

↑ DECENT JOBS
FOR YOUTH



Young people's participation and civic engagement



Generation Unlimited

Generation Unlimited works with a two-pronged approach- coordinating country level action through investment agendas and implementing cross-cutting innovations at scale. At the national level, Generation Unlimited will establish an in-country, multisector partnership group led by the government to undertake a comprehensive landscape analysis of the current ecosystem for education, employment and civic engagement of young people. The analysis will be the basis for a country investment agenda that will articulate a high-level roadmap and a portfolio of scalable initiatives for investments, and Generation Unlimited support sourcing of investment opportunities and mobilization of financial and political capital to execute on these priorities for young people aged 10-24. Where innovations are required, Generation Unlimited will also support co-creation of solutions, particularly with young people.

At the global level, Generation Unlimited will identify and scale innovations of greatest potential to address common challenges of young people, unlocking bottlenecks and brokering partnerships to deliver on the innovations.

Decent Jobs for Youth, the Global Initiative for Action

Decent Jobs for Youth is the global initiative to scale up action and impact on youth employment under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is a hub for catalyzing partnership, collaboration and coordinated action at country and regional level, grounded in evidence-based solutions.

Launched in 2016, with the endorsement of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination, Decent Jobs for Youth brings together governments, social partners, youth and civil society, the private sector, and many more partners advancing the vision: a world in which young women and men everywhere have greater access to decent jobs!

Through the commitment platform and the Decent Jobs for Youth Knowledge Facility, partners identify what works, share innovations, and mobilize concrete actions – from green and digital jobs to quality apprenticeships, youth entrepreneurship, and the transition to the formal economy. With new spin-off initiatives in Namibia, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, and Kenya, and a regional and global convening agenda, Decent Jobs for Youth works with like-minded partnerships to translate fragmentation into synergy.

Acronyms and initialisms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
GCE	Global Citizenship Education
HIV	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus
IEA	International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement
SASM	Student Anti-Sweatshop Movement
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
US\$	United States Dollar

INTRODUCTION

The current generation of young people – numbering 1.8 billion – is one-quarter of the world’s population¹ and a dominant force now and in the decades to come. However, investments in quality wage and self-employment fall short of young people’s aspirations, leaving a growing pool of young jobseekers with an insufficient number of decent jobs. Many education systems are struggling to prepare young people with skills which meet employer’s expectations. The COVID-19 pandemic and related global recession have further exacerbated the socio-economic challenges facing youth, which put at risk many of the gains made in recent years to advance young people’s opportunities.

Generation Unlimited and the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth are two multi-stakeholder alliances working together to mobilize action and foster skills, employment and the meaningful participation of young people across the globe. By bringing young people together with governments, social partners, the private sector, and a range of international and local organizations, they connect secondary-age education and training to a complex and fast-changing world of work, while easing the transition of young people into decent jobs. Efforts are also being made to foster youth-led entrepreneurship and empower a generation of young people to fully engage as part of their societies.



SECTION 1 THE STRATEGIC CASE

The 1.8 billion young people in the world today are a crucial resource for innovative social change towards a more equal and sustainable world. Throughout history, civically engaged young people have proven to be a powerful force for change. In recent years alone, we have witnessed youth-led movements that have successfully gained international attention and challenged established practices within public, private and not-for-profit organizations and institutions.

Young people first and foremost have a fundamental right to participate and engage meaningfully in society. According to Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed by 196 countries, young people have the right to have their voices listened to and taken into account in decisions that affect their lives.² This right, alongside other rights outlined in the Convention such as the right to non-discrimination (Article 2) and freedom of expression (Article 13), puts a duty on governments to create an enabling environment for young people to influence decisions and policies that impact them. The 2030 Agenda recognizes that “children and young women and men are critical agents of change and will find in the new Goals a platform to channel their infinite capacities for activism into the creation of a better world”.³ In addition, in a 2013 resolution the United Nations General Assembly urged “Member States and entities of the United Nations System, in consultation with youth-led organizations, to explore avenues to promote full, effective, structured and sustainable participation of young people and youth-led organizations in decision-making processes”.⁴ This resolution was reinforced by the United Nations Human Rights Council in 2016.⁵

Despite these rights, young people still face unequal opportunities for participation and civic engagement. They typically experience a lack of voice and power to make decisions that affect their lives and to create positive social change. This is true across many contexts including the home, education, local communities, work, business and the political sphere. When forms of youth consultation do occur, the topics are frequently tokenistic in nature, not given the same weight as adults, and are hardly ever acted upon.⁶

This reality does not only breach a basic human right, but also leads to untapped potential for youth development and social improvement. When young people meaningfully engage in decision-making, it improves their problem-solving, negotiation and communication

skills, enables them to build better relationships,⁷ and leads to policies and decisions that are more likely to address their needs.^{8,9} Furthermore, given a conducive environment, young people can then use these skills to strengthen civil society, increase accountability of governments and corporations¹⁰ and work towards greater social cohesion. Lastly, when youth are enabled and supported, their participation and engagement can be a powerful means for them to challenge situations of abuse, injustice and discrimination.¹¹

On the positive side, there are many encouraging examples of significant improvements in young people's participation and influence in the home, at school, in their communities and in the political sphere at local, national and global levels. At local level, an example is greater youth participation and contribution to decision-making in city and district councils in Sierra Leone since the end of the civil war.¹² At national and global level, an example is the inclusion of youth delegates in countries' official delegations to the United Nations General Assembly. Youth representatives provide input to their delegations on issues related to youth and participate through attending national and intergovernmental meetings and informal negotiations. In the political sphere, young female leaders have taken centre stage, from Malala Yousafzai's involvement in strengthening the global movement for girls' rights to education through to Greta Thunberg igniting a movement of young people protesting and striking in demand for action to mitigate climate change. In 2018 we saw young people leading the protests for gun control in the United States. In 2019 we witnessed young people protesting in support of democracy and human rights in Algeria, Chile, Egypt, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Russia and Sudan. Not only have young people continuously demonstrated their capability to lead change, but the data also suggest that young people (18–34) participate in demonstrations more than adults (35 upwards).¹³



Defining the opportunities and challenges

The aim of this guide is to support the Generation Unlimited strategic priority to “Equip young people as problem-solvers and engaged members of society, helping to create a better world”, through providing evidence and guidance that has the potential to improve young people’s participation and civic engagement. This guide will identify successful strategies that can increase young people’s civic participation and boost the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values crucial for future civic engagement. It will identify structures that are likely to amplify young people’s voices in decision-making and benefit local communities.

Participation and civic engagement are very broad and contested concepts that have been stretched and interpreted in many different ways.¹⁴ For this thematic guide, the following **working definitions** have been used:

- **Participation** is understood in terms of a process, i.e., “**partaking in, and influencing, processes, decisions and activities**”,¹⁵ where such behaviour requires positive attitudes, dispositions and interests in participation, along with a clear belief that one can make a difference. The definition insists on the need for participation to be anchored in the values of human rights and based on knowledge and critical reflection.
- **Civic engagement** is defined as “**how an active citizen participates in the life of a community in order to improve conditions for others or to help shape the community’s future.**”¹⁶

There are a wide variety of challenges that young people face in their path to participation and civic engagement.

Young people’s right to be heard and influence decisions in a meaningful way is rarely upheld and supported.

When young people are asked about their experience of involvement in decision-making, the experience they describe is complex. For example, young people engaged in youth councils in the United States reported experiences of adults not taking their ideas seriously.¹⁷ Research in Ghana identified another barrier – when



young people behaved like adults they were viewed as not representing the views of youth and when they behaved like youth they were removed from the consultation exercise and replaced.¹⁸ These barriers to influence and participation in decision-making are not unique, but are indicative of young people’s experiences of youth voice more broadly.

There is a lack of awareness and capacity among adults to equip young people with the tools, support and encouragement needed to be civically engaged. Be it social workers, healthcare professionals, teachers, youth employers or caregivers, many adults do not have the skills and awareness to support and motivate young people to express their views and opinions and to be active in their communities and in wider society. An example of this challenge is the scarcity of quality teaching on youth participation and civic engagement. Despite teachers’ great influence on young people’s lives, the

majority of teachers are not adequately trained to use the teaching approaches required to build the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed for future participation and civic engagement. The lack of initial and continuous professional development on education for sustainable development or global citizenship education was highlighted by UNESCO as one of the major challenges for implementing Sustainable Development Goal target 4.7.1 on global citizenship.¹⁹

Young people face stigma regarding their characteristics and influence on society. With rising global concerns of terrorism, young people are frequently associated with violence and extremism and at times labelled as a threat. These stigmas fuel policies that marginalize young people and evoke security measures against them, rather than leading to more supportive solutions that enable them to participate positively in society.²⁰ Indeed, the stigmatism of young people extends



further still. In a survey in Scotland regarding public attitudes towards young people, 25 per cent viewed young people as lazy, 40 per cent thought they lacked communication skills and 33 per cent saw them as irresponsible. When respondents were asked about the portrayal of young people in the media, 52 per cent felt they were portrayed in a negative light,²¹ which could partially explain the negative perceptions held by some. However, like any other group in society, young people are heterogeneous, and although these negative perceptions might hold true in some cases, the stigma they face as a group acts as a barrier to their positive engagement in society.

Beyond the challenges faced by young people as a whole, there are unique challenges for specific groups of young people. **Vulnerable and marginalized youth face inequities in access to opportunities for civic engagement.** These inequities affect which young people have the opportunity to participate in activities such as school councils, youth councils,²² volunteering

or peer-to-peer initiatives. Access to such opportunities is commonly influenced by socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, citizenship and disability, with participation being dominated by young people who come from a more advantaged background. Though these experiences of meaningful participation are known to develop the skills for future political leadership positions, they still rest within the hands of a privileged few.

There is a lack of data and research available on the impact of young people's participation and civic engagement, which hinders the identification of effective strategies.

Due to these data and research gaps, those initiatives which are designed to boost participation and civic engagement have limited capacity to foster evidence-based practice, and to identify and scale up best practice. This challenge, discussed in more detail below in the section on gaps in the research, is an underlying constraint in addressing the issues highlighted in this guide.

Landscape – Participation and civic engagement trends amongst youth

As highlighted in the introduction, youth have the potential to be a positive force for change. United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security highlights the importance of understanding young people's concerns, grievances and responsibilities, and emphasizes the need for young people to be meaningfully engaged in decision-making so that they can contribute to building more equitable and peaceful societies.²⁵

The United Network of Young Peacebuilders undertook a consultation with over 140 young people from 56 countries. The consultation highlighted the "optimistic individual attitudes and behaviours of many young people driving peacebuilding efforts", and commented that despite often being excluded from political and policy processes, "most young people do not turn to violence as a solution for political change".²⁴

Beyond positive attitudes and behaviours, young people are also becoming effective social activists by increasing their reach and impact through social media. For example, it is becoming increasingly common for young people to use TikTok, one of the biggest social media platforms today with a young user demographic, for social activism. Young people have used the platform to organize a student strike over teachers' pay, share their experiences of racism and raise awareness of climate change.²⁵ In addition, many of the recent protests mentioned in the introduction have been supported by social media networks both locally and internationally, spreading ideas and creativity which authoritarian states then attempted to close down.²⁶

Young people's participation also manifests itself in their involvement in decision-making that affects their lives through school councils, student unions, youth clubs, national youth parliaments, regional and international youth forums and advisory councils for international organizations. It certainly appears that the number of channels and structures for youth participation has increased since the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child was adopted in 1989, although this cannot be established on the basis of any existing evidence base.

Young people are also involved in volunteering and civic service programmes, although there is no up-to-date global knowledge base on such activities at present. As one global example, in 2012 United Nations Volunteers (UNV) had around 1,000 volunteers under the age of 29. Sixty per cent of these were female and 80 per cent came from developing countries. UNV has noted a change in the way young people are approaching volunteering, moving away from structured engagement towards more diverse forms of engagement around national and global issues through mechanism like social media, public fora and participation in activities supporting local causes.²⁷ In the five years between 2012 and 2017, UNV and its partners spent more than US\$20 million on programmes to enhance youth participation and engagement in sustainable development and the promotion of peace.

Despite these encouraging examples of enhanced youth participation, the data suggest that young people are still less likely than older age groups to be involved in

conventional forms of political engagement such as voting and being a member of a political party.^{28, 29, 30, 31} This is also reflected in the fact that only a few parliamentarians are young people.³² As discussed in the opportunities and challenges section, there are additional inequalities when looking at sub-groups of young people. Across the world, there are large gender inequalities as regards empowerment and political leadership.³³ For example, there are fewer political party members that are young women than young men, and young women make up only 40 per cent of the world's young parliamentarians.^{34, 35} This is in part due to the social norms and cultural attitudes which discourage young women from civic engagement, which in turn reduces their motivation to be politically active. Education levels also influence most forms of political engagement, skewing it towards those with more education. These inequalities by age and sub-groups have an impact upon young people, and in particular disadvantaged young women, as their needs are less likely to be taken into account in decisions which affect their lives.

Young workers also have less say in their working lives than older workers. Trends suggest that young people are more likely to be in jobs that do not allow for trade union representation; and where such representation is not formally debarred, the relatively short duration of job contracts for those now entering the labour market means that young people have less time to self-organize, and do so at greater risk since they tend to have less secure contracts than older workers. Young people who do participate in unions often face institutionalized inequalities. For example, negotiations can lead to two-tier contract arrangements in which concessions are made for young and new workers so that senior employees may retain their terms and benefits. Despite this situation, young people at all levels have been active in trade unions – developing young workers' committees to help young people participate in unions' democratic processes, and advocating union structures that fairly support young workers.³⁶





and background characteristics.⁴⁰ Some participation activities have also been found to predict improved mental health and health behaviours later in life.⁴¹ For example, longitudinal research from Ireland has found that participation in school decision-making leads to a more positive experience of school and to more positive health and well-being life outcomes.⁴²

Beyond the moral reasoning, youth participation and civic engagement are worthwhile investments because they lead to **positive social outcomes that have long-term benefits**. According to the evidence, young people can learn to participate and engage civically from an early age, but unlike many skills that deteriorate over time, this training is likely to have a positive and durable effect into adulthood.⁴³ Developing civic engagement habits, even in late adolescence, has been found to be crucial to continuing these practices into later life. Therefore, through investing in the development of active and engaged young people, societies can strengthen their democratic and civic culture, both now and into the future.

Excluding young people from decision-making and not supporting the development of their civic engagement capabilities is not without its consequences. When youth feel disenfranchised and do not have the appropriate capabilities to participate meaningfully in the public sphere, they can become disengaged and develop mistrust towards government.⁴⁴ This can result in frustration and resentment among young political activists, and at times even have destabilizing effects on democracy and government.⁴⁵

The next section looks at the evidence of what works to support youth participation and civic engagement to ensure the potential of youth can be unlocked and used as a positive force for change in society.

Why do improvements in youth participation and civic engagement matter?

Above all, youth participation and civic engagement matters because **it is a basic human right for young people**. Since the members of the younger generation are affected by many decisions in the political and public spheres, and will have to live with the consequences, they have the right to influence such decision-making processes in a meaningful way. It is therefore a moral obligation of governments and societies around the world to support and improve young people's engagement opportunities.

Developing youth civic engagement also benefits society by **positively impacting young people directly**. As adolescence is a critical period of identity formation, growth, learning and physical and neurobiological development, it has significant influence on young people's future.³⁷ According to the World Bank, civic participation is one of the key activities for a healthy transition to adulthood.³⁸ As noted in the introduction, youth participation helps young people develop soft skills and build strong and meaningful relationships with the people around them.³⁹ Research has also found that youth civic engagement is associated with higher educational outcomes and income levels in adulthood above and beyond their family's socioeconomic status



SECTION 2 WHAT WORKS TO SUPPORT YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT?

Solutions – What countries have done to support youth participation and civic engagement

Transmitting information on its own is insufficient to develop young people's active participation. Research shows that young people learn participation and civic engagement skills, attitudes and dispositions most effectively through social, collaborative and interactive methods.⁴⁶ These social learning processes can happen in the home, the school, and in non-formal education from pre-primary age upwards. Activities outside the home are most effective in teaching civic engagement skills from the mid teens onwards.⁴⁷ Developing these skills as an adolescent increases the likelihood of participation and engagement as adults.⁴⁸

Evidence suggests that young people learn to become civically engaged in real-world environments, or in activities that reflect the real world such as mock elections or simulations of United Nations meetings on climate change. Young people learn participatory attitudes through interactions and discussions with parents, teachers and peers concerning issues that affect their lives, or other topics of current affairs. These discussions can take place in classrooms when a safe learning environment is created, or through school decision-making structures like class councils or school parliaments. They can also happen in community-led activities, youth clubs or initiatives led by young people. Peers, parents and teachers can act as role models and/or gatekeepers. They can introduce young people to communities who are engaged and help support the development of values and beliefs that drive the ways in which they participate in society. One benefit of having activities in the school environment is that all countries aim for the vast majority of young people to go to school; and since this is typically the first institution and social environment outside the family home that they experience, it is thus an ideal context for learning to participate in wider society. The challenge of the formal education system is that what happens within schools,

including the content of the curriculum, is often politically driven, and can change with a change of government or policy.

Youth participation and civic engagement can take many different forms, can be applied in diverse settings, and can cover an endless range of topics. Emerging lessons on 'what works' are here provided under five broad categories, based on evidence and documented good practices:

- Fostering laws, policies and budget allocations supporting youth engagement
- Supporting, creating and sustaining structures for young people's participation and civic engagement
- Instituting global citizenship education including curricula and teacher training
- Investing in young people's capacities, networks and partnerships including youth-led movements, initiatives and networks
- Maximizing the value of volunteerism and community service

'What works' includes evidence from research about activities that have been shown to facilitate an increase in young people's levels of participation and civic engagement, as well as country-level examples. It is important to note that the majority of the evidence comes from studies on American youth, with some from studies on youth in other high-income countries. There is much less academic empirical evidence on the impact of civic engagement interventions with youth in low- and middle-income countries, with the literature that is available being largely descriptive.⁴⁹

i. Fostering laws, policies and budget allocations supporting youth engagement

The right of young people to participate and be actively involved in all spheres of life needs to be supported by legislative and policy frameworks, and accompanied by the necessary budget allocations to support sustained and institutionalized participation by young people.

There are a number of different national policies that provide an enabling environment for the development of youth participation and civic engagement. One of these is national civic service (compulsory or voluntary) for youth at the end of school/university, where youth spend a period of time (from a few weeks to a year) undertaking training, building skills for work and life, and doing social action projects in their communities. Another is participatory budgeting activities. Both of these can be introduced through legislation and require significant and regular financing. Although both of these actions are at the national or state level, they need to be implemented at the local level and supported by the necessary infrastructure, including youth representatives being consulted while the strategies are being designed, and then actively involved so as to ensure effective implementation.

An alternative to national civic service is the introduction of service learning within the school curriculum. Service learning is an educational approach which combines learning objectives with community service to provide young people with practical experience of serving the needs of society. A particular benefit here is that this enables critical reflection on the experience of volunteering with the support of teachers (see also the section below on volunteerism and community service).

Interventions can be introduced through legislation and policies through the national education system. These include the compulsory provision of elected school councils,⁵¹ which should then be empowered to have significant influence on young people's decision-making in schools. Having a policy stipulating a curricular subject on global citizenship education or education for sustainable development (ESD) is another strategy for developing youth participation. This needs to be coupled with ensuring that quality teacher training, which includes the teaching of participatory methods for teaching and learning including simulation activities, is a core part of the teacher professional development policy. Continuous professional development of head teachers can be offered to help them introduce a whole-school approach to ESD.

Other important legislation includes allowing the formal registration and independent functioning of youth-led associations such as child clubs, student unions and children's associations, and

Argentina: Adolescent participation in participatory budget processes⁵⁰

The provision of technical assistance by UNICEF to the Government of Argentina facilitated the involvement of adolescents in participatory budget processes, including budget monitoring and analysis. This included collaboration with the Chief of Cabinet of Ministers and the Argentinian Network of Participatory Budgets, and increased the visibility of adolescents in participatory budgeting processes. Technical assistance helped

to develop a training manual and methodologies for central government and municipal officials. The outcome of the support was the involvement of more than 30,000 adolescents from over 38 municipalities in participatory budgeting through dialogue, innovative communication tools, and forums for discussion. Monitoring of trends in sub-national budgets has shown that the percentage of overall public investment in children has increased.

ensuring that law reform processes include platforms for youth participation and representation.⁵²

Many of these activities require significant financing. The introduction of compulsory national civic service and compulsory participatory budgeting by all local authorities are relatively high-cost activities. Participatory budgeting in schools, service learning and school councils are relatively low-cost activities as the infrastructure in schools already exists. Nevertheless, introducing these activities in schools requires further training for teachers.

ii. Supporting, creating and sustaining organized structures for young people's participation and civic engagement

Young people's participation and levels of engagement

As enshrined in Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, young people have a fundamental right to participate in decisions that affect them, which should include having their opinion listened to and considered. There are different structures that enable young people's participation and their voices to be represented and heard in decision making. These include:

- **School councils and student unions** (both connected with education governance). School councils operate in many primary and secondary schools whereas students' unions operate in many colleges and tertiary-level education institutions (e.g., universities and polytechnics). School councils are a forum for young people to participate in formal governance processes, whereas student unions are platforms for youth to co-create

and engage with each other and then represent the voice of students in influencing societal change.

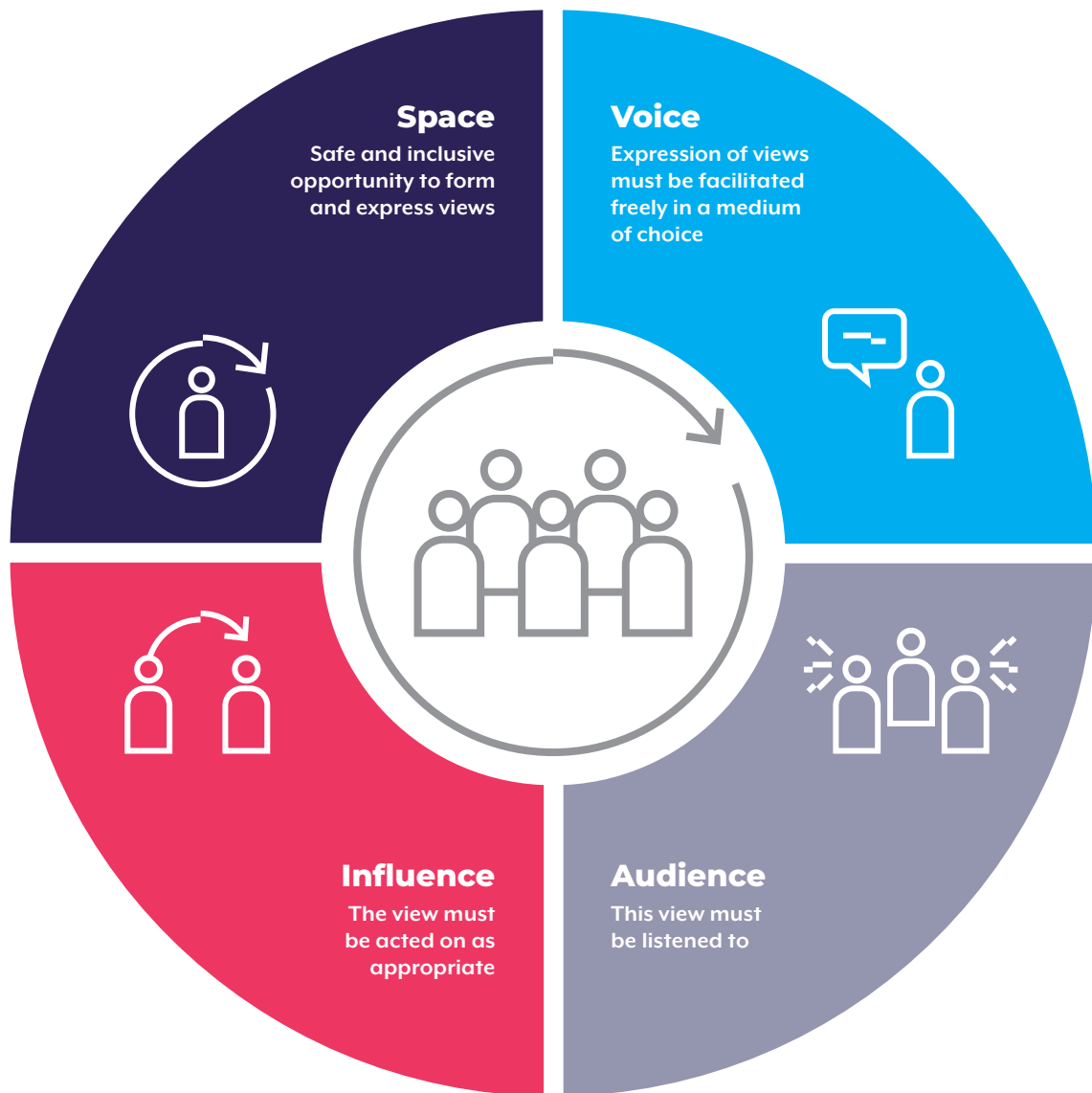
- **Youth councils and youth clubs** (both connected with local authorities) which provide young people with the opportunity to engage in community decision-making.
- **Youth parliaments** (connected with national government) which provide young people with an opportunity to use their voice to bring about social change through meaningful representation and campaigning with national government.
- **Co-management bodies** (typically connected with governance of international organizations) where youth and public authorities responsible for youth issues have an equal say, can share ideas and experiences, and there is an atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect.⁵³

The range of influence on decisions goes from *full*, where young people have complete control; to *collaborative*, where joint decisions are taken with other stakeholders; to *consultative*, where young people are considered to add value to decisions; and finally to *little/none*.⁵⁴ The literature suggests that the critical factor in ensuring young people's participation and rights are upheld is making sure that the participation process is meaningful.⁵⁵ To be meaningful, the following four principles have been suggested (see *Figure 1*):

- **Space:** a safe and inclusive opportunity for diverse groups of children to form views
- **Voice:** being supported to express their views
- **Audience:** their views need to be listened to
- **Influence:** their views need to be acted upon and feedback given about the outcome⁵⁶

Figure 1: Features of meaningful participation

Source: Lundy, L., "'Voice' Is Not Enough: Conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child", *British Educational Research Journal*, vol. 33, no. 6, 2007, pp. 927–942.



Boston, United States: Example of full control

An example of **full control** by young people is the 'Youth Lead the Change' project in Boston, United States, where the mayor annually sets aside US\$1 million of the capital budget for youth (12–22) to oversee and manage.⁵⁷ The Boston Youth Council (comprised of around 85 young persons who are consulted regularly on youth policy in the city) facilitate and collect ideas for new projects from young people across the city. They support the development of youth proposals and then empower the young people to vote on which proposals

to select. The youth council members receive training on **participatory budgeting** from adults in the mayor's office and a consultancy company, which was reported by the young people as crucial to the project's successes. In 2016, the year that the research project was undertaken, 718 projects were proposed by young people, and the winning project (voted for by 4,482 young people) was for a new app on youth jobs, resources and events in the city.⁵⁸ The three winning projects in 2019, each with around 3,000 votes, were:

1. Installing solar-powered benches that charge phones along bus routes
2. Installing new and improved water fountains and water bottle filling stations
3. Placing trash and recycling bins in streets in areas of need.⁵⁹

Council of Europe: Example of collaborating with young people

An example of **collaboration** in decision making with young people can be found at the Council of Europe, where there is a co-management system on youth policy and youth priorities. An Advisory Council on Youth has been created,⁶⁰ comprised of 30 representatives from youth organizations nominated by the European Youth Forum.⁶¹ Decisions regarding the work priorities, programmes and budgets of the

Council of Europe's youth sector are made on the basis of a consensus between the Advisory Council and the European Steering Committee for Youth, comprising nominated experts from the Member States. These decisions are then taken forward to be adopted by the Committee of Ministers. The Advisory Council is also tasked to provide advice to the Committee of Ministers on questions concerning youth in Council of

Europe policies more broadly. The joint decision-making structure supports youth councils, youth organizations and youth networks to formulate and make joint decisions on youth policy. The youth co-management structure was awarded the World Future Council bronze award in the category 'Youth Civic Engagement and Political Participation for Sustainable Development and Peace'.⁶²

Nepal: Example of consulting young people

A local-level example of **consulting** young people on priorities and budgets comes from Nepal, where the government has made explicit policy provisions for child participation in local governance. In Nepal, at least 10 per cent of the capital grants received by local governments have to be allocated to the priorities of young people. Before

decisions are undertaken on how to spend their budget, the local authority must undertake a consultation with young people. The voices of young people are sought through structures called child clubs. These clubs have to represent the diversity of youth, including gender parity. Each club contains about 30 people, and in 2017

it was estimated that about 80,000 children were involved in them. Adults are trained as youth workers to facilitate the children to define their needs and their priorities through creative activities run in these clubs. The youth workers are then required to present the children's priorities to the local authority.⁶³

Youth participation in trade unions

Throughout the past two decades, young people have increased their representation in unions in both the global and local arena. There has been a growth in youth participation in international trade unions such as International Trade Union Confederation and the International Transport Workers' Federation. At both national and local levels, young people have developed organizations such as labour rights activist organizations and young workers' committees, to assist young people to participate in trades unions' democratic processes and advocate for union structures that fairly support young workers.⁶⁴

However, despite the growing youth engagement in unions, there are still significant challenges stemming from young people being less familiar with the organized labour market and their own rights as workers. This means they tend to have precarious employment and face institutionalized inequality in unions.⁶⁵

Trades unions are also more developed and active in high-income countries than in many low- and middle-income countries.

Research has identified several success factors regarding how to encourage young people's participation in unions. A cross-country comparative analysis identified that young people were much more proactive and involved in unions when they were encouraged to develop skills for leadership within the union and enabled to collaborate with each other to promote the engagement of their peers.⁶⁶ Another critical success factor was support through activities such as mentoring from older union members, which was highly influential on the success of young workers' participation and engagement in unions.⁶⁷ Research from France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States has also found that when unions enabled young members to take action on wider social issues such as immigration and climate change as part of their union activities, they tended to be more engaged.⁶⁸

Youth participation in the private sector

There is very little evidence to draw on with regards to the engagement of young people in the private sector. Although we know that young people participate in this sector as employees, entrepreneurs, union members and consumers, the research does not address forms of engagement and influence that youth might have.

We can, however, draw on research on youth engagement platforms and apply their promising examples of good practice to the private sector. One such example is including young people as board members. Having young people on boards is an emerging practice in various public and third-sector organizations, such as schools, city councils and non-profit organization.⁶⁹ Research has shown that young people's participation on boards can lead to innovations and improve the productivity of the organization, as well as provide a great opportunities for young people to develop their skills, build their confidence and shape their identity.⁷⁰ Given the evidence of its positive impact, similar participation by youth in the private sector is likely to yield positive benefits.

Young people are critical consumers with the power to influence the market. Although not a conventional form of engagement, consumer activism is one way in which youth can influence change.

United States consumer activism: The Student Anti-Sweatshop Movement (SASM)

Operating on hundreds of campuses in the United States, the SASM was an influential voice in the anti-sweatshop movement around the turn of the millennium. Its aim was to pressure multinational companies to improve working conditions in their factories and stop sweatshops.⁷¹ As part of its work, SASM established the Worker Rights Consortium, an independent global monitoring organization fighting for transparency of working conditions in apparel factories.⁷²



Developing global citizenship training for teachers

The introduction of the global learning programme in Northern Ireland (and the other three countries of the United Kingdom) aimed to strengthen the capacity of lead teachers and school senior leaders to embed global learning as a whole-school approach. The lead teacher received professional development which, among many other things, addressed how to challenge stereotypical images of poverty, how to implement child-centred simulation and participatory methods, and provided an overview of the Sustainable Development Goals and how they correspond to the different

areas of the curricula and life of the school. The lead teachers then worked with their schools to conduct a self-evaluation of the school and develop a whole-school action plan. The lead teachers' approaches and attitudes were found to have changed on the basis of this experience of professional training, leading them to revise their predominantly liberal-charity-based perception of poverty in favour of greater activism, and to grasp the need to address the underlying causes of inequality.⁷⁸ In the most engaged schools in the programme, students had also made this shift in attitudes and actions.

iii. Instituting global citizenship education including curricula and teacher training

The education system – both formal and non-formal – is the main place for equipping young people with the skills and capacities to participate and civically engage. This highlights the need for an appropriate curriculum, for teachers to be trained in participatory pedagogy, and for learning to include the development of foundational and transferable skills that are important for civic participation and engagement (see Secondary Education and Skills for more details).

Compulsory citizenship education in schools has been effective in mitigating socioeconomic inequalities in civic engagement in the United Kingdom,⁷³ the United States,⁷⁴ and Chile,⁷⁵ and the creation of an open and safe environment for discussion in the classroom has been a positive outcome in the United States.⁷⁶ Research also shows that it is a lack of access to participatory forms of learning at school that increases socioeconomic inequalities in political engagement. Methods that increase access to these forms of learning for disadvantaged groups, such as citizenship classes within vocational education and training, and a greater focus on participatory learning at schools containing less-well-off students, are likely to be effective in reducing inequalities in civic engagement.⁷⁷

Teachers need training in order to acquire the relevant skills, be empowered to adopt a whole-school approach, and employ participatory forms of learning on global citizenship education issues. There are various teacher training programmes on learning for sustainability, but few have been rigorously evaluated. One example of a programme which has been evaluated comes from Northern Ireland.

The literature suggests that teaching about sustainable development, and even attending a school with a certified United Nations Education for Sustainable Development school programme, are not sufficient to develop young people's attitudes and skills in this area.⁷⁹ As mentioned in the introduction to this section, the effective methods for achieving action are those that combine knowledge transmission with participatory forms of learning.⁸⁰ Key to this is a whole-school approach to ESD that incorporates students, teachers and headteachers, and that the school as a whole practices active citizenship. ESD needs to be covered horizontally across subject disciplines – including in environmental, social and economic subjects. Topics should include climate change, biodiversity and sustainable consumption and production,⁸¹ and the relationships and conflicts between these different factors and interest groups.⁸² Effective methods for teaching youth

action on sustainable development are participatory approaches that allow young people to critically engage with different points of view, while also involving them in decision making in classes on ESD and with the implementation of ESD within the school overall.⁸³ Simulation activities, such as United Nations global climate change summits where young people need to argue from the perspectives of different countries and stakeholders, have also been found to be one of the successful participatory strategies for teaching action on climate change.⁸⁴ Two key enabling features are skilled teachers and a supportive school.⁸⁵

iv. Investing in young people's capacities, networks and partnerships including through youth-led movements, initiatives and networks

Through education (formal, non-formal and informal)

It is critical to ensure that formal, non-formal and informal education programmes provide all young people, including the most disadvantaged, with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values required for participation and civic engagement. This will require capacity building and training of teachers and other adults working with young people (parents, caregivers, youth workers, health workers and community leaders) around:

- Knowledge of young people's rights, how they can participate, and safeguarding issues
- Core skills such as communication, active listening, negotiation, etc.
- Respectful attitudes and behaviours towards all young people⁸⁶

It will also require developing the capacities of young people themselves and providing opportunities for them to develop the relevant skills, attitudes and values.

Within the school environment, opportunities for disadvantaged groups, including young women, to take on leadership roles has been reported as an effective way to enhance their learning about political leadership. This could take place within school councils as well as unelected forms of school leadership such as prefects and captaining sports teams.

Youth participation in peacebuilding and prevention of conflict

An evaluation of child and youth participation in peacebuilding, looking at interventions in Colombia, eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and Nepal,⁹¹ found that children and youth peacebuilders have had an impact in four main areas:

1. Young peacebuilders have become more aware and active citizens for peace
2. Young peacebuilders have increased cohabitation and reduced discrimination
3. Young peacebuilders have reduced violence
4. Young peacebuilders have increased support to vulnerable groups through community organizations

Key to success was:

1. Building the capacity, knowledge, skills and experience of children and youth through training and opportunities to develop skills through involvement in youth associations and clubs.
2. Supportive families who encouraged their children to actively participate in peacebuilding activities and efforts. This was particularly important for female youth in Nepal, who faced greater restrictions on their mobility compared to male youth.
3. Challenging cultural attitudes, beliefs and practices which affected peacebuilding efforts, e.g., discrimination towards certain groups, or traditions undermining gender equality including early marriage.

Targeted non-formal leadership interventions are also described as being able to contribute to girls' leadership development, such as the girls in CARE's leadership development projects.⁸⁷

Here girls learnt and practised five essential leadership competencies: (i) voice to express their own opinions, (ii) decision-making, (iii) self-confidence, (iv) organization and (v) vision. The learning activities run out of school were co-designed with the girls involved.

Parents and community leaders can also be important role models for young people, developing their capacity, introducing them to other activists, and challenging prevailing cultural norms where appropriate. Mentoring and intergenerational partnerships can be important in this respect. Malala's father, Ziauddin Yousafzai, was an education activist in Pakistan long before people had heard of his daughter, and Malala talks about the strong influence her father had on her activism. One of the factors that was reported to improve the chances of young women becoming future leaders in the United Arab Emirates⁸⁸ was the attitudes and degree of open-mindedness

of their fathers. Challenging social norms and stereotypes in men and women is critical to effecting change.⁸⁹

Informal education also plays a role. For instance, 160 youth cafés in Ireland have supported mental health in young people, particularly youth from disadvantaged urban areas, helping them to enhance their sense of connection within their communities and to stay safe.⁹⁰

Through youth-led initiatives and movements

Youth-led initiatives, networks and movements have been successfully gaining international attention and influencing countries around the world. Youth-led initiatives, defined as initiatives for community improvement that are designed, planned and implemented by youth, may include social entrepreneurship as well as community service. An example of a national youth-led initiative comes from Nepal: after the 2015 earthquakes, UNICEF partnered with a youth-led organization which had pre-existing district-based networks, and hundreds of volunteers visited homes in villages and camps to exchange information, distribute



leaflets and show community members how to use essential supplies.

Youth-led initiatives are unique in comparison to other forms of youth engagement in that they are initiated and facilitated by young people themselves and are typically centred on grassroots activities.⁹² Although youth-led initiatives and movements are covered on social media and in news articles, they have not been a focus of many academic studies, making it challenging to identify common success factors and barriers. However, one study from the Democratic Republic of the Congo does provide some promising models for good practice in the use of mobile phones and social media in youth engagement around peace-building in a setting of protracted conflict.

In recent years there has also been an increase in youth-led movements. These include, amongst others, Malala Yousafzai leading a global movement advocating girls' right to education; Greta Thunberg spearheading a movement of young activists demanding urgent action to mitigate climate change; and youth activists leading protests in Hong Kong. These examples demonstrate how young people are not only engaged in social issues at community and national level, but have also been leading world-changing movements.

Through digital media knowledge and skills

As the three previous examples demonstrate, much of today's political engagement occurs online. Research from high-income countries has found that young people have less affinity for 'dutiful' citizenship acts such as voting, preferring instead to use digital networking, self-expression (especially through social media including the use of imagery, art and memes), volunteering and protests as forms of the "personalized politics of expressive engagement".⁹⁷

A recent global study covering 11 countries analysed Internet use among 9–17 year olds, asking young people whether they discuss political and social problems with others online and whether they have been involved in a campaign or protest online.⁹⁸ Approximately 25 per cent of adolescents aged 15–17 years engaged politically online in Brazil and South Africa, with smaller percentages in the other

Democratic Republic of the Congo: Youth struggling for change

The LUCHA movement is a nationwide initiative of young people from all backgrounds in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The movement uses non-violent approaches to influence the DRC government to improve services and deliver social justice. Active since 2012, LUCHA has its origins in the city of Goma. It led various campaigns such as a call for better water infrastructure in the city and a campaign for the construction of roads. In 2015, it gained traction nationally when acting as a key driving power behind the #Telema ('Stand Up' in Swahili) protests, aimed to stop President Joseph Kabila from altering the constitution in order to stand for another term in office. Since 2015 it has continued its work nationally to fight for improved service provision. Research shows that LUCHA has contributed to change in the DRC.

The youth-led movement helped to challenge the Congolese people's expectations of their government and helped them use non-violent approaches to hold it to account. Through their successful campaigning and activities LUCHA also influenced the role of young people in politics – it provided young people with a different and non-violent form of political expression and made the political world more respectful of young people. One of the key success factors which enables LUCHA to achieve its aims was its ability to use mobile phones and social media. By communicating effectively using these technologies it was able to bypass some of the challenges social movements face in DRC, such as bad infrastructure, and was able to rapidly organize, mobilize and protest.⁹⁵

South Africa: #RhodesMustFall #FeesMustfall

An example of young people leading their own initiatives without support from adults, and of considerable pressure and police violence in resistance to their voices, is the black student protest #RhodesMustFall #FeesMustfall that began in the University of Cape Town, South Africa in 2015. The purpose of this movement was to decolonize the university by

confronting the issues of institutional racism, access to education, and reform of the Eurocentric university curriculum.⁹⁴ The campaign did not achieve all its goals, but it did lead to a global movement that removed statues of colonial leaders and changed the curricula of universities across the world so that they covered broader non-Eurocentric knowledge.

Youth-led movements on climate change

Youth action on climate change has been crucial in raising awareness and increasing the political profile of this topic. As a 15-year-old, Greta Thunberg's 2018 protest outside the Swedish Parliament demanding stronger action on climate change has made her an international young leader in this area. Her actions, closely followed and shared by many on social media, provided momentum for youth to strike under the Fridays for Future banner, and in 2019 involved hundreds of thousands of students in 1,664 cities across 125

countries registering strike actions, demonstrating the power of a strong youth leader and social media to build awareness and promote youth activism through collective action.⁹⁵ There are also other relevant organizations here, such as the Conference of Youth (COY) that meets on the weekend before the United Nations Climate Change Conference, bringing together youth from across the world to exchange knowledge, experience and practice, thus strengthening the international youth climate movement.⁹⁶

countries. In Ghana and the Philippines, 10 per cent and 17 per cent had been involved in political discussions online respectively, while 8 per cent and 10 per cent had been involved in online protests. Other research has found that young people's digital civic engagement is positively correlated to offline youth political participation.⁹⁹

Despite young people being more comfortable than adults on social media, few have the knowledge or skills to know how to engage effectively in public life and how to develop impactful digital media content. One of the potential breakthroughs for teaching young people to develop digital civic engagement, based on the latest and most rigorous research, is the provision of structured opportunities to learn about and practice the creation and sharing of digital media content tied to societal issues in schools.¹⁰⁰ It is learning through participation that creates action, and here it is important that the content is relevant to the lives of the young people involved. This highlights the need for digital literacy as a precursor for digital civic engagement by young people.¹⁰¹

The Digital Age offers multiple ways of learning for participation, both on- and offline. Offering out-of-school learning through a digital format is an alternative approach for developing offline political engagement in new democracies. This method was successfully applied in the recent elections in Tunisia,¹⁰² where films and tutorials were designed and put online with the aim to increase political efficacy and voter turnout. The initial results suggest that this method was low-cost and highly effective.

Another digital approach to civic learning is to enable discussions between politicians and young people at school, creating 'digital surgeries' through video-conferencing platforms. This method involved training teachers on how to facilitate the exchange, training students to build their political efficacy, and then a one-hour lesson in which the young people asked the politician questions. The evidence suggested that one in three of the digital surgeries led to a specific action by the politician after the surgery.¹⁰³

Three key enablers of digital civic engagement include equitable access to technology, civic education in schools and open civic space. The main barriers include a lack of trust (fear about hacking), harassment and trolling, and the use of data and surveillance.¹⁰⁴

v. Maximizing the value of volunteerism and community service

Volunteering is a broad activity in which many young people engage. Originally conceived of as being a choice, unpaid, and undertaken for altruistic purposes, the concept and purpose of volunteering has since evolved. Compulsory community service has challenged the idea that volunteering is a choice, and the idea of volunteering for learning and skills development for employment purposes has challenged the belief that it must be purely altruistic. Compulsory community service is the focus here, since the benefits for civic outcomes have been demonstrated; volunteering for labour market skills, however, is covered elsewhere





under School to Work Transition. It is in the areas of organized volunteering, service learning and community service¹⁰⁵ programmes where research has identified factors for successful outcomes. It is acknowledged that informal volunteering and mutual support are important and more common among the less well-off and in less developed countries.¹⁰⁶ Time and effort given by people who have very little are often the life blood of political uprisings for equality and democracy, such as in the struggle against Apartheid in South Africa.¹⁰⁷

Over the years, **volunteering** *per se* has seen mixed results regarding its effectiveness on civic outcomes. Structured compulsory community and elective service-learning programmes show clearer results regarding the potential civic benefits for the individual. These activities, organized at school or university, require unpaid work experience in the community. Nevertheless, there is considerable variation in implementation practices. Despite the variation, the evidence of positive benefits regarding compulsory community service programmes undertaken at school is strong and for those young people who have participated, it significantly increases their chances of future political engagement.¹⁰⁸ According to Canadian research, the level of impact depended largely on two features of the volunteering experience: (i) sustained commitment to one placement, and (ii) a positive experience as evaluated by the student.

In Denmark, youth are offered opportunities to build skills by connecting local and international service placements with a focus on civic participation. The youth wings of 72 Danish volunteer youth organizations including the youth wings of political parties, as well as humanitarian youth organizations, student organizations and the Scouts, receive services from the Danish Youth Council, which represents around 600,000 young members and promotes youth participation nationally and internationally.¹⁰⁹

Service learning is defined as a teaching and learning strategy that attempts to integrate community service within an academic curriculum. It has been applied in schools but is more widely available at universities. A meta-analysis of 62 studies of service-learning programmes identified that the benefits to the individual

of undertaking these programmes were increased levels of civic engagement and social skills,¹⁰ as well as improvements in attitudes towards the self, and in school and academic performance. There were four critical success factors identified from these programmes: (i) linking programmes to academic and programme curriculum or objectives; (ii) youth voice in planning, implementing and evaluating the experiences; (iii) having community partners involved; and (iv) providing young people with opportunities for critical reflection on the experience after the service has been undertaken.

Implementation principles that underpin young people's participation and civic engagement

Below is a list of key principles for youth participation and civic engagement activities, drawn from research and guidance on youth participation and engagement.¹¹

1. Identify and address barriers to participation, including stigma, discrimination and prevailing social norms, and include the full diversity of young people within engagement and decision-making activities. This means targeting of young women, those from less-advantaged backgrounds, those with disabilities, and other social groups. Without taking this into account, it is likely that inequalities in engagement and power in society will continue to be reproduced.

2. Create a safe environment and do no harm. This is where young people can express their views in a safe space without fear; gender-based violence, for example, impacts on the possibility for young women to express their needs in a public environment. Rival groups may first need to meet in separate spaces before engaging together. Young people need to be able to participate in risk assessment and mitigation and know where they can go to receive additional support if needed.

3. Ensure that the decisions in which young people are involved are meaningful to them, e.g., decisions on priorities on budgets, young workers' rights, opportunities for non-formal and informal learning, how schools are managed, and broader societal issues such as climate change.¹²

4. Support young people with training and facilitation. Both adults and young people need to be trained and mentored in facilitating young people's participation so that they can serve as trainers and facilitators.

5. Facilitate the process in such a way as to ensure that it fully incorporates the values of human rights and democracy. The process needs to be voluntary and respectful, and young people should receive clear information on their right to express their views and the purpose and scope of different opportunities to participate and engage. If decisions are taken using authoritarian methodologies, democratic values will not be learnt.

6. Ensure that young people know that they have been listened to and their views were taken into consideration. This means that those in positions of power must be willing to relinquish some of their control to young people. Young people should also receive clear feedback on how their participation has influenced decisions and outcomes, and be supported to share this feedback with their peers.

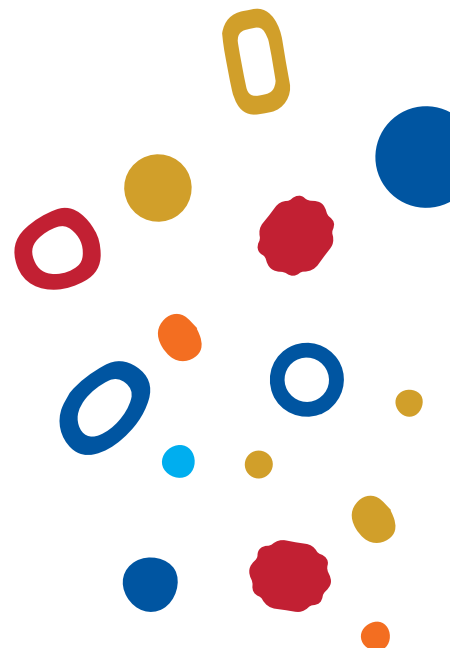
7. Gather data (disaggregated where possible) on participation and civic engagement work to ensure investment in youth participation and civil engagements is targeted on the most effective interventions that can demonstrate impact.

The gaps – Knowledge, data and mapping

There is a lack of coherent and systematic data collected on youth participation and civic engagement, which makes it very difficult to identify priority areas for investment. There is a shortage of data at the national, regional and global level for:

- Mapping the different types of youth participation/youth civic engagement opportunities/platforms for young people by country, region and globally (with data disaggregated by age, gender, socioeconomic background and geography wherever possible).
- Deciding on budgets and expenditure on diverse youth participation opportunities/platforms by national or local governments, charities and international organizations.
- Evaluating the cost-effectiveness of the different types of youth participation/civic engagement projects.
- Rigorously evaluating and assessing the outcomes of participation and civic engagement activities for young people, as well as future participation levels and how young people's participation has affected the policies undertaken.
- Rigorous evaluations or assessments of youth networks and youth partnerships.

To plug this gap, a key area for future investment must concern better knowledge of the barriers and impacts of the whole range of youth-related policies, interventions and initiatives that constitute the global youth agenda. In order to make significant progress in the field of evidence-based youth policy on participation and civic engagement, significant investment and research are required to map and evaluate the effectiveness of existing activities.



SECTION 3 CALL TO ACTION

Young people

It is critical that **young people participate and civically engage to voice their opinions and advocate for them to be heard in decision making.**

Young people are encouraged to:

- **Lead from the front** and to encourage their peers to engage, assess their needs, plan their initiatives and **take action to improve their societies.**
- **Engage in governance structures** in schools (e.g., school councils), local communities (e.g., youth community centres), politics (e.g., national councils and youth parliaments) and work (e.g., unions, business associations, chambers of commerce) to discuss key issues, present youth perspectives, create tools for greater participation and influence decision-making.
- **Get active online** and take part in discussion platforms where issues such as the quality of education, the future of work, green economy, job matching, digital connectivity, and entrepreneurship opportunities are being discussed, for example through local blogs and vlogs.
- **Get engaged in local communities** – for example at the municipal level, in school and university governance structures and through youth community centres – to discuss key issues such as education, employment and mental health.

Political leaders and policymakers

To advance youth engagement, it is vital that political leaders and policymakers choose to **perceive youth as partners for good** rather than threats to contain. This will require the following:

- Provision of an enabling environment for young people's participation and civic engagement **through laws, policies and budget allocations** that facilitate this. This will need to involve **active implementation** of such laws and policies and a commitment to spend budget allocations in full.
- **The creation and strengthening of governance structures and platforms in schools, workplaces, local communities and politics,** through which young people can share their concerns, have a voice and influence decision making. This will need to include independent local and national youth councils elected by youth organizations, elected student councils/unions, and youth representation on boards and in unions or professional associations. Linked to the point above, such platforms require regular budgets and at least co-representation on decisions on youth policy at the level on which they are working.
- **Mainstreaming global citizenship education in both formal and non-formal learning settings.** This will include creating **a relevant national curriculum;** ensuring that **teachers and youth workers are appropriately trained** in participatory methodologies to support the processes of facilitating youth voice; and ensuring that head teachers understand and adopt a **whole-school approach.** Schools working together with youth workers who have experience in these methods may be an option worth exploring.

- **Investment in young people's capacities, networks and partnerships** through formal, non-formal and informal education and youth programmes, and the **provision of space and opportunities** to develop and practice the skills and competencies required for civic participation and engagement. This could include the introduction of compulsory community service or service-learning courses at schools and colleges or as young people leave formal education. These opportunities should be targeted at disadvantaged social groups.
- **Promotion and protection of young people's rights** to participate and engage through different structures including through unions, youth-led coalitions and collective bargaining.

Business leaders

Business leaders need to:

- Provide opportunities to **connect youth to business networks and markets** through the creation and strengthening of online platforms and multimedia campaigns that raise awareness of opportunities for youth and provide them space to engage and influence change on key issues affecting them.
- **Support leadership development programmes for young people** to develop their skills, and provide opportunities for them to have meaningful opportunities to engage in the workplace.
- Consider including youth on boards, so as to allow them to influence businesses' creation of more opportunities for employment and entrepreneurial training for young people.
- **Invest in mentoring opportunities for young people** to help them find space and an audience for their voice and influence.

Social partners

Social partners need to:

- **Co-create and design their programmes and services with adolescents and young people** through regular engagement throughout the different phases of programme design and delivery.
- **Promote and encourage greater participation and representation of a diverse range of young people in their organizations**, increasing their voice in social dialogue. This may include **challenging social norms and stereotypes**, especially in relation to gender, but also in relation to other marginalized groups. Encouraging the use of quotas within leadership positions in non-governmental organizations, civil society, youth councils and youth parliaments is one important strategy that can help to create new role models and change social norms.¹¹⁵
- **Strengthen initial and continuous training of social workers, including teachers and youth workers, on how to teach young people the skills for civic engagement and participation.** Teachers and youth workers are also role models, and therefore their everyday practices in schools and other spaces need to be as democratic as possible.
- **Raise awareness among employees, shareholders and associates about the rights of young workers**, including through digital technology and social media.
- **Advocate meaningful engagement of young people** in politics, education and the workplace, and **actively implement strategies** to make sure their rights are respected.



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