

# FACT SHEET 2009



**The International Award is an exciting self-development programme for all young people worldwide. It equips them with life skills, builds their confidence and engages them with their communities. To date more than six million young people from over 125 countries have undertaken a variety of voluntary and challenging activities through the Award.**

- It began in 1956 in the UK, where it is known as The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Over the last 53 years it has spread across the globe, because the philosophy and the format have proved attractive and adaptable to many cultures.
- It gives all young people aged between 14 and 25, regardless of their background, abilities or circumstances, an opportunity to experience challenge and adventure, to acquire new skills and to make new friends.
- The Award transforms lives. Some of the Programme's participants – including young offenders, street kids and youths from native populations – have become marginalised. The Award may prove a decisive turning point not just in their lives, but also in those of the people around them.
- There are three Award Levels, Bronze, Silver and Gold, each requiring increasing commitment and effort. Bronze usually takes 6-12 months to complete, Silver 12–18 and the Gold 18–24 months. Participants are in charge of their own programme: they set their own goals and measure their progress against them.
- The Award Programme comprises four Sections: Service develops a sense of community and social responsibility; the Adventurous Journey cultivates a spirit of adventure and an understanding of the environment; the Skills Section develops cultural, vocational and practical skills; and Physical Recreation encourages improved performance and fitness. The Residential Project, an additional requirement at Gold Level, broadens horizons through a worthwhile residential experience.
- The Award has a presence in 126 countries. It operates on a national basis in 59 countries and there are nearly 250 Independent Operators in a further 67 countries.
- The International Award is the generic title, but each National Award Authority (NAA) can choose its own title, for example the El-Hassan Youth Award in Jordan, The President's Award in Ireland and The Hong Kong Award for Young People.
- Over 750,000 young people worldwide are currently participating in the Programme. Last year around 145,000 young people achieved Awards and over 320,000 started the Award for the first time.
- In most countries the Gold Award is presented by the head of state.
- Find out more by visiting [www.intaward.org](http://www.intaward.org).

*"I am a first hand witness to problems encountered by young people in our world today: challenges of identity crisis, difficulties in choosing careers, drugs and prostitution. The Award helps young people to appreciate that there are challenges facing them and equips them with skills to cope with these challenges."*

Olunga, Gold Award holder, Kenya



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*challenging  
young people  
everywhere*