

DDMBA Overview

Dharma Drum Mountain Buddhist Association (DDMBA) is a US based non-profit organization founded in 1994 by the renowned teacher of Chan Buddhism, Master Sheng Yen (1930–2009). He held a deep concern for the state of the planet and recognized that religious and spiritual leaders must take a leading role in addressing global issues and to help humanity shift course. To this end, DDMBA was tasked to take an active role in interfaith dialogue, peacebuilding, protecting the environment and developing youth leadership.

Since its inception, DDMBA has co-organized and participated in interfaith conferences in an effort to promote understanding and respect between cultures and faith traditions and prioritized youth empowerment programs. The organization supported regional youth leadership summits around the world including in Kenya, Cambodia, India and the US, which focused on the Millennium Development Goals and peacebuilding.

The organization has been active in addressing Climate Change, one of humanity's greatest global challenges, and received observer status from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2009. DDMBA has participated in these global climate change meetings over the years and has partnered with other NGOs to bring attention to the critical role of faith leaders, youth and everyday citizens and highlighting sustainable consumption and production patterns.

DDMBA received consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council in 2014 and has been actively engaged in the United Nations Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda and the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals by 193 United Nations Member States in September 2015.

DDMBA continues to partner with other organizations and institutions on international programs around the world and will hold regional youth conferences on “Inner Dimensions of Climate Change” over the next few years.

*The Earth is as kind as a mother
who puts up with all the
willful behaviors of her children.
And yet we human beings just
take whatever we want, exploiting,
destroying, and polluting nature in
whichever way we can. Now we have
pushed nature beyond her limits.*




Master Sheng Yen


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International Youth Programs

One of DDMBA's main priorities is to address the state of the world's young people who face a myriad of new challenges. Threats from climate change, displacement, unemployment, growing inequalities, and exclusion are shaping a new reality as they engage in the world. Never has a generation had to deal with such pressing societal, economic and environmental issues. Youth must be given a voice in addressing global issues that they are directly affected by and become agents of change.

DDMBA has designed two youth programs, **Global Citizenship Education** and **The Inner Dimensions of Climate Change** to empower youth and to assist young people in developing the tools to achieve a new sense of self-worth, direction and empowerment and creating a more conscious and caring way to live on the earth.

*My favourite learning from today
is we don't live in this world,
we live in the story
we tell ourselves about the world.*



Gerald, Youth Delegate

These programs align with the following targets of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals adopted by world leaders at the United Nations in September 2015:

Target 4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

Target 12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.

Target 13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

THE GLOBAL GOALS For Sustainable Development



Global issues are used as a platform for dialogue on values, worldviews and perceptions. Both programs explore the role of interconnection and strive to assist youth in uncovering internal and external drivers that shape the way their lives unfold in both a personal dimension and in a global context and how these drivers affect perceptions and everyday interactions. By examining the inner, one can choose a more meaningful and fulfilling outer. By making invisible parts of life visible, we are more fully able to realize our potential and perform at our greatest capacity. The role of inner dynamics such as fear vs. creativity and the power of being vs. existing are examined.

The Inner Dimensions of Climate Change youth program places emphasis on our connection with nature and the four elements; water, earth, air and fire. The program also explores how human values and climate change are related with a focus on consumption and production and sustainable lifestyles.



...any act of destruction [of nature] or overconsumption is virtually an act against humanity, for it is depleting the resources that are commonly shared by people of our generation and future generations.



Master Sheng Yen

Founder

Master Sheng Yen, a thinker, author and revered teacher was born in Nantong, Jiangsu Province, China in 1930. After his ordination he engaged in solitary retreat for 6 years and went on to receive a doctorate in Buddhist studies at Rissho University, Japan in 1975. In 2007 the Sheng Yen Professorship in Chinese Buddhist Studies was formally inaugurated at Columbia University, the first endowed chair in Chinese Buddhism in North America. Master Sheng Yen is especially known for his global vision and advocated for the establishment of global ethics and the advancement of world peace. He has addressed many high level meetings including the World Economic Forum in 2002, the Global Conference on Achieving Global Ethics through Education at UN headquarters in 2003 and the Global Conference on the Use of Religion to Incite Violence at UN headquarters in 2003. He held a deep commitment to people and the planet.