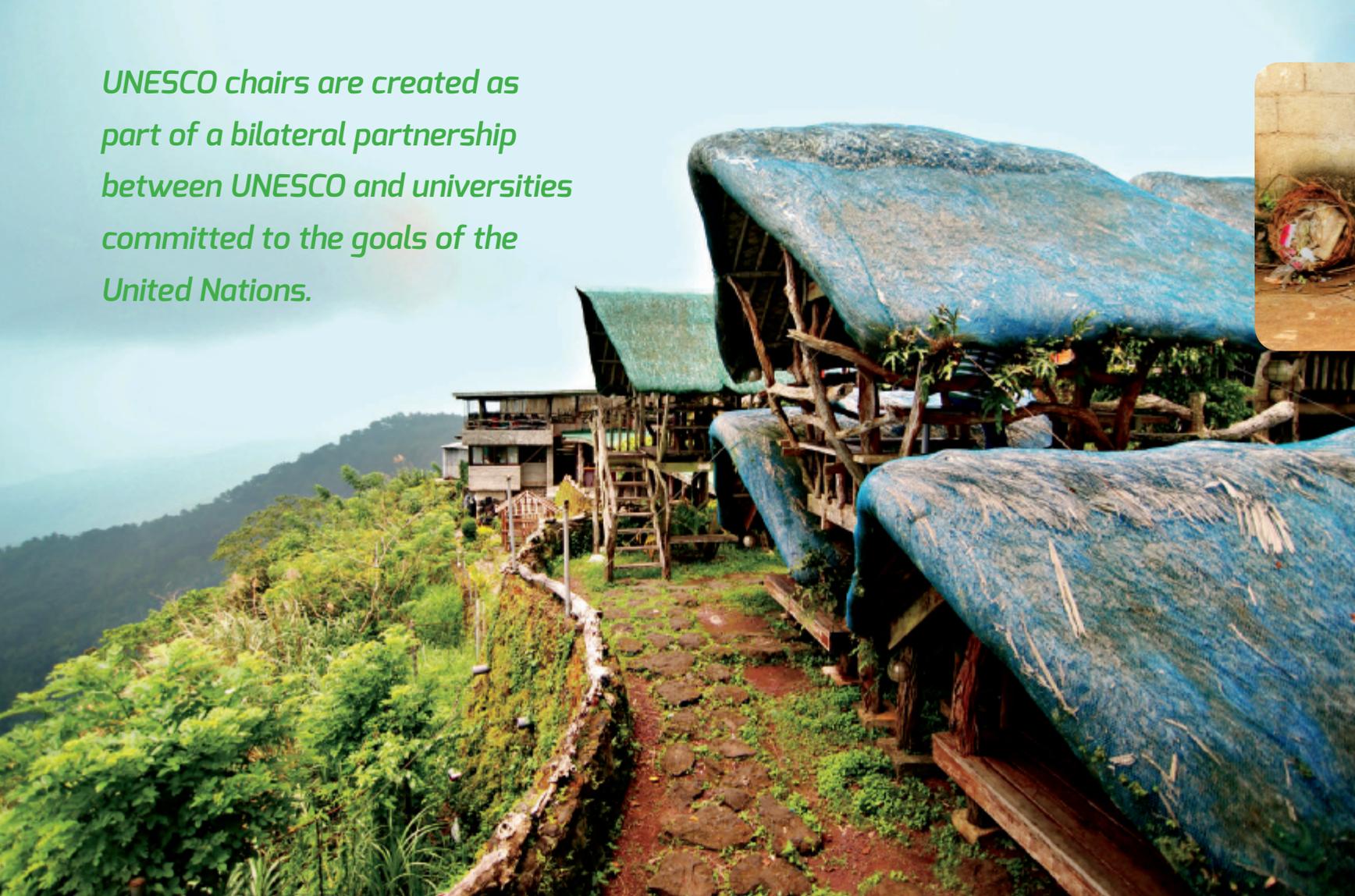
PENNSTATE



**UNESCO** CHAIR in RURAL COMMUNITY,  
LEADERSHIP, and YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

at Penn State • [www.unescochair.psu.edu](http://www.unescochair.psu.edu)

*UNESCO chairs are created as part of a bilateral partnership between UNESCO and universities committed to the goals of the United Nations.*





The number of young people in the world is at an all-time high. According to the U.N. Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2011), 27 percent of the 6 billion people on Earth are age 15 or younger, with 85 percent of all youth living in less-developed countries that are heavily dependent on agriculture.

Today, millions of adolescents and communities in developing countries face challenges brought about by limited access to resources, healthcare, education, training, employment, and economic opportunities. They face early marriage and childbearing, inadequate education, and the threat of HIV and AIDS.



This reality creates an environment in which the active engagement of young people in rural communities is essential to capacity building, gender equality, and equal access to education for women and girls and a host of socio-economic development outcomes.

*This is the basis for our work.*

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## WHAT WE DO

There is a well-documented need for rural community **leadership** and youth development **research**, teaching, and programming, particularly in developing countries of the Southern Hemisphere (Africa, Asia, and Central and Latin America), where an increasing share of the total national population is youth.

This UNESCO Chair in Rural Community, Leadership, and Youth Development supports UNESCO's priorities for addressing the specific issues and needs of **rural youth** and **communities**.

We work to create opportunities for youth worldwide to improve their lives and communities. Our proven research, education, and outreach programs focus on three key interrelated areas:

- Personal youth development
- Community capacity building in which youth play a central role
- Activism oriented toward social justice, change, and equality



We lead change through high-quality, evidence-based research, innovative educational programs, effective policy advice, and high-impact national and international **partnerships**. Through this process, citizens are empowered to take ownership of local decision making and shape efforts to meet local needs. Communities are made stronger, more resilient, and more sustainable.

We serve as a significant bridge builder among universities, researchers, and international policy-makers. A key strength is our vast network of diverse world-renowned **experts** in the areas of youth, leadership, and community and rural development.

We address and directly contribute to the objectives of the UNESCO Education for All Agenda by addressing two key areas: Youth, and Environment and Sustainable Development, as well as UNESCO Medium-Term Strategy Goals and UNESCO Domain priorities. The Education for All (EFA) movement is a global **commitment** to provide quality basic **education** for all children, youth, and adults.





Located at Penn State's University Park campus, we have at our full disposal the resources and infrastructure of a leading U.S. research university. An ever-growing group of subject-matter experts from a variety of areas are affiliated with the program. All of this led to the appointment of the [UNESCO Chair at Penn State](#).

Beyond Penn State, hundreds of leading researchers, teachers, policymakers, and practitioners throughout the UNESCO system can be immediately engaged to [achieve our goals](#). We currently have partnerships with universities, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and government agencies in more than forty countries.

Our core group has a twenty-year history of productivity. The Chair has more than twenty years' experience conducting international comparative research and program development. Together, our core group of faculty represents 250 years of combined experience. Our work has been conducted in more than fifty countries on six continents and in developing and developed regions.



## WHAT WE CAN DO FOR YOU

Our in-house group and skill sets allow us to immediately conduct the highest-quality research, teaching, and program/policy development around [youth, community, and rural development](#). Our network of partners allows us to delve deep into these and other areas to include unique sponsor interests in the areas of health, natural resources, poverty, and a wide range of social, economic, and developmental subject areas.

We can have your research and programs endorsed, promoted, and applied through the worldwide [UNESCO network](#). Our UNESCO role and your support can help shape policy at the [global level](#).



## WHAT YOU CAN GET FROM YOUR INVESTMENT

Our work is designed to deliver a range of products to **advance** your mission and goals.

Our research and outreach programs result in high-quality, methodologically sound findings that can be used to shape programs and policy and provide a basis for a variety of **institutional efforts**.

Our efforts are intended to build **lasting partnerships** with many national and international bodies and to link our sponsors to these groups.

Our work results in a range of **tangible products**, including educational curriculum, research reports, policy briefs, books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and other media designed for all audiences from the community level to high-level government agencies.

We have a long history of productivity, with our core team having published hundreds of peer-reviewed articles, dozens of books, and countless invited presentations. Through all of these, our sponsors are highlighted as being **key players** in the global debate on rural, community, and youth development.



## AN EXAMPLE OF OUR WORK

Our work exists **worldwide**, within the UNESCO priority area of the Global South, to other regions of the world where youth and communities are in need of **support**. We have a track record and the resources to indicate we get things done. For example:

### Youth Leadership Development in Kenya and Zambia

This innovative program and partnership, led by a dynamic partnership (UNESCO Chair, UNESCO, and NGOs in Africa), addresses the critical need for youth development in Kenya, Zambia, and South Africa by providing leadership training to highly vulnerable and disadvantaged youth.



Trained groups of youth develop and deliver self-directed social entrepreneurship projects that addresses local needs, assets, and opportunities identified by the group as viable development options. The partnership also trains youth and other active citizens who will annually deliver future **leadership development programs** to hundreds of youth.

The project enables local communities to autonomously support and provide youth leadership training and follow up on social entrepreneurship opportunities for vulnerable and marginalized youth.

For more examples, visit [www.unescochair.psu.edu](http://www.unescochair.psu.edu)



## CONTACT US:

We would be honored to be part of your research, education, policy, or other needs. Please feel free to contact us to explore the possibilities.

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## THE UNESCO CHAIR

The UNESCO Chair is based in the Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences and works collaboratively with the Office of International Programs and Center for Economic and Community Development in the Department of Agricultural Economics, Sociology, and Education.

Today, UNESCO functions as a laboratory of ideas and a standard-setter to forge universal agreements on emerging ethical issues. The organization also serves as a clearinghouse for the dissemination and sharing of information and knowledge, while helping member states to build their human and institutional capacities in diverse fields.

UNESCO is working to create the conditions for genuine dialog based upon respect for shared values and the dignity of each civilization and culture. The world urgently requires global visions of sustainable development based upon observance of human rights, mutual respect, and the alleviation of poverty, all of which lie at the heart of UNESCO's mission and activities.

UNESCO Chairs are created as part of a bilateral partnership between UNESCO and universities committed to the goals of the United Nations.

The UNESCO Chair in Rural Community, Leadership, and Youth Development at Penn State seeks to advance research, teaching, and applied programs in all of UNESCO's fields of competence. We do this by building university networks and encouraging inter-university cooperation through the transfer of knowledge across borders.

As part of the UNESCO University Education and Twinning program (UNITWIN), the UNESCO Chair in Rural Community, Leadership, and Youth Development brings together university-based research centers and national and international organizations with a shared goal of enhancing lives and opportunities for young people and communities worldwide.

The UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Program was conceived as a way to advance research, training, and program development in higher education by building university networks and encouraging inter-university cooperation through transfer of knowledge across borders. Since it was set up in 1992, the program has aroused great interest among member states. Today, 706 UNESCO Chairs and 69 UNITWIN Networks are established within the program, involving more than 810 institutions in 131 countries, covering 70 disciplines.

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