Youth Civic and Political Participation
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**Reflection activity: SWOT analysis tool**
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Session content: Youth civic participation and social change
Part 1: Introduction to youth civic participation
Activity 17: Submit your citizen report card
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Extending the session

SESSION 9: INCLUSION OF MARGINALIZED YOUTH
Description
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Activity 19: Who is left behind in your community?
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Activity 20: Views from the margins and the mainstream
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Description
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Activity 24: What can YOU do to advance peace and security in your community?
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Reflection activity: Learning journal tool

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Activity 25: Analyzing and evaluating the news
Part 2: Ways that media can be harmful and misused, and the impact on youth participation
Activity 26: Deconstructing the cycle of hate in and through the media
Extending the session

SESSION 13: YOUTH DIGITAL PARTICIPATION
Description
Session content: Youth digital participation
Part 1: Main challenges and opportunities for youth digital participation
Activity 27: Working group reports on youth digital citizenship
Part 2: Best practices for safe and responsible digital participation
Activity 28: Checklist – Are you a digital citizen?
Extending the session
[Optional] Youth in action: Creating your own advocacy plan

FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION
Description
Session content: The value of feedback and evaluation
Feedback activity: Feedback manakish (or pizza)
Evaluation activity: Curriculum evaluation questionnaire
Final activity: Certificate ceremony
Extending the session
Guidance note

About the Curriculum:

The UNDP “Curriculum on Youth Civic and Political Participation” is a comprehensive training manual crafted by subject-matter experts to cater to trainers who already possess an understanding of the subject and are acquainted with the technical terminology associated with youth civic engagement and political participation. In addition to the theoretical background, every session proposes a set of interactive activities to allow participants to “experience” the session content and validate newly introduced concepts and approaches and hence to be able to analyse, explain, evaluate, and defend the importance of effective and meaningful youth civic engagement in different contexts, including for the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Intended Audience:

This manual is meticulously designed for trainers who hold a proficient understanding of the related topics and can navigate the technical nuances embedded within. The training programme specifically targets individuals aged 18 to 29, including those with an interest in the subject matter but with a beginner-level experience.

Trainers’ Considerations and Tips:

Throughout the different modules, the manual proposes tips and considerations for trainers to ensure optimal curriculum delivery. These include but are not limited to the below considerations.

Before embarking on the training journey, it is important for trainers to grasp the participants’ foundational skill levels. This understanding allows trainers to finely calibrate the curriculum, tailor activities, and align content with participants’ capabilities. The objective is to craft an engaging learning environment that resonates with their existing knowledge and encourages effective comprehension.

Trainers are urged to delve into the socio-political and institutional contexts wherein the training will unfold. This encompasses historical, economic, social, and cultural dimensions. Participants should also be prompted to explore and understand these contextual frameworks through up-to-date and realistic examples and illustrations. Trainers must also acknowledge the contextual challenges faced by vulnerable groups of youth, such as the ones young refugees, youth with disabilities or young women often encounter, resulting from the prevalence of social, age and gender biases widespread across the regions.

To enhance the training’s effectiveness, trainers are encouraged to selectively concentrate on specific curriculum sections. Adapting the content to the session’s distinct needs and time constraints ensures a focused and captivating learning experience. Prioritizing sections tightly aligned with learning objectives allows for a tailored and impactful training content delivery.

Emphasizing quality over quantity is paramount in delivering impactful sessions. Customizing content to the unique demands of each session not only fosters participant engagement but also deepens comprehension of the subject matter.

Encouraging teamwork among participants nurtures collaborative learning. Inclusion of team-based activities fosters interactive engagement, promoting shared insights and perspectives.

Introducing new topics can be achieved through dynamic methods like showcasing relevant videos and materials. Trainers are encouraged to identify suitable resources aligned with participants’ proficiency levels. The manual and online guidelines offer an array of options for sourcing supplementary materials, enriching the learning experience.

In essence, this manual aims to guide trainers and enhance their ability to create an immersive learning atmosphere. By sensitively adapting to participants’ contexts, needs, and preferences, trainers can ensure an impactful training journey that resonates deeply and facilitates effective learning outcomes.

Adaptive Training:

Adaptive training is recommended throughout the curriculum. Adapting the curriculum’s components to harmonize with the participants’ varying skill levels serves as a cornerstone of effective training delivery. By tailoring the material to meet their specific needs, trainers can greatly enhance their engagement and amplify the overall impact of the training session.

Promoting Inclusive Engagement:

It is essential for trainers to foster an inclusive environment that respects diversity and ensures equitable participation, ultimately advancing the UN’s commitment to meaningful youth engagement.

To achieve this, trainers should: i) create a safe and welcoming space for all participants taking into account the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives; ii) recognize the unique challenges and contributions of women in youth engagement, promote gender-responsive language, encourage the active participation of women and girls and address issues related to gender equality; iii) prioritize accessibility for both virtual and physical meetings to accommodate participants with disabilities and practise disability-inclusive communications.

Trainers should emphasize the importance of mutual respect among participants, addressing any instances of discrimination, harassment, or exclusion promptly and sensitively.

It is vital for trainers to stay informed about evolving best practices for youth engagement, gender sensitivity, and disability inclusion and seek feedback from participants to improve their training approaches continually.

For more detailed guidance on these topics and additional resources, please refer to the links provided below.

- United Nations Disability Inclusive Communication Guidelines
- United Nations Gender-Inclusive Language Guidelines
- Meaningfully engaging youth: Guidance and training for UN staff

Curriculum Structure:

The curriculum is organized into four modules, each addressing specific aspects of youth civic and political participation. These modules are further divided into thirteen sessions, with each session designed to
holistically cover the learning goals essential for enhancing youth engagement in civic and political spheres. The curriculum also uniquely integrates a series of questions and statements to guide the learning journey, enabling participants to grasp key concepts and perspectives. It ends with a session dedicated to feedback and evaluation where participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their full learning journey and highlight key learning outcomes and the impact the curriculum has had on their personal and professional development.

Below is the detailed outline of the curriculum and estimated suggested duration for every module.

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<th>Suggested total duration for the module: 210 minutes (3.5 hours without lunch and breaks).</th>
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<td>SESSION 13: Youth digital participation</td>
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| Feedback and evaluation | Suggested total duration for the session: 90 minutes. |

**Modules Insights:**

Throughout the curriculum, participants will engage in a dynamic learning process and through interactive activities, they will refine their reasoning and complex problem-solving skills while becoming adept agents of positive change in their communities and beyond.

Below is a summary of what every module brings.

**Module 1: Introduction**

This module serves as the cornerstone, offering foundational knowledge on theories, terminology, and methods integral to the curriculum. Participants will grasp the essence of effective and meaningful youth participation, cultivating the skills for active engagement. Through interactive activities, they will enhance their capacity to analyse, evaluate, and defend the significance of youth civic engagement across diverse landscapes, synergizing with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Module 2: Youth Political Participation**

Delving into political awareness and understanding, this module equips participants to comprehend key trends, challenges, and opportunities within formal and informal political structures. From electioneering to policymaking, participants grasp the multifaceted nature of political engagement. Aspiring active citizens will gain insights into influencing policymaking, elections, and political parties, practicing reasoning and complex problem-solving skills.

**Module 3: Youth Civic Participation**

The third module nurtures participants’ civic literacy, elucidating the complexities of youth engagement within civil society through collective endeavors. From community service to activism, participants delve into the facets of civic participation. Equipped with skills in community organizing, mobilizing, and campaigning, participants will understand their role in effecting social change.

**Module 4: Youth Participation in the Digital Age**

This module sharpens participants’ digital literacy, preparing them for modern challenges. From understanding media’s role to combating misinformation, participants will gain insights into digital citizenship. Interactive engagements enhance pertinent skills, fostering the analysis, explanation, evaluation, and advocacy of youth participation within the dynamic digital sphere.
Learning Outcomes:

The primary objective of this curriculum is to empower trainers and provide them with a roadmap and rich skeleton that could be tailored and used to enhance participants’ knowledge and skills. By the end of the training, participants should be proficient in the following aspects:

• Grasping foundational concepts and theories related to youth civic engagement and political participation.
• Navigating technical jargon linked to the subject matter.
• Understanding the significance of an enabling environment for youth participation and adopting a human-rights based approach.
• Mastering context and institutional analysis, identifying threats and opportunities, and adapting strategies.
• Promoting an enabling environment for youth participation based on principles of rule of law, diversity, and inclusion.
• Demonstrating understanding of key concepts, characteristics, and barriers to effective and meaningful youth participation.
• Exhibiting leadership qualities, embracing diversity and inclusion, and transitioning to effective and meaningful youth participation.
• Grasping the civic and political knowledge, skills, and attitudes of an “active citizen” and its role in peaceful and inclusive societies.
• Understanding the link between Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and youth participation.
• Developing sustainability awareness and engagement skills aligned with SDG target 4.7.
• Grasping the policy-making process and influencing avenues.
• Mastering skills for effective public policy impact.
• Understanding the role of youth in the electoral process and political parties.
• Developing research, leadership, and advocacy skills for political change.
• Understanding the role of youth in civil society and collective action.
• Promoting active citizenship and societal impact.
• Advocating for diversity and inclusion in public life and promoting the “leaving no one behind” principle.
• Understanding youth action in civil society and community-level engagement.
• Developing analytical and strategic thinking, mobilization, and advocacy skills.
• Embodying peace and security roles as outlined in UN Security Council Resolution 2250.
• Developing skills for participation in conflict-affected settings.
• Exhibiting leadership in conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and social cohesion.
• Understanding youth participation in digital technologies and online engagement.
• Developing digital literacy and skills for online advocacy, awareness-raising, and digital security.
• Championing digital citizenship, online freedoms, and respect for diversity and inclusion.

This curriculum will not only equip trainers with a robust toolkit but will also catalyse a transformative journey toward enhancing youth engagement in civic and political domains.

WELCOME AND TEAMBUILDING

Suggested total duration for the session: 90 minutes.

Description

This session, taking place at the very beginning of the training, will provide organizers and trainer(s) with the opportunity to welcome the participants, introduce the trainer(s), and provide a brief overview of the main topics and learning objectives of the curriculum. Participants will start by doing a brief energizer and engage in two separate welcome and teambuilding activities to help them build positive group dynamics, before the start of the main proceedings.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

• [Knowledge] Understand the main topics and learning objectives of the curriculum, get to know the organizers and trainer(s) as well as the other participants, and the main rules and expectations from each participant throughout the training.
• [Skills] Teambuilding skills, based on inter-related skills such as active listening, consensus-building, and flexibility.
• Attitudes and values] Display a respect for diversity (of backgrounds, of experiences, of opinions), bed on mutual respect, dialogue, and open-mindedness among participants.

The purpose of the “Session content.”

The “Session content” provided in this training guide is intended for the trainer’s personal reference in order to familiarize themselves with the topic. It is recommended to avoid using the “Session content” as training materials during the session itself, as this may overwhelm the participants. However, the trainer is encouraged to share the “Session content” with participants after the session as a reference for further knowledge.

Remember to prioritize engaging and interactive training methods to ensure an effective learning experience for all participants.
Session content: Welcome and introduction

The trainer may start the training with a brief discussion on the famous quote from Margaret Mead (cultural anthropologist, 1901-1978). What do participants think this quote means? How do they think this quote relates to this curriculum? Do they relate to this quote on a personal level, why and how?

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

Alternatively, the trainer may consider conducting an icebreaker appropriate for the level of the participants. Many options are available online by searching key words such as “icebreaker,” “energizer,” and “youth participation” in your Internet browser. Examples include:


Trainer tip!

When developing the curriculum for this training programme, consider the target audience’s age range of 18 to 29, comprising individuals with a keen interest in the topic but limited/Beginner experience. To ensure effective training delivery, it is important to gauge the participants’ skill levels beforehand.

Before selecting activities, take the time to understand the knowledge and experience levels of the participants. This will enable you to tailor the content and choose suitable exercises that align with their abilities and facilitate their learning journey effectively.

Adapting the training materials to match the participants’ skill levels will enhance engagement and maximize the impact of the training session.

After welcoming the participants and introducing the organizer(s) and trainer(s), the trainer may consider starting the session by conducting a brief discussion or an icebreaker of his/her choice.

Suggested duration: 10 minutes

To better understand what this curriculum is about, there are several important questions to consider.

Why is this curriculum important?

The Arab region has witnessed phenomenal progress over the past decade but progress on youth empowerment lags in the region. Young people continue to face discrimination, marginalization, and violence, including unequal access to education and opportunities for leadership and participation. The growing youth population can be a tremendous force for development and is essential for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Based on the arguments above, the overarching objective of this curriculum is to equip a new generation of young leaders in the Arab States with knowledge and tools to unleash their full potential to become changemakers, and a powerful force for good among their peers, family, colleagues and their communities, countries, and the region at large.

The trainer may find more information about the context for youth participation in the Arab region, by referring to the two following flagship UN publications:


Who is this curriculum for?

This curriculum will be useful for youth-serving organizations (YSOs) and other community-based organizations (CBOs) working with young people as well as UN and other development partners who are interested in designing or implementing capacity-building initiatives to ensure that young women and young men in the Arab region between the ages of 19 and 29 years old (up to 35 years old in certain contexts) are able to participate fully and effectively in all aspects of the societies in which they live.

What is this curriculum about?

This curriculum is about youth participation, more specifically the ability for individual young people and groups of young people to have the space, the right, the opportunity, the capacities and, where necessary, the support to freely express their views, contribute to, and influence societal decision-making, and be active within the political and civic life of their community, and of society at large.

1. See the definition of “Youth empowerment,” p. 25.
2. See the session on “Youth participation and the SDGs,” p. 72.
4. See the definition of “Youth participation,” p. 24.
The curriculum is divided in 4 thematic modules and 13 thematic sessions:

- **Module 1** will provide the foundational knowledge (theories, principles, terminology, contexts, facts, methods, competencies, and skills) that will be useful throughout the rest of the curriculum. It will enable participants to understand what “effective and meaningful participation” entails and encourage them to participate in public life not only as beneficiaries but also as partners, leaders, changemakers, and innovators. This module includes sessions on:
  - Key concepts and theories related to youth participation (Session 1).
  - Youth civic space and human rights (Session 2).
  - Capacities for youth participation (Session 3).
  - A cross-cutting session on youth participation in the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development (Session 4).

- **Module 2** will help participants develop their political awareness and understanding (political literacy) and understand the key trends, challenges and opportunities related to young people’s participation in both informal and formal political and decision-making structures, institutions, and processes, at local and national levels. Young people can participate in political life through policymaking, voting, election campaigning and management and running for elected office as well as informal political and decision-making processes such as participating in youth parliaments, signing petitions, and other forms of political action. This module includes sessions on:
  - The basics of political systems (Session 5).
  - Youth in policymaking, including a simulation on “Safe and inclusive public spaces for youth” (Session 6).
  - Youth participation in elections and political parties (Session 7).

- **Module 3** will help participants develop their civic awareness and understanding (civic literacy) and understand the key trends, challenges and opportunities related to young people’s participation in civil society and through collective action, at local and national levels. Young people can participate in civic life through joining civil society organizations, carrying out community service activities and other forms of volunteering, and joining with others to raise awareness on issues of public concern, through peaceful demonstrations and consumer activism. This module includes sessions on:
  - Introduction to youth civic participation (Session 8).
  - The inclusion of marginalized youth (Session 9).
  - Youth action in organized civil society and collective action (Session 10).
  - A cross-cutting session on youth participation in conflict settings (Session 11).

- **Module 4** will help participants develop their digital, media, and information literacy and understand the basic human, cultural, societal, and technological trends, threats, and opportunities related to traditional and new forms of media and digital technologies, and how they affect youth participation in public life. While there are many opportunities and aspirations for youth civic engagement associated with developments in media and technology systems, resources, and services, there is also a crucial need to understand and mitigate the challenges it presents to society and for youth participation. This module includes sessions on:
  - Youth participation in and through the media (Session 12).
  - Youth digital participation (Session 13).

This curriculum includes enough training materials to teach an estimated 1,720 minutes of training (about 28.5 hours), with breaks and reflection times that bring the total to an estimated 36 hours which may be taught over a period of 4 or 5 training days. A sample agenda for a 4-day consecutive day agenda is provided for illustrative purposes only.

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<tr>
<td><strong>Morning</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Welcome and teambuilding</td>
<td>Welcome and teambuilding</td>
<td>Welcome and teambuilding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Afternoon</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>Coffee break</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reflection</strong></td>
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<td><strong>18:00-21:00</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Free time, dinner and/or evening activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Free time, dinner and/or evening activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Free time, dinner and/or evening activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Free time, dinner and/or evening activities</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Sessions 4 and 11 are considered cross-cutting sessions.

After providing an overview of the curriculum, the trainer may consider using the interactive Welcome Activity to discuss the participants’ fears, expectations, and contributions for the curriculum moving forward.

**Suggested duration:** 25 minutes
Welcome Activity: Fears, expectations, and contributions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Share their fears, expectations, and contributions for the curriculum moving forward</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 25 min</td>
<td>Each participant individually</td>
<td>3 Post-it or sticky notes for each participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td>- Debriefing in the full group</td>
<td>- Pens for each participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Activity (13 min)</td>
<td>- Material</td>
<td>- Flipchart paper and markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Debriefing (10 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Identify their main fears, expectations, and contributions for the curriculum moving forward.
- [Skills] Develop self-awareness (ability to pause, to pay attention to thoughts and feelings and to self-question) self-reflection (ability to pay attention to one’s own thoughts, emotions, decisions, and behaviours) skills through a non-verbal exercise.
- [Attitude and values] Stimulate the participants’ participation throughout the training through the reflection on their active role in managing their fears, expectations, and contributions.

Preparation/ materials:

- Pens and 3 Post-it or sticky notes for each participant, ideally of distinct colours.
- Optional: 3 separate flipcharts for each theme, namely: 1) Fears, 2) Expectations, and 3) Contributions, and markers.
- There is no handout necessary for this activity.

Activity instructions:

*Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes*

- Pass out 3 Post-it or sticky notes of distinct colours to each participant and encourage them to write anonymously. Tell participants which colours is assigned to each theme, namely: 1) Fears, 2) Expectations, and 3) Contributions.
- Assign the following questions for the 3 distinct coloured Post-it or sticky notes. The trainer may consider sharing examples to illustrate if participants are unsure.
  - **Fears**: What are your fears about working with this group and/ or going through this curriculum? Examples include: Being judged, asking a stupid question, not making friends during the training, etc.
  - **Expectations**: What are your expectations about what you would like to achieve and learn with this group and/ or going through this curriculum? Examples include: Learning more about youth participation in public life, exchanging among peers and with technical experts, etc.
  - **Contributions**: How do you think you can contribute to this group to support the learning journey going through this curriculum? Examples include: Sharing with others this personal and professional experiences, bringing one's positive energy, open-mindedness, critical and innovative thinking to each session, etc.

*Activity: Up to 13 minutes*

- Tell participants they have up to 8 minutes to individually fill out each Post-it or sticky note with at least one answer. Remind participants that there are no right or wrong answers, but merely different views, and that differences can lead to strengths and can teach everyone a lot.
- After 12 minutes, invite participants to place their Post-its or sticky notes on the 3 flipcharts (or 3 areas of the wall or black board).

*Debriefing and evaluation: 10 minutes*

- After 13 minutes, bring all participants back together and read some of the responses aloud to see what the main commonalities and differences are among participants. The trainer may consider moving the Post-its or sticky notes around and group similar responses.
- Be sure to dispel fears, set expectations, and encourage ways for participants to share their contributions.

**Trainer tip!**

- It is recommended to spend time first dispelling fears for participants to see what fears they have in common. Next, share the expectations and finally, check what contributions the group wrote about that can help dispel fears and make expectations come to life. For instance, if a common fear is that they will be judged by others, but someone wrote they will contribute their open perspective and outlook on life, be sure to highlight the connection that the group will depend on an open-minded and non-judgmental atmosphere to feel safe within the team.
- If possible, it is suggested to the trainer to save these Post-its or sticky notes and reflect on them in the session on “Feedback and Evaluation” to refer to what fears were dispelled, if they reached their expectations, and if they were able to contribute what they planned at the beginning of the curriculum.

**Variations:**

- An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online “breakout rooms” organized by city or country and encourage them to work collaboratively to answer the questions with virtual Post-its or sticky notes, using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

**More information:**


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5. See the session on “Feedback and evaluation,” p. 269.
Teambuilding Activity: The Human Library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 40 min</td>
<td>• Full group walking around the space freely</td>
<td>• Posters prepared by participants ahead of the training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Present a visual that summarizes their story, who they are, and why they care about youth participation</td>
<td>• Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td>• Debrief in the full group</td>
<td>• Paper and pens for each participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Activity (30 min)</td>
<td>• Debriefing (8 min)</td>
<td>• Flipcharts and tape</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Know who the other participants are, and why they care about youth participation.
- [Skills] Develop presentation, effective questioning, and active listening skills.
- [Attitude and values] Promote the importance of being open-minded and addressing people’s prejudices by helping them to talk to those they would not normally meet.

Preparation/ materials:

- Personal posters prepared by participants ahead of the training, to be displayed around the training room on flipcharts (or on walls, or blackboard). Tape for each (small group of) participant(s).
- Paper and pens for each participant to take notes when they go around the room.

Handout: There is no handout necessary for this activity.

Activity instructions:

**Before the training: Up to several hours**

- Ahead of the training, participants are encouraged to prepare personal A3 posters which contain basic information about their name, age, city/country of origin, as well as provide some illustrative visuals, e.g., pictures, drawings, hashtags or key words, snippets from newspapers, printouts from their social media accounts, and any other creative means. Encourage participants to think out of the box! The personal poster should ideally provide answers to the following main questions:
  - What is your name, your age, where are you from?
  - What are your personal passions, interests, talents, and hobbies?
  - What makes you a changemaker among your peers, family, colleagues, and your community at large?
  - How do you already participate in the political and civic life of your community/country?
  - Why do you care about youth participation and youth civic engagement?
- If participants are not familiar with this tool, the trainer may consider providing participants with a template of a personal poster. The trainer may also consider sharing more information about the Human Library, which is a method that helps to investigate and challenge prejudice, stigmatization or discrimination using active dialogue based on respect. Just like a real library, where books provide an insight to unknown worlds, the Human Library offers its “visitors” the chance to step into the world of another person.

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**

- If they have not already done so during registration/before the start of the proceedings, ask participants to put their personal poster on display around the room.
- Explain that the activity will require 5 participants to stand next to their posters, and the rest of the participants to walk around the training room clockwise. After 5-8 minutes, the 5 participants who stood next to their poster will now go around the room clockwise, and 5 other participants will stand next to their poster, etc.

**Debriefing and evaluation: 8 minutes**

- After 30 minutes, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - What did you learn about other participants? Did you learn any funny, surprising, or interesting commonalities and differences?
  - Did you identify common personal passions, interests, talents, and hobbies?
  - What are bits of information or stories about each other that encouraged you to learn more about?

**Extending the session**

Encourage participants to learn more about each other beyond the Human Library exercise. Encourage participants to move beyond the basic information, and practice effective questioning and active listening. Meeting new people and engaging with them in a meaningful and respectful way involves paying attention to the conversation, not interrupting, putting one’s phone down, and taking the time to actively listen to someone’s life story and leadership journey. Will participants consider making a commitment to having meaningful interactions outside of the training hours with each and everyone in the room, e.g., will they sit next to, have lunch, or spend coffee breaks with (a) different (group of) participant(s) every day?
MODULE 1: INTRODUCTION

Suggested total duration for the module: 420 minutes (7 hours without lunch and breaks).

The first module will provide the foundational knowledge (theories, principles, terminology, contexts, facts, methods, competencies, and skills) that will be useful throughout the rest of the curriculum. It will enable participants to understand what “effective and meaningful participation” entails and encourage them to participate in public life not only as beneficiaries but also as partners, leaders/changemakers, and innovators. Through interactive activities, participants will practice reasoning and complex problem-solving and be able to analyse, explain, evaluate, and defend the importance of effective and meaningful youth civic engagement in different contexts, including for the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

SESSION 1: Introduction to key concepts and theories

Suggested total duration for the session: 90 minutes.

Description

The main aim of this session is to increase participants’ understanding of what youth participation is and why effective and meaningful participation is important both in principle and in practice. This session will focus on the basic understanding of key concepts and theories related to youth participation, how they are defined, and what diverse types, forms, and levels of participation exist. Participants will work in teams to better understand the impact of diverse levels of participation in their everyday life (on the receiving end, as people “being engaged”), and on the lives of the people they themselves engage (engaging others, be it peers, members of the community, decision-makers, and other relevant stakeholders).

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Understand the key concepts, characteristics, and approaches as well as the key barriers to effective and meaningful youth participation.
- [Skills] Develop basic analytical skills.
- [Attitudes and values] Exhibit leadership, embody and promote among peers and community the principles of diversity and inclusion, avoid tokenistic approaches to youth participation, and move from informative and consultative approaches to collaboration and empowerment in their engagement with young people.
Session content: The effective and meaningful participation of young people

In the Lisān al-Arab (“The Arab Tongue”) dated from 1290 by Ibn Manzūr, the most well-known and comprehensive dictionary of the Arabic language, the Arabic word for participation literally means “sharing.” It is the same in Latin (participātiō) and Greek (κοινωνία or koinonia) as the “act, state or fact of sharing with another or others, receiving or having a part of something.” It might therefore be interesting to think about participation as sharing, receiving and “having a part” in power and exerting influence, and in sharing an identity or common values, and “having a part” in something bigger than just oneself in the community, and in society at large.

Terms and concepts for the trainer

- **Youth participation**
  Involves individual young people and groups of young people having the space, the right, the opportunity, the capacities and, where necessary, the support to freely express their views, contribute to, and influence societal decision-making, and be active within the civic, political, economic, and cultural life of their community, and of society at large.

- **Youth engagement**
  Engagement is a journey – rather than an end in itself – that young people take from being uninvolved in an issue to expressing their opinions, being part of the decision-making process at diverse levels, and leading various forms of action. This broad term encompasses the full spectrum of activities young people participate in for the common good, from volunteering, signing petitions to leading direct actions, raising awareness, fundraising, and much more.

- **(Youth) civic engagement**
  The process through which individual and collective actors undertake voluntary action in the civil society arena – as opposed to the spheres of the family, the state, and the market – with the aim of achieving socially-relevant goals. Youth civic engagement refers to the effective and meaningful participation of young people in the civic and political life of their community and of society at large.

- **Changemaker**
  Sometimes referred to as “agents of change,” a changemaker is an individual who sees change as an opportunity rather than a threat, who will be instrumental in identifying, leading, and giving direction and momentum to the implementation of new ideas, policies, and methods.

**Youth empowerment**

The process through which young people are enabled to use their full capacity as valuable partners, decision-makers, and active citizens in addressing issues that affect them personally and/or that they believe to be important. Effective and meaningful empowerment often requires significant changes in power relations, both at the level of agency (the ability of young people to think and act in their own interests), and structure (formal and informal institutions, rules, norms, and beliefs that enable and constrain thinking and action).

**Tokenism**

A practice or process where young people appear to be given a voice, but in fact have little or no choice about what they do or how they participate.

Part 1: What is it? Understanding the types, forms, and levels of youth participation

Youth participation can be defined as an approach and attitude in everyday life that enables young people to express their opinions, to become involved, to be part of the decision-making process at diverse levels, with the overall aim to influence and change society. To better understand the diverse types, forms and levels of youth participation, there are several questions to consider.

**What are the diverse types of youth participation?**

**Trainer tip!**

Young people’s individual and collective discussions and actions are not monolithic, may be contradicting at times and may overlap across different spheres. When in doubt, it is suggested to use the wording “youth civic engagement” which encompasses youth civic and political participation, both offline and online.

Youth participation can be divided among the following “areas” of public life, which can be grouped under the concept “youth civic engagement.” It is important to highlight that young people’s individual and collective discussions and actions do not always fall neatly in one category or another, and that these areas are often complementary in building inclusive and peaceful societies:

1. See the definition of “Decision-maker,” p. 114.
2. See the definition of “Active citizenship,” p. 162.
3. See the definitions of “Youth participation” and “Changemaker,” p. 24.
4. See the definition of “(Youth) civic engagement,” p. 24.
• Youth political participation, which broadly relates to young people exercising power and playing a role in various government institutions and inclusive political processes, policymaking and influencing the distribution of resources.

• Youth civic or social participation, which broadly relates to the involvement of young people in the life of a local community, addressing local problems and challenges, working in an association, or volunteering to help a cause or other members of society.

• Young people can also participate in many other aspects of public life that cut across the civic and political spheres, such as peace- and resilience-builders in conflict prevention and peacebuilding processes or in the cultural life of their community and society at large.

• Youth economic participation, which relates to youth employment and work, inclusive economic development, eliminating poverty, and building a stable economic situation for young people as a group, including through social entrepreneurship, is also part of youth participation, but is not the focus of this curriculum.

There are other common ways to explain the diverse types of youth participation, by distinguishing between:

• Formal vs. informal: Formal participation often refers to participation in formal political and decision-making processes such as voting, joining a political party, standing for public office, or participating in not-for-profit structures such as an association or NGO. On the other hand, informal participation often refers to “bottom-up” activities in informal processes such as being a member of a local club, being appointed to a youth council or moot court, signing a petition, leading an advocacy campaign, or volunteering.

• Indirect vs. direct: Indirect participation can refer to the exercise of influence through elections and decision-making processes (e.g., in a system of representative institutions where others make the decisions on one’s behalf). On the other hand, direct action refers individual actions that have a direct impact, such as consumer activism (e.g., boycotting of products) and participating in demonstrations.

• Traditional vs. modern/emergent: Traditional participation often refers to the various formal types of participation, whether in the civic or political spheres (see above). On the other hand, modern or emergent forms of participation refer to using information and communication technologies and participating in the digital sphere, as well as a wide range of other forms of expressive, emotional, artistic, and cultural participation. Examples include mobilization via web and messaging platforms, peer-to-peer online support groups, e-democracy, and participation in social movements.5

5. See Module 2 on “Youth political participation,” p. 95.
6. See Module 2 on “Youth political participation,” p. 95.
7. See the session on “Youth participation in conflict settings,” p. 212.
8. See the definition of “Social movements,” p. 194.

Evidence suggests that young people are more inclined to participate in informal processes, using direct action and modern forms of civic engagement. For instance, many young people prefer to join a community tree-planting project, or advocate and collect funds online for it, rather than joining a political party that proposes to plant trees in the future. In practice, most young people practice a blend of these different forms of civic engagement, somewhere along the spectrum of political lobbying, advocacy and awareness-raising, street mobilization, and volunteerism and community service.

Who participates?

There is no consensus within the UN on how to define precisely who are part of the “youth.” While the target audience of this curriculum are young people in the age group between 18 and 29 (in certain contexts, 35 years old), a young person can be characterized as any individual below the age of 35 years old. So, who participates? Every young person — irrespective of race, colour, descent, language, religion, political or other opinion, social origin, property, disability, or other status. This also includes young people irrespective of their place of birth; nationality, national or ethnic origin, or legal status, and therefore includes all young members of society, such as immigrants, refugees, undocumented people, stateless persons, and, in some countries, the incarcerated. It also includes every young person irrespective of gender, and the wide range of gender identities. 10

Where to participate?

This curriculum will focus on the importance of youth participation at various levels:

• Grassroots: local, community, and other basic levels of civic movements and political systems, including online which can refer to one’s group of “friends” or connections on social media platforms.

• Sub-national: municipal, district, county, governorate, prefecture, province, region, and other administrative sub-divisions within a country.

• National: all branches of government including executive (e.g., president, prime minister, ministries,

10. See the session on “Inclusion of marginalized youth,” p. 179.
Young people are strongly encouraged to participate in the transnational and multilateral spheres, based on the principle that young people’s awareness and understanding of the wider world and their place in it, is important. For instance, young people can participate in consultative and decision-making processes within regional and multilateral bodies such as the League of Arab States, the African Union, or the UN General Assembly. This type of youth engagement is encompassed under “global citizenship,” which – while important – will not be a focus of this curriculum.

This curriculum also focuses on youth participation in different contexts:

- In the wide range of political contexts, in whichever way the trainer(s) would like to classify different countries in the Arab region, including fragile and conflict-affected countries, and countries emerging from crisis and/or undergoing transition towards new political settlements or systems.
- In urban settings and rural communities: in relation to issues regarding their access to rights, benefits, and opportunities based on their place of residence or their ability to overcome mobility biases (e.g., social, and ethnic segregation in cities, youth participation in remote or hard-to-reach communities, issues related to migration and refugees).
- In the real world (referred to as “offline,” in-person, or face-to-face) and in the online sphere.

**When to participate?**

Encouraging young people to participate by providing them with the space, the right, the opportunity, and the capacities will support their inclusion in the life of their community, and their society at large. In principle, youth participation should be the rule, not the exception! Concretely, when thinking about civic and political participation, this also means participating in:

- Every stage of the policy-making cycle: when identifying issues, setting the agenda, and making decisions, and when formulating/implementing and evaluating policies.
- Every stage of electoral cycle: in the pre-electoral period, for instance during political campaigning, during elections, and in the post-electoral period.
- Every stage of the cycle of implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Why is youth participation important?**

Building inclusive and peaceful societies requires all people to be involved, make their voices heard, and be active in the lives of their peers and community. The fundamental reason why youth participation is important and represents key opportunities for different actors – governments, the UN and civil society – is the principle that young people are part of the solution, not the problem. The main arguments in favour of youth participation can be summarized in the following points:

- First, participation is a human right recognized in numerous international legal and regulatory frameworks and standards. Under international human rights law, promoting and protecting civic space is recognized as necessary for the realization of the human rights of young people in everyday life.

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11. See the session on “Youth participation in conflict settings,” p. 212.
12. See Module 4 on “Youth participation in the digital age,” p. 231.
13. See the session on “Youth participation in policymaking,” p. 113.
14. See the session on “Youth, elections, and political parties,” p. 135.
15. See the session on “Youth participation and the SDGs,” p. 72.
16. See the session on “Space for youth participation,” p. 39.
• Second, participation fosters learning and self-development and can lead to increased academic performance, it is critical to building life skills and networks that are valued in the workplace, and it helps young people build the social-emotional well-being necessary to reach their full potential and realize their dreams and aspirations.  

• Third, participation is an essential part of good governance, and excluding young people from political and decision-making processes in fact excludes a large part of the population. Nearly all societal issues – ranging from education, healthcare, housing, the environment, peace, and even foreign affairs – affect young people and may impact them differently or uniquely. Young people are undeniably the best placed to identify and address the problems that affect them and are often at the front lines of the issues that affect their communities.  

• Fourth, youth participation contributes to a vibrant civil society by building a sense of belonging, solidarity, responsibility, and accountability, and by promoting diversity and inclusion. Every young person, at their individual level and when participating in community with others, can do something useful for the development of their country. In other words, participation is a vehicle for young people to create positive change and shape a brighter future for themselves, their community, and their society at large.  

• Fifth, young people not only contribute to making communities stronger and more resilient, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected settings, and they can also help increase the potential for ownership of shared solutions by the community, which increases the effectiveness of public service delivery and the sustainability of development projects and processes.  

• Lastly, young people can have the energy and passion to access people and places that decision-makers cannot and do so by bringing new and innovative solutions and ideas to the table.  

More information:


Activity 1: The “Five Ws” of youth participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Brainstorm</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 25 min</td>
<td>• Discussions in small groups (1 group per table)</td>
<td>• Piece of paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and share their findings on the “Five Ws” of youth participation</td>
<td>• Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td>• Pens for each participant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Activity (18 min)</td>
<td>• Debriefing (5 min)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Debrief in the full group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

• [Knowledge] Understand the rationale ("the Who, What, When, Where, and Why") of youth participation, using concrete examples of the most common forms of youth participation observed in Arab societies.

• [Skills] Develop basic analytical skills, consensus-building, and teamwork.

• [Attitude and values] Promote the importance of diverse and inclusive young people’s participation in public life.

Preparation/ materials:

• Ensure all participants have paper and pens.

Activity instructions:

Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes

• Check who among the participants is familiar with the “Five Ws” and get them to explain it in their own words to the rest of the group, otherwise go ahead and explain that the “Five Ws” are a are a simple set of questions to ask when gathering information, and are often used by journalists, researchers, and investigators. They include Who, What, When, Where, and Why.  

Activity: Up to 18 minutes

• In small groups (1 group per table), request that participants draw a table with 5 columns for the “Five Ws” and try to fill in as much as possible in each column within the time frame. They will need to work efficiently in their group and build consensus fast on the “Five Ws of youth participation.” Be in mind that only 1 item per column may already a good achievement, depending on the level of the group.

17. See the session on “Capacities for youth participation.” p. 61.  
18. See Module 2 on “Youth political participation,” p. 55.  
20. See the session on “Youth participation in conflict settings,” p. 212.  
21. See Module 4 on “Youth participation in the digital age,” p. 231.  
22. There is often a sixth element, the “One H,” corresponding to “How,” which is suggested not to be addressed in this brief exercise, because it will be explained in the session content “Part 2: What does effective and meaningful youth participation look like?” p. 33, and in the rest of the curriculum.
Debriefing and evaluation: 5 minutes

- After 18 minutes, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to fill out every column of your table? If you did not manage, which columns, and why?
  - How easy was it to find answers in each column? Which ones were least obvious?
  - What were the most convincing arguments/reasons in favour of youth participation and empowerment in your opinion?
  - What is the most interesting/surprising information you learned today from your group discussions?
  - What is the most interesting/surprising information you learned today from your group discussions?
  - Can you think of an example for each column? How is this example relevant to illustrate one of the “Five Ws”?

Handout: There is no handout necessary for this activity.

Cheat sheet for the trainer: Possible answers to the exercise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Where</th>
<th>Why</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age (below 35)</td>
<td>Political, social, economic, cultural</td>
<td>In everyday life, based on the principle</td>
<td>Grassroots/local, sub-national, national,</td>
<td>Participation is a human right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formal, informal</td>
<td>that youth participation should be the</td>
<td>transnational/multilateral levels</td>
<td>Learning and self-development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traditional, new/modern</td>
<td>exception</td>
<td>Rural, urban</td>
<td>Good governance and representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct/indirect</td>
<td>Throughout the policy-making</td>
<td>Different political contexts</td>
<td>political systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>cycle</td>
<td>Offline, online</td>
<td>Vibrant civil society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Throughout the electoral cycle</td>
<td>Civil society arena (as opposed to family, state, and market)</td>
<td>Creativity and innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Throughout the cycle of SDG implementation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Enables community resilience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and ownership for improved public service delivery and development effectiveness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After finishing Activity 1, the trainer may wish to explain that the participants will now focus on understanding what “effective and meaningful” participation looks like, using the session content in Part 2.

Suggested duration: 15 minutes

Part 2: What does effective and meaningful youth participation look like?

Roger Hart’s “Ladder of Youth Participation”23 is the most widely used model of youth participation and uses a ladder analogy to provide a typology that distinguishes among eight levels of participation. It focuses on the role of organizations and actors in creating the space and opportunity for young people to participate.

The top five steps (numbered 4-8) represent gradual steps of genuine “participation,” where young people are informed about the issue(s) at stake, understand them, and are directly involved in the decisions. The top step 8 “Control” represents the highest level of participation, which in this curriculum is referred to as youth empowerment.24 It is important for the trainer to further distinguish between diverse levels within participation, for instance, in lower levels, there is still room for tokenistic approaches25 and “window dressing.”

- **Step 8 is Control**: Young people are in control of planning, policymaking, and managing the initiative, in partnership with decision-makers.
- **Step 7 is Delegated power**: Power is delegated by decision-makers, with shared responsibilities but still some level of oversight.
- **Step 6 is Partnership**: Power is redistributed through negotiation, with shared responsibilities by young people for planning and decision-making.
- **Step 5 is Informed and Consulted**: Young people can advise, plan, and make specific suggestions, and decision-makers still retain the final say.
- **Step 4 is Consultation**: Young people are consulted, but decision-makers retain the final say without necessarily informing young people.

The bottom three steps (numbered 1-3) represent “non-participation”, because young people are not genuinely enabled participate in the decisions, acquire no or limited understanding of the issue(s) at stake and are engaged in a basic way merely to show they were involved.

- **Step 3 is Information**: Young people are informed, but the emphasis is on a one-way flow of information, without any channel for feedback.
- **Step 2 is Decoration**: Young people are used ‘for show’ with the sole objective to help decision-makers’ initiatives.
- **Step 1 is Manipulation**: Decision-makers use young people to support their own initiatives, and pretend they reflect young people’s aspirations.

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24. See the definition of “Youth empowerment,” p. 25.
25. See the definition of “Tokenism,” p. 25.
26. See the definitions of “Political and decision-making processes” and “Decision-maker,” pp. 96 and 114.
There are many theoretical models conceptualizing and explaining the processes or diverse levels of participation, some of which focus on children or on citizens more generally. For instance, “Shier’s Pathway” is a flowchart developed by Harry Shier\(^2^\) comprised of a series of logical questions that help distinguish between five gradual levels of youth participation. The “Spectrum of Public Participation,” commonly used within the UN, is a scale developed by the International Association for Public Participation\(^2^\) and includes five steps of participation: information, consultation, collaboration, involvement, and empowerment.

In addition to assessing youth participation using the “ladder” continuum (looking at engagement from the ‘supply side’), there are two other complementary approaches that may also help trainers to guide participants during the discussions:

- A focus on the role of young people (looking at engagement from the ‘demand side’). This approach moves away from viewing young people as mere beneficiaries\(^2^\) or passive recipients of development interventions (refer to levels 1-3 in the ladder above). Instead, it is important to work towards achieving youth empowerment through youth-led and self-sustained processes, and to help young people engage others and be engaged in the following key roles: as leaders and “changemakers”\(^2^\) (refer to levels 7-8 in the ladder above); as partners who can work on an equal footing and are at the very least consulted (refer to levels 4-6 in the ladder above); and, across the participation spectrum, as innovators who are able to identify new ideas and solutions to the issues that affect them, their community, and society at large.

- A focus on the characteristics or principles for effective and meaningful youth participation.\(^2^\) To be effective and meaningful, there is a consensus among UN and youth-serving organizations that youth participation, at the very minimum, is composed of some of the following elements:
  - Prioritize regular, systematic, sustainable, long-term, and collaborative initiatives.
  - Be grounded in a rights-based approach.\(^2^\)
  - Be accountable, transparent, and informative.
  - Be youth-friendly (accessible) and respectful of their views and backgrounds.
  - Be inclusive, not discriminatory, respectful of diversity, and be supportive of gender dynamics.
  - Provide a physically, socially, and emotionally safe and supportive environment.
  - Be sensitive to risks and conflicts that may arise.
  - Be supported by training with an emphasis on learning-by-doing.
  - Where relevant, be youth-led and voluntary.


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29 A range of terms are used in the development sector, including “constituent” (like voters in a district), “users” (of public services), “clients” (used in the private sector), the more versatile terms such as “actors” and “stakeholders” are favoured in this curriculum.
30 See the definition of “Changemaker,” p. 24.
32 See the session on “Space for youth participation,” p. 39.
Module 1

Did you manage to connect every item during the exercise? If you did not manage, which items, and how did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?

Can you think of concrete examples of “effective participation,” “tokenistic participation,” and “non-participation?”

What is the most outstanding information you learned today from your group discussions?

Activity: Up to 18 minutes

Tell groups that they have up to 18 minutes to read the brief scenario and match the actions of the organization [right-hand side] to the corresponding level or “step of the ladder” [left-hand side]. The trainer may or may not want to specify that there are two actions corresponding for each “step of the ladder,” and that all the actions of the organization [right-hand side] must be matched. The trainer may or may not leave the “Ladder of Participation” visible/ displayed during the exercise for participants to be able to go back to it and check the definitions.

Debriefing and evaluation: 5 minutes

After 20 minutes, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:

- How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
- Did you manage to connect every item during the exercise? If you did not manage, which items, and why?
- How easy was it to connect different steps of the “Ladder of Youth Participation” (“effective participation,” “tokenistic participation,” and “non-participation”) compared to others? Which ones were least obvious?
- Can you think of concrete examples of “effective participation,” “tokenistic participation,” and “non-participation” from your personal experience?
- What is the most outstanding information you learned today from your group discussions?

Handout:

The correct answers to the questions are: 1. g) and j), 2. c) and j), 3. i) and o), 4. b) and p), 5. e) and m), 6. a) and h), 7 f) and k), 8. d) and n).

The Ladder of Youth Participation

You are a member of the local youth organization “Nahno Nusharik” (“We Participate”) which is planning a public event that will bring together members of the community, partners, and representatives from the media. During an internal planning meeting, it was suggested that young people would be singing and dancing, and use signs and placards, during the event. Given the mandate of your organization, focused on the effective and meaningful participation of everyone, including of young people, how would you assess the actions of your organization? The goal of this exercise is to match the actions of your organization [right-hand side] to the corresponding level or “step of the ladder” [left-hand side].

- a. Young people are featured as co-organizers and partners of the event and had a say in designing the event, including to propose other partners and representatives from the media.
- b. A meeting was organized with young people to discuss their role during the event, and a proposal made by senior managers that they sing and dance and hold signs and placards is agreed upon, but several other proposals young people made were not included.
- c. Young people were invited to the event only because they were young and representatives from the media were participating.
- d. The director of the organization is a young person who identified the issue in their community, initiated the organization of this event, and convinced members of the community, partners, and representatives from the media to join.
- e. Senior managers sent out a survey to collect the inputs from young people, but only shared a report with selected responses to the survey that were aligned with their own preferences.
- f. A working group composed of young people led the planning and implementation of the event, with the support from senior managers and the approval from the (board of) director(s).
- g. Young people are organized to participate in the event, believing they were invited to an event on an unrelated topic, or in exchange for goodies such as a t-shirt.
- h. A self-identified group of young people acts as an advisory board for the event organization, reports back to senior managers, who in turn justify how their inputs were incorporated.
- i. Several young people were part of a messaging group where a flyer of the event was shared, without any background context or explaining what role young people would be at the event.
- j. Young people are given signs and placards that they did not draw themselves with messages they do not understand to show at the event.
- k. Several senior managers of this organization are young people and co-led the organization of this event with the help of members of the community and other selected partners.
- l. Young people are assigned to show the signs and placards in front of partners and the media, but have little idea of what the event is about.
- m. Senior managers pre-selected a group of young people participating in an advisory board for the organization of this event, but the senior managers retain the power and the right to judge the legitimacy or feasibility of the advice with limited justification.
- n. There are young people on the board of directors who shaped the vision and strategy of this event and ensured members of the community will be fully involved from start to finish.
- o. Young people received an email with an invitation from the organization about an event taking place at a specific time and location and joined based on their limited understanding of what the event is about.
- p. Senior managers sent out a survey to collect the inputs from young people, but the results were not shared, and no feedback was given to young people afterwards.
Wrap-up and final questions, the trainer may consider using some of the questions in "Extending the session."
Suggested duration: 5 minutes

Extending the session

Invite participants to apply what they learned from the session and reflect on how they can move from “non-participation” and tokenistic approaches to promoting youth empowerment in their everyday lives. For instance, if participants work in a youth organization, where is their project or initiative on the “Ladder of Youth Participation”? On which step would their project be most effective, and how can their project reach this level? As individuals, how would participants assess their own ways of engaging with young people and members of the community around them, and what can they do to foster more meaningful engagement? Encourage participants to discuss the different steps of the “Ladder of Youth Participation” with their peers, family, colleagues, and the community.

SESSION 2: SPACE FOR YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Suggested total duration for the session: 120 minutes.

Description

Youth participation involves individuals and groups of young people having the space and the right to participate, to contribute to and influence societal decision-making, to freely express their views, and to organize and be active within the life of their community, at society at large. This session will explore the enabling conditions for youth participation: what is youth civic space and how does it impact young people in the Arab region? What are the personal and collective human rights and principles, based on international law, that support youth participation? Participants will be invited to answer these questions by using a civic space monitoring tool and through an interactive mind mapping game.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Understand – through the exploration of evidence-based research and tools on civic space as well as international human rights frameworks – the importance of an enabling environment for youth participation and the human-rights based approach to youth participation.
- [Skills] Practice context and institutional analysis skills, including the ability to identify “big picture” threats and opportunities for youth participation, as well the research and strategic thinking skills that can help young people and their organizations learn how to tactically adapt to their operating environment.
- [Attitudes and values] Promote an enabling environment for youth participation, and advocate for the application of personal and collective civic and political rights based on the principles of the rule of law, checks and balances, diversity, and inclusion, among other principles.

After briefly introducing the main topic of the session, the trainer may consider explaining the learning outcomes above, and some of the key terms and concepts, based on the needs/level of the group.

Suggested duration: 10 minutes

Session content: Promoting an enabling environment for youth participation

Civic space is considered under international human rights law as the bedrock of and a prerequisite for building inclusive and peaceful societies. When civic space is open, safe and inclusive, young people can participate, organize and communicate without hindrance. In doing so, they can claim their rights and influence the political and social structures around them.
Module 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civic space</th>
<th>Often also referred to as “civil society space” or the “enabling environment for civil society”, civic space includes the legal, policy, administrative, economic, customary, and cultural factors determining the extent to which members of society can participate in public life.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normative frameworks for civic space</td>
<td>The wide range of interrelated law, policies, regulations, and institutional procedures which impact the possibility, type and level of civic engagement – both offline and online.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td>Sometimes also referred to as “fundamental freedoms”, human rights are moral principles or norms that describe certain standards of human behaviour and are protected by law. Human rights are inherent to us all, regardless of nationality, religion, language, or any other status. They range from the most fundamental – the right to life – to those that make life worth living, such as the rights to food, education, work, health, and liberty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International human rights framework</td>
<td>A framework comprising of international and domestic legal instruments that protect the fundamental human rights and freedoms of all human beings. A distinction must be made between legally binding treaties, covenants, statutes, protocols and conventions, and political statements such as declarations and principles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human rights-based approach</td>
<td>This approach involves empowering people to know and claim their rights and increasing the ability and accountability of individuals and institutions who are responsible for respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights. In practical terms, it involves ensuring that human rights principles – such as universality, non-discrimination, equality, participation, inclusion, and accountability – guide all activities such as policy development, research, advocacy, resource allocation, planning, implementation, and monitoring of programmes, and projects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trainer tip!

To optimize training delivery, feel free to select and focus on specific sections of the chapter rather than attempting to cover every aspect. By tailoring the content to the specific needs and time constraints of the session, you can ensure a more targeted and engaging learning experience for the participants. Prioritize the sections that align closely with the learning objectives and customize the training content accordingly.

Remember, quality is more important than quantity when it comes to delivering effective training sessions. Adapting the material to suit the specific needs of each session will enhance participant engagement and promote a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

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1. See the definition of “International human rights framework,” p. 40

Part 1: Protecting and monitoring civic space for Arab youth

What are the main dimensions of (youth) civic space?

Trainer tip!

This session introduces youth civic space and an overview of the standards and norms enshrined in international human rights law insofar as relevant to youth participation, building on the work of the UN and several international CSOs specialized on these issues. An important consideration for the trainer is to be fully aware of the political and institutional context in which the training will be taking place, as well as historical, economic, social and cultural realities. Participants should be also encouraged to learn about and understand these boundaries. In addition, the trainer should also be fully cognizant of the “double discrimination” faced by young women who also often experience additional obstacles compared with men in many countries based on their age and gender.

Youth civic space can be defined as the set of enabling conditions that allow young people, either individually or in community with others, to play a role in the political, economic, and social life of our societies. Youth civic space includes both the physical and virtual spaces where young people can participate, contribute to policymaking, access information, engage in dialogue, including to express dissent or disagreement, organize and join to express their views.

This operating environment can be regarded as “enabling” when several conditions are met, namely when it is:

- Open and transparent, meaning it is possible for actors to step in and out easily, and to be able to participate in aspects of decision-making and accountability of public authorities.
- Safe, meaning it is possible to operate in and around it and without fear of reprisals, with effective protection mechanisms and access to remedies in case the right is restricted or violated.
- Inclusive, meaning it is open and safe for all, in keeping with the principles of equality and non-discrimination, as well as the inclusion and diversity of the individuals and groups able to participate.

The opposite of an enabling environment is often called “constrained,” “shrinking,” or “closing” civic space.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights highlighted that “the five key elements to create and maintain a safe and enabling environment for civil society are: a robust legal framework that is compliant with international standards as well as a strong national human rights protection system that safeguards public...
freedoms and ensures effective access to justice; a political environment conducive to civil society work; access to information; avenues for participation by civil society in decision-making processes; and long-term support and resources for civil society. Using this list of civic space dimensions as a framework to understand youth civic space, let us break down each item more in details:

- **Normative frameworks for civic space** and access to remedies relate to the set of laws and regulations that, in compliance with international standards, defines the size and nature of civic space, and the extent to which civil society actors including young people can participate in that space. It also relates to the ability of those affected by restrictions on civic space or violations of their human rights to seek redress and access justice as well as independent and effective national human rights institutions, and access to international human rights mechanisms. Sound frameworks are very important but will remain ineffectual if not properly implemented.

- **A conducive political and public environment** which values and encourages civic contribution. In practice, this means that institutions and public officials are responsive to civil society actors including young people in their regular interaction, and that the importance of the value of civil society, volunteerism, youth participation as well as independent media, and access to and free flow of information including on the Internet is recognized.

- **Access to information and public voice** relate to the ability for young people to access to objective and reliable information and freedom of expression, through different forms of media, the Internet, and other advocacy actors with informative functions (NGOs, think tanks, research and academia, etc.). The free access to ideas, reports, initiatives, and decisions enables citizens and young people to become aware and informed about issues, articulate concerns, engage constructively, and contribute to solutions.

- **Dialogue and consultation in decision-making** relate to the ability of young people to participate in dialogue and consultative processes, how governments engage with citizens and young people in the development of policies and the extent to which they can shape government decision-making.

- **Access to funding** relates to the ability of civil society actors including youth-serving organizations, academia, and philanthropy to make use of potential sources of funding – whether from domestic or international – and the ways this is open or controlled by the government.

**How does civic space impact civil society and young people in the Arab region?**

It is well documented that civic space is constrained and closing globally, including in several countries in the Arab region. According to CIVICUS, the World Alliance for Citizen Participation, an organization with ECOSOC consultative status and working closely with several UN agencies, “8 out of 10 people in the Middle East and North Africa live in countries that have the worst rating for civic freedoms,” the region with the poorest record globally. Repressive laws are spreading, with increased restrictions on the rights to participate, assemble and associate, and express one’s views. Civil society actors, including those who cooperate with the UN, are facing a pushback. Attacks on human rights defenders, journalists and media professionals, environmental activists – as well as their friends, relatives, and colleagues – continue and in many places are worsening. Young people involved in public life are also the target of attacks, harassment, intimidation, and reprisals, online and offline. In addition, information and communication technologies have expanded opportunities for participating, debating, mobilizing, and accessing information held by public authorities and more broadly in the public sphere. However, reports from several UN Special Rapporteurs highlight that “(...) over the past decade, states have used technology to silence, surveil and harass dissidents, political opposition, human rights defenders, activists and protesters, and to manipulate public opinion.”

**How to measure youth civic space?**

Part of the challenge lies in the difficulty of measuring and monitoring civic space for civil society in general, and young people and the organizations representing their interests. The lack of an effective or comparable measure makes it difficult to detect and track changes in civic space and to identify whether or where civic space is expanding, stable or shrinking. This, in turn, limits efforts to initiate informed dialogue about civic space issues, to identify actions to promote and protect civic space, and to effectively advocate for the implementation of those actions.

There are numerous tools and methodologies (often referred to as “civil society assessments”) that measure the impact of laws and regulations on civil society, different aspects of society’s strength and viability, and the state of global political rights and civil liberties. Other useful tools include public perceptions and opinions surveys sometimes called “barometers” such as the Arab Barometer, which contribute to a better understanding of citizens’ values and attitudes toward politics, civic engagement, governance, democracy as well as the impact of law and the way law is implemented. Some of these tools specifically focus on measuring the enabling environment for young people, such as the Youth Progress Index and the Arab Youth Survey.

**More information:**


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3. See the definition of “normative frameworks for civic space,” p. 40.
4. The national framework includes the entire hierarchy of legal instruments, from the national constitutions and other founding documents, statutes and legislation, regulations, policies, to administrative procedures. Examples of frameworks that may affect youth civic space include youth laws or regulations, and legislation, regulations, policies to administrative procedures. Examples of frameworks that may affect youth civic space include youth laws or regulations, and legislation, regulations, policies to administrative procedures.
6. See the session on “Youth participation in policymaking,” p. 113.
17. Arab Barometer (2019). Doha, United Arab Emirates. Available in English only.


After providing an overview of the session content in Part 1, the trainer may consider using the interactive Activity 3 to help participants “experience” the session content. Suggested duration: 30 minutes

Activity 3: The dimensions of youth civic space

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td>Total time: Approx 30 min</td>
<td>Each participant individually</td>
<td>Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fill out a table,</td>
<td>• Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td>• Debrief in the full group</td>
<td>Pens for each participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>draw a pentagon</td>
<td>• Activity (18 min)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>with ratings of civic</td>
<td>• Debriefing (10 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>space dimensions, and</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>compare the findings</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Activity learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

• [Knowledge] Understand the different dimensions of civic space and how they relate to youth participation and the participant’s country context.

• [Skills] Practice context and institutional analysis skills using a simplified version of a tested methodology to assess the operating environment for civil society and young people; consensus-building, and teamwork.

• Attitude and values] Promote the importance of an enabling environment for young people to participate in public life.

Preparation/ materials:

• Printed handout for each participant.

• Pens for each participant.

Activity instructions:

Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes

• Ask participants if they know about “civic space measurement,” and tools such as “civil society assessments,” and about concepts such as “enabling” versus “shrinking or closing” civic space.

• Explain that the activity will require to rate their country’s performance on different dimensions of civic space, namely: 1. Normative framework and access to remedies, 2. Conducive political and public environment, 3. Access to information and public voice, 4. Dialogue and consultation in decision-making, and 5. Access to funding.

• For this activity, participants can discuss in small groups to compare their answers, but it is okay to work alone!

Activity: Up to 18 minutes

• Tell participants they have up to 18 minutes to read the guiding questions, to fill the table and draw an octagon based on their ratings (see Handout).

• Participants are expected to rate the dimensions of civic space in their country, from closed (lowest rating, 0-2) to open (highest rating, 8-10). The third column requires participants to think whether the situation has worsened (negative), stayed the same (static) or improved (positive) in the past year? Participants can be encouraged to think about the specific reasons why they picked a rating by jotting down some examples (fourth column).

• The trainer may highlight this is a subjective assessment based on the participant’s personal and professional experience. The trainer may or may not want to show participants how to fill the table based on his/ her own country (ideally only if there are no other participants from the same country) and be ready to provide some examples.

• Once they filled up the table, participants can create their own “civic space pentagon” by transferring their ratings (in the second column “RATINGS”) for each dimension onto the pentagon, and then by connecting the five dots to design a unique shape.

Debriefing and evaluation: 10 minutes

- After 18 minutes, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to fill every column during the exercise? If you did not manage, which columns, and why?
  - Can you think of concrete examples of enabling or disenabling environment from your personal experience? In which dimension of civic space (numbered 1 to 5) did they occur?
  - How easy was it to create your “civic space pentagon”?
  - Is it an even pentagon, or are there dimensions of civic space that have better/worse rating than others? Why?
  - What is the most surprising or interesting information you learned from this exercise?

Handout:

This exercise was adapted to youth civic space from a very useful framework originally developed by the CIVICUS World Alliance for Citizen Participation and used in this training tool: Oxfam (2019). Civic Space Monitoring Tool: Understanding What is Happening in Civic Space at Local and National Level. London, United Kingdom. Available in English only.

The dimensions of youth civic space

Step 1: Fill out table with your assessment (15 min)

Assess your country’s performance on different dimensions of civic space. Use the guiding questions below to remind you what each dimension is about. Try to think about the specific reasons why you picked a specific rating from closed (lowest rating, 0-2) to open (highest rating, 8-10), and whether the situation has worsened (negative), stayed the same (static) or improved (positive) in the past year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Trend</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Normative frameworks and access to remedies</td>
<td>Closed 0-2</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A conducive political and public environment</td>
<td>Obstructed 4-6</td>
<td>Static</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Access to information and public voice</td>
<td>Open 8-10</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Dialogue and consultation in decision-making</td>
<td>Narrowed 6-8</td>
<td>Static</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Access to funding</td>
<td>Repressed 2-4</td>
<td>Static</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Normative frameworks and access to remedies
   • Are you aware about existing laws or plans for new or amended legislation to regulate the registration and activities of civil society and the non-profit sector?
   • Are vulnerable or marginalized groups (young people, women, minority groups, refugees, etc.) singled out as targets in how laws and regulations are implemented?
   • Do state authorities take seriously acts of intimidation or reprisal against civil society actors and young people, investigate or take appropriate action? What are the levels of impunity of those specific cases?
   • How do you rate the general legal framework that regulates civil society, and the access of civil society to legal services and justice in case of violations of rights, on a scale between 0 (closed) and 10 (open)?

2. A conducive political environment
   • Is there a political culture that recognizes the value of civil society, volunteerism, youth participation as well as independent media and free Internet in your country?
   • Are you aware of the use of derogatory terminology to delegitimize or defame CSOs and YSOs, to discourage free expression, increase negative public opinion of civil society actors and distract attention from the issues at stake?
   • How do you rate the role of national and local administrations (e.g., branches of government, local authorities) in facilitating your activities as CSO or YSO, on a scale between 0 (closed) and 10 (open)?

3. Access to information and public voice
   • Are you aware of major restrictions and acts of intimidation or reprisals on journalists, bloggers, podcasters, and other media professionals in their freedom of expression and the freedom to publish or campaign their work, including defamation/ delegitimization, digital restrictions and security, and self-censorship?
   • Do vulnerable or marginalized groups (young people, women, minority groups, refugees, etc.) have disproportionate difficulties in accessing information and finding platforms for public speech, including online?
   • How do you rate the access to information and freedom of expression of civil society and young people in your country on a scale between 0 (closed) and 10 (open)?

4. Dialogue and consultation in decision-making
   • Are you aware if CSOs and YSOs are actively involved in decision-making, or if effective and meaningful spaces for dialogue and consultation on policies by the government exist?
   • How can these spaces be characterized: e.g., antagonistic, episodic, tokenistic, at the discretion of governments and involve selected CSOs and YSOs, versus structured, permanent and inclusive platforms?
   • How do you rate the openness of the government to engage meaningfully with civil society and young people on policy issues and reform, on a scale between 0 (closed) and 10 (open)?

5. Access to funding
   • Are you aware of any barriers for CSOs and YSOs to access and utilize domestic and foreign funds?
   • Are you aware of mechanisms or practices that specifically favour or discriminate against some organizations or agendas (e.g., minorities, gender identities, homelessness) or kind of activities (e.g., advocacy, election monitoring)?
   • How do you rate the freedom of civil society and young people to mobilize domestic and/or foreign resources on a scale between 0 (closed) and 10 (open)?

Step 2: Create your own “civic space pentagon” (3 min)

Create your own “civic space pentagon” by transferring your ratings (in the second column “RATINGS”) for each dimension onto the pentagon below. Once you have marked the 5 places, connect the five dots to design a unique shape. You have now created your very own civic space monitoring tool, one that is commonly used for comparative studies and analysis in numerous UN and civil society reports, congratulations!
Module 1

Part 2: International human rights framework related to youth participation

The promotion and protection of youth civic space is grounded in the human rights-based approach (HRBA), an approach developed and used by the UN that consciously and systematically includes human rights and human rights principles in all aspects of its work. For instance, for the UN, this means that human rights guide all activities such as policy development, research, advocacy, resource allocation, planning, implementation, and monitoring of programmes and projects.

International human rights law distinguishes between two main categories of actors. On one hand, all individual human beings are rights-holders of the human rights codified in international human rights law, such as in covenants and conventions, which include the “core civic space rights.” The HRBA approach aims to empower rights-holders to claim and exercise their rights, based on the human rights principles of equality and non-discrimination. All individuals are equal as human beings and by virtue of the inherent dignity of each human person and are entitled to their human rights without discrimination of any kind. It also focuses on people whose rights are not fully realized, especially vulnerable or marginalized groups (young people, women, minority groups, refugees, etc.). The HRBA approach lies at the centre of the relationship between the state (duty-bearers) and its citizens (rights-holders), in a virtuous cycle that promotes participation and accountability at all levels, especially at the national, sub-national and local levels.

On the other hand, all rights have corresponding duty-bearers – commonly understood as the state, or governmental institutions. Under international human rights law, states have the primary responsibility to respect, protect and fulfill human rights. These obligations are both negative (e.g., to refrain from interfering with recognized rights) and positive (e.g., to protect and promote) in nature and apply to all branches of government at every level, as well as in the intergovernmental sphere. Failure to meet these obligations constitutes a violation of such rights. To illustrate this general point, we can take as an example the right to vote:

| Negative responsibility | Respect | The authorities shall not interfere with the voting procedure and shall respect the election results. |
| Positive responsibility | Protection | The authorities shall organize voting by secret ballot to prevent violations by persons in power (such as politicians or employers). |
|                          | Fulfillment | The authorities shall organize free and fair elections and ensure that all citizens can vote without discrimination. |

Examples of duty-bearers include: Elected representatives (legislature e.g., Parliament); Political parties, interest groups and, lobbyists; Courts (judiciary), and independent bodies (e.g., National Human Rights Institutions); Members of the police or armed forces (law enforcement); Civil servants or administration of the state. Civil society actors, including young people, together with the UN human rights system and other actors can help States meet these obligations.

What are the “core civic space rights?”

The rights to participate, organize and communicate freely are internationally recognized human rights that enable everyone, individually or in association with others, to mobilize for positive change. Sometimes referred to as the “pillars of civic space” or “core civic space rights,” they are central to youth civic engagement and are considered the foundation of an open, safe, and inclusive civic space conducive to youth participation in public life:

- The right to participate in the conduct of public affairs, sometimes referred to as “public participation,” can take many forms. It includes voting rights which encompass the right to participate as voters in genuine periodic elections, or as candidates being elected according to international election obligations.

Variations:

- Time permitting, a longer version of this activity can be organized by encouraging participants at the same table, or from the same country, to compare their “civic space pentagons” and discuss how their pentagons are different from one another, by looking at each dimension of civic space (numbered 1 to 5). Alternatively, the “civic space pentagons” can be drawn on flipcharts and participants can go around the room to discuss the main differences and commonalities between their “civic space pentagons.”
- An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online “breakout rooms” organized by city or country and encourage them to work collaboratively to fill out the table online and draw the connections of “civic space pentagon” using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

After finishing Activity 3, the trainer is now encouraged to organize a brief energizer.

Suggested duration: up to 10 minutes
The trainer may wish to explain that the participants will now focus on the personal and collective human rights and principles, based on international law, that support youth participation, using the session content in Part 2.

Suggested duration: 15 minutes

18. See the definition of “Human rights-based approach,” p. 40.
19. See the definition of “Social accountability,” p. 164.
20. See the definition of “Youth civic engagement,” p. 24.
and standards; the right of direct participation in the conduct of public affairs, including at supranational level, in both formal consultative political and decision-making processes, such as referenda or public hearings, and through public debate and dialogue with elected representatives or within civil society itself; and the right to equal access to public service in one’s country to positions in public institutions including national and local legislatures, public service, and the judiciary.

- The right to freedom of association protects the right of any individual or groups of individuals to be allowed to organize in groups or form associations (this includes trade unions and political parties), to freely decide on their internal governance in a way that would help them most effectively to reach their objectives and, where needed, also to engage their constituencies and the public at large without fear of reprisals. Notably, no one may be compelled to belong to an association. Likewise, associations should be free to choose their members and whether to be open to any membership. This aspect is particularly relevant for since direct interference in their membership may jeopardize their independence. Importantly, the right to freedom of association embraces the ability to seek, receive and use resources — human, material and financial – from domestic, foreign, and international sources.

- The right to freedom of peaceful assembly. Peaceful assemblies are defined as any intentional and temporary, non-violent gathering of a group of people for a specific purpose. This includes non-violent direct action such as demonstrations, strikes, religious and cultural processions, flash-mobs as well as virtual protests. Peaceful assemblies can take place in a public or private space, outdoors or indoors, whether they are stationary, such as pickets, or mobile, such as processions or marches. This also includes the right to meet on the Internet to exchange views and share opinions and to collectively protest, for instance, via electronic networks and social media platforms, “through technologies of today, or technologies that will be invented in the future.”

- The rights to freedom of opinion and expression includes the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, in political discourse, public affairs, and human rights, as well as religious, cultural and artistic expression, regardless of frontiers, both online and offline. All forms of expression and the means of their dissemination are protected: spoken, written and sign language and non-verbal expression such as images and objects of art, and any other media of choice. Protection includes the right to adopt, change, renounce and not to participate and other related freedoms.

24. According to international human rights standards, the right embraces expression that may be regarded as inflammatory, blasphemous or deeply offensive, except for limitations against propaganda for war; and any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence.
25. See the sessions on “Youth participation in and through the media,” and “Youth digital participation,” pp. 232 and 248.

The above-mentioned “core” civic space rights are interrelated, each right being closely linked with – and a necessary condition for – the realization of the other rights. For instance, there is no meaningful public participation without the right to have equal access to multiple sources of information, drive attention to issues of concerns, and speak out against perceived injustices without hindrance. Similarly, the freedom of expression cannot be realized without the citizens’ right to come together publicly or privately to form diverse opinions and express alternative viewpoints or to manifest, advocate and uphold collective interests. They also cannot be fully realized without respect for other mutually reinforcing rights and freedoms protected under international law, including:

- The right of access to information includes the right of individuals, CSOs and the media to request and receive information of public interest held by the executive, the legislative and the judicial arms of the state, as well as any government-owned corporation and any other body carrying out public functions. Principles to promote effective freedom of information legislation were developed by civil society and subsequently endorsed by UN bodies, such as the principles of maximum disclosure, the obligation to publish, the promotion of open government, and processes to facilitate access and the protection of whistle-blowers.

- Press freedom relates to the freedom of all individuals or institutions to use media platforms, including digital platforms, so that their expression may reach the public. Effective press freedom is underpinned by, and realized through, a media environment that is not only legally free, but which also provides for media freedom, pluralism, independence, and safety. According to international norms and standards, a pluralistic media landscape embraces independent media for society to benefit from news shaped by professional standards and ethical decision-making. This is not limited to traditional media outlets, and includes all intermediaries in public communication processes, content producers and audiences at large – including institutions, individuals and entities active on the Internet.

- The rights to life, liberty and security of the person are important safeguards of the right to express dissent and to participate in public affairs, particularly where public authorities may resort to the use of force or detention to suppress these rights or fail to protect people exercising these rights from harm that may be caused by others. In addition to prohibitions of arbitrary arrest or detention, personal integrity is protected by prohibitions against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

- The right to equality and non-discrimination protects from any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground. Discriminatory laws, policies and practices are among the main obstacles that prevent young people from exercising their right to participate and other related freedoms.

- The rights to privacy, anonymity, and protection of personal data protects against unwarranted governmental intrusion into their internal or personal affairs. States and other parties are prohibited from arbitrarily or unlawfully interfering with an individual’s privacy, family, home or correspondence, and from unlawfully attacking an individual’s honour and reputation. In the digital era, anonymity and online privacy play an important role in safeguarding and advancing free expression, political accountability, public participation and debate.
What are the main international legal standards relating to civic space?

The most widely subscribed legally binding human rights instrument of relevance to the promotion and protection of civic space is the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and its First Optional Protocol (1966) – which provide for the “core civic space rights,” namely the rights to participate, organize and communicate freely, in Articles 19, 21, 22, and 25. Other important international human rights instruments also include: the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol (1989) in Articles 3 and 7; the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) in Articles 13, 15, the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (1990) in Articles 13, 14 and 26; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol (2006) in Articles 21 and 29, to name a few. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) provides for these rights in Articles 19, 20, 21 but is not a treaty, and therefore does not directly create legal obligations for countries. In the Arab region, the Arab Charter on Human Rights (2004) developed under the auspices of the League of Arab States provides for these rights in Articles 19, 27, 28, 29, and 31. It is a binding legal framework since its entry into force in 2008 for the Arab countries who ratified it. All other regions also have their own set of human rights instruments.

Who ensures compliance with human rights standards at the national level?

There are mechanisms at the global and regional levels to support state compliance with international human rights standards. Examples include the UN Human Rights Council, the Arab Human Rights Committee, established in 2008 under the League of Arab States, and the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission, established in 2011 under the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. At the national level, judicial protection and human rights monitoring can be provided by:

- Independent and effective national and local courts, which can use international human rights law as the minimum standard of protection, and in some countries invoke it directly to suspend and nullify national laws.
- Other mechanisms monitoring the human rights situation such as national human rights institutions (NHRIs) currently exist in 110 countries and serve an instrumental protective role by investigating or adjudicating issues related to civic space. Other bodies with quasi-judicial competence also exist such as equal opportunity commissions or other advisory or regulatory commissions (such as a Media Council, Press Observatory or dedicated inter-ministerial committees); ombudspersons and similar offices; and public inquiries, which are official reviews of events or actions ordered by a government body to investigate issues or incidents and develop policy or law reform proposals.
- In some countries, courts may not have sufficient enforcement powers, and oversight mechanisms might be ineffective or non-existent. In these cases, the legislatures—32 for instance, in the form of a parliamentary human rights committee (common in Commonwealth countries) – can have a comprehensive human rights mandate encompassing both legislative and oversight functions.

More information:


Activity 4: Mind mapping your rights to participate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td>Total time: 35 min</td>
<td>Discussion in small groups of 6 (1 table)</td>
<td>A large piece of paper for each group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Connect inter-related concepts and principles in the shape of a logical tree</td>
<td>Instructions (3 min)</td>
<td>Debriefing in the full group</td>
<td>Cards with key terms, a few blank cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Activity (22 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Debriefing (10 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Understand the close connection between the participation of young people in public life, an enabling legal and regulatory environment, and internationally recognized human rights.
- [Skills] Develop basic analytical skills and think through complex problems, consolidate information from different sources and present it logically and clearly through teamwork and co-operation.
- [Attitude and values] Promote young people’s active participation in public life, based on the human-rights based approach and principles of universality, equality and non-discrimination, participation, and accountability.
Preparation/ materials:

- Prepare a large sheet of paper for each group (e.g., two pieces of flipchart paper taped down the middle). In the centre of each group’s sheet, write one of these: Right to participate in the conduct of public affairs; Rights to freedom of association and of peaceful assembly; Rights to freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of information (see Handout).

- Print or write out the key terms on cards (see Handout) on sticky notes (alternatively notepaper and tape) for each group and distribute. Provide participants with additional blank sticky notes and pens.

Trainer tips:

- The trainer is encouraged to familiarize him/ herself with the mind mapping tool. It is a non-linear way of organizing information that allows to cluster similar ideas, to see interlinkages between them and to pick out the most important issues, particularly when discussing or brainstorming. The process starts with a central issue or question which branches outwards like a tree, extending to make sub-branches and sub-sub-branches and create a spider’s web of inter-connected concepts.

- The trainer may use an example and make sure he/ she is at ease about explaining it to participants. Work on a few branches with participants before asking them to do their own mind map.

Activity instructions:

**Explanation and set-up: 3 minutes**

- Ask participants what they know about the rights to participate, the freedoms of association, peaceful assembly, opinion and expression, and access to information.

- Explain that the activity will explore the connection between these human rights and the participation of young people in public life, using the process of a mind map. Give an example of a mind map (see below) if participants have not used this method before.

- Divide participants into three groups and allocate one of the themes to each group. Give each group the flipchart paper you have prepared and a set of cards with the key terms on them.

**Activity: Up to 22 minutes**

- Tell groups that they have about 20 minutes to produce a mind map connecting as many of the key terms as they can. Explain that if the connections are not obvious to others, they will need to provide information on their diagram, for example by writing in the connecting links between two terms. Provide each group with spare blank pieces of paper or sticky notes in case participants would like to add key terms and connections of their own.

- When groups do their own mind maps, encourage groups to use at least 2/3 of the key terms and, ideally, for each branch, to produce two levels, and to be creative and include details or visual aids such as icons, drawings, arrows or highlighting.

**Debriefing and evaluation: 10 minutes**

- After about 20 minutes, invite the groups to look at the mind maps produced by other groups. Ask them to make a note of anything that is not clear or where they need further information from the group responsible.

- Bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to include all the cards in your map? Did you add new cards, which ones and why?
  - How easy was it to identify the connections? Which ones were least obvious?
  - What did you notice about the maps produced by the other groups?
  - What is the most outstanding information you learned today from this exercise?
  - Are young people in your community aware of the links between participation and human rights?
  - Can you think of examples of issues affecting people’s rights in your country or other parts of the Arab region?
  - How can you promote the rights related to youth participation and empowerment in your everyday life?
Handout:

Mind mapping cards

It is up to the trainer to determine the number of cards to share with each group. The first set of cards below can be shared with all three groups. They can be broadly be grouped in three main themes, namely: rights and obligations of state, key principles, and actors. It is suggested to mix the cards up and to include empty cards so that participants can produce some of their own answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State obligation to respect and protect this right from violation by (non-) state actors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diversity and inclusion of those most a risk of vulnerability and marginalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social cohesions, tolerance and intercultural dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courts (judiciary), and independent bodies (e.g., National Human Rights Institutions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the police or armed forces (law enforcement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grassroots and social movements, and other local advocacy groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prohibition of acts of intimidation or reprisals by persons or organizations of authority

| Equal protection against any discrimination on any grounds |
| Culture of peace (peaceful resolution of conflict), and non-violence |
| Elected representatives (legislature e.g., Parliaments) |
| Political parties, interest groups and lobbyists |

Effective and meaningful participation and empowerment of young people

| Education and skills for active citizenship, including online on the Internet |
| Regional (e.g., League of Arab States) and multilateral organizations (e.g., UN) |
| Civil servants or administration of the state |
| Youth-serving and other civil society organizations |

Cards specific to Group 1: Right to participate in the conduct of public affairs

The first card “Right to...” should be placed in the centre of the flipchart.

| Right to participate in the conduct of public affairs |
| Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Art. 21 UDHR) |
| Right to participate as voters in genuine periodic elections |
| Right to participate as candidates being elected |
| Right to participate through public debate and dialogue |

International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights (Art. 25 ICCPR)

| Arab Charter on Human Rights: right of political participation (Art. 24) |
| Right to participate in political/decision-making processes |
| Right to access to public service/public institutions in one’s country |
| Right to participate in civil society, as members of an association |

Cards specific to Group 2: Rights to freedom of association and of peaceful assembly

The first card “Rights to...” should be placed in the centre of the flipchart.

| Rights to freedom of association and of peaceful assembly |
| Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Art. 20 UDHR) |
| Right to life and security of the person; protection from torture, inhuman/degrading treatment |
| Ability to seek, receive and use human and financial resources from domestic and foreign source |

International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights (Art. 21 and 22, ICCPR)

| Arab Charter on Human Rights: right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association (Art. 24) |
| Right to meet on the Internet to exchange views, share opinions and collectively assemble |
| Freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention or exile |
| Telecom, digital technology service companies and social media companies |

Cards specific to Group 3: Rights to freedom of opinion and expression

The first card “Rights to...” should be placed in the centre of the flipchart.

| Rights to freedom of opinion and expression, right to information |
| Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Art. 19 UDHR) |
| Protection from attacks upon one’s honour and reputation |
| Right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media |

International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights (Art. 19 ICCPR)

| Arab Charter on Human Rights: freedom of opinion and expression, right to information (Art. 32) |
| Protection from arbitrary interference with his privacy/correspondence |
| Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Art. 18 UDHR) |
| Telecom, digital technology service companies and social media companies |
Variations:

- When the groups have finished their mind maps, you could invite them to walk around and look at the mind maps of other groups. If groups would like to present their results, they should be advised to talk about the process, perhaps focusing on points of disagreement, rather than trying to talk through the mind map itself.
- An easier version of this activity involves participants brainstorming the key terms, and then trying to build their mind maps using these terms.
- An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online “breakout rooms” and using the “whiteboard” function to enable remote participants to work collaboratively on a “digital mind map,” where each one can provide brainstorm and draw the connections using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

Wrap-up and final questions, the trainer may consider using some of the questions in “Extending the session.”

Suggested duration: 10 minutes

Extending the session

Invite participants to research more about youth civic space, and internationally recognized human rights and principles that support youth participation in their country. Are these rights recognized in their constitution or other founding documents? Are vulnerable or marginalized groups (young people, women, minority groups, refugees, etc.) singled out as targets in how laws and regulations are implemented, can they find examples? Do they know whether their country has a dedicated youth law or national policy on youth? Encourage them to check on the National Youth Policy Database managed by Youth Policy Labs, a global think-tank specifically focusing on youth policies.

SESSION 3: CAPACITIES FOR YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Suggested total duration for the session: 90 minutes.

Description

Youth participation involves individuals and groups of young people having the right, the space, and the capacities to participate, to contribute to and influence societal decision-making, to freely express their views, and to organize and be active within the life of their community, at society at large. This session will explore the set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (or competences) that enable youth participation. How do we develop critical citizens, with the ability to participate in public life effectively and meaningfully? What are the qualities that make an “ideal” leader, whose engagement and leadership is based on values? Participants will be invited to answer these questions by conducting a basic skills gap analysis and through a self-reflection exercise about what kind of leader they want to be.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Understand the key civic and political knowledge, skills and attitudes that make an “active citizen” and the importance of values-based engagement and leadership to build and sustain peaceful and inclusive societies.
- [Skills] Develop analytical and youth leadership skills.
- [Attitudes and values] Display a commitment to building their own competences, and promoting the transfer of competences to peers, family, colleagues and the community, exhibit leadership in support of diversity and the meaningful, equitable and inclusive participation of all members of society.

After briefly introducing the main topic of the session, the trainer may consider explaining the learning outcomes above, and some of the key terms and concepts, based on the needs/level of the group.

Suggested duration: 10 minutes
Session content: Understanding the capacity needs for youth participation

Terms and concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms and concepts</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civic education</td>
<td>Sometimes referred to as “education for (active) citizenship,” civic education is learning that support the ability of people, individually and in community with others, to participate effectively and meaningfully in public life, at both local and national levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth competences</td>
<td>Competences are the basic set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that accompany learning and personal fulfilment and development in any field, including in relation to youth engagement and empowerment such as social inclusion, active citizenship and employment, and more broadly for the effective and meaningful participation of young people in the societies in which they live.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political and civic literacy</td>
<td>The wide range of technical, cognitive, social, cultural and creative capacities that allow people to exercise critical thinking and make informed choices about issues of public concern while participating in the political, economic, social and cultural aspects of society and playing an active role in political and civic life, in their community and in society at large.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital, media, and information literacy</td>
<td>The wide range of technical, cognitive, social, cultural and creative capacities that allow people to access, interact with, create and critically evaluate different types of digital information and communication technologies, and the media. In other words, it encompasses a range of competences, attributes and behaviours that harness the benefits and opportunities online and media worlds afford while at the same time building resilience to potential harms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life skills for young people</td>
<td>Sometimes referred to as “transversal,” “transferable,” “soft,” or “21st century,” life skills encompass a range of psychosocial abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable young people to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values-based leadership</td>
<td>In their work to build and sustain peaceful and inclusive societies, young leaders strive to abide by a set of core values, such as equality, non-discrimination, social justice, human rights, transparency and accountability, peace and non-violence, as well as on the principles of tolerance, diversity and inclusion.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Part 1: Educating young people to become active citizens

What is civic education and why is it relevant for youth participation?

Civic education, sometimes referred to as “education for citizenship,” provides people with the necessary competences for civic engagement or, in other words, the tools to become active citizens in the communities and the societies they live in. Such competences develop slowly over time and as a result of what one learns and experiences at home, at school, in the community, organizations of civil society, or at work, and it shapes who one is (self-awareness) and one’s place with respect to others in the community, and in society at large.

Civic education has a fundamental influence on the abilities and potentials of individuals and communities to achieve development as well as social and economic success. It is one of the key factors for development as well as for empowering people to develop the self-confidence to participate in public life, and in addition to do so effectively and meaningfully. Many of the reference studies on civic education, such as the ones developed by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement and the Center for Civic Education, stress the importance of the acquisition of civic and political knowledge, skills, and attitudes for expected civic engagement in the future. Let us break down each item more in detail.

What is civic and political knowledge?

Sometimes referred to as “civic and political literacy,” it encompasses a range of technical, disciplinary, and practical knowledge related to civic engagement, that will be addressed in Modules 2, 3, and 4 of this curriculum:

- Political literacy, for instance the knowledge of basic laws, political rights and democratic institutions, the understanding policy-making processes and how to influence them, the understanding of the role of different political actors

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1. See the definition of “Peaceful and inclusive society,” p. 73.
2. See the definition of “Youth competences,” p. 62.
3. See the definitions of “Civic education,” “Youth civic engagement” and “Active citizenship,” pp. 62, 24 and 162.
What are civic and political skills?

They refer to the ability and capacity of young people to use their knowledge in a responsible way with the objective to be active citizens and participate in public life. On one hand, hard skills refer to the technical abilities needed for youth participation such as: the ability to manage an organization (strategy, programming and project management, financial literacy, financial and budget skills), and to connect with, mobilize or influence others (networking, partnerships, coalition-building, advocacy, awareness-raising and communication, community organizing, mobilizing and campaigning skills).

On the other hand, soft skills refer to a combination of skills ranging from communication and inter-personal skills, to social and emotional intelligence skills that enable young people to navigate their environment, work well with others, perform well, and achieve their goals. Examples include the ability to collect, analyse, interpret and judge information; the ability to explain, analyse, evaluate, and defend a position based on prior critical analysis; ability to communicate clearly and effectively; and interpersonal skills (including listening skills, giving and receiving feedback, empathy, conflict management, negotiation, cooperation, and teamwork).

Soft skills are sometimes referred to as “life skills,” which the UN Children’s Fund divides into four broad categories useful to better understand youth civic engagement. The categories are: the cognitive dimension, or the cognitive skills for analyzing and using information (“Learning to know”), the instrumental dimension, or the practical skills or the ability to act, make decisions, negotiate and cooperate with others (“Learning to do”), the individual dimension, or the personal skills for developing personal agency, managing oneself and building resilience (“Learning to be”), and the social dimension, or the inter-personal skills for communicating and interacting effectively with others, while respecting inclusion and diversity (“Learning to live together”). UNICEF emphasizes that the twelve core life skills are life-long, they build on evidence that underlines the importance of skills acquisition from an early age, and they are acquired and sustained through all forms of learning in a “systems approach” that recognizes multiple pathways of learning, formal, non-formal and informal.

What are civic and political traits and dispositions?

Sometimes referred as “attitudes and values,” civic and political dispositions and traits are needed to apply one’s knowledge and skills in different ways and in different contexts. The Center for Civic Education distinguishes between traits of private character such as moral responsibility, self-discipline, and respect for the worth and human dignity of every individual, and traits of public character such as public spiritedness, civility, respect for the rule of law, critical mindedness, and willingness to listen, negotiate, and compromise. It is the combination of the traits of private and public that contributes to shape one’s leadership style, self-awareness, and relationships with others.

More information:


After providing an overview of the session content in Part 1, the trainer may consider using the interactive Activity 5 to help participants “experience” the session content. Suggested duration: 35 minutes
Activity 5: Build your own leader!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explore leadership</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>styles, and</td>
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<td>make an “ideal” leader</td>
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<td>• Discussions in</td>
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<td>• Debrief in the full</td>
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<tr>
<td>paper for each group</td>
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<tr>
<td>with a human</td>
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<tr>
<td>(gender-neutral) shape</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sticky notes for</td>
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<td>each group</td>
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<td>Pens</td>
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</table>

Activity learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

• [Knowledge] Identify the different qualities or characteristics, for instance the knowledge, skills, and dispositions and traits (competences) that make an “ideal” leader.

• [Skills] Conduct a basic skills gap analysis using a fun and interactive game.

• [Attitude and values] Promote the importance of values-based leadership.

Materials/ preparation:

• On a flipchart or on a large sheet of paper, draw a human (gender-neutral) shape. The trainer may consider adding some cues such as “intellectual capacities” (near the “brain”), “emotional capacities” (near the heart) and “practical action-oriented capacities” (near the “hands”) and have the participants add the qualities/characteristics in the respective areas.

Activity instructions:

Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes

• Ask participants what they know about “leadership” and if they can name some of the skills and competences, dispositions, and traits that an “ideal” leader should display, not only to be elected to office, but also to be a respected, just, honest leader who makes decisions based on values.

• Explain that the activity will require to brainstorm, and to create a visual by writing their answers on sticky notes and organizing them in a logical way. The trainer may provide a few examples (e.g., vision and strategic thinking, fundraising, networking, integrity and accountability, compassion and empathy, resilience, respect for diversity and inclusion) to clarify if the participants are not clear on the instructions as evidenced by the kinds of responses participants identify in their initial brainstorm.

Activity: Up to 20 minutes

• Divide participants to work in small groups and tell them they have up about 15 minutes to build their “ideal” leader. Provide them with a flipchart or a large sheet of paper (see Materials/Preparation), sticky notes (alternatively notepaper and tape) and pens.

• Participants should write one quality or characteristic per sticky note. Participants can also be encouraged to list qualities or characteristics a leader should not display (e.g., demagogy, corruption, factor of instability or promoter of hate speech) if it helps them with the brainstorming. Participants may wish to see if there are any similar qualities or characteristics that they believe should be collapsed under a broader heading, for instance knowledge, skills, and dispositions and traits. Clustering responses is not required but should be offered as an option.

• After about 15 minutes, encourage participants to go around the room (5 minutes) to compare their “ideal” leaders, by focusing on how they are different from one another, by looking at each dimension: intellectual, emotional, and practical action-oriented capacities.

Debriefing and evaluation: 8 minutes

• Bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:

  • How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?

  • Did you manage to build your “ideal” leader? Which dimension was the most important: intellectual, emotional, and practical action-oriented capacities?

  • What did you notice about the “ideal” leaders created by other groups? What the main differences and commonalities between the different “ideal” leaders?

  • Can you think of inspirational leaders in your family, community or country, or historical figures, that identify as role models? Why?

  • Can you think of female role models that inspire(d) you? Why?

  • What is the most outstanding information you learned today from this exercise?

Handout: There is no handout necessary for this activity.

Variations:

• A simpler variation is to ask one representative in each group to present the top 5-7 qualities or characteristics and invite them to place each sticky note on a common flip chart, thereby creating the whole group’s “ideal leader;” and then directly move to the discussion.

• A longer version of this activity can bring the whole group back together, give each participant 5-7 dots (coloured adhesive circles), and encourage them to go around the room to vote on which qualities/characteristics are the most important. Participants can spread their dots across different skills in any combination (e.g., two on each; four on one, one on the remaining two). Once participants have voted, the trainer can count the number of dots beside each skill and determine which received the highest number of votes. The announcement of the results can be discussed: were participants surprised by the results? Was there a consensus? Are these the qualities/characteristics important for young leaders?
Part 2: Empowering young people to become leaders

Youth development is the process that prepares a young person to reach his or her full potential as a changemaker, through activities and experiences that help them develop the range of competencies described in Part 1 above.

Youth leadership is part of the youth development process and supports young men and women to be empowered and have opportunities for genuine leadership, taking primary responsibility for developing plans, carrying out decisions, and solving problems in their community, and society at large. Young leaders are empowered when they can be active citizens, effectively and meaningfully participate in public life, and:

- Analyse his or her own strengths and weaknesses, set personal and professional goals, and have the self-esteem, confidence, motivation, and abilities to carry them out.
- Practice self-management and responsible decision-making that reflects healthy choices and values.
- Guide or direct others on a course of action, influence the opinions and behaviours of others, and serve as mentors and positive role models for others.
- Demonstrate awareness, understanding, and knowledge of other cultures and societies and adopt a human rights-based approach consistent with values and principles such as democracy, social justice, and peace. These include equality, non-discrimination, social justice, transparency and accountability, tolerance, diversity, inclusion, social cohesion, and non-violence, for instance, by supporting education and capacity-building of young people, in the form of inter-cultural and inter-community dialogue and education for peace and conflict prevention, particularly for young people who have been directly involved or victimized by conflict.

More information:


8. See the definitions of “Human-rights-based approach,” and “Values-based leadership,” pp. 173 and 62. See the session on “Inclusion of marginalized youth,” p. 178.
Handout: There is no handout necessary for this activity.

**Activity instructions:**

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**
- Explain that the activity will require each participant to write a letter to themselves, reflecting on the kind of leader they are, and envisioning the kind of leader they want to be in the future.

- Participants may be reminded that their goals and dreams should be theirs, not based on someone else's needs or expectations. Encourage them to be as specific and realistic as possible. Some guiding questions for participants may include:
  - What do you want to say to your future selves? What kind of leader do you want to be one year from now? Encourage participants to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses as a leader.
  - What are the goals and dreams you want realized by then? Encourage participants to focus on something they want to change and set goals and work toward them.

- While participants can write to their future selves from any time period, it is recommended to start with a one-year time frame. This may facilitate the process of identifying their goals, at the same time it also provides for a comfortable time frame to act.

**Activity: Up to 20 minutes**

- Tell participants they have up to 20 minutes to draft their letter. It is suggested that participants take a few minutes to reflect on the kind of leader they are (2-3 min.), and spend more time envisioning the kind of leader they want to be in the future, and decide on the three commitments they would like to make (17-18 min.)

- Ask participants to refer to today's date, and that they may start their letter with "Dear future self,..." and that the letter must at the minimum include three commitments to themselves. The trainer and participants can refer to the session content and previous activity (Activity 7: Build your own leader!) for ideas. Examples of commitment may include to incorporate civic dispositions and traits (such as ethics and compassion) into their leadership style, or to build their civic knowledge and skills by participating in capacity-building activities.

- After 20 minutes, encourage participants to sign off with their name and today's date, and to put their letter in an envelope and seal it. On the cover, participants can write "To [Their Name]. To be opened on [Date, one year from the training day]. Participants can be encouraged to set an appointment in their phone or computer's calendar to remember to open their letter.

- Bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to finish writing your letter?
  - How easy was it to identify three commitments to make to your future selves?
  - Are you comfortable sharing an example of a commitment you made with the group? Will you share your commitments with your peers, family, or colleagues?
  - Do you think your priorities/commitments may change, will there be unanticipated circumstances that may affect your commitments? Can you plan for such circumstances?
  - Are there any concrete actions you will need to do to realize your commitments? Which one(s) will you implement now, which one(s) will your start after the training?
  - What is the most outstanding information you learned today from this exercise?

**Variations:**

- An online version of this exercise consists in typing the letter on their computer, and to save it on their computer or send it to themselves by email. An online service called [FutureMe.org](http://FutureMe.org) helps you send a message to your desired email address at any point in the future.

**Debriefing and evaluation: 3 minutes**

 Invite participants to further reflect on their leadership style and potential capacity gaps and to consider signing up for training programmes and mentoring schemes in the areas where they feel they may need to build their capacity. Several organizations and institutions provide regular online capacity-building activities, ranging from online courses, webinars, and workshops, most of which are free to access and to use, such as UNDP's [Arab Development Portal](https://portal.arabdevelopment.org), and the World’s Bank [Open Learning Campus](https://openlearningcampus.worldbank.org). In addition, invite participants to research the concept of "lifelong learning" and the benefits of the ongoing, self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for either personal or professional reasons. Lifelong learning is a powerful habit that helps not to settle for what one currently knows and always seek for improvement. A great resource in this area is UNESCO’s [Institute for Lifelong Learning](https://il2.unesco.org).

**Extending the session**

- Suggested duration: 5 minutes
SESSION 4: YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND THE SDGS

Suggested total duration for the session: 120 minutes. This session is a cross-cutting theme throughout the curriculum, and it is suggested to use it between Modules 1 and 2, but the trainer may choose to use it at a different moment.

Description

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the critical role of young people in supporting the effective implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and calls for action against the challenges faced by young people that limit their political, social, and economic inclusion. This session will explore the following issues: what is the 2030 Agenda and how does it impact young people in the Arab region? What can young people do, individually and collectively, to promote (youth participation in) sustainable development in their everyday life? Participants will be invited to answer these questions by answering a quiz and through an interactive game.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

• [Knowledge] Understand the importance of the SDGs as a global blueprint for sustainable development, how the SDGs – with a focus on SDGs 5, 10 and 16 – relate to youth participation, and the numerous ways young people can contribute to advance the implementation of the SDGs.

• [Skills] Develop sustainability awareness and understanding in line with SDG target 4.7 on education for sustainable development (sustainability literacy) and practice relevant skills can support young people to engage on sustainability issues in their community, and society at large, such as leadership, research and data analysis in key policy areas, strategic thinking, and advocacy.

• [Attitude] Exhibit leadership, embody and promote among peers and community the importance of participation of young people in sustainable development, display a commitment to championing sustainable development in their daily life and actions.

Session content: Youth participation and the Sustainable Development Goals

Terms and concepts for the trainer

| Sustainable Development Goals | A universal set of interlinked goals, targets, and indicators that UN Member States agreed to use to frame their political agendas and policies related to sustainable development until the year 2030. The SDGs constitute a global framework for action on sustainable development called “The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” |
| SDG goals, targets, and indicators | The 2030 Agenda includes 17 goals, 169 targets and 231 unique indicators. The 17 goals set the aspiration of what the SDGs are trying to achieve. The 169 targets are the areas of change that need to be reached to achieve the goals. The 231 unique indicators are used to measure the progress in reaching the targets. |
| Peaceful and inclusive society | A society for all, in which every member of society has an active role to play, which is based on core values, such as equality, non-discrimination, social justice, human rights, transparency and accountability, peace and non-violence, as well as on the principles of tolerance, diversity and inclusion. Building peaceful and inclusive societies is one of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly in Goal 16. |

After briefly introducing the main topic of the session, the trainer may consider explaining the learning outcomes above, and some of the key terms and concepts, based on the needs/level of the group.

Suggested duration: 10 minutes
Part 1: The basics of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals

Brief background: From the MDGs to the SDGs

Trainer tip!

This session introduces the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. This is a broad topic difficult to tackle in detail in a 90-minute session. An interactive way to introduce this topic could be by showing relevant videos. The trainer is encouraged to identify videos appropriate for the level of the participants, and ideally use (a) video(s) in the local language. Many options are available online by typing key words such as “sustainable development,” “SDG,” and “youth” in your Internet browser. A selection of relevant videos is available below:


The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) build on decades of work by countries and the UN and were unanimously adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2015. In June 1992, at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, brought together more than 178 countries to adopt the “Agenda 21,” a comprehensive plan of action to build a global partnership for sustainable development to improve human lives and protect the environment. In September 2000, UN Member States unanimously adopted the Millennium Declaration, and created the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These aspirational goals ranged from halving extreme poverty rates to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS, to empowering women, and providing universal primary education, all by the target date of 2015. In the words of the former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, the MDGs were “the most successful anti-poverty movement in history, (…) they helped to lift more than one billion people out of extreme poverty, to make inroads against hunger, to enable more girls to attend school than ever before and to protect our planet.”

What are the Sustainable Development Goals?

The SDGs are a set of 17 interlinked goals, backed by a set of 169 targets and several hundred indicators that UN Member States agreed to use to frame their political agendas and policies related to sustainable development until the year 2030. The SDGs can be grouped into 5 sub-groups or key themes, sometimes referred to as the “5 Ps of sustainable development”: people (SDGs 1-6), prosperity (SDGs 7-10), planet (SDG 11-15), peace (SDG 16), and partnerships (SDG 17).

ECONOMIC PILLAR | ENVIRONMENTAL PILLAR | SOCIAL PILLAR
---|---|---
1. **POVERTY:** Reducing poverty and inequalities
2. **ZERO HUNGER:** Ending hunger, achieving food security, and improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture
3. **GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING:** Ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages
4. **QUALITY EDUCATION:** Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all
5. **PEACE AND JUSTICE:** Promoting peace, justice, and strong institutions
6. **SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES:** Making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable
7. **AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY:** Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all
8. **DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH:** Promoting sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all
9. **INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, AND INFRASTRUCTURE:** Buildinginnovative and sustainablesocieties
10. **CLEANER WATER AND SANITATION:** Ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
11. **RESPECT FOR NATURE:** Protecting marine ecosystems, sustainable use of oceans, and promoveresponsibility for nature
12. **CLIMATE ACTION:** Taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
13. **SUSTAINABLE CIRCULAR ECONOMY:** Promoting sustainable production and consumption
14. **LIFE ON LAND:** Combating desertification, halting deforestation, and restoring degraded land and oceans
15. **LIFE UNDER WATER:** Conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas, and marine resources
16. **PEACE, JUSTICE, AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS:** Promoting peaceful and inclusive societies
17. **PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS:** Reviving the global partnership for sustainable development

UNIVERSALITY | INTEGRATION | TRANSFORMATION
---|---|---
- Goals and targets are relevant to all countries (e.g., poor, rich, and middle-income), all sectors and all stakeholders are challenged to act.
- Universality does not mean uniformity; instead, it implies differentiation based on what each country can implement or contribute.
- Interconnected in all its dimensions, in a system, and at all levels: between goals, between countries, between global, national, and local levels.
- Need to balance all dimensions of sustainable development: social, economic growth, and environmental protection, through integrated and coherent policies.
- Very big, fundamental changes are needed to enhance human prosperity, reduce inequalities, build inclusive and peaceful societies, while protecting the environment, for all (leaving no one behind).
- The scale of this challenge means that no one stakeholder can do it alone.


2. See the definition of “SDG goals, targets and indicators,” p. 73. More information about each SDG can be found on numerous websites, including The Sustainable Development Goals developed by the UN Development Programme, and The 17 Goals developed by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs.
How are the SDGs being implemented, financed, and monitored?

The SDGs are not legally binding under international law, they are only a compass for aligning countries’ plans with their global commitments and each government will decide how these aspirational and global targets will be incorporated in national planning processes, policies, and strategies. Goal 17 encompasses the means of implementation (the “how”), including how to mobilize the financial resources to achieve the 2030 Agenda. To achieve the SDGs, substantial investment will be required, in both developed and developing countries: it is estimated that this investment will amount in the trillions of dollars. But these resources already exist, they need to be reallocated to sustainable development, and mobilized from both the public and private sectors.

At the global level, the SDGs are monitored and reviewed using a set of global indicators, developed by the UN Inter Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators, under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council and the UN General Assembly who adopted these indicators. The follow-up and review processes are informed by an annual SDG Progress Report prepared by the Secretary-General, as well as several flagship reports at the regional level, for instance by the UN regional commissions, such as the UN Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. At the national level, numerous governments also developed their own national processes to assist in monitoring progress made on the Goals and targets.

More information:


Activity 7: SDG quiz, did you know…?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Answer quiz questions</td>
<td>Total time:</td>
<td>- Each participant</td>
<td>- A piece of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to review the basics</td>
<td>Approx. 30 min</td>
<td>individually</td>
<td>paper for each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>about the 2030 Agenda</td>
<td>- Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td>Debrief in the full</td>
<td>participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Activity (20 min)</td>
<td>group</td>
<td>pens</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Debriefing (8 min)</td>
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</table>

Activity learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Review the basic information about the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- [Skills] Develop basic analytical and research skills.
- [Attitude and values] Promote young people’s active participation in the implementation of the SDGs.

Preparation/ materials:

- Show the questions on a screen and invite the participants to answer them individually on their own piece of paper. Provide participants with a piece of paper and pens.
- Alternatively, print or write out the quiz questions and distribute them (1 quiz per participant). Provide participants with the handout (see below) and pens.

Activity instructions:

Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes

- Ask participants what they know about the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Explain that the activity entails to answer questions to a quiz to review the basics: what the SDGs are, what do they entail, and who is responsible for designing, implementing, and monitoring their implementation?

Activity: Up to 20 minutes

- Tell participants that they have about 20 minutes to answer the quiz questions (see Handout). Explain that this is not a test, just a fun way to review all the basic information about this topic.
Debriefing and evaluation: 8 minutes

• After about 20 minutes, review the answers to the quiz with the participants. Ask them to make a note of anything that is not clear or where they need further information from the trainer.
• Bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to answer all the questions in the quiz? If not, which ones were most difficult?
  - What is the most outstanding information you learned from this exercise?
  - Are young people in your community aware of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs?
  - How can you promote sustainable development in your everyday life?

Handout:

It is up to the trainer to determine the number of questions to share with the participants. It is suggested, but not compulsory, to use the order of questions proposed below. The trainer is encouraged to review the session content in Part 1. The correct answers to the questions are: 1. a), 2. c), 3. b), 4. d), 5. c), 6. d), 7. d), 8. b), 9. c), 10. a), 11. b), and 12. a).

SDG quiz, did you know…?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respond to as many questions as you can! There is only one correct answer per question.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How many Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been agreed to by the UN Member States in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) 16, plus a few statements about implementation that are not actually a Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Each SDG is supported by a set of Targets — specific objectives that are associated with that Goal. How many Targets are there in total?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) 99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) 1,016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) 169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) 51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. How the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are described in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

a) They are Goals to be applied in certain countries.
b) They are universal, applicable to all countries while respecting national contexts.
c) They imply a mandatory and international set of development models that all countries must follow.
d) Each country can choose which Goal or set of Goals they wish to implement.

4. Which of the following is not true about the SDGs?

a) They encourage the promotion of health, well-being, and education for all, at all ages.
b) They explicitly promote innovation.
c) They include the development of sustainable cities, infrastructure, and industry.
d) They are a legally binding international treaty that all nations are required to follow.

5. Which of the following is not part of the Sustainable Development Goals?

a) Access to sustainable energy for all
b) Availability of water and sanitation for all
c) Provision of internet services for all
d) Promotion of decent jobs for all

6. Goal 5 is focused on ending all discrimination against women and girls. It is not only a basic human right, it is crucial for sustainable future; it is proven that empowering women and girls helps economic growth and development. Which of the following statement is true?

a) Only 24 percent of national parliamentarians were women as of November 2018, a slight increase from 11.3 percent in 1995.
b) Two thirds of developing countries have achieved gender parity in primary education.
c) Almost 750 million women and girls alive today were married before their 18th birthday.
d) All of the above
7. Goal 16 is devoted to significantly reduce all forms of violence, and work with governments and communities to end conflict and insecurity. Promoting the rule of law and human rights are key to this process, as is reducing corruption and bribery in all their forms and ensuring representative decision-making at all levels. Which of the following is part of Goal 16?

a) The promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development
b) The provision of equal access to justice for all
c) The establishment of effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels
d) All of the above

8. Who are those “left behind” referred to in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

a) Hard-to-reach communities living in remote rural areas
b) All people without access to certain rights, goods, and services
c) Refugees, asylum seekers and people displaced within their own country
d) Persons with disabilities, such as visual, hearing, speech, physical, intellectual, and mental disabilities

9. Equality issues are specifically mentioned in how many of the Sustainable Development Goals (not including the targets)?

a) In two of them: Goal 6 on water, and Goal 12 on sustainable production and consumption
b) In four of them: Goal 2 on hunger, Goal 7 on energy, Goal 8 on economic growth and jobs, and Goal 14 on preserving the oceans and seas
c) In three of them: Goal 4 on education, Goal 5 on gender, and Goal 10 on reducing inequality within and among countries
d) In one of them: Goal 16 on promoting peaceful and just societies for all

10. Goal 17 is about strengthening the “means of implementation” and revitalizing the “Global Partnership” for realizing all the other Goals. Which of the following is not part of Goal 17?

a) Creating international sports tournaments and festivals to promote the Goals
b) Mobilizing the financial resources necessary to achieve the Goals
c) Helping developing countries build the capacities they need in areas such as technology, public policy, and data for reporting on progress
d) Enhancing trade, especially to help developing countries increase their exports and grow their economies

11. Who is responsible for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals?

a) The UN
b) Everyone has a role to play in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals
c) Only government officials and policymakers
d) Civil society actors and the media

12. Is there any review of the SDG situation in all UN Member States?

a) Yes, there is a periodic voluntary review made to all UN Member States about their situation in the field of sustainable development called the “Voluntary National Reviews”
b) Yes, the reviews are called “Universal Periodic Reviews”
c) Yes, but only in relation to the economic and social aspects of sustainable development, and only in certain UN Member States
d) No, there is no mechanism to conduct this kind of review

Variations:

- Give participants additional time to discuss in a small group (one group per table) the responses to the quiz. Do they agree on the answers? What do they know about the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in their city or country? Are they themselves working on the SDGs, or have they participated in activities related to the SDGs, what were they and how did they create a positive impact on their community?

- Alternatively, participants can also start with the quiz from the beginning and work in small groups to answer the questions one by one. The trainer may encourage participants to pick a group name (e.g., names of fruits) and keep scores. Each group can have a brief discussion and will need to build consensus on the correct answer.

- An online version of this activity can be organized with remote participants by showing the quiz questions and the multiple-choice answers online, using a software like Mentimeter, and getting the participants to answer them behind their screen.

- Provided participants have a mobile phone or access to a computer, there are numerous online quizzes related to the SDGs that can be used instead of the paper version. Such quizzes can be found by typing “SDG” and “quiz” in your Internet browser. Selected quizzes include: SDG Quiz Level 1 developed by 17Goals.org, UNAI Quiz: Sustainability developed by the UN Secretariat; and Quiz SDG Zone: Which SDG Are You? developed by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network.
Part 2: What is the role of young people to advance the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs?

Today, there are 1.2 billion young people aged 15 to 24 years, accounting for 16 per cent of the global population. In the Arab region, one out of every five persons is between 15-24 years old and more than half of the population is below the age of 25. Young people will not only directly experience the outcome of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and plans but are also already key drivers for their successful implementation, engaged in the frameworks and processes that support the implementation, follow-up, and review of the SDGs by 2030.

What are the SDGs relevant for youth participation?

One of the founding principles of the 2030 Agenda is the requirement for processes to be participatory and inclusive. In practice, this means ensuring that all stakeholders, including all levels and sectors of government, the wide range of civil society actors and the private sector, are involved in the SDG implementation and review processes. The effective and meaningful participation of all stakeholders promotes the ownership and sustainability of decisions, by giving individuals and groups of people affected by those decisions the opportunity to communicate their needs and interests.

Through the 2030 Agenda and the SDG goals, targets, and indicators, UN member states have made several commitments related to the meaningful and inclusive participation of all actors in society (see column A below), particularly those most at risk of discrimination and of being left behind. These commitments are captured primarily in three SDGs, namely Goals 5, 10, and 16, which all include SDG targets aimed at promoting civic space (see column B below) in the form of legal, regulatory, policy, and institutional frameworks, with a focus on enforcing and monitoring equality and non-discrimination.

Want to learn more about education for sustainable development?

- UN Institute for Training and Research and UN Staff College (n.d.). UN SDG:Learn. Turin, Italy. Available in English, some resources also in Arabic and French.
- Teach SDGs Organization (n.d.). The Teach for SDGs Project Resources. New York, United States. Available in English only.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. SDG TARGETS (PARTICIPATION, INCLUSION &amp; EQUALITY)</th>
<th>B. SDG TARGETS (ENABLING ENVIRONMENT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• SDG target 16.7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making at all levels.</td>
<td>• SDG target 16.b: Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies broadly for sustainable development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• SDG target 16.10: Ensure public access to information and the protection of fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.</td>
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</table>


After finishing Activity 7, the trainer is now encouraged to organize a brief energizer. Suggested duration: up to 10 minutes

The trainer may wish to explain that the participants will now focus on the role of young people in achieving the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, using the session content in Part 2. Suggested duration: 15 minutes
• SDG target 5.5: Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life.

• SDG target 5.1: End all forms of discrimination against all women, with SDG indicator 5.1.1: Whether or not legal frameworks are in place and girls everywhere to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex.

• SDG target 10.2: Empower and promote the social, economic, and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

• SDG target 10.3: Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome ...

• SDG target 4.5: Eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable ...

• SDG target 4.7: Ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, (...) human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, (...) cultural diversity ...

Several other SDG targets also refer to the inclusive participation of civil society and local communities in specific areas such as water and sanitation management (SDG target 6.2) and urban planning (SDG target 11.3), the protection of collective action in the form of labour rights (SDG target 8.8), the importance in specific areas such as water and sanitation management (SDG target 6.2) and urban planning (SDG target 11.3). Several other SDG targets also refer to the inclusive participation of civil society and local communities in specific areas such as water and sanitation management (SDG target 6.2) and urban planning (SDG target 11.3), the protection of collective action in the form of labour rights (SDG target 8.8), the importance in specific areas such as water and sanitation management (SDG target 6.2) and urban planning (SDG target 11.3).

What is Goal 16, and why is it important?

Facts and figures related to Goal 16

• Among the institutions most affected by corruption are the judiciary and police. Source: UNODC.

• Corruption, bribery, theft and tax evasion cost some US $1.26 trillion for developing countries per year, this amount of money could be used to lift those who are living on less than $1.25 a day above $1.25 for at least six years. Source: WEF.

• In 2019, the United Nations tracked 357 killings and 30 enforced disappearances of human rights defenders, journalists and trade unionists in 47 countries. Source: UN Secretary-General.

• The proportion of prisoners held in detention without sentencing has remained almost constant in the last decade, at 31 percent of all prisoners. Source: UNODC.

• The number of people fleeing war, persecution and conflict exceeded 70 million in 2018, the highest level recorded by the UN refugee agency in almost 70 years. Source: UNHCR.

• 50 percent of the world's children experience violence every year. Every 7 minutes, somewhere in the world, a child is killed by violence. Source: UNICEF.

• Youth voting rates in the Arab region were the lowest globally in 2016, remaining at 68.3 percent compared to 87.4 percent in middle income countries. Source: UNDP.

Conflict, insecurity, weak institutions, and limited access to justice remain a great threat to sustainable development. In the words of the UN Secretary-General António Guterres, “sustainable development also depends on upholding human rights and ensuring peace and security. Leaving no-one behind means reaching the furthest behind first: those facing armed conflict, governance failures and political repression and instability. Therefore, the framework includes a dedicated goal on inclusive societies, access to justice and accountable institutions. Sustainable development is an end in itself, but it is also the best way to prevent crisis and build a safer world.

Goal 16 includes several important commitments made by government, including to reduce violence everywhere, end violence and torture of children, to provide equal access to legal services, to reduce corruption and bribery, to provide public access to information and the protection of fundamental rights, and to promote inclusive and representative decision-making at all levels. Goal 16 – similarly to Goal 5 and Goal 10 – is closely interlinked with other SDGs and considered a critical enabler to achieving all other SDGs. Understanding the interlinkages between SDG targets is important to help understand the possible synergies between sectoral programmes and develop integrated and coherent policies. The interactions between several SDGs can lead to an impact greater or less than the sum of individual effects, referred to as synergies (positive) or trade-offs (negative). Without peace, justice, and inclusion, achieving goals such as ending poverty, ensuring education, promoting economic growth, promoting gender equality can be difficult or impossible. At the same time, various SDGs can help or hinder the achievement of SDG 16, for instance climate change can act as a threat with a multiplier effect, further aggravating political, social, and environmental stressors, and potentially lead to conflict, violence, and exclusion. Several tools such as the SDG Interlinkages Analysis & Visualization Tool exist to map and analyse interlinkages between different SDG targets, an example of visual showing the interlinkages between Goal 16 and other SDG targets is available below:
More information:


After providing an overview of the session content in Part 2, the trainer may consider using the interactive Activity 8 to help participants “experience” the session content. **Suggested duration:** 40 minutes

### Activity 8: What can YOU do to advance SDG 16?

**Activity aim/objectives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Explore Goal 16, and identify concrete actions in support of its implementation</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 40 min</td>
<td>Discussion in small groups of 6 (1table)</td>
<td>Handout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pens for each participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Activity (28 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Debriefing (10 min)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Activity learning outcomes:**

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- **[Knowledge]** Understand the main SDG targets related to Goal 16, reflect on the key challenges and opportunities related to their implementation, and understand the interlinkages with other SDGs.
- **[Skills]** Practice analytical skills using an adapted version of the SWOT methodology to understand the challenges and opportunities related to Goal 16.
- **[Attitude and values]** Identify concrete actions in support of SDG 16 relevant in the participant’s country context and promote the importance of youth participation to advance sustainable development.

**Activity instructions:**

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**

- Ask participants if they know about “Goal 16,” and the different SDG targets under this goal. The trainer may introduce the importance of Goal 16 by providing official UN statistics (see session content in Part 2), or by providing some illustrative examples from the trainer’s personal or professional experience.
- Explain that the activity will require participants to read the list of SDG 16 targets (see Handout), to brainstorm and identify in their respective groups the top issue that hinders building or sustaining a peaceful and inclusive society.
- Participants will then fill up a table composed of four boxes (related to the top priority area they identified as a group): A. Key challenges in your context, B. Key opportunities/solutions in your context, C. Examples of interlinkages with other SDGs, and D. Concrete actions to address the challenges and build upon the opportunities, keeping in mind the SDG interlinkages they identified.

**Activity: Up to 28 minutes**

- Tell participants they have up to 28 minutes to read the list of targets associated with SDG 16, identify a priority area (one SDG target), and fill up a table (see Handout). Participants are encouraged to spend about 3 minutes for the brainstorming and identification of their top issue, and about 25 minutes to fill up the table.
• Whether participants are from the same country or from different countries, the trainer may want to help the initial discussions so that participants can identify the top priority area more easily. Some guiding questions may include:
  º What is the most prevalent issue in your country that hinders building or sustaining a peaceful and inclusive society, from the perspective of their country or community context? What are the solutions to this issue?
  º What can YOU – from your individual level, operating from the grassroots level – do about it in practice to address this issue?
• If participants disagree about which SDG target to pick, they can organize a quick vote a show of hands.

**Debriefing and evaluation: 10 minutes**

• After 28 minutes, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  º How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  º Did you manage to fill every box in the table during the exercise? If you did not manage, which box(es), and why?
  º Did you identify interlinkages between SDG targets and other SDGs? Are you able to provide examples of synergies (positive) or trade-offs (negative) among SDGs?
  º Did you ever participate in activities related to Goal 16 as a student or a volunteer? If you are working in an organization, what are the activities related to Goal 16 implemented by your organization? What challenges and opportunities did you or your organization encounter?
  º What is the most surprising or interesting information you learned from this exercise?
  º How are the learnings from previous sessions (see the sessions on "Space for youth participation" and on "Capacities for youth participation"): relevant to the implementation of Goal 16? Can you think of any examples?

**Handout:**

What can YOU do to advance SDG 16?

**Step 1: Identify your top priority areas among the list of SDG targets (5 min)**

Read the list of SDG 16 targets, brainstorm in your small group, and identify your top priority area, the top issue area that hinders building or sustaining a peaceful and inclusive society, from the perspective of their country or community context.

**Goal 16.** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels

• **Target 16.1:** Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere
• **Target 16.2:** End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children
• **Target 16.3:** Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all
• **Target 16.4:** By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime

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9 UN Development Programme (n.d.). Webpage on Anti-corruption and SDGs. New York, United States. Available in English only.

### Cheat sheet for the trainer: Possible answers using SDG target 16.5 on corruption as an example

Using SDG target 16.5 “Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms” as an example, let us explore possible answers to the exercise:

**Key challenges:** Corruption undermines human development. For instance: 1) It diverts public resources away from the provision of essential services, and increases the costs of public services, their predictability, and their quality. 2) It increases inequality and hinders national and local economic development by distorting markets for goods and services, with enormous financial and economic costs. 3) It corrodes rule of law and destroys public trust in governments and leaders.

**Key opportunities/solutions:** There is no silver bullet for fighting corruption, but some solutions exist to help mitigate corruption risks in essential sectors. For instance: 1) Strengthening anti-corruption institutions and systems, by creating well-funded independent anti-corruption authorities, and by building multi-stakeholder partnerships between governments, civil society, and the private sector. 2) Promoting transparency, government openness, freedom of the press, transparency, and access to information, which increases the responsiveness of government bodies, while simultaneously having a positive effect on the levels of public participation in a country. 4) Advocating for and supporting the implementation of the UN Convention Against Corruption, the first legally binding instrument against corruption (82 State Parties) and building public awareness through education programmes and media campaigns.

**Interlinkages:** Corruption has a direct impact on the three dimensions of sustainable development – social, economic, and environmental. For instance: 1) Goal 4: Education budgets are affected by corrupt public procurement practices and false maintenance costs of school infrastructures. 2) Goal 10/ Goal 5: Corruption perpetuates discrimination and inequality, with a disproportionate impact on marginalized and vulnerable groups. Gender roles and stereotypes can disproportionately affect women resulting in them paying more bribes to obtain equal access to public services. 3) Goal 13: Corruption negatively impacts environmental governance and reduces the consistent implementation of environmental regulations. 4) Goal 16: Corruption is a serious threat to peace and stability, particularly in post-conflict environments. It weakens trust in government legitimacy, the rule of law and access to justice. By favouring some groups or interests, it fuels grievance and violence.

**Concrete actions:** Call out corruption attempts and do not give bribes. Make a conscious decision not to support this behaviour even though it might seem easier to give a bribe than study or work for a particular thing. In case your family members, friends or colleagues try to give/ take a bribe, stand up for what you believe in and call them out. See: Transparency International (2017), 15 Ways Young People Can Fight Corruption. Berlin, Germany. Available in English only. Other examples of concrete actions related to Goal 16:

• Target 16.5: Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms
• Target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels
• Target 16.7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making at all levels
• Target 16.8: Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance
• Target 16.9: By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration
• Target 16.10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements
• Target 16.a: Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime
• Target 16.b: Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development

Variations:
• Time permitting, the trainer may consider going around each group for them to briefly present the concrete actions (Box D. in the Handout) they identified. Are the actions they identified realistic and feasible in the participants’ country or community contexts? Would participants be ready and willing to carry out these actions after the training? What resources – human, financial, and material – they would need to make their actions a reality?
• An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online “breakout rooms,” and encourage them to work collaboratively to identify the top priority area and to fill out the table online, using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

Step 2: Fill out the table below (25 min)

Fill out the table based on the top priority area you identified in Step 1 and try to find up to 3 answers for each box: A. Key challenges in your context, B. Key opportunities/solutions in your context, C. Examples of interlinkages with other SDGs (see the list of SDGs below), and D. Concrete actions to address the challenges and build upon the opportunities, keeping in mind the SDG interlinkages you identified.

YOUR TOP PRIORITY AREA:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. KEY CHALLENGES</th>
<th>B. KEY OPPORTUNITIES/SOLUTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Challenge:</td>
<td>Opportunity:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge:</td>
<td>Opportunity:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge:</td>
<td>Opportunity:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C. INTERLINKAGES WITH OTHER SDGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interlinkage:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interlinkage:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D. CONCRETE ACTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wrap-up and final questions, the trainer may consider using some of the questions in “Extending the session.”

Suggested duration: 5 minutes

Extending the session

Invite participants to research about their country’s work to realize the 2030 Agenda. Encourage them to check their country’s profile on the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform managed by the UN Department for Social and Economic Affairs; do they have a national policy or plan to advance sustainable development? Did they publish national progress reports on the implementation of the SDGs? Are there coalitions of young people working on the SDG implementation in their country? Invite participants to become a champion/ambassador of the SDGs in their community, to engage their peers, family and colleagues and teach them about sustainable development and the SDGs, and to take measurable actions towards the SDGs.

REFLECTING ON MODULE 1

Suggested duration for the reflection: 20-30 minutes

Reflection activity: Learning cycle tool

The trainer is encouraged to organize a brief reflection time at the end of thematic Modules 1, 2 and 3, or at the end of each day of training. Reflection can be a very empowering process and can be structured in different ways. The trainer may organize the reflection time as an open discussion, or organize participants in small groups, before encouraging them to share some insights back with the whole group. The trainer may encourage participants to use the Handout provided (see below), or – given the extensive number of questions – to use only selected questions from the Handout, or simply to write down key words about high and low points of the day and areas for improvement. Participants can save the content in the form of a self-
reflection diary or journal, and be encouraged to review it the next day, and again at the end of the training during the session on "Feedback and Evaluation."10

Reflection learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

• [Knowledge] Reflect and review the consolidated or acquired new knowledge during the module/ day of training and identify potential training-related subjects to research/ learn more about.
• [Skills] Develop awareness and critical analysis skills through their ability to pause, pay attention to thoughts and feelings, self-question, challenge assumptions, and put their learning into perspective.
• [Attitude and values] Make sense of their learning and set a personal challenge for the remainder of the training and for their personal and professional lives.

Trainer tips:

• The trainer may also consider providing participants with an anonymous “post-box” or whiteboard where participants can write down some feedback for the trainer. The trainer is strongly encouraged to use this feedback meaningfully for the next day and the remainder of the training, and potentially even announce how the suggestions were incorporated, for instance during the morning re-cap time at the beginning of each training day.
• While the participants are reflecting, it may also be a good opportunity for the trainer to reflect on his/ her own achievements during the day. In some contexts, it may even be useful to share some feedback/ reflections with the group of participants. In many cases, a candid self-assessment will build trust between the trainer and participants and is a very good way to lead by example. Some guiding questions for the trainer’s self-assessment include:
  - How did I (the trainer) help or hinder participants today? What can I do to help participants even more?
  - What was I most proud of today, at what point did I feel the most successful?
  - What were my biggest obstacles (or areas for improvement), and how can I overcome them for the next module/ next training day?
  - Were my participants excited to be in class? Do specific efforts need to be placed on specific participants?
  - What do I want my participants to say about me at the end of the day?
  - How well did I communicate to my participants? Did I draw participants out and encourage participation?

Handout:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflection: Learning cycle tool</th>
<th></th>
<th>Handout:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflection: Learning cycle tool</td>
<td>Read the following questions carefully and reflect on what you learned today!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Feelings</td>
<td>2. Observations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total time: Approx. 5-7 min</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 5-7 min</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How do you feel now with the experience of today, without judgement about those feelings? Please write down at least 3 emotions.</td>
<td>• How was your participation today?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Did your emotional states change during the day? For instance, did you feel more energized in the morning, in the afternoon?</td>
<td>• Do you notice you were rather active, observing, speaking out, or participating in silence?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Did those emotions made you aware, notice, discover new things about yourself, others and training-related subjects?</td>
<td>• What did you observe on other participants’ actions? Are there actions that you plan on replicating?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do you feel like you are in progress of learning?</td>
<td>• Did those observations made you aware, notice, discover new things about yourself, others and training-related subjects?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Consolidated or acquired knowledge</td>
<td>4. Any decisions or actions for the future?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total time: Approx. 5-8 min</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 5-8 min</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Have you consolidated or gained new knowledge today? Please write down at least 3 examples of things you learned.</td>
<td>• What did you do during the sessions and during the breaks?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do you feel like getting more knowledge on any training-related subjects after today? For instance, are you planning to attend an online course?</td>
<td>• If you haven’t already, are you planning to get to know new participants, maybe have lunch with them?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Did you learn about any practical side of the knowledge?</td>
<td>• What will you do differently tomorrow and why? How exactly will I do it and how will that give you the outcome you want?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How can this knowledge help you be your personal best and become a changemaker among your peers, family, colleagues, and the community?</td>
<td>• Do you think that you are taking steps in your overall learning progress?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Have you made concrete plans for decisions or actions in the future about tomorrow? The rest of the training programme? After the training programme?</td>
<td>• Add any other reflections you may have:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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10. See the session on “Feedback and evaluation,” p. 269.
Variations:

• An online version of this reflection activity (and the other reflection activities listed at the end of Modules 2 and 3) is possible using polling tools, such as Mentimeter, to collect anonymous feedback system online.

More information:


MODULE 2: YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The second module will help participants develop their political awareness (political literacy) and understand the key trends, challenges and opportunities related to young people’s participation in both informal and formal political and decision-making structures, institutions, and processes, at local and national levels. Young people can participate in political life through policymaking, voting, election campaigning and management and running for elected office as well as informal political and decision-making processes such as participating in youth parliaments, signing petitions, and other forms of political action. Through interactive activities, participants will practice reasoning and complex problem-solving and be able to analyse, explain, evaluate, and defend the importance of the effective and meaningful youth political participation in different contexts.

Terms and concepts

(Youth) political participation
The wide range of actions by people, undertaken either alone or in community with others, with the intent or effect to influence political and decision-making processes, and/or their fellow members of society, by affecting the making or implementation of public policy or by influencing the selection of individuals who make that policy.

Political literacy
See the definition of “Political and civic literacy” in Module 1 above.

Political and decision-making processes
The process through which individual and collective actors undertake voluntary action in the civil society arena – as opposed to the spheres of the family, the state, and the market – with the aim of achieving socially-relevant goals. Youth civic engagement refers to the effective and meaningful participation of young people in the civic and political life of their community and of society at large.

SESSION 5: BASICS OF POLITICAL SYSTEMS

Description

The aim of this session is to provide participants with the foundational knowledge needed for Module 2 on youth political participation. This session will focus on the basic understanding of key concepts and theories related to political systems, including the main forms, levels, functions, and divisions of political systems. Participants will work in teams to review the basics through a series of fun games, and the trainer will conduct a discussion with guided questions to deconstruct some of the sociocultural norms, beliefs, misconceptions, and stereotypes about youth political participation.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Understand the basics of what a political system is – its main forms, levels, functions, and divisions – and how it functions, and the different types of political change.
- [Skills] Develop basic analytical and consensus-building skills.
- [Attitudes and values] Promote the importance for young people to learn about different political systems, and the important role of young people in politics.

After briefly introducing the main topic of the session, the trainer may consider explaining the learning outcomes above, and some of the key terms and concepts, based on the needs/level of the group. The trainer may also provide an overview of the sessions covered in this module.

Suggested duration: 10 minutes

Session content: The basics of political systems

Terms and concepts

Political system
A set of formal legal institutions that constitute a government or state, and the reality of how it functions, meaning the set of processes and interactions among actors within this system, as well as with other systems such as the social or economic systems.

Core government functions
The key functions of a government that enables a political system to make and implement policy, and to provide guidance on their execution. Core government functions can be divided into: (i) executive decision-making and coordination at the centre of government; (ii) public revenue and expenditure management; (iii) government employment and public administration; (iv) the security sector; (v) local governance; and (vi) aid management.

Inclusive political processes
Effective, transparent, and accountable political institutions and processes that listen and respond to citizens’ voices, lead to more constructive state-society relations, with potentially better prospects to build peaceful and inclusive societies.

Political change
The change of structures, institutions, processes as well as behaviours, and values systems within the political structures of society. Change can be either a gradual or disruptive shift in the status quo, intentional or random, human-caused, or natural.

1. See the definition of “Citizen,” p. 162.
2. See the definition of “Peaceful and inclusive society,” p. 73.
Part 1: The main forms, levels, functions, and divisions of government

Want to learn more about political systems and political change?

This session introduces the basics of political systems and political change. This is a vast topic that is difficult to summarize in a 90-minute session. The trainer is encouraged to review and research additional resources. Flagship resources on this topic include:


A political system can be defined by the set of formal legal institutions that constitute a government or state. Yet, political systems cannot be classified in terms of their legal structures alone: two states may have similar founding documents with similar institutional and legal frameworks and may not fit clearly in the same category of political system. It is not always clear how the state functions, meaning the set of processes and interactions among actors within this system, as well as with other systems such as the social or economic systems, that defines the type of political system. In line with public international law, the most common type of political system is the nation-state, in which a national government claims to exercise sovereignty and govern usually through the rule of the majority. Citizens can choose between different ways of participating in public life.

To better understand the different forms, levels, functions, and divisions of government, and the ways the social contract works in practice, there are several questions to consider.

What are the main forms of government?

Governments can be classified in many ways, based on many typologies and models. A common distinction is based on the number of rulers: government by one person (monarchy or tyranny); government by the few (aristocracy or oligarchy or any other form of government in which power rests with a small number of people, distinguished by wealth, education, religious, or other forms of status); and government by the many (democracy). While it is understood that there is no single model for the ideal political system, democracy is a core value supported across the UN system by promoting sustainable development, human rights, peace, and security. A free and open democracy means that the people themselves gain power and govern usually through the rule of the majority. Citizens can choose between different ways of participating and some may even decide not to participate at all. Some countries are democracies in name only and people are not allowed to participate in practice.

Another common way to distinguish among political systems is to emphasize the mode of succession and the role played by force in the acquisition and transfer of power:

- **Hereditary succession**, in which power is passed from one member of a ruling family to another member of the same family. This is the case of monarchies, which can be led by ceremonial heads of state, e.g., in a parliamentary democracy, or they may be heads of government, perhaps even functioning as absolute rulers.
- **Succession by law**, which can take place either by election or by constitutional prescription, such as in the case of the 25th amendment of the U.S. constitution, which establishes procedures for responding to presidential disabilities and filling a vacancy in the office of the vice president. It is important to emphasize that neither modes of succession necessarily prevent any conflict or violence. The **constitutional government** is characterized by the existence of a constitution that effectively controls and allows sharing the exercise of political power, with the development of social forces that generate a variety of interests, and the existence of reciprocal controls among power holders (“checks and balances”) and of effective sanctions of law.
- **Succession by force**, which can be the result of an extreme crisis and/or violence, in some cases leading to the overthrow of the government (e.g., in the case of a coup d’état) in combination with an overthrow of the political order itself (e.g., in the case of a revolution). There are many other forms of violent political events, including civil war, secession, guerrilla warfare, resistance movements, and terrorism, to name just a few.

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4. See the session on “Youth, elections and political parties,” p. 135.
• Autocracies, characterized by the concentration of power in a single centre, be it an individual leader or a group of power holders such as a military junta, a committee, or a party leadership, are sometimes the result of succession by force.

What are the main levels of government?5

A common distinction among political systems is between national, subnational, and supranational6 levels. In national political systems, a common distinction exists between unitary nations and federal states.

• On one hand, most of the world’s countries are unitary systems, with varying degrees in how central institutions and processes interact with their territorial subunits, and irrespective of the form of government. This territorial decentralization of authority can range from a system with central supervision of locally elected governments to almost autonomous territorial subdivisions. Illustrative examples: France is an example of a unitary republic, while the United Kingdom is an example of a unitary monarchy.

• On the other hand, in federal systems, political authority is divided between two sets of governments, one national (often referred to as the central or federal government) and the other subnational (often referred to as the provincial, regional, or state government), both of which exercise independent authority of the whole country or within their own territories, respectively. A federal system often requires two separate executive, legislative and judicial systems. Commonly, the national government is responsible for issuing currency, and managing foreign relations, war, and foreign trade. Illustrative examples: Germany is an example of a federal republic, while Malaysia is an example of a federal monarchy.

At the subnational level, cities and local governments are often considered the government units better placed to understand and improve people’s quality of life by developing and implementing local policies adapted to their priorities and needs. In both urban and rural settings, local governance is the mechanism closest to the people for providing basic services such as police and fire departments, housing services, emergency medical services, municipal courts, transportation services, and public works. Local governance is also the channel closest to the people for participating in public processes where decisions affecting their lives are made, and for exercising their rights and obligations as citizens. There are numerous examples of local government units, whose executive, administrative, legislative, and fiscal authority extend over geographical areas of different sizes and varies greatly among countries. Some of the most common ones include municipalities, cities, districts, towns, and villages.

What are the main functions of government?7

In nearly all political systems, certain functions are recognized as primarily “public,” or belonging to the government, although some aspects of these services may be handled by the private sector. The main functions of government can be summarized below, in no order of priority, including:

• Provide security to all citizens, by preventing violence and crime within the country through police and other law enforcement authorities, by providing relief in case of emergencies such as natural catastrophes, and by protecting citizens from foreign attacks through foreign relations and national defense.

• Protect rights and keep the order through law. In constitutional governments, law is elaborated in complex codes governing rights and duties and procedural methods, and court systems are employed that adjudicate disputes in terms of the law.

• Provide public goods and services such as public education, public health systems, public transportation, and services necessary for the common good e.g., postal services and traffic control.

• Regulate of the economy, with interventions such as economic planning, economic regulations in the forms of taxes, tariffs, and subventions (e.g., in the fields of industry, agriculture), labour-management relations, managing natural resources, and promoting various economic activities.

What are the main divisions of government (sometimes called the “Three Powers”)?

A government is often divided in three main branches each with a distinct role, yet in some countries these roles may sometimes be overlapping or conflicting:

• The main function of legislatures – e.g., parliaments, assemblies, and congresses – is the making of the law. Legislatures may also be tasked with other roles such as supervising the administration, accepting, or refusing executive nominations, appropriating funds, ratifying treaties, and organizing public hearings on petitions. There are two main kinds of systems: on one hand, bicameral systems, with two separate houses of parliament, are more common in many countries with a federal system of government, such as the United States, Germany, and India; unicameral legislatures, on the other hand, are typical in small countries such as New Zealand and Denmark. It is important to note that legislatures do not monopolize the law-making function.

• The executive is the branch of government that participates in the determination and direction of government policy. In the federal system, subnational levels of government also have executive powers. Examples of executive actors include heads of state and government leaders such as presidents, prime ministers, and chancellors, as well as ministers, Council of Ministers or cabinet members, councilors, and heads of agencies and other governmental bodies. In many countries, the executive branch has a power of veto over legislation, and sometimes the power of creating legislation (e.g., executive orders).

• The judiciary, composed primarily of courts and judges at different levels, are responsible for interpreting and promulgating the rules of behaviour in society. In many countries, the judicial branch can also share the law-making function, courts (like legislatures and administrative agencies) can promulgate laws and

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5. See the session on “Introduction to key concepts and theories” under “Where to participate?,” p. 27.

6. There are also supranational political systems, separate from national entities or states, that share common goals, needs, and threats and engage in the multilateral spheres based on different modalities – but this is not a focus of this curriculum. Examples include empires (e.g., Egypt, China, and imperial Rome), leagues (e.g., the predecessor of the UN, the League of Nations), federations and confederations which are voluntary groupings of states, often on a regional basis, that establish some joint mechanisms for consultation or deliberation. These alliances do not override national sovereignty and can have a range of objectives such as military (e.g., North Atlantic Treaty Organization), or political and economic (e.g., the European Union is a supranational organization with confederal and federal aspects).

7. The UN Development refers to the main roles of government as “core government functions,” which include executive decision-making and coordination, public revenue and expenditure management, government employment and public administration, the security sector, local governance, and aid management.
judges can interpret and apply laws. Most political systems have national supreme councils/courts that hear appeals and exercise original jurisdiction in cases of the highest importance, such as those involving conflicts between a state and a national government.

The implementation of government policies is supported by the government employment and systems of **public administration**. Depending on the country, there are differences in national civil services, for instance the way in which individuals are recruited, financed, and in the status accorded to them in the political system. It is important to remember that there are public officials in all three branches of government, not only in the executive branch.

In most constitutional governments, **checks and balances** and the separation of powers are essential principles of government under which separate government branches have a reciprocal control over the actions by other branches in a system that promotes collaboration and power-sharing. This is illustrated in the graph below (which reflects on the political system commonly available in constitutional governments, and does not refer to any particular country):

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### More information:

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### Activity 9: The “political” Olympics

#### Activity aim/objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 30 min</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Do a series of fun exercises to review the basics of political systems, and compare the findings</td>
<td>- Each participant individually</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td>- Discussions in small groups (1 group per table)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Activity (23 min)</td>
<td>- Debriefing (5 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Debriefing (5 min)</td>
<td>- Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Pens for each participant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Activity learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Review the basics of what a political system is – its main levels, forms, divisions, and functions – and how it functions, the role of public administration, using fun exercises.
- [Skills] Develop basic analytical skills, consensus-building, and teamwork.
- [Attitude and values] Promote the importance of basic political literacy and display a commitment to sharing this knowledge with peers, family, colleagues, and the community.

#### Preparation/materials:

- Ensure all participants have the printed handouts and pens at their table.
Activity instructions:

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**
- Check who among participants can name diverse types of political systems, and name some of the key functions of a government.
- Tell participants that they have 23 minutes to complete all the games in the "political" Olympics.

**Activity: Up to 23 minutes**
- In small groups (1 group per table), participants will need to work efficiently in their group and build consensus fast on the correct answers to be able to complete all of them in the given timeframe!

**Debriefing and evaluation: 5 minutes**
- After 23 minutes, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to complete every game of the "political" Olympics? If you did not manage, why?
  - How easy was it to find answers for each game? Which ones were least obvious?
  - Can you reflect about the political system in your own country? Which elements from the games relate to your context? Which elements are missing from your context?
  - What is the most interesting/ surprising information you learned today from your group discussions?

Cheat sheet for the trainer: Basics of political systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main forms of government</th>
<th>Main levels</th>
<th>Main divisions</th>
<th>Main functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monarchy</td>
<td>National government (e.g., unitary systems and federal systems)</td>
<td>The legislature</td>
<td>Provide security to all citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autocracy</td>
<td>Subnational (e.g., regional and state government, city, and local government)</td>
<td>The executive</td>
<td>Protect rights and keep the order through law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oligarchy</td>
<td>Supranational (e.g., empires, leagues, federations, and confederations)</td>
<td>The judiciary</td>
<td>Provide public goods and services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constitutional government</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Regulate the economy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Handout:
- The answers to the missing words questions are a) citizens to choose who should govern their country, by holding free and fair elections, b) the rights of both parties, c) constitution, d) government, e) local.
- The answers to the mystery boxes are available in the session content above.

**Down**
1. Sometimes called “supreme court,” it is the highest level of judicial power in a country.
2. An official chosen or elected to preside over a country as head of state.
3. The branch of government that ensures that all laws are enforced and obeyed.
4. The upper house of the legislature of certain countries, e.g., United States, France, Republic of South Africa.
5. The document of fundamental principles and laws of almost all countries in the world.
6. The branch of government that has the power to make and pass laws, in some political systems only with a consultative role.
7. A legislative body with two chambers; the opposite of unicameral.
Across

8. The branch of government that interprets the meaning of laws and decide if they violate the constitution or other founding document of a country.

9. The lower legislative branch in many national and state bicameral governing bodies, e.g., United States, Mexico, Japan.

10. Sometimes called the “Council of Ministers,” its role is to advise the executive branch on issues such as the economy, education, and foreign relations.

Game 2: Missing words – The levels and roles of government

*Choose the missing words from the proposed list provided below.*

a. A democracy is a system of government allowing __________________.
   Choose between a king or queen to rule the country; children to become leaders when their parents die; political parties to share their power with the government; citizens to choose who should govern their country, by holding free and fair elections.

b. The social contract is an agreement between a government and its people, detailing __________________.
   Choose between the rights of both parties; who can own property; who can vote; that neighbors must respect one another.

c. In most countries in the world, the _____________ sets out the rules on how a country is governed.
   Choose between dictionary; constitution; government; Supreme Council/ court.

d. A ___________, is a group of people with the authority to run a country or state, and manage essential functions such as national defense, law and order, and the provision of certain public goods.
   Choose between parliament; government; political party; House of Representatives.

e. The ________________ level of government can design and implement policies most adapted to the needs and priorities of the community.
   Choose between federal; state; local; international.

Game 3: Mystery boxes – Checks and balances

*Fill out the mystery boxes using the statements below.*

1. Can dissolve the legislature, can convene sessions, is collectively responsible
2. Can designate the prime minister, can submit a no confidence motion
3. Can impeach judges
4. Can rule on constitutionality of exacted laws
5. Can rule on constitutionality of executive orders and administrative litigation
6. Can appoint/ nominate judges, including judges of Supreme Councils
7. Can elect members of parliament
8. Can elect judges
9. Can elect and/ or exert public pressure
Part 2: Political change and young people

What are the main types of political change?

Political change can be defined as the change of structures, institutions, processes as well as behaviours and values systems within the political structures of society. It is characterized by changes through collective behaviour and social movements but is also possible through the actions of individuals. It is important to note that the nature of a political system may be transformed suddenly or violently (e.g., during a revolution) but also often by the gradual influence of ideas and by the accumulating impact of different political actions. Shifts in the status quo can be intentional or random, human-caused or natural; and can be affected by many factors such as political philosophies, population increases, environmental stressors, industrial and technological innovations, and many other social and economic shifts.

In constitutional governments, there are common types of political change in which citizens and young people may be able to participate, including:

- **Structural revision** or changes to the structure of the political system, its formal and informal institutional arrangements, based on the recognition that the policies of a government may be changed by adjusting the institutional forms through which the government acts. In many political systems, this type of change can be accomplished by legal means, through revisions/amendments to the constitutions and other founding documents, and through law-making.

- **Change of leaders**, based on the recognition that changing the human capacity of a government may be an effective way of changing government policy. In constitutional governments, the existence of means of changing political leaderships through elections has proved an effective way to replace one set of political leaders by another. But no political system is immune to election contests and other political disruptions, or even more extreme or violent types of political action e.g., political kidnapping, assassination, and coup d’état.

- **Change of policies** can also contribute to modifications to the functioning of the political system and are often a response to widespread demands and frustrations that, if not satisfied by the system, may intensify and lead to violent and extreme types of political action. It is important to highlight that political change can also occur in gradual or subtle shifts in the function and relative power of different institutions – one policy at a time – which, over time, produce entirely new structures and vastly different patterns of institutional behaviour.

What are the main causes for political change?

To better understand the main causes of political change, a useful distinction is between stable and unstable political systems.

- **A stable political system** is one that survives through crises without conflict or internal warfare, in a continuous process of adjustment and mutation. By this definition, all types of political systems, not only in constitutional democracies, can be considered stable. According to political science, enabling conditions for peaceful political change, especially during transitions of power, require the existence of an effective and meaningful social contract. Enabling conditions include for instance: well-established political institutions that permit peaceful political change, the existence of basic agreement on the legitimacy of state authority, representative institutions that reflect social and economic developments in the society, and the presence of widely shared attitudes and values among the population and trust toward the government.

- **Unstable political systems** struggle in crisis situations – such as conflict, economic crisis or natural disasters and any other circumstances that test the stability of political systems – because they place extraordinary demands on the political leadership, the institutions, and processes of the political system.

More information:


Activity 10: Busting myths about youth political participation and political change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 25 min</td>
<td>Discussion and debrief in the full group</td>
<td>There are no preparation/materials necessary for this activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bust myths about youth political participation</td>
<td>• Instructions (1 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Activity (20 min)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Debriefing (4 min)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. See the definition of “Political change,” p. 97
9. See the definition of “Changemaker,” p. 24
10. See the session on “Youth, elections, and political parties,” p. 135.
11. See the session on “Youth participation in conflict settings,” p. 212.
Activity learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Deconstruct some of the sociocultural norms, beliefs, misconceptions, and stereotypes about young people, their political participation and how they can effect political change.
- [Skills] Develop basic analytical skills and build consensus.
- [Attitude and values] Promote young people's effective and meaningful participation in political life.

Preparation/ materials:

- There are no preparation/ materials necessary for this activity.

Activity instructions:

**Explanation and set-up: 1 minutes**

- Ask participants what they know about concepts such as "political change," the types of political change, and the main causes stability and instability in a political system?
- Tell participants that the whole group will be having a discussion to deconstruct some of the sociocultural norms, beliefs, misconceptions, and stereotypes about young people, their political participation and how they can effect political change.
- The trainer can choose to have small groups brainstorm their answers or lead a discussion with the whole group.

**Activity: Up to 20 minutes**

- The trainer can choose to have an open discussion, or facilitate the discussion using some of the statements below:
  - Young people are apathetic, disaffected, and disengaged towards politics.
  - Young women are not interested in politics, there are not enough women in the leadership pipeline.
  - Young people are too immature to be included in decision-making and political processes.
  - Young women are weak leaders, risk-averse, lack confidence, and lack ambition.
  - Young people only engage in politics to socialize with their peers, not based on strong beliefs or knowledge of "how things work."
  - Female politicians come into office only to pursue women's issues.
  - Young people lack the skills and experience to engage in political activity and lead positive change in their community.
  - Positive discrimination and quotas for women distort the level playing field.
  - Political change takes place from the top-down, individuals do not have an impact.
  - Young people have a propensity for violence and extremism, and primarily create change through conflict.
  - Other statements that may be relevant to the participants' local contexts.

- Participants can be invited to share about the common norms, beliefs, misconceptions, and stereotypes in their context, and to illustrate with concrete examples from their personal or professional experience. What are the main commonalities and differences between different participants/ communities/ countries?

**Debriefing and evaluation: 4 minutes**

- After 20 minutes, consider conducting a debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the discussion? Was it useful?
  - What does it mean to you to be a "changemaker" in the context of youth political participation? Can you think of ways to encourage your peers, family, colleagues, and members of the community to be changemakers?
  - Can you think of concrete examples of young people having a positive impact through political action in your community or country?
  - What is the most outstanding information you learned today from the group discussion?

**Handout:** There is no handout necessary for this activity.

**Variations:**

- For this activity, the trainer may choose to use the World café methodology, which consists in assigning a host to each table and giving each table a different topic to discuss. Participants will be switching tables periodically and getting introduced to the previous discussion at their new table by the host. Examples of topics around youth political participation: Table 1: What skills are needed to participate in politics? Table 2: Are young people really interested in politics? Table 3: Can young people really create political change or impact political processes?
- An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online "breakout rooms" organized by city or country and encourage them to discuss and write down their main points, using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

**More information:**


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Wrap-up and final questions, the trainer may consider using some of the questions in “Extending the session.”

**Suggested duration:** 5 minutes

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**Extending the session**

Encourage participants to review the basics of political science using free online course by universities such as Harvard University’s [Harvard Online Learning](https://www.harvard.edu), Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s [MIT Open Courseware](https://ocw.mit.edu), and on reputable websites such as [Coursera](https://www.coursera.org) and [edX](https://www.edx.org). Invite participants to research about their country’s political system. Encourage them to check their country’s governmental websites and to follow the social media accounts of some of their political institutions and leaders. Encourage participants to research the role of the three branches of government, do they know which institutions are responsible for the issues affecting them in their everyday life? Highlight that there are only benefits in being better informed.

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**SESSION 6: YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN POLICYMAKING**

**Suggested total duration for the module:** 90 x 2, plus 15-minute break = 195 minutes.

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**Description**

Policymaking can be understood as a process for identifying issues in society, making decisions on the appropriate solutions, and taking steps to implement and review them. This session will explore the numerous ways in which young people can contribute to and influence societal decision-making: what are the various stages of the policymaking cycle, how can actors influence it, and what are the formal and informal processes and structures that enable youth participation in policymaking? Participants will be invited to answer these questions by researching local newspapers for concrete examples of the different steps of the policymaking cycle, discussing the practical rules and procedures that would create their “ideal” national youth council, and by conducting a simulation to better understand policymaking in practice.

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**Learning outcomes**

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- **[Knowledge]** Understand the main processes by which public policy concerning a local or national issue is formed and implemented and identify the main avenues for young people to influence policy development.
- **[Skills]** Practice relevant skills that can enable young people to impact local and national policymaking processes, such as leadership, strategic thinking, negotiation, persuasion and influence, and networking.
- **[Attitudes and values]** Exhibit leadership and promote among peers, family, colleagues, and members of the community the importance of young people becoming knowledgeable about public affairs and policymaking and playing a positive role in policymaking processes.

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After briefly introducing the main topic of the session, the trainer may consider explaining the learning outcomes above, and some of the key terms and concepts, based on the needs/level of the group.

**Suggested duration:** 5 minutes
Session content: Youth participation in policymaking processes

Terms and concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policymaking cycle</th>
<th>Often referred to as the “policymaking process,” a series of steps taken to develop, approve, implement, monitor, and evaluate a policy, course of action or set of regulations adopted by a government or an institution.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public dialogue</td>
<td>Sometimes referred to as “civic dialogue” or “social dialogue,” the specific dialogue between civil society, public authorities, and other relevant stakeholders on issues of public concern that impact the lives of individuals and society as a whole.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobbying</td>
<td>Involves direct, face-to-face contact and activities carried out by a range of individuals and organized groups, including individuals in the private sector, corporations, legislators or government officials, political parties, and advocacy groups (sometimes referred to as “interest groups”), in order to influence policies and further a specific agenda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision-maker</td>
<td>For the purpose of this curriculum, a person who has the authority to create or change governmental or organizational policies, programmes or laws.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influencers</td>
<td>Individuals and groups that can influence the decision-makers (or other target audience) by having the opportunity to give their inputs, ideas, and opinions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After introducing the topic, the trainer may consider focusing on the session content in Part 1.

Suggested duration: 10 minutes

Part 1: What is the policymaking cycle and how can it be influenced?

What are the key steps of the policymaking cycle?

The policymaking cycle, or process, can be defined as the series of steps taken to develop, approve, implement, monitor and evaluate a policy, course of action or set of regulations adopted by a government or an institution. In can be divided in multiple ways, in this curriculum, we will be looking at the five following main steps:

- **Step 1: Issue identification and agenda building** For issues to enter the policymaking cycle, they must first make it onto policy agendas or, in other words be identified as salient issues and become the focus of concerted political attention. Many problems exist in every society and not all make it onto the political agendas, even the ones that were previously identified as a priority by political leaders during electoral campaigns. Policy agendas can change quickly and be easily replaced by other issues because of public outcry, crises, and the lobbying efforts of important interest groups.

- **Step 2: Policy formulation** involves policymakers discussing and suggesting different courses of action and proposing solutions to address agenda issues. A specific policy is usually chosen based on two main factors: on one hand, the policy must be sound and efficient, based on in-depth analysis and identification of alternatives to solving issues. On the other hand, the policy must be politically feasible which, in most political systems, means it is agreed upon through bargaining and majority building among political forces, especially in legislatures and political parties (sometimes referred to as “political authorization”).

- **Step 3: Policy adoption** involves policymakers getting the agreed policy adopted by relevant government institutions for future implementation. Depending on the political system, this process is initiated, led, or validated by different branches of the government. In some countries, the president has the ability of initiating new national policies, and legislatures play a minimal role in policy adoption or sometimes have some level of influence over policy adoption, as it must approve the president’s actions. In federal systems, policymakers at the subnational and local levels such as mayors, can also adopt policies to bring about change at their level.

- **Step 4: Policy implementation** is the step in which adopted policies are put into effect. The successful implementation of a policy can be based on numerous criteria. Firstly, the way the policies are communicated from the initiator (e.g., the President, an administrative agency, a local official) to the relevant structures within the bureaucracy that have the power to enact it. When no existing agency has the capabilities to carry out a given policy, new agencies must be established, staffed, and financed. Secondly, the means of implementation of policies need to be formulated clearly and easy to interpret, otherwise their implementation may lead to confusion that leads to the involvement of the judiciary who may overrule it. Thirdly, policies need to integrate with existing processes, and avoid causing extensive disruption, competition, or conflict. The lack of direction about the means of implementation, bureaucratic inefficiencies, gaps in human and financial resources, and corruption may hinder policy implementation.

- **Step 5: Policy monitoring and evaluation** is a crucial step, which can take place during different steps of the policymaking cycle. Policies may sometimes contain multiple objectives that may not be compatible, or even conflicting with existing policies. The effectiveness of policies, meaning whether they fulfill their intended purpose, may be assessed based on research and evidence, as well as feedback from users and anyone affected by the policies. This process can be complicated to design and implement, time consuming and costly and is therefore that is often overlooked.

Who can influence the policymaking cycle?

Typical policymaking bodies can be a legislature (e.g., parliament, municipal council) or an administrative agency, (e.g., a ministry or department) belonging to the executive branch of the government. In constitutional governments, elections provide opportunities for youth participation in a process of open debate and public decision that contributes to shape laws and policies. Political parties play a distinct role and enable to integrate a variety of interests and effect compromises on policy that win acceptance from many diverse groups, including from citizens and young people. Judicial processes offer a means by which some disputes in society are settled according to rule and legal authority, rather than by violence and disruption.
Beside governmental actors and institutions within formal political structures and processes, and citizens and young people, there are other actors who can also have a great deal of influence in every step of the policymaking process. In numerous countries, groups or institutions perceived as influencing or acting in the stead of the three branches of government (legislative, executive, and judicial) are often referred to as the “fourth branch,” particularly in places where the media and interest groups are not perceived as independent of the government.

- **The media** acts as the primary conduit between those who want to influence policy and policymakers controlling the scope of political discourse and regulating the flow of information. Through the media, citizens learn how government policies will affect them, and governments gain feedback on their policies and programmes. The media can undermine or move specific issues into the public spotlight, bring attention and public outcry to issues previously considered outside of the realm of law-making, and during the policy adoption, move the needle in favour or against specific policies.

- **Interest groups** who compete for the attention of policymakers and attempt to influence decisions made by officials in the government, especially members of legislatures and regulatory agencies, in a process often referred to as “lobbying.” These groups can range from think tanks, political lobbyists, business groups, labor groups and trade unions, consumer groups, environmentalists, and even foreign governments. Civil society organizations are therefore also considered interest groups. It is often the case that several interest groups have competing or conflicting interests, for instance between business and civil society actors. The effectiveness of interest groups can be assessed based on many criteria, including on how representative they are (the number and power of their constituents), their access to (political, financial, media, etc.) resources, and their ability to network especially with relevant government officials.

**More information:**


**Activity 11: The steps of the policymaking cycle**

**Activity aim/objectives**

- **Participants will:**
  - Use local newspapers to research concrete examples of each step of the policymaking cycle
  - They also serve as a starting point.

**Duration (Min)**

- Total time: Approx. 25 min
  - Instructions (2 min)
  - Activity (18 min)
  - Debriefing (5 min)

**Group organization**

- Preparation in small groups (1 group per table)
- Debrief in the full group

**Materials/handouts**

- Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group)
- Pens for each participant. Optional: scissors and glue.

**Activity learning outcomes:**

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- **[Knowledge]** Understand the various stages of the policymaking cycle and apply this model to examples of political and decision-making processes from the participants’ country context.
- **[Skills]** Practice research and analysis skills.
- **[Attitude and values]** Become aware of the opportunities in engaging and participating in political and decision-making processes; exhibit leadership and promote the importance of political participation among peers, family, colleagues, and members of the community.

**Preparation/ materials:**

- A selection of local newspapers for each small group of participants (1 group per table). It can be either a selection of newspapers, ideally with the same set for each small group, or only the “Politics and Government” section.
- Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group).
- Pens for each participant. Optional: scissors and glue.

**Activity instructions:**

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**

- Ask participants if they know about the “policymaking cycle,” and the different steps to adopt policies in a country.
- Explain that the activity will require to research local newspapers provided to identify examples of each step of the policymaking cycle, namely: 1. Issue identification and agenda building, 2. Policy formulation, 3. Policy adoption, 4. Policy implementation, and 5. Policy evaluation.
- The trainer may consider showing a visual that illustrates the different steps and providing some concrete examples for each step. For instance, the trainer may consider providing an example of a local/national policy that relates to the participants’ realities, which can be a current issue, a decision that they support or disagree with or a problem that they are worried about. A decision in school/university or at work can also serve as a starting point.

**Activity: Up to 18 minutes**

- Tell participants they have up to 18 minutes to read the newspapers provided, and to fill the table (see Handout).
- Participants are encouraged to be collaborative and creative! They can write down key words or decide to use scissors and glue to create a visual. The trainer may use the visuals created by participants during the debriefing.
Debriefing and evaluation: 5 minutes
- After 18 minutes, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to fill every column of the table? If you did not manage, which columns, and why?
  - Did you identify the considerations that shape the formulation of policies? Are they strictly political, social, economic, cultural, or other considerations?
  - Did you identify which groups can expedite or retard the adoption of policy?
  - Did you find examples of how political actor(s) play distinct roles? What about special interests, such as political parties, interest groups and lobbyists?
  - Did you find examples of how policies are implemented and the challenges that accompany the implementation process? Are there any bottlenecks in terms of budget or financing only?
  - Did you identify some of the key challenges in assessing policies? Are there only hurdles and bottlenecks in terms of the time, effort, and money needed to conduct policy evaluations?
  - In what stages of a decision-making process can citizens and young people participate?
  - What is the most surprising or interesting information you learned from this exercise?

Handout:

The steps of the policymaking cycle

Fill out the table below with concrete examples of each step of the policy cycle you may be able to find in the newspapers provided. Be collaborative and creative! You can write down key words or decide to use scissors and glue to create a visual.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step of the policy cycle</th>
<th>Examples (Provide an example based on what you can find in the newspapers)</th>
<th>Notes (Include key words, or use scissors and glue to create a visual)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Issue identification and agenda building</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Policy formulation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Policy adoption</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Policy implementation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Policy monitoring and evaluation</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Variations:
- An easier version of this exercise consists for the trainer to select a relevant policy issue and follow the decision-making process together with the participants. This may require the trainer to prepare in advance and collect materials covering a longer period from various sources (e.g., online research, books, older newspapers). This exercise can also be developed into a research project on a dedicated policy issue.
- An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online “breakout rooms” organized by city or country and encourage them to work collaboratively to fill out the table online, using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

After finishing Activity 11, the trainer is now encouraged to organize a brief energizer.

Suggested duration: up to 5 minutes
The trainer may wish to explain that the participants will now focus on the main entry points for young people to participate in political and decision-making processes, using the session content in Part 2.

Suggested duration: 10 minutes

Part 2: Youth participation in policymaking

Globally, youth participation and representation in institutional political and policymaking processes is low. People under the age of 35 are rarely members of parliaments, in public administration, and in decision-making bodies such as committees on constitution-building or peacebuilding. In one-third of countries, eligibility for the national parliament starts at 25 years or higher (as high as 45 years in some places). Even when the voting age is 18 years, eligibility to be a candidate is often higher.

What are the main barriers for youth participation in policymaking?
The main barriers to youth participation can be summarized in the points below.

Want to learn more about national youth policies?
- UN Volunteers (2017). Engendering the National Youth Policy. New Delhi, India. Available in English only.

• Legal barriers: Almost every country in the world has developed some kind of legal or policy framework (e.g., law, act, regulation, strategy) that supports and advocates for youth participation in decision-making. Some youth policies aim to address any policy area that may affect young people, e.g., unemployment, formal education social protection, gender equality, health, housing, while others are much narrower in scope. What they all have in common is their implementation often lacks the financial resources, institutional structures, and sometimes the political will to effectively and meaningfully impact youth participation.

• Institutional barriers: Actors in political and decision-making structures can lack the will or the knowledge to involve young people in policymaking effectively. In many countries, there are organizational culture (e.g., a very formal setting not adapted to youth participation) and procedures (e.g., the final steps of policy design and planning may be behind closed doors) that hinder youth participation.

• Economic/financial barriers: Income inequality restricts youth participation since their engagement in political life is often voluntary and unpaid. Financial constraints also affect the sustainability of youth-serving organizations and other forms associations in which young people tend to be involved.

• Sociocultural barriers: Sociocultural norms, beliefs, misconceptions, and stereotypes as well as age discrimination against young people hamper their participation in policymaking. Youth agendas tend to be led by adults and focus on young people’s shortcomings and problems rather than invest in youth's potential as a positive source of change.

What are the main entry points for youth participation in policymaking?

Arguably, enabling young people to participate in, learn about and/or to provide inputs and influence policymaking at all levels, starts with the legislatures, such as parliaments, assemblies, congresses, and other parliamentary institutions.

• First, by taking steps to empower legislators who value the contributions of young people, and to ensure that legislatures are youth-sensitive, and whose membership, leadership, structure, rules of procedures, and practices are inclusive and non-discriminatory.

• Secondly, by increasing the election of young legislators. In some countries, legislatures have set up networks of young parliamentarians which focus on bringing together young members of parliament for purposes of capacity-building and networking. In other countries, caucuses for youth issues were set up, and engage parliamentarians of all ages to work on policy reforms and other initiatives for young people.

• Thirdly, by providing for public hearings on issues of policy and creating formal deliberative procedures at various stages of the legislative process. In many countries, young people can participate in dialogue and engagement platforms processes in which civil society and other societal actors are often involved in. For instance, young people can participate in committees and multi-party groups either focused on youth or deliberating issues impacting youth, a process through which young people and youth-serving organizations can be invited to share their views. Young people can also participate in structured social dialogues, and other forms of participatory planning (e.g., budgeting and budget advocacy) and participatory monitoring (e.g., social audits, community score cards, and other citizens’ oversight mechanisms), opinion polls, online surveys and consultations, and petitions.

Beyond formal processes, there are also several informal avenues for young people to influence policymaking, often referred to as “youth participatory structures.” Their objectives and modes of functioning vary greatly, from merely informing young people, to consulting them and reflect their inputs, to empowering young people to shape the policy agenda, especially as contributors to the development of public youth policy, to take part throughout the decision-making process, and genuinely impact the outcome of decisions. While some enjoy a formal relationship with their national legislatures, most are coordinated by non-governmental organizations, government ministries, local authorities, universities, and schools. The most common examples include:

• National youth councils are umbrella organizations that represent and co-ordinate youth-serving organizations with different interests, activities and reach within a given country, with the objective to effectively represent youth and give them a voice in national decision-making. Depending on the country, such councils accept representatives of governments, individuals and/or groups of young people, representatives from youth wings of political parties, etc. Youth councils also exist at the local level, including in schools and/or universities, and municipal councils, with the creation of working groups and committees can be tasked with solving local issues that concern young people.

• Youth parliaments exist in numerous countries, either as civic education exercises for raising awareness about the functions and procedures of parliament or, in some countries, as formal mechanisms with a consultative function for youth-relevant issues. They exist at the national level, and in a few countries such as the United Kingdom and Canada, also at the sub-national level. Several multilateral organizations and international civil society organizations also have set up youth parliaments such as the Model UN, Youth Parliament, the European Youth Parliament, and the Model Arab League, with youth representatives from countries of the League of Arab States.

• Other common examples of youth participatory mechanisms include youth mayors, youth observatories, youth juries, mock trials, youth advisory committees, youth consultations and panels, and other forms of youth forums at local and national levels.

More information:


2. See Activity 10 on “Busting myths about youth participation and political change”, p. 109.

4. See Activity 2 on “The Ladder of Youth Participation,” p. 35.
Activity 12: Set up your national youth council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Discuss the rules and procedures of an “ideal” youth participatory structure</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 30 min</td>
<td>• Discussion in small groups of 6 (1 table)</td>
<td>• Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td>• Pens for each participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Activity (20 min)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Debriefing (8 min)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

• [Knowledge] Understand the main working organization and methods e.g., composition, membership, internal decision-making processes, and other rules and procedures of youth participatory structures, based on the concrete example of a national youth council involved in decision-making.

• [Skills] Develop basic analytical skills, build consensus, and make concrete proposals through teamwork and co-operation.

• [Attitude and values] Promote young people’s active participation in political and decision-making processes.

Preparation/ materials:

• Printed handout for each participant.

Activity instructions:

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**

• Ask participants what they know about youth participatory structures, such as national youth councils, and youth parliaments, and other informal structures for youth participation?

• Explain that the activity will require them to work in small groups and put themselves in the shoes of the staff of an organization called “Nahno Nusharik” (نحن نشارك, “We Participate”), which was invited to participate in a national youth council by a top governmental body. Your director and senior managers have flagged this as a strategic opportunity for your organization “Nahno Nusharik” to be involved in the agenda-setting, policy formulation and the implementation of key youth-related policies in the future. This is an opportunity for your organization to truly shape the rules and procedures of this youth council. You will need to make a proposal about the rules and procedures for this council.

**Activity: Up to 20 minutes**

• Tell groups that they have about 20 minutes to fill out the table of rules and procedures, and that they can add their own additional ideas for rules and procedures in the last box.

**Debriefing and evaluation: 8 minutes**

• After about 20 minutes, invite the groups to mingle and compare their findings. Ask them to make a note of anything that is not clear or where they need further information from the group responsible.

• Bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to fill out all the boxes in the table? If not, which ones were most difficult to fill?
  - Which rules and procedures were easy to agree on? Which ones were least obvious?
  - What did you notice about the rules and procedures proposed by the other groups?
  - What is the most outstanding information you learned today from this exercise?
  - Are young people in your community aware of the existence of youth participatory structures such as national youth councils, youth parliaments, and other informal structures for youth participation?
  - Can you think of examples of youth participatory structures in your community/ city/ country or other parts of the Arab region?
  - How can you promote the participation of young people in informal political and decision-making processes?

Handout:

**Set up your national youth council**

You are a member of the local youth organization “Nahno Nusharik” (نحن نشارك, “We Participate”) which was invited to participate in a national youth council by a top governmental body. Your director and senior managers have flagged this as a strategic opportunity for your organization “Nahno Nusharik” to be involved in the agenda-setting, policy formulation and the implementation of key youth-related policies in the future. This is an opportunity for your organization to truly shape the rules and procedures of this youth council. You will need to fill out the table below collaboratively and creatively!
### 1. Composition

- How many youth representatives would there be?
- How old would youth representatives (allowed to) be?
- How would the representatives be selected and appointed?
- Will there be consideration related to the representation of young women? How?
- Will there be consideration related to the representation of vulnerable and marginalized groups? How?

### 2. Membership

- Would only individuals or also youth-serving organizations allowed to be members?
- Would government officials, or representatives from youth wings of political parties be allowed to be members?
- Who else should participate? Who else should be allowed to observe?
- Would there be a mechanism to prevent conflict of interests, or remove members?

### 3. Decision-making

- How will opinions and recommendations by the youth council be adopted?
- Would every youth representative have one vote?
- Would there be there be a decision-making body? How would it function?
- Would there be a division of work among youth representatives, for instance by organizing thematic youth committees?

### 4. Mandate

- What issues would the youth parliament be allowed to discuss, and what issues would it not be allowed to discuss?
- What kind of decisions would the youth parliament be allowed to make, and what decisions would it not be allowed to make?

### 5. Coordination and advisory capacity

- Would the youth council have access to relevant information concerning youth issues?
- How would the youth council engage with the top governmental body who convened them?
- Would the opinions and recommendations of the youth council be used? How?
- Would there be a commitment on the part of the authorities, should they decide not to follow the said recommendations, to give reasons for their decision?

### 6. Other rules and procedures

- How often would the youth council meet?
- Would the youth representatives meet after university/business hours?
- Where would the youth council meet?
- Will the youth representatives get an allowance for transportation and other costs related to their function?
- Would the youth council be able to determine and change their working organization and methods?

Add any other important consideration(s) you may identify:
Variations:

- A longer version of this activity could designate each small group/table as one of the many leading youth-serving organizations, beside the local youth organization “Nahno Nusharik” (نحن نشارك, “We Participate”), that were also invited to join the national youth council. Participants could start by filling out the table (20 minutes), and then be encouraged to negotiate and come to an agreement with the view to make a joint proposal to the representatives of the top governmental body.
- An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online “breakout rooms,” and encourage them to work collaboratively to identify the rules and procedures of the “ideal” national youth council, and to fill out the table online, using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

Part 3: Safe and inclusive public spaces for youth

As a follow-up to the Parts 1 and 2, the trainer is encouraged to conduct a simulation to better understand policymaking in practice. Participants may be assigned distinct roles and different scenarios with the view to adopt a decision on a policy issue, namely the importance of creating and maintaining “safe and inclusive public spaces for youth,” using the session content in Part 3, and refer to the key terms and concepts in Parts 1 and 2 as needed.

Suggested duration: 5 minutes

After Activity 12, the trainer may consider doing a break before starting the simulation.

Suggested time: up to 15 minutes

The trainer may introduce the topic and the key issues related to creating and maintaining “safe and inclusive public spaces for youth,” using the session content in Part 3, and refer to the key terms and concepts in Parts 1 and 2 as needed.

Evidence from Habitat III, the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, highlighted that urban planning practices which are inclusive in their approach are more likely to lead to safe and inclusive cities for all. Across the Arab region, the absence of open, safe, and inclusive public spaces can be considered a major societal issue. Public spaces are often envisioned, designed, and built without considering the everyday lives, needs and desires of young people and their families. In fact, this issue disproportionally impacts young women as well as young people from different marginalized and vulnerable groups who may feel intimidated to leave the sphere of the private/family home, and hindered to freely engage in the community, and society at large. For instance, the absence of street lighting at night or the absence of family and disability-friendly sidewalks and playgrounds, may lead to safety concerns, including to the harassment of women and concerns related to road safety.

Case study: Creating safer public spaces for women in Tunisia and Morocco

Youth leader Salma Belhassine witnessed and experienced sexual harassment daily in her home country, Tunisia. Her desire to address this problem brought her to the UNDP Youth Leadership Programme in 2017, where she developed the concept for a mobile application that would help to make public spaces more secure, particularly for young women, through mutual aid and cooperation among people in the community. SafeNess was launched in both Tunisia and Morocco in partnership with the Center of Arab Women for Training and Research and several Arab civil society organizations. The app enables a user who is in danger to immediately alert a list of trusted contacts who can then track the users’ location and provide assistance. The app can also be used to support the work of law enforcement by providing the ability to record the location, date, and time of an assault. It also works as a bridge between victims and specialized NGOs and provides useful resources such as videos to learn self-defense and information about legal procedures following sexual harassment, including a function to contact lawyers directly for assistance. The app is available for download from the PlayStore and the AppleStore, and includes a feature that makes it user-friendly to the visually impaired. The launch of the app was accompanied by an extensive advocacy campaign on social media, both in Arabic and in French, to raise awareness about the prevention of gender-based violence, to be extended to the protection of women in public places at universities and also in the context of COVID-19 related confinements.

Source: Youth Leadership Programme 3 (2017), UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States.

More information: Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (2020). Facebook page with SafeNess Promotional Video.

5. See the session on “Space for youth participation,” p. 39
6. Public spaces also include the digital/virtual spaces that help youth interact virtually across borders with everyone, but this not the topic of this simulation.
Module 2

More information:


Activity 13: Simulation – “Safe and inclusive public spaces for youth”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| - Conduct a simulation to understand policymaking in practice | 85 min         | • Preparation in 4 distinct teams  
  • Activity and debrief in the full group  
  • Handout with scenarios  
  • Flipcharts, sticky notes, pens  
  • Coloured sticky dots or pins for each team |                   |
| Total time: Approx.      |                |                   |                   |
| - Instructions (10 min)  |                |                   |                   |
| - Activity (65 min)      |                |                   |                   |
| - Debriefing (10 min)    |                |                   |                   |

Activity learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Explore a range of policy issues related to “safe and inclusive public spaces for youth” and better understand the different steps of the policymaking cycle, especially policy formulation and policy adoption.
- [Skills] Strategic thinking skills such as ways of framing policy positions, coalition building skills to assert ones’ policy positions, and negotiation skills.
- [Attitude and values] Promote the importance of importance of policymaking, governance, and financing public action.

Materials/preparation:

- Handout with scenarios.

Activity instructions:

**Explanation and set-up: 10 minutes**

- Explain the participants will participate in a simulation to discuss a policy issue, namely the importance of “safe and inclusive public spaces for youth.” Ask participants what they know about this issue or share some insights from your personal or professional experience.
- Explain that the participants will be divided in 4 groups, namely: public officials from the municipal council (Team 1), representatives from a youth-serving organization (Team 2), representative from the neighbourhood family association/local population (Team 3), representatives from a social enterprise (Team 4). Explain that the primary objective for each group is to produce a policy proposal that will make life better for the people living in Olive City, either by getting all other stakeholders to agree on their group’s policy proposal, or by coming together with other teams and making a joint policy proposal.
- Explain that the simulation will be conducted in 3 steps, facilitated by the trainer, detailed below as well as in the Handout. This activity will focus on two steps of the policymaking cycle, namely policy formulation and policy adoption.

**Activity: Up to 65 minutes**

- In Step 1 “Internal strategy meeting” (15 min), teams are encouraged to read their scenarios carefully and brainstorm about key arguments that support their respective policy positions.
- In Step 2 “External meeting with other relevant stakeholders” (20 min), teams will be going around the room to meet other stakeholders and try to find common interests (synergies), discuss issues of contention, negotiate, and identify possible joint solutions (trade-offs).
- In Step 3 “Consultative meeting at the municipal council of Olive City”, teams will enact a deliberative meeting at the municipal council, when each group will present their policy proposals (20 min), be given a final opportunity to negotiate with other teams (5 min), and finally vote on the best policy proposal, each group having one vote (5 min).

**Debriefing and evaluation: 10 minutes**

- After the vote, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - What is the most outstanding information you learned today from this exercise?
  - Which step of the simulation was the most useful to formulate your policy proposal? What is during Step 1 when you only discussed with people who have the same interests, and what is in Step 2 when you engaged with other stakeholders with sometimes overlapping or conflicting interests?
  - Did you think that all groups of stakeholders had an equal amount of information or an equal number of resources? How do you think young people can plan for these differences when engaging in policy discussions?
  - Did the negotiation process in Steps 2 and 3 play a role in shaping the policy proposals, can you provide examples on how each group was influenced by other groups’ arguments?
Do you think the policy proposal adopted in Step 3 reflects the best possible for all stakeholders?

Have you ever worked at a community-based organization (e.g., student councils, youth-serving organizations, local community or family associations, other types of organizations) on this topic?

Can you tell us more?

Can you think of examples in your community/ city/ country or other parts of the Arab region that illustrate the importance of “safe and inclusive public spaces for youth”?

Do you think public information and media campaigns are needed to raise awareness on this policy issue?

How can you promote “safe and inclusive public spaces for youth” among your peers, family, colleagues, and members of the community?

**Handout 1:**

**Simulation on “Safe and inclusive public spaces for youth”**

**Context of the simulation**

The municipal council of Olive City (مجلس مدينة الزيتون) has recently been made aware that a plot of land in a prime location in the middle of the city, which was previously rented to a private goods company, is now at the disposal of the city. The goods depot that was located on this plot was unmaintained and considered a liability by the local authorities and the people living in the neighborhood for several years. The building was finally destroyed in the past few weeks, but the plot of land still has a lot of potentially dangerous construction materials and gravel lying around, and several safety complaints have already been lodged by local associations at the municipal council. These complaints have reached the municipal council of Olive City, which decided to place this issue at the top of its agenda for the next meeting of the municipal council in two weeks.

Given the importance of this policy issue, you decide to come together as a group to brainstorm and discuss how best to strategize and identify arguments to support your policy position (see Step 1). To better understand the other stakeholders’ policy positions, you will also briefly meet with all the other stakeholders to discuss potential synergies and trade-offs, and ways that you can find a solution agreeable to everyone (see Step 2). Finally, it was decided that an open, transparent deliberation with all relevant stakeholders will be organized to identify how to fast-track the cleaning of this plot of land, and determine its best use, in two weeks when all stakeholders will have the opportunity to negotiate and vote on this policy issue.

Your top priority is that the plot of land is cleaned to make it safe for all as soon as possible, and to decide on how the space will be used in the future based on a consensual decision by most stakeholders (meaning more than half, each team being awarded one vote), either by getting all other stakeholders to agree on your policy proposal, or by coming together with other teams and making a joint policy proposal. Be creative and collaborative!

**Step 1: Internal strategy meeting (15 min)**

Read the context of the simulation as well as your scenario carefully and brainstorm about key arguments that support your policy position. Are you ready to speak with other stakeholders, and clearly present your policy position?

**Step 2: External meeting with other relevant stakeholders (20 min)**

Go around the room clockwise (while one group stays in place) and meet other teams to briefly present your policy position and hear theirs. Are you able to find common interests (synergies), discuss issues of contention, negotiate, and identify possible joint solutions (trade-offs)? You will only have a few minutes per group, so make it count!

**Step 3: Deliberative meeting at the municipal council of Olive City (30 min)**

Each of the 4 teams will have about 5 minutes to present their key arguments (20 min). You are encouraged to emphasize the policy points where you found common interests and call upon other stakeholders to support you! This be followed by a recess/ break during the municipal council meeting (5 min), where each team may informally discuss potential last-minute concessions or trade-offs or make a last-minute proposal to another team to convince them to vote in support of each other’s proposal(s). The trainer will go around the teams and collect all the final four proposals (or less if some teams were able to propose joint proposals) will be presented for a vote (5 min), each of the group being awarded one vote.

**Handout 2:**

Each of the 4 groups will receive a different scenario.

**Scenario for Team 1: Public officials from the municipal council**

You are decision-makers and senior representatives of the municipal council of Olive City (مجلس مدينة الزيتون). You are aware that several basic infrastructures are missing in the city center of Olive City, and while you may need to prioritize, you are focused on the well-being of the community. You are open to any project as long as it is cost-effective, accessible, and user-friendly for all, and you acknowledge that focusing on young people is a priority. You are the municipal council members who have led the adoption of two municipal strategies on “safe and inclusive public spaces for youth” and on “the promotion of youth innovation through entrepreneurship.” Both were the mayor’s top electoral promises when he was elected a year ago. The previous municipal council already budgeted for the renovation of this plot of land, but there are no financial resources immediately available for its cleaning. You will need to be creative to find a solution as soon as possible, as you already received several warnings from the municipal public safety commission. Safety first!
Scenario for Team 2: Youth-serving organization

You are decision-makers and senior representatives of the youth organization called “Nahno Nusharik” (نحن نشارك). There are currently no youth or community centres in the city center of Olive City, and you have suggested to create a structure where young people could meet and exchange ideas. The members of your network do not all live in the neighbourhood, and most of them would only use the facility after work/school hours. The current mayor and several municipal council members present at the meeting have led the adoption of two municipal strategies on “safe and inclusive public spaces for youth” and on “the promotion of youth innovation through entrepreneurship.” Both were the mayor’s top electoral promises when he was elected a year ago. Unfortunately, you do not have any financial resources at your disposal, but a lot of technical knowledge! Several members of your network are top electoral promises when he was elected a year ago. Unfortunately, you do not have any financial resources at your disposal, but a lot of technical knowledge! Several members of your network are

Scenario for Team 3: Neighbourhood family association/ local population

You are decision-makers and representatives of the neighbourhood family association called “Hayi Amen” (حي آمن, “Safe Neighbourhood”). There are currently no green public spaces in the city center of Olive City, and you have suggested to create a public park where families and young people could meet, and children could play. You are the ones who would benefit from this project the most as you live in the area and could use it on a daily basis. The current mayor and several municipal council members present at the meeting have led the adoption of two municipal strategies, on “safe and inclusive public spaces for youth” and on “the promotion of youth innovation through entrepreneurship.” Both were the mayor’s top electoral promises when he was elected a year ago. Unfortunately, you do not have any financial resources at your disposal, but most of the local knowledge! You have monitored the situation in this plot of land for several years. You are the ones who lodged the safety complaints at the municipal council, based on direct observation. You know exactly what needs to be done!

Scenario for Team 4: Social enterprise

You are decision-makers and representatives of the social enterprise “Hulul Alshabab” (حلوى الشباب, “Youth Solutions”). There are currently no youth innovation hubs/ centres in the city center of Olive City, and you have suggested to create a structure where young innovators could meet and exchange ideas. The members of your network do not all live in the neighbourhood, and most of them would only use the facility after work or school hours. The current mayor and several municipal council members present at the meeting have led the adoption of two municipal strategies, on “safe and inclusive public spaces for youth” and on “the promotion of youth innovation through entrepreneurship.” Both were the mayor’s top electoral promises when he was elected a year ago. Unfortunately, you do not have any financial resource at your disposal, but a lot of technical knowledge! Several members of your network are creative and innovative urban planners who have already started working on plans for this plot of land and identified several cost-effective solutions to clean it up.

Variations:

• Simulation and role-play are widely used as an educational method for learning. Although educational theory provides a sound rationale for using this type of activity, it will be up to the trainer to determine if this method is best fit for the local context, and for the level of participants, since their prior experiences of simulation and role-play may influence the way in which they are able to engage in this activity.

Trainer tip!

• There are many ways to solve the policy issue in a way that different teams can find a consensus on the best course of action, and solutions that may work for several teams at once:
  ° The plot of land can be divided between the construction of a community youth centre (Team 2) and a public park (Team 3). The community youth centre (Team 2) could allocate some of its space/time/budget to have a youth hub for innovation and entrepreneurship (Team 4), or the other way around, the social enterprise (Team 4) can lend its space to the youth-serving organization (Team 2). The municipal council could sell or lease the plot of land (Team 1) and use the money to fund activities led by the other stakeholders (Teams 2, 3, and 4).
  ° Similarly, while all stakeholders do not have the same human and financial resources, they can contribute in multiple ways. The youth-serving organization (Team 2) and neighbourhood family association (Team 3) can organize a clean-up drive, and the social enterprise (Team 4) can volunteer to find an innovative solution to clean up the garbage on the plot of land. All stakeholders especially other stakeholders in Teams 2, 3, and 4 can join forces, conduct advocacy, and resource mobilization campaigns to support the municipal council (Team 1).

• In Step 1, guiding questions to support the work of the teams may include:
  ° What arguments can you use to convince the municipal council of Olive City and other relevant stakeholders that your proposal is best for most citizens?
  ° What assets do you have that other stakeholders potentially do not? In which way does your proposal affect other stakeholders?
  ° Are there potentially unintended consequences to your proposal, what can you do to mitigate these risks?

• In Step 2, encourage participants not to show their printouts when they meet other teams, or during any steps of the simulation. It will be more fun for participants to bargain with incomplete information!

• In Step 3, it is suggested that the order of the speakers be determined randomly, and representatives of the municipal council (Team 1) speak last. During the vote, in case of a tie, the trainer will be the deciding vote, which will be given based on how convincing and articulate each proposal is, ideally based on a brief explanation/ justification by the trainer on the main reasons why one policy proposal was favoured over another/ others.
An easier version of this activity may consist of explaining the context and organizing it as a discussion by looking at the different possible arguments in favour or against different courses of action.

While not advised for this activity, an online version can be organized by assigning remote participants to online “breakout rooms,” and encourage them to work collaboratively, using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

**Extending the session**

By taking part in the public debate, forming one’s opinion on the decisions, and supporting (or opposing) the way in which decisions are implemented, citizens and young people make use of their human and civil rights. A democracy depends on its active citizens to be vibrant and healthy! Encourage participants to learn more about the policymaking cycle and the opportunities for citizens and young people to take part in it in their respective community/ city/ country. Encourage participants to think outside of the box: many societal issues require political attention and public resources to solve them, what if some issues could be solved within the community, with no or limited resources, with the help of other young people?

1. See Session 1 on “Space for youth participation,” p. X.
Session content: Youth participation throughout the electoral cycle

Terms and concepts²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms and Concepts</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electoral cycle</td>
<td>A visual planning and training tool designed to assist development agencies, electoral assistance providers and electoral officials in partner countries to understand the cyclical nature of the various challenges faced in electoral processes. This approach emphasizes the importance of long-term activities aimed at developing capacities for inclusive political participation, including of young people. It covers the pre-electoral, electoral, and post-electoral periods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election management bodies</td>
<td>An organization which has the sole purpose of, and is legally responsible for, managing some or all of the elements that are essential for the conduct of elections and referenda. There are three models of functioning of an electoral authority: elections that are run by the executive branch of government, by an independent electoral commission and by a mix of the two.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quota</td>
<td>Minimum number of seats or candidates determined by law that are reserved for marginalized or underrepresented social categories, such as women, young people, or ethnic/religious minorities, in order to facilitate their access to representative bodies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political pluralism</td>
<td>The degree to which a political system, as a result of freedom of association, allows the formation of different types of political bodies, including organized groups and political parties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political parties</td>
<td>Organized groups of people with similar ideas or ideology about the function and scope of government, and with shared policy goals, who work together to elect individuals to political office, to create and implement policies, to further an agenda, and to gain control of the government and the policymaking process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political campaign</td>
<td>An organized effort which seeks to influence political and decision-making processes within a specific group. These include electoral campaigns, the competitive efforts by candidates and political parties to win voter support in the period preceding an election; and advocacy campaigns, an activity by an individual or group that aims to influence decisions within political, economic, and social institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s participation</td>
<td>Women’s ability to participate equally with men, at all levels, and in all aspects of political life and decision-making and in public life.³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender mainstreaming</td>
<td>A globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality, gender mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities, from policy development, legislation, research, advocacy, resource allocation, and planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part 1: Young people and elections

What is the role of elections and why are they important for young people?

A political system can be defined by the set of formal legal institutions that constitute a government or state. Yet, political systems cannot be classified in terms of their legal structures alone: two states may have similar founding documents with similar institutional and legal frameworks and may not fit clearly in the same category of political system. It the reality of how the state functions, meaning the set of processes and interactions among actors within this system, as well as with other systems such as the social or economic systems, that defines the type of political system. In line with public international law, the most common type of political system is the nation-state, in which a national government claims to exercise sovereignty and seeks to govern the life of its people. The relationship between a government and its citizens is sometimes

Trainer tip!

This session introduces the participation of young people in elections and political parties. This is a broad topic and difficult to tackle in detail in a 90-minute session. An interactive way to introduce this topic could be by showing relevant videos. The trainer is encouraged to identify videos appropriate for the level of the participants, and ideally use (a) video(s) in the local language. Many options are available online by searching key words such as “elections,” “political parties,” and “youth participation” in your Internet browser. Examples of videos are provided below:


Elections are the main process by which individuals choose their representatives by voting.⁵ They represent a central avenue through which citizens and young people can participate in and influence political and decision-making processes and the composition and direction of public institutions.

2. See more definitions in Activity 14 on “Electoral vocabulary BINGO,” p. 142.
3. See the definitions “Youth political participation” and “Youth civic participation,” pp. 96 and 162.
4. See the definition of “Gender equality,” p. 179.
5. Elections can also be used to designate representatives within organizations such as associations, unions or political parties. See Part 2 in session 11 on “Main entry points for supporting youth participation in political parties,” p. 212.
Democratic elections are a vital element of democratic societies in which diverse voices are heard, concerns and preferences are expressed peacefully, and decisions are made based on consensus, building upon the recognition and affirmation of diversity within a political system (sometimes referred to as political pluralism). Democratic elections are guided by three main principles: representation, transparency, and inclusiveness:

**Representation:** When people cast their vote, they are giving the candidate the right to represent them in government. This right is not given without responsibilities; once in government, the candidate is expected to act responsibly and to truly represent the voters’ interests to the best of his/her abilities.

**Transparency:** When mechanisms of the electoral system are transparent and known to voters, candidates, and political parties in advance, it helps to prevent distrust in the results of the elections. Transparency increases the likelihood that results will be accepted as fair and legitimate.

**Inclusiveness:** When the electoral law allows as many citizens as possible to vote (universal suffrage), when mechanisms of the electoral system do not overtly discriminate against any group in society, and when the electoral system is easily understandable, elections can better represent the will of the people.

**What are the key challenges and opportunities for youth participation in elections?**

Young people are facing multi-dimensional and inter-connected barriers when participating in electoral processes, which can lead them to feel disempowered and excluded. Drawing on UNDP’s electoral cycle approach, which focuses on the pre-electoral, electoral and post-electoral periods, the main challenges can be summarized as below:

**Want to learn more about gender and elections?**


**At the structural level,** in many countries, there are limitations of the minimum voting age (usually 18 years old, but in many countries 21 years old) and the minimum age of eligibility to run for office (up to 40 years old in the upper house of some legislatures), which excludes young people from participating in political life and from holding office. The age gap between the ability to vote and to get elected also means that elected leaders have no or limited accountability towards the youth electorate (elected leaders often consider they do not need their vote to win), and it creates a perception that participation is not going to make any difference leading in many countries to voter apathy among young people. In addition, young people can be excluded from politics and decision-making due to the high financial costs for candidate nomination and campaigning and the lack of political finance regulations, or by some social and cultural traditions, according to which politics is a domain of older, often male and wealthy citizens. Young women are in many countries subject to ‘double discrimination’ based on their age and gender, thus facing additional obstacles compared with men.

**At the organizational level,** inadequate or ineffective youth policies, limited data on youth participation, and limited funding to promote youth participation in political parties, legislatures, and election management bodies are considered key factors in the under-representation of young people in formal politics.

**At the individual level,** the limited trust in formal political processes, political institutions and leaders, and limited access to and knowledge about electoral processes represent a key challenge leading to youth under-representation. Evidence on voter turnout from various countries shows that young voters tend to participate less in elections compared to older citizens. Survey results from a sample of 33 countries indicate that close to 44 percent of young adults aged 18-29 years “always vote,” compared with almost 60 percent of all citizens.

Lastly, **election-related violence** has a negative impact on the meaningful engagement of young people in electoral processes, particularly in unstable political systems and countries emerging from internal conflicts. In countries with a history of electoral violence, young people are often involved as perpetrators or victims of the violence, with young women disproportionately impacted as such environments are often characterized by heightened risks of intimidation of women in public life and a high threat of gender-based violence.

Notwithstanding these challenges, there are many opportunities for young people to play a range of distinct roles throughout the electoral cycle, including by voting, running for office, managing elections and by shaping voting processes beyond the electoral event:

- **Young people as voters and campaigners:** Engaging young people, and especially first-time voters, in the electoral process is key to fostering consistent voting habits. Civil registration is usually the basis for establishing legal identity and is necessary to assert the rights to vote and be elected and can be a big hurdle for youth voter registration. It is important to highlight that the act of voting represents only one step, but that young people can be engaged in countless ways throughout the electoral cycle: as individual citizens and representatives of civil society organizations, they can attend a campaign event/speech; they can donate money or volunteer to support political campaigns, they can create awareness-raising and civic education campaigns, they can participate in a demonstration related to a political issue, they can follow politicians or post comments on political issues online, etc.

- **Young people standing for elected office and becoming an elected representative:** Young people can also be nominated and elected as political candidates and leaders, including within political parties and legislatures. It is important to support young people with training, access to opportunities and resources, skills-building, and funding, so they can be placed in favorable positions within party lists or districts.

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6. See the definition of “Political pluralism,” p. 136.
8. See Session 6 on “Youth participation in policymaking,” p. 133.
9. See the definition of “Election management bodies,” p. 136.
• Young people working in electoral management: Young people can also volunteer or be hired in electoral management bodies (EMB), as members of EMB advisory boards, and as voting/polling station workers. To promote youth participation, in many countries, EMBs also allocate a proportion of all departmental budgets to youth inclusion, promoting young people as “Youth Ambassadors,” and involving them in social media campaigns to motivate and assist youth and other groups to register and vote.

• Young people as observers of the electoral process: Young people, individually or as representatives of civil society organizations, can be independent electoral observers alongside national or international organizations working in electoral observation missions, and thereby participate in observing and reporting on electoral processes, helping to identify areas of concern and improving efficiency. As citizen observers or media observers, for instance, by reporting on electoral issues on traditional and social media, young people can also contribute to increase electoral integrity and transparency around the electoral cycle.

• Young people as peace- and resilience-builders in electoral processes: Young people can play the role of community mediators, help reduce the risks of electoral violence, and enhance peoples’ sense of security and freedom in exercising their right to vote, thereby helping to preserve the integrity of elections.

Case study: Building a new generation of empowered youth leaders in Libya

Training for municipal council election monitors. Photo: H2O (2021)

Mohamed Hamuda was convinced of the positive role young people can play to support democratic transformation and the promotion of human rights in his country, Libya. To achieve these objectives, he established a youth-led non-profit organization called “H2O” in 2011, which develops civic education programmes aimed at building the capacities of young people on a range of topics related to active citizenship. These topics include the legal frameworks for human rights, especially civil and political rights, the foundational values of citizenship, the Constitution and its role in the democratic system, the importance of awareness and participation in public affairs, and the skills required for community participation and effective citizenship practices. H2O also organizes regular training sessions for young people serving as local electoral monitors across the country, in order to equip them with tools to better understand the electoral systems and increase electoral awareness and civic education among youth. As a result of these efforts, H2O has helped to create a new generation of well-educated youth leaders who participate more effectively in political and decision-making processes and can translate the ideas, views and aspirations of Libyan youth into clear proposals and demands which are presented to decision-makers in power.

Source: Youth Leadership Programme 4 (2018), UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States.

More information: Facebook page of H2O organization.

More information:


12. See the session on “Youth participation in conflict settings,” p. 252.
Activity 14: Electoral BINGO!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Play a game of BINGO to review electoral vocabulary and discuss the role of young people in elections</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 30 min</td>
<td>Full group walking around the space freely</td>
<td>Printed Bingo cards for each participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Debrief in the full group</td>
<td>Pens for each participant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity aim/objectives

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Understand the key terms, and their definitions, related to elections and political parties, and discuss the diverse roles of young people throughout the electoral cycle.
- [Skills] Develop basic analytical skills.
- [Attitude and values] Promote young people's active participation throughout the electoral cycle and in political parties.

Preparation/materials:

- Provide pre-filled BINGO cards, printed for each participant, and pens.
- Alternatively, provide blank BINGO cards (see Variations below), and pens.

Activity instructions:

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**

- Ask participants what they know about elections and political parties. Do they think they know all the important key terms?
- Explain that you will read out definitions of key electoral term, and if participants have on their card the word that matches the definition, they cover that spot with a marker or put an X through on the box in which that word appears. The first participant to have a complete row of 5 key terms calls out "BINGO!"

- Explain that this is not a test, just a fun way to review all the basic information about this topic.

- Tell participants that there are a total of 24 definitions, corresponding to the 24 key terms available in the BINGO card. The trainer is encouraged to read the definitions in the order provided below, designed to prevent participants from calling BINGO too quickly, but also by starting with easier definitions first, thereby building the participants' confidence.

- After providing an overview of the session content in Part 1, the trainer may consider using the interactive Activity 14 to help participants "experience" the session content. **Suggested duration: 30 minutes**

Activity: Up to 23 minutes

- Explain that the space in the middle of the BINGO cards is "free" and is considered "called," meaning it counts towards winning a bingo game, like a joker card.
- The trainer can start another game or continue the game that is already in progress until another participant or two has called out BINGO. If BINGO has not been called, the trainer can start reading the definition from the top of the list again.

Debriefing and evaluation: 5 minutes

- After about 23 minutes (or when at least three rounds of BINGO were called and most definitions were read), review the remaining definitions with the participants. Ask them to make a note of anything that is not clear or where they need further information from the trainer.
- Bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you learn new key terms related to elections and political parties? Which ones?
  - Did you manage to match the BINGO cards with the definitions? Which key terms were the most difficult to match?
  - Can you think of key terms related to elections and political parties that were missing from the exercise? Can you think of a suitable definition for them?
  - How do you think we can use the information we learned during BINGO moving forward?
  - Are young people in your community aware of the role of young people throughout the electoral cycle and in political parties?
  - What is the most interesting or surprising information you learned from this exercise?

List of BINGO game definitions for the trainer:

There are a total of 24 definitions, corresponding to the 24 key terms available in the BINGO card. The trainer is encouraged to read the definitions in the order provided below, designed to prevent participants from calling BINGO too quickly, but also by starting with easier definitions first, thereby building the participants' confidence:

1. **Electoral cycle:** Refers to the different stages of the electoral process, namely the pre-electoral, electoral and post-electoral periods. It is a visual planning tool designed to help development agencies, electoral assistance providers and electoral officials to understand the cyclical nature of the various challenges faced in electoral processes.

2. **Political party:** Organization of people who share the same opinions, principles and aspirations regarding how society should be managed and who wish to implement these by obtaining power.

3. **Universal suffrage:** A fundamental principle in democratic elections, by which every citizen has the right to vote in periodic and regular elections and referenda. Restrictions may apply (minimum age, mental capacity), but the right to vote should not be denied on the basis of any discriminatory ground.
4. **Political pluralism**: The degree to which a political system, as a result of freedom of association, allows the formation of different types of political bodies, including organized groups and political parties.

5. **Opinion poll (for an election)**: Scientific, quantitative sociological research, based on a representative sample of voters. It is used to determine the opinion of voters on parties and candidates, as well as to ascertain their most likely choice.

6. **Voter education**: Information campaign organized by election authorities as well as civil society organizations to explain to citizens the importance of voting, the electoral process, voting procedures, etc.

7. **Parity**: In an electoral context, a principle by which candidate lists must include an equal number of individuals from different groups: men/women, religious and ethnic groups, etc., in order to ensure these groups are equally represented in elected bodies.

8. **Multi-party elections**: Elections in which a minimum of two parties or candidates runs for office. Plurality is an essential condition of democratic elections.

9. **Electoral fraud**: Any illegal act intended to reverse or modify an election result. This includes ballot stuffng, voting more than once in the same election, buying votes, voting on someone else’s behalf without their authorization, etc.

10. **Majority**: Largest number of votes obtained in a vote on a decision, a draft law or the election of a candidate or list of candidates. In some cases, it must be absolute or qualified.

11. **Campaign strategy**: Plan of action developed by a candidate or a political party aimed at obtaining the best electoral performance. It covers target audience studies, campaign messages and other elements.

12. **Voter exclusion**: Event which occurs when a potential voter cannot exercise his or her right to vote on election day because his or her name does not appear on the voter list.

13. **Quota**: Minimum number of seats or candidates determined by law that are reserved for marginalized or underrepresented social categories, such as women, young people, or ethnic/religious minorities, in order to facilitate their access to representative bodies.

14. **Abstention**: Deliberate refusal on the part of a voter to vote on election day. It can be considered a political statement if clearly called for, it can also be the result of a lack of interest in an election.

15. **Secret ballot**: A fundamental principle in democratic elections, by which the voter is entitled to vote without being seen by others, a potential source of pressure and intimidation which could invalidate the freedom of choice.

16. **Referendum**: Instrument of direct democracy by which a population is called to vote not for one or several representatives, but to answer a question, generally with a ‘yes’ or ‘no,’ and sometimes to approve or reject a legal text (e.g., a law or constitution).

(At this point, there is the potential for several BINGO to be called in quick succession, with the next definitions provided participants matched the previous definitions to the BINGO cards correctly.)

20. **Ballot box**: Container in which voters insert their ballot after indicating their choice or, in multiple ballot systems, after choosing their preferred ballot.

21. **Transparency (of an election)**: A prerequisite of a democratic and fair election, involving, on the one hand, the right and ability of all electoral stakeholders to access all the regulations governing the process and, on the other hand, their right to follow and observe every step of the process to ensure it is carried out properly.

22. **Electoral rights**: All the civil rights and liberties that a citizen may enjoy in the context of an election, including the right to register as a voter, the right to vote, stand as a candidate, join a political party and campaign.

23. **Electoral violence**: Any harm or threat of harm to persons or property to delay, impede, intimidate, prevent or eliminate political opponents, voters and/or the electoral process itself.

24. **Electoral observation**: Verification of the election process for the purpose of collecting all information concerning the conditions in which it took place, to assess the extent to which an election has complied with national electoral law and with international standards.

**Handout:**

**Electoral BINGO!**

Listen to the definitions carefully and if you find the word that matches the definition, you can cover that spot with a marker or put an X through on the box in which that word appears. If you have a complete row of 5 covered or Xd words (either horizontally, vertically or diagonally), be ready to be the fastest to call out “BINGO!” The space in the middle of the BINGO! cards is “free” and is considered “called,” meaning it counts towards winning a bingo game, like a joker card.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election observation</th>
<th>Voter education</th>
<th>Multi-party elections</th>
<th>Secret ballot</th>
<th>Universal suffrage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voting age</td>
<td>Political party</td>
<td>Transparency (of an election)</td>
<td>Quota</td>
<td>Political funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct suffrage</td>
<td>Campaign strategy</td>
<td>FREE!</td>
<td>Electoral cycle</td>
<td>Electoral violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political pluralism</td>
<td>Voter exclusion</td>
<td>Electoral rights</td>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>Electoral fraud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstention</td>
<td>Referendum</td>
<td>Opinion poll (for an election)</td>
<td>Ballot box</td>
<td>Parity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part 2: Young people and political parties

What is the role of political parties and why are they important for young people?

Political parties 15 represent a central avenue through which young people can participate and influence political and decision-making processes. Democratic, transparent, inclusive political parties are a vital element of democratic societies in which diverse voices are heard, concerns and preferences are expressed through the political process peacefully, and decisions are made based on consensus. Although a basic objective of a political party is one of self-interest (winning elections), that self-interest plays a check and balance role in maintaining the integrity of elections, and in advancing higher levels of accountability by the scrutiny they provide when in opposition. The main roles of political parties can be summarized as below:

- **Policy development:** Political parties develop policies, plans, and ideas for how a community/government/country should be run and how societal challenges should be addressed. They contribute to elevating issues to national prominence, and they present their ideas and solutions in political agendas/programmes, especially during campaigns when they are competing to get elected. Young people can therefore participate in political parties to influence societal decision-making.

- **Electoral competition:** Political parties provide a means to compete peacefully for political power through elections, both by accepting the responsibility of governing when they win an election and by respecting the choice of the voters when they lose. In most countries, political parties determine which candidates are nominated and elected, and who will be placed on their candidate lists and at which position, and therefore whether young people can access political leadership in the first place.

- **Governing institutions:** Political parties can gain control over the government by winning elections with candidates they officially nominate or sponsor for positions in government. Political parties nominate candidates to run every level of government including the national and local levels, in all three branches of government. Political parties are therefore an essential means for young people to access government institutions and a fast-track to political leadership.

- **Citizen (and youth) participation:** Political parties are gatekeepers for inclusive representation in government institutions, and one of the main mechanisms for individuals to become directly involved in how a country is governed. Through political parties, young people can build their civic and political skills, dispositions and traits. 16 Political parties can enable youth participation through their campaign structures during elections and in outreach efforts to mobilize voters outside of elections, such as door-to-door campaigning, attending political meetings, and other types of voluntary political work. In constitutional governments, the characteristics of a high-functioning political party include having clearly defined roles and responsibilities, rights and powers, to have clear and transparent internal decision-making processes and procedures, and to have regular and accessible communications, both internal and external. To some extent, all these aspects have an impact on youth participation.17

What are the key challenges and opportunities for youth participation in political parties?

While in the past political engagement of citizens was primarily channelled through political parties, the last decade has shown that political parties are facing difficulties in retaining or attracting new party members, particularly young people. Evidence shows 18 that political party membership is less prevalent among those under the age of 30 than among older adults. Only 41 percent of 18 to 29-year-olds are active party members, compared with 5 percent of all adults.

This under-representation of young people can be explained in many ways. Structural hurdles include promotion mechanisms based on seniority, socio-cultural norms that discourage youth engagement in politics, and discrimination based on age or other grounds. Individual hurdles include the lack of political

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13. See the definition of “Political parties,” p. 156.
15. See Part 1 of this session on “Young people and elections,” p. 137.
17. See Activity 15 on “The triangle of political party best practices,” p. 150.
and civic literacy and political awareness, the lack of a powerbase or networks to win nominations and elections, and the lack of financial resources (see below “Political finance”). Political parties could do more to encourage young people to run for office, such as nominating younger candidates for national and local elections and creating platforms and space for young people to engage with political leadership. They could also advocate to lower the legal age to run for office at these levels of political office in order to allow younger candidates.

In many countries, opportunities to foster the inclusion of young people in political parties already exist within their internal organizational structures, and external engagement practices. To be more diverse and inclusive, political parties could move away from thinking of young people as only volunteers and supporters and start recruiting young people to become active members and provide them with access to party leadership. Selected examples of existing methods, referred to as “affirmative action measures,” are provided below.

Want to learn more about gender and political parties?


- Youth quotas: In some countries, legislation aims to tackle the under-representation of young people by implementing youth quotas, such as Cyprus and Nicaragua. The two main types of quotas include reserved seats and legal candidate quotas. In countries without legal provisions guaranteeing a minimum of young people on candidate lists or reserved seats for young people, political parties can also opt to introduce voluntary quotas to ensure that a minimum number of young candidates are represented on their lists. To help with gender parity, quotas are also implemented in certain countries to improve the representation of women in the political process. Gender quotas are one type of temporary special measures, and there are many other types of policies adopted and implemented to increase women’s access to political participation and decision-making in order to overcome structural barriers that women face in male-dominated electoral politics.

- Youth party wings: To tackle the decline in youth political party membership, political parties in numerous countries have created a dedicated platform for young people to participate within, and in some cases, alongside the main party structure. Evidence shows that youth wings are instrumental for political parties for multiple important reasons, including: to build the capacity of young party members through mentoring programmes and policy development activities, thereby creating a new generation of skilled political leaders; to help influence party policy development and leadership selection from the inside, and mainstream young people’s points of view, and to support strategic and youth-friendly outreach to young voters, using appropriate language, platforms, and content. However, in some countries, youth wings are not always given a space to influence nomination processes, set political agendas or write party programmes/manifestos.

  - Political finance: The distribution of financial resources can also affect young people’s representation within political parties and the electoral process. Excessive costs often limit opportunities for young people with relatively less influence or financial means, regardless of how eager they are to run for office. Recognizing that political activities often require (considerable) financing, many countries have introduced state subsidies to level the playing field and encourage political pluralism.21 Political finance has also a decisive impact on young women’s participation in politics, for instance by providing increased public funding to lists headed by women and by providing ongoing public funding to political parties with specific funds for activities related to gender equality. Increased transparency in political parties and election campaigns has the potential to rebalance the participation of men and women in politics.

More information:


The trainer may consider doing a break before starting Activity 15. Suggested time: up to 15 minutes

After providing an overview of the session content in Part 2, the trainer may consider using the interactive Activity 15 to help participants “experience” the session content. Suggested duration: 35 minutes

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19. See the definition of “Political and civic literacy,” p. 62.
Activity 15: The triangle of political party best practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 35 min</td>
<td>Discussion in small groups of 6 (1 table)</td>
<td>Printed handout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Review the basic roles and functions of political parties, and how they can promote youth participation</td>
<td>• Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td>• Debrief reflection in the full group</td>
<td>Pens for each participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Activity (25 min)</td>
<td>• Debriefing (8 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity learning outcomes:**

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Understand the basic roles and functions of political parties, and how they can promote youth participation.
- [Skills] Practice analytical skills.
- [Attitude and values] Promote young people’s active participation in political parties, including through youth wings.

**Activity instructions:**

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**

- Ask participants what they know about the roles of political parties, and what they imagine to be the main characteristics or features of a high-functioning political party in a constitutional government.
- Explain that participants will work in small groups to assess the three main aspects of high-functioning political parties, namely: 1. Internal democracy, 2. Outreach, and 3. Transparency (see Handout). For each aspect, lettered a) to l), participants will rank them from lowest (1) to highest impact (5) on youth participation in political parties. Encourage participants to reflect on how political parties can be more inclusive towards young people and young women. Explain that participants will need to provide a justification for why they choose a certain ranking from lowest (1) to highest impact (5).

**Activity: Up to 25 minutes**

- Tell participants they have up to 20 minutes to complete the exercise. The trainer may want to help the initial discussions by providing some examples (see Cheat sheet) so that participants can identify areas with the highest impact on youth participation.

**Debriefing and evaluation: 8 minutes**

- After 25 minutes, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to give a ranking to three main aspects of high-functioning political parties, namely: 1. Internal democracy, 2. Outreach, and 3. Transparency? If not, why did you not manage?
  - Do you agree that the three main aspects of high-functioning political parties are important and can have an impact on youth participation? In which ways?
  - Can you reflect on the situation in your country, and can you think of examples that illustrate each of the three main aspects of high-functioning political parties?
  - What is the most surprising or interesting information you learned from this exercise?

**Cheat sheet for the trainer: Possible answers to the exercise**

Based on the “The triangle of political party best practices” (see Handout), aspects of high-functioning political parties which have a high impact (and therefore may be rated at the top of the scale, numbered 4 or 5) on youth participation include:

- a. Young people have access to information and capacity building activities on internal party governance.
- b. No direct relationship with youth participation in political parties.
- c. Young people can shape the vision and priorities of the party’s agendas/programmes, and influence policymaking.
- d. Young people have access to political structures and potentially to party leadership, with a more limited potential of being discriminated based on age or other status.
- e. Young people are informed through internal communication channels and can be more strategic in navigating political structures and potentially access political leadership.
- f. Young people can be included in party structures based on research, data and evidence, including from “new sectors,” meaning potentially also young people from vulnerable and marginalized groups or hard-to-reach communities.
- g. External communication of the party is adapted to young people, and young people in the party can contribute to shaping political messages.
- h. The party leverages the capacity of young people to participate in outreach, organize, and mobilize young people and volunteers.
- i. Young people benefit from training on outreach, and support party membership recruitment including from “new sectors,” meaning potentially also young people from vulnerable and marginalized groups or hard-to-reach communities.
- j. No direct relationship with youth participation in political parties.
- k. Young people can benefit from accountability and transparency by being better represented within party structures.
- l. No direct relationship with youth participation in political parties.
Handout:

This exercise was adapted to address youth participation in political parties from a very useful framework originally developed by the NDI and used in this training tool: National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (n.d.). Campaign Skills Trainer’s: Module 1 Political Parties and Elections. Washington D.C., United States. Available in English only.

The triangle of political party best practices

There are three main aspects of high-functioning political parties in constitutional governments, namely: 1. Internal democracy, 2. Outreach, and 3. Transparency. Based on your own experience, what aspects (lettered from a) to l) have the lowest (1) to the highest impact (5) on youth participation in political parties. Be prepared to explain why!

Variations:

- If the participants are from the same country and taking into consideration local sensitivities, the trainer can encourage participants to think about the main political party and use it as an example.
- An online version of this activity can be organized by sharing an online/ editable version of the triangle and letting online participants do this exercise behind their screens, using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

Part 3: Young women in politics

While there is some undeniable progress with an increasing number of women in executive, government, and parliamentary position, women are underrepresented as voters, as well as in leadership positions, whether in elected office, the civil service, or academia. The range of barriers they face were summarized by the UN General Assembly in its resolution on women’s political participation: “Women in every part of the world continue to be largely marginalized from the political sphere, often as a result of discriminatory laws, practices, attitudes and gender stereotypes, low levels of education, lack of access to health care and the disproportionate effect of poverty on women.”

Among them, young women face additional structural barriers through discriminatory laws and institutions that limit their voting rights and their ability to run for office and to be elected. Compared to young men, young women are even more likely to have capacity gaps, including the education, networks and resources needed to become political leaders, and are further excluded from political life due to socio-cultural and institutional norms. In response to this, a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality, gender mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities, policy development, legislation, research, advocacy, resource allocation, and planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects.

Young women represent an untapped resource in politics and any political environment which reflects and addresses gender-specific concerns, values and experiences contributes to building and sustaining peaceful and inclusive societies, for several reasons including:

- Democratic gains, human rights, and gender equality: Women’s political participation is a fundamental prerequisite for gender equality and genuine democracy and gender equality. The concept of democracy is only truly realized when women participate effectively and meaningfully in all spheres of public life, when political decision-making is shared by women and men. Women’s participation is also a human right, rooted in social justice and equality.

24. See the activity on “Busting myths about youth political participation and political change,” p. 109.
25. See the definition of “Peaceful and inclusive society,” p. 73.
26. See the definition of “Gender equality,” p. 179.
• **Inclusive policymaking and lawmaking:** Women’s participation in politics can contribute to redefining political priorities, by placing new items on the political agenda and providing fresh views on mainstream political issues and the types of solutions that are proposed. Female politicians tend to prioritize issues related to the quality of life and focus on education, health and infrastructure, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.27

• **Responsive and accountable leadership:** Female politicians are often perceived as more honest and more responsive than their male counterparts, qualities which encourage confidence in democratic and representative institutions. Female lawmakers are perceived as more responsive to community concerns and citizen needs, particularly from underrepresented, vulnerable, and marginalized groups.

• **Consensus-, resilience- and peacebuilding:** Women’s leadership and conflict resolution inclinations tend to prioritize participatory, consultative and less hierarchical political structures and processes. Female politicians are also more likely to work across party or ethnic lines, even in highly partisan environments, and across social sectors. In conflict settings, female leaders tend to advocate most strongly for stabilization, reconstruction, and the prevention of further conflict.

More information:

• UN Development Programme, UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, Inter-Parliamentary Union and International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2018). Consolidated Response: Involvement of Young Women in Politics. New York, United States. Available in English only.


• Center of Arab Women for Training and Research and Oxfam (2016). Women in Political and Civic Life: Obstacles and Challenges to Overcome Them in Morocco, Tunisia, Occupied Palestine Territories, Yemen: Regional Report. Tunis, Tunisia. Available in English only.


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**Activity 16: Let’s unpack gender statistics!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion in small groups of 6 (1 table)</td>
<td>Printed handout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Review official UN Women statistics to discuss women’s equal participation and leadership in political and public life</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 30 min</td>
<td>• Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td>Pens for each participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Activity (23 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Debriefing (5 min)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Debriefing (5 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity learning outcomes:**

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

• [Knowledge] Understand the main fact and figures and reflect on the key challenges and opportunities for women’s equal participation and leadership in political and public life.

• [Skills] Practice analytical skills, and teamwork.

• [Attitude and values] Promote the importance of women’s equal participation and leadership in political and public life.

**Preparation/ materials:**

• Printed handout for each participant

• Pens for each participant

**Activity instructions:**

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**

• Ask participants if they know about “gender parity,” and the “equal participation and leadership of (young) women in political and public life,” by asking them to identify women leaders they may know, or by providing some illustrative examples from the trainer’s personal or professional experience.

• Explain that the activity will require participants to work in small groups and review a list of official UN Women (see Handout) and answer a series of questions related to women’s equal participation and leadership in political and public life (see Handout).

• The trainer may choose to let the small groups do the entire exercise at once, or instead to go over each statistic one by one.

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27 See the session on “Youth participation and the SDGs,” p. 72
Activity: Up to 23 minutes

- Tell participants they have up to 23 minutes to read the list of official UN Women statistics, and fill up a table (see Handout).

Debriefing and evaluation: 7 minutes

- After 23 minutes, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to fill every row in the table, and answer every question in the exercise? If you did not manage, which row(s) or which question(s), and why?
  - Can you name many women Heads of State or Government, what are they famous for, what did they achieve?
  - What are your concrete suggestions to achieve gender-inclusive national parliaments, local governments?
  - What are your concrete suggestions to change (young) men’s attitudes towards (young) women’s leadership in national parliaments and local governments?
  - What is the most surprising or interesting information you learned from this exercise?

Handout:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Statistics (as of 2020)</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Women in executive government positions</td>
<td>• Women serve as Heads of State or Government in only 21 countries, and 119 countries have never had a woman leader. At the current rate, gender parity in the highest decisions of power will not be reached for another 130 years. • Only 21 percent of government ministers were women, with only 14 countries having achieved 50 percent or more women in cabinets. With an annual increase of just 0.52 percentage points, gender parity in ministerial positions will not be achieved before 2077. • The five most held portfolios by women ministers are: family/children/youth/elderly/disabled; followed by social affairs; environment/natural resources/energy; employment/labour/vocational training, and women affairs/gender equality.</td>
<td>Name one woman leader currently acting as Head of State or Government? Name one woman leader currently acting as government or cabinet minister? Provide two reasons why women leaders should manage portfolios such as Defense, Foreign Affairs, Justice, Finance, the Interior?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Women in national parliaments</td>
<td>• Only 25 percent of all national parliamentarians are women, up from 11 percent in 1995. • Only four countries have 50 percent or more women in parliament in single or lower houses: Rwanda with 61 percent, Cuba with 53 percent, Bolivia with 53 percent, and the United Arab Emirates with 50 percent. • Countries which have reached or surpassed 40 percent are often characterized by applied gender quotas—either legislated candidate quotas or reserved seats. • In Nordic European countries, women hold 43.9 percent of seats in national parliaments (both houses combined), while in the Middle East and North Africa, women only hold 16.6 percent of seats. The percentage falls to 10.8 percent for Arab women in the upper house/senate. • At the current rate of progress, gender parity in national legislative bodies will not be achieved before 2063.</td>
<td>Provide one policy or law-related idea on how to achieve gender-inclusive national parliaments? Provide one idea on how to change (young) men’s attitudes towards (young) women’s leadership in national parliaments?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3. Women in local governments

- Data from 133 countries shows that women constitute 36 percent of elected members in local deliberative bodies.
- Only two countries have reached 50 percent, and an additional 18 countries have more than 40 percent women in local government.
- Regional variations are also noted for women’s representation in local deliberative bodies: Central and Southern Asia, 41 percent; Europe and Northern America, 35 percent; Oceania, 32 percent; Sub-Saharan Africa, 29 percent; Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, 25 percent; Latin America and the Caribbean, 25 percent; Western Asia, Middle East and Northern Africa, only 18 percent.
- Women demonstrate political leadership by working across party lines through parliamentary women’s caucuses, even in the most politically combative environments, and by championing issues of gender equality, such as the elimination of gender-based violence, parental leave and childcare, pensions, gender-equality laws, and electoral reform.

Provide one policy or law-related idea on how to achieve gender-inclusive local governments?

Provide two benefits of (young) women leader when they are in charge of local-level affairs?

More information:


**Extending the session**

Encourage participants to research the next election in their community, city, or country. When are the elections taking place, who are the main political parties and political figures running for office, and what are the main ideas proposed in their respective political programmes? Do participants know if the main political parties have a youth wing and/or a student wing or other mechanisms for youth participation? If so, does it have the authority and autonomy to make its own decisions? Is it represented in the executive of the party? Does it have its own budget? Do the main political parties have a gender-responsive strategy or actions plan, or does it conduct gender audits that promote young women’s participation in politics? Highlight that there are only benefits in being better informed!

**REFLECTING ON MODULE 2**

**Reflection activity: SWOT analysis tool**

Insist that the group creates a quiet and learning atmosphere for each individual to reflect, without any distractions or interruptions. Please refer to the trainer tips previously provided. 28

28. See the section on “Reflecting on Module 1,” p. 91.
Reflection: SWOT analysis tool
Read the following questions carefully and reflect on what you learned today!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Strengths</th>
<th>2. Weakness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total time: Approx. 5-7 min</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 5-7 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What positive aspects and strengths did you notice within this module?</td>
<td>• What was missing for you from this module?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What learning development occurred for you in this module?</td>
<td>• What are the areas for improvement for your own learning, development, and engagement in the curriculum?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Besides knowledge acquisition, what other benefits have you received from this module?</td>
<td>• In which ways are you not following through on your commitments to the team and to yourself? What ideas do you have to change that?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Opportunities</th>
<th>4. Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total time: Approx. 5-8 min</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 5-8 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What areas would you like to further develop? What challenge can you set for yourself to support with that?</td>
<td>• Are there any risks that threaten your potential as a leader and changemaker? If so, what are they?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What resources (people, materials, courses, resources, etc.) can support you to develop the competences of this module further?</td>
<td>• What threats may prevent you from learning to your maximum potential? How might you mitigate them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What feedback can you provide to the trainer to support your learning process further in the following module?</td>
<td>• What behaviours have you noticed in yourself and others that might harm instead of helping the team dynamic? What ideas do you have to overcome them?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Add any other reflections you may have:
MODULE 3: YOUTH CIVIC PARTICIPATION

The third module will help participants develop their civic awareness and understanding (civic literacy) and understand the key trends, challenges and opportunities related to young people’s participation in civil society and through collective action, at local and national levels. Young people can participate in civic life through joining civil society organizations, carrying out community service activities and other forms of volunteerism, and joining with others to raise awareness on issues of public concern, for instance through peaceful demonstrations and consumer activism. Through interactive activities, participants will practice reasoning and complex problem-solving and be able to analyze, explain, evaluate, and defend the importance of the effective and meaningful youth civic participation in different contexts.

Terms and concepts

(Youth) civic participation
The wide range of actions by people, undertaken either alone or in community with others, with the intent or effect to address issues of public concern, to help others, to solve a community problem and/or to participate in the life of the community, and society at large.

Citizen
For the purpose of this curriculum, wherever the term “citizen” is used, it refers not to a national of a particular country but to a person subject of rights and obligations to be respected and promoted by states and other actors. It refers to “members of society” and does not intend to ignore the contexts and needs of immigrants, refugees, undocumented people, stateless persons, and, in some countries, the incarcerated.

Active citizenship
The process by which people prioritize the common good or issues of public concern in their values, life choices and actions, in accordance with core values. Active citizens can participate in different fields of life (political, economic, social, cultural, etc.) at several levels, from local (community or grassroots), national (country or nation-state) to supra-national (commonly referred to as “global citizenship”).

Civic literacy
See the definition of “Political and civic literacy” in Module 1 above.

SESSION 8: INTRODUCTION TO YOUTH CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Description
The aim of this session is to provide participants with the foundational knowledge needed for Module 3 on youth civic participation. This session will focus on the basic understanding of key concepts and theories related to civil society, collective action, social accountability, and social change. Participants will work in teams to conduct a qualitative and participatory assessment, using the example of a citizen report card, and will have facilitated discussion to deconstruct some of the sociocultural norms, beliefs, misconceptions, and stereotypes about youth civic participation.

Learning outcomes
By the end of this introductory session, participants will be able to:

• [Knowledge] Understand key trends, challenges and opportunities related to young people’s participation in civil society, through collective action and mechanisms of social accountability, at local and national levels.

• [Skills] Develop civic awareness and understanding (civic literacy) and practice identifying relevant skills that can enable young people to have a positive impact on the lives of their peers, including marginalized youth, family, colleagues, and community.

• [Attitudes and values] Promote the importance for young people to learn about and embody active citizenship, and the key role young people can play in public life.

After briefly introducing the main topic of the session, the trainer may consider explaining the learning outcomes above, and some of the key terms and concepts, based the needs/ level of the group. The trainer may also provide an overview of the sessions covered in this module.

Suggested duration: 15 minutes

1 See the definition of “Values-based leadership,” p. 62.
Session content: Youth civic participation and social change

Terms and concepts

| Civil society | Often referred to as the “civic sector,” civil society is the arena – outside of the family, the state, and the market – in which individual and collective actors undertake free and voluntary action to advance shared interests. |
| Civil society organizations | A diverse set of individual and collective actors operate in the civil society arena. Among them, civil society organizations are the broad range of organized collective actors which can structure themselves in a variety of ways, from more to less formal. |
| Collective action | Action taken together by a group of people whose goal is to enhance their condition and achieve a common objective. |
| Social accountability | The change of structures, institutions, processes as well as behaviours, and values systems within the social structures of society. Change can be either a gradual or disruptive shift in the status quo, intentional or random, human-caused, or natural. |
| Social change | A form of accountability that emerges through actions by individuals and civil society organizations, aimed at holding the state to account, as well as efforts by government and other actors – such as the media, private sector, donors – to support these actions. |

Part 1: Introduction to youth civic participation

What is youth civic participation and why is it important?

Youth civic participation is the wide range of actions by young people, undertaken either alone or in community with others, with the intent or effect to address issues of public concern, to help others, to solve a community problem and/or to participate in the life of their community, and the society at large. It can primarily take place in the following main forms: 2

- **Youth participation in civil society organizations** includes the participation of young people in the full range of formal and informal civil society organizations that are outside the state and market. For instance, participating in youth-serving organizations, non-governmental organizations, associations, clubs but also carrying out voluntary work outside of formal civil society structures.

- **Youth participation through collective action** includes any action taken together by a group of young people whose goal is to achieve a common objective or enhance their condition. For instance, young people take part in peaceful demonstrations, in consumer activism, e.g., participating in social movements, including online using the Internet and messaging applications, boycotting products, and collective bargaining (related to the terms and conditions of employment). Promoting youth civic participation is important for several reasons. At the individual level, the participation of young people in civic life plays a valuable role in shaping how young people learn to interact with their community and develop the skills, values, and sense of empowerment necessary to become active citizens. 3 It supports their social, cognitive, and psychological development as well as the development of their identity, self-confidence, autonomy, and their feeling of belonging. It also provides access to different perspectives, experiences, and approaches leading to better career prospects and access to new job opportunities. At the community level, youth civic participation is also essential to promote social inclusion, community resilience, and ensuring lasting peace and stability within communities.

What is social accountability and how does it relate to youth participation?

Accountability means that all individuals, organizations, and institutions have to take responsibility for and disclose their actions. Accountability is based on transparency and access to information, for in the absence of reliable and timely information there is no basis for analyzing a situation, demanding answers or for enforcing sanctions. Accountability is important to youth participation for three main reasons:

- Accountability is considered one of the pillars of the social contract between a government and its citizens, which is based on the effective and meaningful participation of all, as well as on responsive and accountable public institutions and inclusive political processes. Accountability enables governments to identify challenges, enact solutions and build the trust, legitimacy and mutual understanding with citizens and young people that are among the basis for good governance.

- Accountability is also a central commitment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which emphasizes “the need to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies (…) based on transparent, effective and accountable institutions” (Goal 16). Accountability is also highlighted as a commitment in the follow-up and review framework of the SDGs.

- Accountability is also a key element of a human rights-based approach, which emphasizes the relationship between the duties of the state (duty-bearers) and the corresponding rights entitlements of the individual (rights-holders), as it helps identify who has a responsibility to act to ensure that rights are fulfilled.

Promoting youth civic participation is important for several reasons. At the individual level, the participation of young people in civic life plays a valuable role in shaping how young people learn to interact with their community and develop the skills, values, and sense of empowerment necessary to become active citizens. It supports their social, cognitive, and psychological development as well as the development of their identity, self-confidence, autonomy, and their feeling of belonging. It also provides access to different perspectives, experiences, and approaches leading to better career prospects and access to new job opportunities. At the community level, youth civic participation is also essential to promote social inclusion, community resilience, and ensuring lasting peace and stability within communities.

What is social accountability and how does it relate to youth participation?

Accountability means that all individuals, organizations, and institutions have to take responsibility for and disclose their actions. Accountability is based on transparency and access to information, for in the absence of reliable and timely information there is no basis for analyzing a situation, demanding answers or for enforcing sanctions. Accountability is important to youth participation for three main reasons:

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2. See the session on “Youth action in civil society,” p. 193.
3. See the definition of “Active citizenship,” p. 162.
Accountability is considered one of the pillars of the social contract between a government and its citizens, which is based on the effective and meaningful participation of all, as well as on responsive and accountable public institutions and inclusive political processes. Accountability enables governments to identify challenges, enact solutions and build the trust, legitimacy and mutual understanding with citizens and young people that are among the basis for good governance.

Accountability is also a central commitment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which emphasizes "the need to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies (…) based on transparent, effective and accountable institutions" (Goal 16). Accountability is also highlighted as a commitment in the follow-up and review framework of the SDGs.

Accountability is also a key element of a human rights-based approach, which emphasizes the relationship between the duties of the state (duty-bearers) and the corresponding rights entitlements of the individual (rights-holders), as it helps identify who has a responsibility to act to ensure that rights are fulfilled.

Accountability is often divided in two main types:

- **Horizontal accountability**: Imposed by governments internally through institutional mechanisms in the three branches of government (executive, legislative, and judiciary) for oversight, e.g., monitoring and reporting on potential abuses, in a system of checks and balances. In numerous countries, dedicated institutions have the mandate to carry out this function, such as anti-corruption commissions, public auditors, National Human Rights Institutions, ombudsmen, legislative public-accounts committees, and sectoral regulatory agencies.

- **Vertical accountability**: Imposed directly through formal political and electoral processes or indirectly through citizens and civil society, including the media, with the view to enforce standards of good performance on public institutions.

Social accountability is a form of accountability that emerges from actions by young people, citizens and civil society organizations aimed at holding the state to account, as well as efforts by government and other actors (e.g., private sector, donors, the media) to support these actions. The goal of social accountability is not to replace but to complement and support existing vertical and horizontal accountability mechanisms. Unlike vertical and horizontal accountability, social accountability can often be exercised on a continuous basis, through the legislatures (e.g., public hearings), the judiciary (e.g., legal actions related to government policies and budgets), through civil society (e.g., advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns) and collective action (e.g., peaceful demonstrations, collective bargaining), and the media, among others.

Social accountability is more likely to be effective if a few conditions are met. Firstly, an enabling environment for citizens and civil society, who can be capacitated and encouraged to effectively and meaningfully participate in public life. Secondly, the existence of monitoring/ accountability systems and grievance and redress mechanisms, for instance through the judiciary. Lastly, improving internal government mechanisms to investigate electoral fraud, corruption, human rights abuses, and to improve public audits and other types of oversight mechanisms.

Common examples of social accountability tools and mechanisms include:

- **Monitoring public financial management** such as public expenditure tracking surveys, which are quantitative surveys that track public funds to identify how different streams of government resources are used and what proportion of the resources reaches the intended groups of beneficiaries. Participatory budgeting is also common, and it involves direct citizen participation in the distinct phases of budget formulation, decision-making and monitoring, and helps government budgets better reflect people’s needs and priorities.

- **Citizen and community report cards** are surveys that seek to obtain direct feedback on experiences, suggestions, and complaints from citizens or communities regarding the services they use, by assessing the performance of specific public service providers. Report card initiatives can provide insight into the effectiveness of public spending across geographical areas and sectors and create benchmarks against which certain performance improvements can be promoted and to help assess whether public actions are reaching citizens and communities to the expected level. Report card initiatives also support the improved accountability of the public sector by supplying systematic feedback from users to elected and public officials.

- **Information and communications technologies (ICTs)** are increasingly used as a participatory monitoring and reporting tool and can empower citizens and civil society to engage in informed and meaningful dialogue with government about the quality of governance and service provision. ICTs can increase transparency and facilitate access information, by enabling a larger dissemination, reaching more locations across larger areas, and increasing the number of potential participants in a cost-effective way.

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4. See sessions on “Youth participation in policymaking,” and “Youth, elections, and political parties,” pp. 113 and 135.
5. See session on “Youth participation and the SDGs,” p. 72.
6. See session on “Space for youth participation,” p. 29.
Case study: Enabling direct citizen feedback in the occupied Palestinian territory

In the occupied Palestinian territory, youth leader Ahmad Al Dirye built on his volunteer experience as a Youth Ambassador in the Arab Thought Foundation and his participation in the UNDP Youth Leadership Programme to “think mobile and act local.” He created the “Initiative for Palestinian Citizenship” (known under the acronym “RASSD”), which set up a dedicated committee to serve as a platform for exchange and mediator, geared toward improving communication between citizens and local authorities and encouraging people to take part in local decision-making and political processes. The initiative also created a website and mobile application designed to help citizens learn about their civic and political rights and responsibilities and understand and follow municipal plans and recommendations, which included a mechanism to share experiences, suggestions and complaints about public services with the responsible department. Based on its successes, RASSD expanded to include a grassroots network composed of young volunteers who organize training-of-trainers to build the capacities of its members on active citizenship, with a special focus on young people. The initiative also conducts awareness-raising campaigns about the importance of engaging in local governance processes.

Source: Youth Leadership Programme 2 (2016), UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States.

More information:

Activity 17: Submit your citizen report card

Activity aim/objectives
Participants will:
- Conduct a qualitative and participatory assessment, using the example of a citizen report card

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total time: Approx. 30 min</td>
<td>- Each participant individually</td>
<td>- Printed handout for each participant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td>- Discussions in small groups (1 group per table)</td>
<td>- Pens for each participant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Activity (23 min)</td>
<td>- Debrief in the full group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Debriefing (5 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity learning outcomes:
By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:
- [Knowledge] Understand the concept of social accountability.
- [Skills] Practice analytical and reporting skills, using the example of a qualitative and participatory assessment (citizen report card).
- [Attitude and values] Promote the importance of participatory monitoring and reporting to create community change.

Preparation/materials:
- Printed handout for each participant.
- Pens for each participant.
Activity instructions:

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**

- Ask participants if they know about "accountability," "social accountability" and examples of social accountability tools and mechanisms such as "citizen report cards."
- Explain that the activity will require to conduct a qualitative and participatory assessment, using the example of a citizen report card, in relation to the issue of health and wellbeing of the community. Participants will work individually to fill out the table (see Handout) and reflect on three elements: their personal habits, to which extent their environment is conducive to be physically active, and the existence and functioning of public facilities, spaces and programmes promoting physical activity.

**Activity: Up to 23 minutes**

- Tell participants they have up to 20 minutes to fill the table (see Handout) and identify 3 top recommendations for their city/ town/ village, based on their citizen report card.
- After 20 minutes, encourage participants to compare their citizen report cards with participants at their table. What are the main differences and commonalities between their results?

**Debriefing and evaluation: 5 minutes**

- After 23 minutes, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to fill every row of the table? If you did not manage, which rows, and why?
  - What did you discover in your analysis of your own habits, the influences of your friends and family, and the structures available in your community?
  - Which factors are in your control, which ones are out of your control? What can YOU do about either?
  - Do you have practical examples from your city/ town/ village of public facilities, spaces and programmes promoting physical activity? Are they safe and inclusive for everyone?
  - Did you identify concrete and useful recommendations? How can they be used to lobby or advocate for public facilities, spaces and programmes promoting physical activity?
  - What is the most surprising or interesting information you learned from this exercise?

Handout:

**Submit your citizen report card**

The municipal council of the neighbouring town of Olive City (مجلس مدينة الزيتون "Majlis Madinat Alzaytoon") has recently conducted an in-depth study to measure the status of the health and wellbeing of its citizens in the city. In addition, a qualitative study looking at people’s perceptions based on a series of indicators was conducted to collect evidence and data. You are provided with the citizen report card used in Olive City below, but you are welcome to add your own criteria and sets of indicators in the empty rows!

Reflect on your own city/ town/ village, look at your personal habits, and the degree to which the environment in your community affects your ability to be physically active in the past 12 months. Guidelines developed by the World Health Organization suggest that young people should do at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity and sleep between 7 to 9 hours every day. Based on the results of your community score card, suggest the top 3 recommendations to improve the health and wellbeing of people in your community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Rating and comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Physical activity</td>
<td>- To what degree you are meeting the guidelines for daily physical activity? &lt;br&gt; - How much of my day do I spend being active (as opposed to being sedentary, e.g., seated at your computer)?</td>
<td>📰 High 📰 Medium 📰 Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Sleep</td>
<td>- How often are you meeting or exceeding the daily recommended amount of sleep?</td>
<td>Add your own!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Influencers</td>
<td>- To what degree does your family emphasize the importance of physical activity and as part of our day to foster healthy habits?  &lt;br&gt; - Are you often involved in physical activity with your friends? How much do you meet with your friends at public physical activity facilities and spaces?</td>
<td>Add your own!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Add your own!
3. Your school/work

Conducive environment

- To what degree is there opportunity to be involved in physical activity, e.g., sports classes and clubs in your school? Who has access, or not, to these programmes, and why?
- Does your work emphasize the importance of life and work balance? Does your office have dedicated physical activity facilities and spaces?

Influencers

- To what degree does your school/work emphasize the importance of physical activity and life and work balance as a best practice to foster healthy habits?

Add your own!

4. Your city/town/village

Public spaces

- To what degree are there safe walking routes to school and work, bike lanes and walking trails?

Public infrastructures and programmes

- Do members of your community have access, or not, to public infrastructures, e.g., pools, arenas, parks, and other physical activity spaces?
- Do all members of your community have access to a variety of free or affordable programmes? Who has, or cannot, access these programmes?
- How has your municipal government invested in building healthy and accessible spaces and
- How has it provided access to programs for all community members?
- Are you aware of the existence of a municipal plan related to healthy communities and providing access to physical activity facilities, spaces and programmes?

Municipal strategy and investments

Add your own!

Your key recommendations to improve the health and wellbeing of people in your community:
Based on the results of your community score card, what are the top recommendations for your city/town/village?

More information:


Part 2: Social change and young people

Similarly to political change, social change can be defined as the change of structures, institutions, processes as well as behaviours and values systems within the social structures of society. The causes of social change are diverse, as it can result from numerous stressors, such as ideological/political, economic, demographic, and technological. This section will focus on social change through the actions of civil society actors, as well as through the actions of individuals coming together and creating change through collective behavior and social movements.

To better understand social change, a common distinction analyzes the power relationship between the givers and receivers. For all four types of approaches, change can take place through formal and informal organizations, it may be local, sub-national, national (or global) in scope, and may involve a range for actors, e.g., government programmes, civil society organizations and/or the private sector.

- Service-based approach: Aims at fulfilling gaps of basic services such as health, social welfare, housing, literacy, and sports. The responsibility lies with the powerholders, mainly public institutions, to provide individuals with services.
- Charity-based approach: Aims at fulfilling gaps of (often material) needs, beyond basic services. Individuals are “beneficiaries” or objects of charity. The responsibility is at the discretion of the givers, without obligations.
- Human rights-based approach: Aims at empowering people to know and claim their rights and increasing the ability and accountability of individuals and institutions who are responsible for respecting,

8. See the definition of “Political change,” p. 97.
10. See the definition of “Changemaker,” p. 24.
11. See the definition of “Human rights-based approach,” p. 40.
protecting, and fulfilling human rights. Individuals are subjects as rights-holders, while the responsibility lies with the duty-bearers to fulfill the rights of individuals.

- **Empowerment-based approach**: Aims at enabling citizens and communities to gain control over the factors and decisions that shape their lives. Individuals access a degree of autonomy and self-determination and can impact social change. The responsibility lies with the powerholders to provide individuals with the space, the right, the capacities, and the opportunity to participate.

Another useful framework to understand the theories of social change is Bill Moyer’s four roles of social activism, which helps understand the distinct roles assumed to create change at the individual and organizational levels. Each role can be played positively or negatively, and the table below summarizes some of the key information about this model.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helper</th>
<th>Ineffective</th>
<th>Advocate</th>
<th>Ineffective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>• Believes charity can handle social problems, or that helping individuals can change social structures</td>
<td>• Uses official channels, e.g., courts, legislatures, to get goals and values adopted</td>
<td>• Promotes minor reforms acceptable to powerholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Displays blind obedience to powerholders and country, not believing that institutions can serve elite interests</td>
<td>• Uses various means: elections, lobbying, legal action, coalition-building</td>
<td>• Identifies more with powerholders than with grassroots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Monitors success to make sure they are implemented</td>
<td>• Does not advocate for big transformations in society</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizer</th>
<th>Disruptor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>Ineffective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educates, convinces, and involved majority of citizens</td>
<td>• Promotes visions of perfection disconnected from practical political and social movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurtures mass-based grassroots mobilizing and organizing</td>
<td>• Advocates single approach while ignoring others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chooses strategies for long-term movement development, to diversify and broaden organization and coalitions</td>
<td>• Stifles emergence of diversity and ignores needs of activists</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More information:

Activity 18: Busting myths about youth civic participation and social change

**Activity aim/objectives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bust myths about youth civic participation</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 25 min</td>
<td>• Discussion and debrief in the full group</td>
<td>• There are no preparation/materials necessary for this activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructions (1 min)</td>
<td>Activity (20 min)</td>
<td>Debriefing (4 min)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity learning outcomes:**

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Deconstruct some of the sociocultural norms, beliefs, misconceptions, and stereotypes about young people, their civic participation and how they can effect social change.
- [Skills] Develop basic analytical skills and build consensus.
- [Attitude and values] Promote young people’s effective and meaningful participation in civic life.

**Preparation/materials:**

- There are no preparation/materials necessary for this activity.

**Activity instructions:**

**Explanation and set-up: 1 minutes**

- Ask participants what they know about concepts such as "social change," the types of social change, using what they learned in Module 2 and thinking about the difference between political and social change.
Tell participants that the whole group with be having a discussion to deconstruct some of the sociocultural norms, beliefs, misconceptions, and stereotypes about young people, their civic participation and how they can effect social change.

The trainer can choose to have small groups brainstorm their answers or lead a discussion with the whole group.

Activity: Up to 20 minutes
The trainer can choose to have an open discussion, or facilitate the discussion using some of the statements below:

- Young people are individualistic, entitled, or self-absorbed, they do not care about the wellbeing of others, community issues and the common good.
- Young people are too immature to be included in leadership positions within civil society organizations, e.g., community-based, volunteer-based, or youth-serving organizations.
- Young people only engage in civic action to socialize with their peers, not based on strong beliefs or knowledge of "how things work."
- Only young people can be volunteers.
- Young people lack the skills and experience to engage in civic/volunteer activity and lead positive change in their community.
- Participating in the life of the community or volunteering does not build relevant skills for the job market or 21st century life, and therefore are a waste of time and effort for young people.
- The civil society sector primarily exists to provide social services, e.g., education, and other delivery of basic services, and as well as developing and maintaining social structures.
- Social change takes place from the top-down, individuals do not have an impact.
- There is only one main way to create social change: either in gradual, slow, values-based, process-oriented manner (e.g., roles of helper and advocate), or through abrupt, transformational changes that requires mass mobilization and disruption (e.g., roles as organizer and disruptor).
- Young people have a propensity for violence and extremism, and primarily create change through conflict.
- Other statements that may be relevant to the participants’ local contexts.

Participating in the life of the community or volunteering does not build relevant skills for the job market or 21st century life, and therefore are a waste of time and effort for young people.

Participants can be invited to share about the common norms, beliefs, misconceptions, and stereotypes in their context, and to illustrate with concrete examples from their personal or professional experience. What are the main commonalities and differences between different participants/companies/countries?

Debriefing and evaluation: 4 minutes

After 20 minutes, consider conducting a debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:

- How did you find the discussion? Was it useful?
- What does it mean to you to be a “changemaker” in the context of youth civic participation? Can you think of ways to encourage your peers, family, colleagues, and members of the community to be changemakers?
- Can you think of concrete examples of young people having a positive impact through civic action in your community or country?
- What is the most outstanding information you learned today from the group discussion?

Handout: There is no handout necessary for this activity.

Variations:

- For this activity, the trainer may choose to use the World café methodology, which consists in assigning a host to each table and giving each table a different topic to discuss. Participants will be switching tables periodically and getting introduced to the previous discussion at their new table by the host. Examples of topics around youth civic participation: Table 1 What skills are needed to participate in the life of the community or as a volunteer? Table 2 Are young people really interested in helping others, or do they engage to socialize with their friends? Table 3 Can young people really create social change or a positive impact in the community?
- An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online “breakout rooms” organized by city or country and encourage them to discuss and write down their main points, using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

More information:


Extending the session

Invite participants to reflect on the importance of empathy and generosity in their everyday lives. How does it feel to be useful to their community? What are even the smallest steps they can take today to implement their pledge to help others? Can they think of ways to use the wide range of skills they have to create sustainable, positive change on the lives of their peers, family, colleagues, and community? Encourage participants to better understand social change by taking free online courses such as the ones proposed by websites such as Coursera on "Social Norms and Social Change" and edX on "Global Social Change."
SESSION 9: INCLUSION OF MARGINALIZED YOUTH

Suggested total duration for the session: 90 minutes.

Description

A true democracy requires that the poorest, most vulnerable, and marginalized members of society to have the opportunity to participate and have a meaningful voice in decisions affecting their lives. This session will explore the following topics: what is the "Leaving no one behind" approach and how does it relate to young people? What are the benefits of promoting inclusion and diversity and creating an enabling environment welcoming to all, where everyone feels valued and can contribute at their full potential? Participants will be invited to answer these questions by conducting a “Leaving no one behind” assessment and by reflecting on issues of discrimination and marginalization and the importance of social inclusion, diversity, and creating a sense of belonging for everybody in society.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

• [Knowledge] Understand the “leaving no one behind” principle and the benefits of diversity and inclusion in support of the participation in public life of young people belonging to all societal groups.
• [Skills] Build capacity for the effective use of inclusive approaches and tools that ensure that everyone's concerns, aspirations, opportunities, and capacities are considered, including the most vulnerable and marginalized individuals and groups in society.
• [Attitudes and values] Exhibit leadership, embody and promote among peers and community the principles of diversity and inclusion, and demonstrate the values of tolerance, dialogue and cooperation, mutual trust, and understanding.

After briefly introducing the main topic of the session, the trainer may consider explaining the learning outcomes above, and some of the key terms and concepts, based the needs/ level of the group.

Suggested duration: 5 minutes

Session content: Inclusion of marginalized youth

Terms and concepts

| Leaving no one behind | Ensuring people’s equal opportunities to participate in and benefit from development progress, based on the understanding that the achievement of well-being is of the highest moral importance. Leaving no one behind is a central principle of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. |
| Diversity | The idea that acknowledges the unity of humankind, while also recognizing, respecting, and valuing that each individual is unique, with individual differences. Diversity is based on principles of multiculturalism, tolerance, dialogue and cooperation, mutual trust and understanding, and is among the best guarantees to build and sustain inclusive and peaceful societies. |
| Equality | The idea that everyone, irrespective of age, gender, religion, and ethnicity, is entitled to the same rights and/ or opportunities. |
| Gender equality | The principle that men and women should receive equal treatment and access to opportunities and should not be discriminated against based on their gender. |
| Discrimination | The practice of unfairly treating a person or group of people differently from others based on stereotypes or prejudices and characteristics such as race, colour, descent, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic, or social origin, property, birth, disability, nationality, or other status. |
| Social exclusion | Being left outside the mainstream and denied participation in the economic, social, political, and cultural life of society, for instance through a restriction of access to opportunities and limitation of the capabilities required to capitalize on these opportunities. |
| Intersectionality | An analytical tool for understanding and responding to the ways in which systems of discrimination and disadvantage based on social categorizations such as ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, age, disability, and gender intersect, and the oppressive effects of these systemic inequalities are compounded to negatively impact marginalized and vulnerable individuals and groups, especially young men and women. |
Part 1: What does it mean to “leave no one behind”?

What is “Leaving no one behind” and how does it relate to youth participation?

“Leaving no one behind” is a central commitment made by UN Member States in the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. It means ensuring people’s equal opportunities to participate in and benefit from development progress, based on the recognition that today’s inequalities have arisen from discrimination experienced in the past, and therefore those who are most discriminated against, vulnerable and/or marginalized, the people “furthest behind first” in the words of the 2030 Agenda, need to be reached first. “Leaving no one behind” is based on two main elements:

- On one hand, inclusive economic growth that advances equitable economic opportunities to all groups and can deliver sustainable development more quickly. This is an important element, but not the focus of this curriculum.
- On the other hand, social inclusion, and participation, based on the recognition that poor, disadvantaged, and marginalized individuals and groups tend to have the least say in the decisions that affect them and are least likely to be included in the data and evidence governments use to allocate resources and shape policies.

It is important to note that people at the intersection of these factors face reinforcing and compounding disadvantage and deprivation, making them likely among the furthest behind:

- **Discrimination** relates to the importance to assess practices of unfairly treating a person or group of people differently from others based on stereotypes or prejudices, and characteristics such as race, colour, descent, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic, or social origin, property, birth, disability, nationality, indigenous, migratory status, or other status.
- **Geography** relates to someone’s place of residence and how it affects isolation, vulnerability, missing or inferior public services, transportation, Internet, or other infrastructure gaps.

The 2030 Agenda calls on all countries to identify who is left behind across income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, and geographic location. The UN Development Programme developed a framework to help identify who is being left behind and understand why, based on the 5 key factors below.

**Governance** relates to people facing disadvantage due to ineffective, unjust, unaccountable, or unresponsive public institutions. This includes the existence of inequitable, inadequate, or unjust laws, policies, processes or budgets, and the inability to gain influence or participate effectively and meaningfully in the political and decision-making processes.

**Socio-economic status** relates to people facing deprivation or disadvantages in terms of income, life expectancy and educational attainment, for instance access to jobs and livelihood, quality education and health services. It also includes access to clean water, sanitation, energy, social protection, and financial services.

**Shocks and fragility** relate to people’s exposure and/or vulnerability to setbacks due to the impacts of climate change, natural hazards, violence, conflict, displacement, health emergencies, economic downturns, price, or other types of shocks.

To deliver on this commitment in the 2030 Agenda, UNDP suggests that countries take an integrated approach, drawing on three mutually reinforcing “levers”:

- **Examine why people are left behind** by assessing inequalities through “leaving no one behind” assessments, and supporting the collection of research and disaggregated data and information that support a better understanding, monitoring and reporting of who is left behind, and why.
- **Empower those who are left behind** to become active citizens and agents of sustainable development. Urgent action is needed to enable and empower them, including to ensure their meaningful participation in decision making and to establish safe and inclusive mechanisms for their civic engagement.
- **Enact coordinated policies, laws, reforms, and interventions** that curb inequalities, and create opportunities for people’s participation, while upholding minimum standards of well-being.

More information:


1. See the session on “Youth participation and the SDGs,” p. 72.
3. See the definition of “Active citizenship,” p. 162.
4. See the definition of “Intersectionality,” p. 179.
6. See activity on “Who is left behind in your community?” p. 182.
7. See the definition of “Youth empowerment,” p. 25.
After providing an overview of the session content in Part 1, the trainer may consider using the interactive Activity 18 to help participants “experience” the session content.

**Suggested duration: 30 minutes**

### Activity 19: Who is left behind in your community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conduct a simplified version of a “leaving no one behind assessment” and provide recommendations</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 30 min</td>
<td>Discussions in small groups (1 group per table)</td>
<td>Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td>Debrief in the full group</td>
<td>Optional: Flipcharts and markers for each small group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Activity (20 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Debriefing (8 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity learning outcomes:**

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- **[Knowledge]** Understand the varied factors affecting the “leaving no one behind” principle and how they relate to young people and the participant’s country context.
- **[Skills]** Practice context and institutional analysis skills using a simplified version of a tested methodology to assess who is left behind and why; consensus-building, and teamwork.
- **[Attitude and values]** Promote the importance of diversity and inclusion, based on analysis, research and data, and display a commitment to sharing this knowledge with peers, family, colleagues, and the community.

**Preparation/ materials:**

- Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group).
- Optional: Flipcharts and markers for each small group.

**Activity instructions:**

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**

- Ask participants if they know about the “leaving no one behind” principle, and the varied factors that may come into consideration when discussing vulnerability and marginalization between diverse groups in society?

- Explain that the activity will require to work in small groups to assess who among young people is left behind and why, using a tested UN methodology, focusing on 5 key factors, namely: 1. Discrimination, 2. Geography, 3. Governance, 4. Socio-economic status, and 5. Shocks and fragility. Based on their 5-step assessment, groups will need to formulate at least 3 top recommendations to not leave young people behind and present them to the whole group.

**Activity: Up to 20 minutes**

- Tell participants they have up to 20 minutes to read the scenario provided, and to fill the table (see Handout).

**Debriefing and evaluation: 8 minutes**

- After 20 minutes, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to fill every row of the table? If you did not manage, which row, and why?
  - Who is left behind in your context? Who is the “furthest behind”? Why are they left behind? Are the considerations affecting why they are left behind strictly political, social, economic, cultural, or other considerations?
  - In your discussions, did you identify some of the key challenges in assessing who is left behind? Is your government working to realize the “Leaving no one behind” pledge in any of the following areas?
    - Data: Are countries undertaking research and collecting data necessary to identify those at high risk of being left behind?
    - Policy: Do countries have key laws and policies in place that address the needs of those at risk of being left behind such as anti-discrimination gender equality laws, and universal access to health, education, and public services? In relation to Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, what do you think an inclusive decision-making process mean to you as a young person or a one who is working in the youth empowerment field?
    - Finance: Are governments investing in education, health, and social protection — three sectors key to supporting those at high risk of being left behind?
  - What are your key recommendations for your government to fulfill the “Leaving no one behind” principle?
  - What actions can YOU do at your individual level to ensure people are not left behind?
  - What is the most surprising or interesting information you learned from this exercise?

8. See the session on “Youth participation and the SDGs,” p. 72.
Handout:

Leaving no one behind assessment

Within the framework of its national sustainable development plan, the government is conducting an integrated and comprehensive “leave no one behind assessment.” It was approved that a top governmental body will use the information to create a package of different policies that target the underlying and reoccurring reasons people and places get left behind, and the compounding and severe challenges endured by the furthest behind (e.g., inter-generational, chronically poor, most marginalized), as well as those most at risk of being left behind.

As a member of the local youth organization “Nahno Nusharik” (نحن نشارك, “We Participate”), you were selected to look specifically into the issues affecting young people, based on your extensive experience working with young people and grassroots organizations. Your director and senior managers have flagged this as a key opportunity to influence the government’s policy on diversity and inclusion, and that – based on your 5-step assessment – you will need to formulate at least 3 top recommendations to not leave young people behind.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Key questions</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Discrimination</td>
<td>What biases, exclusion or mistreatment do young people face based on one or more aspect of their identity, including prominently gender as well as ethnicity, age, class, disability, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, indigenous, migratory status, etc.?</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Geography</td>
<td>Who among young people endures isolation, vulnerability, missing or inferior public services, transportation, Internet, or other infrastructure gaps due to their place of residence?</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Governance</td>
<td>Where do young people face disadvantage due to ineffective, unjust, unaccountable, or unresponsive global, national and/or sub-national institutions? Who among young people is affected by inequitable, inadequate, or unjust laws, policies, processes, or budgets? Who is less or unable to gain influence or participate meaningfully in the decisions that impact them?</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Socio-economic status</td>
<td>Who among young people faces deprivation or disadvantages in terms of income, life expectancy and educational attainment? Who has less chances to stay healthy, be nourished and educated? Compete in the labour market? Acquire wealth and/or benefit from quality health care, clean water, sanitation, energy, social protection, and financial services?</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Shocks and fragility</td>
<td>Who among young people is more exposed and/or vulnerable to setbacks due to the impacts of climate change, natural hazards, violence, conflict, displacement, health emergencies, economic downturns, price, or other shocks?</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your key recommendations NOT to leave young people behind in your community/country:

Variations:

- Time-permitting, the trainer may consider starting this activity with a short reflection exercise. Encourage participants to think about how they feel when they are disempowered? Who are the people, institutions, processes disempowering people around them? How do they feel towards those who disempower them, or disempower specific groups? The trainer can also divide the participants in several groups, ask each group to present the results of their discussion, and discuss the main differences and commonalities between their responses.
- An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online “breakout rooms” organized by city or country and encourage them to discuss and write down their main points, using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

After providing an overview of the session content in Part 1, the trainer may consider using the interactive Activity 18 to help participants “experience” the session content. Suggested duration: 30 minutes
Part 2: Understanding social inclusion and exclusion

**Social inclusion** is the process of improving the terms of participation in society, particularly for people who are disadvantaged, through enhancing opportunities, access to resources, voice, and respect for rights. It is also considered a core aspiration of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which emphasizes the importance of promoting political, social, and economic inclusion of all people (Goal 10). Social inclusion rests on two important principles:

- **Equality** is about ensuring everybody has an equal opportunity and is not treated differently or discriminated against because of their characteristics or the group they belong to. Equality highlights that everyone, irrespective of age, gender, religion, and ethnicity, is entitled to the same rights and opportunities. It is a fundamental principle of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights captured in the following: “recognition of the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.” To achieve equality, in some cases, it is necessary to do positive discrimination, which is the deliberate action of giving advantage to those individuals and groups in society that are often treated unfairly, with the aim of reversing inequalities resulting from (negative) discrimination. Gender equality is not only a human right according to international human rights law and recognized as a priority in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Goal 5), it also facilitates the participation in political and decision-making processes, supports equal access to opportunities and economic prosperity, and prevents violence against women and girls.

- **Diversity** is about taking account of the differences between individuals and groups and placing a positive value on those differences. Diversity acknowledges the unity of humankind, while also recognizing, respecting, and valuing that everyone is unique, with individual differences. Diversity is based on principles of multiculturalism, tolerance, dialogue and cooperation, mutual trust, and understanding. By tapping into different perspectives, experiences, knowledge, and approaches, a peaceful, inclusive, and diverse society can strive to create an enabling environment welcoming to all, where everyone feels valued and can contribute at their full potential — regardless of age, gender, gender identity, disability, race, caste, ethnicity, nationality, religion, or any other status.

On the other hand, social exclusion takes place when individuals and groups are being left outside the mainstream, meaning the qualities, behaviors, and values supported by the (majority of a) group. Social exclusion takes place when people are denied participation in the political, social, economic, and cultural life of society, for instance through a restriction of access to opportunities and limitation of the capabilities required to capitalize on these opportunities. When young people are excluded, it can lead to long-term and entrenched political, social, and economic isolation, trapping them in a cycle of non-participation, poverty, insecure living conditions, unhealthy lifestyles and, in some cases, political radicalization and extremism.

Social exclusion is a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon, and is often based on sociocultural norms, beliefs, misconceptions, and stereotypes that lead to the negative judgement of other people without having enough knowledge about them, sometimes assessing a particular group of people based on their perceived character, mostly in terms of behaviour or habits, with the objective of simplifying reality. Examples of social exclusion include, but are not limited to, the following practices:

- **Discrimination**: The practice of unfairly treating a person or group of people differently from others based on stereotypes or prejudices and characteristics such as race, colour, descent, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic, or social origin, property, birth, disability, nationality, or other status. Young people, and young women, can face “double discrimination,” a bias due to their age, gender, disability, or other aspects of their identity, and the compounded discrimination can be significantly greater than the sum of its parts. The inclusion of intersectional youth communities in decision-making and political processes is important to safeguard the participation and representation of young people from all groups in society, and to enable them to have a say on the issues affecting them. For instance, young people with disabilities can bring unique perspectives on disability rights issues that would benefit from political support and legislative action, such as inclusive education initiatives, improvements to public transportation, increased services and support including healthcare, or the standardization of accessible technology.

- **Xenophobia**: The fear and hatred of strangers, foreigners, or foreign countries, based on blurred knowledge and presumptions of the other, a feeling or perception based on socially constructed images and ideas, not rational or objective facts.

- **Racism**: A conscious or unconscious belief in and sense of superiority of one “race” over another, a belief that “race” is a determinant of human behaviour and capabilities in the form of a superior/inferior perception.

- **Misogyny**: dislike of, contempt for, or ingrained prejudice against women.

**Case study: Making “leaving no one behind” a reality for young persons with disabilities in Egypt**

Youth leader Sara Mahmoud is deeply committed to helping her community, particularly those who are vulnerable and marginalized in society. To achieve this, Sara developed a mobile application called “Helppee” that helps persons with disabilities fully engage in everyday activities by connecting them with nearby available “helpers” for assistance with a broad range of pursuits such as communicating, learning, working, traveling, and other social and recreational activities. Helppee is designed to be disability-friendly and very simple to navigate: a user can choose to request either a volunteer or professional helper, schedule the time and date of the “service,” and use geo-localization to map the user’s location easily.

9. See the session on “Youth participation and the SDGs,” p. 72
10. See the definition of “Gender equality,” p. 179
11. See the definition of “Intersectionality,” p. 179
As a medical student, Sara later expanded the range of services available to users to include in-house medical services, customized precision medicine programmes, and well-trained personal assistants to enhance functional independence. This work enabled Sara to bring two of her passions together, using youth-led social entrepreneurship toward creating a more equal and inclusive community, in line with the 2030 Agenda commitment to “leave no one behind.” Based on its initial successes in Cairo and its region, the app is planned to be rolled out in the rest of Egypt soon.

Source: Youth Leadership Programme 2 (2016), UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States.


The UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities further highlights the importance of differentiating between exclusion, segregation, integration, and inclusion, applied to the right to inclusive education. Integration is different from inclusion in that it aims at incorporating individuals of diverse groups in society, often by creating separate structures, institutions, and processes within the mainstream. Segregation is different from exclusion in that it provides separate structures, institutions, and processes to individuals of diverse groups, in isolation from the mainstream. The visual below, applied to the case of students with disabilities, may help to illustrate these points:

![Image of social inclusion and exclusion]

Source: UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (n.d.)

More information:

Activity 20: Views from the margins and the mainstream

**Activity aim/objectives**

Participants will:
- Explore some dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion, by reflecting on their marginal and mainstream roles in society

**Duration (Min)**

Total time: Approx. 25 min
- Instructions (2 min)
- Activity (20 min)
- Debriefing (8 min)

**Group organization**

- Discussions in small groups (1 group per table)
- Debrief in the full group

**Materials/handouts**

- Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group)
- Pens for each participant

**Activity learning outcomes:**

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:
- [Knowledge] Understand the concepts of “social inclusion and exclusion,” “marginalization,” and “mainstream” based on personal perspectives, experiences, and approaches.
- [Skills] Develop basic analytical skills, consensus-building, and teamwork.
- [Attitude and values] Promote the importance of diversity and inclusion and display a commitment to sharing this knowledge with peers, family, colleagues, and the community.
Preparation/ materials:

- Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group).
- Pens for each participant.

Activity instructions:

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**

- Ask participants if they know about concepts such as “social inclusion and exclusion,” “marginalization,” and “mainstream.” Explain that participants will explore some dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion, by reflecting on their marginal and mainstream roles in society. Explain.
- Explain that the activity will require to answer two sets of questions (10 minutes for each step). The trainer may consider providing the two sets of questions (Step 1: Views from margins, and Step 2: Views from the mainstream) separately.
- For Step 1, answers can be something as simple as being picked last for the sports team or being refused access to a service because of age restrictions. The trainer is encouraged to provide examples of their own. If this may be a sensitive topic in the local context, the question can be rephrased as follows: who is often marginalized or left outside of the mainstream in your community/ country, how do you think they feel about it?

**Activity: Up to 20 minutes**

- Tell participants they have up to 20 minutes to answer the questions provided, and to fill the table (see Handout). Participants are encouraged to be collaborative and creative!

**Debriefing and evaluation: 8 minutes**

- After 20 minutes, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to answer every question in the table? If you did not manage, which questions, and why?
  - What are the main characteristics of the marginal role? Of the mainstream role?
  - Do you think everyone has the same level of awareness about social injustice, if they are coming from the margins or from the mainstream?
  - Can you notice that everyone may oscillate between playing marginal and mainstream roles in society at some point in their lives?
  - If you consider yourself as part of the mainstream, do you believe you can create positive social change by promoting inclusion and diversity in your everyday lives?
  - What are the benefits of promoting inclusion and diversity for yourself, your community, and society at large?
  - Can you think of examples when you were an ally to a vulnerable or marginalized individual or group? What were your concrete actions to support them?
  - What is the most surprising or interesting information you learned from this exercise?

**Handout:**

**Views from the margins and the mainstream**

**Step 1: View from the margins**

You have 10 minutes to answer the two following questions below. Do not forget to provide illustrative examples!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Illustrative examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Was there a time in your life when you felt marginalized or outside of the mainstream? Why?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In your marginal role, are there initiatives that you would have liked to come from the mainstream (or the individual/group that discriminated against you) that would have helped you to re-negotiate your relationship to the mainstream?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Step 2: View from the mainstream**

You have 10 minutes to answer the two following questions below. Do not forget to provide illustrative examples!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Illustrative examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you have any aspects of yourself that are mainstream, or any roles you play in society that are mainstream? Which ones?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. In your mainstream role, can you think of initiatives that would have helped to promote the inclusion of marginalized individuals and groups?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Variations:**

- A more difficult version of this exercise consists to encourage participants to distinguish between the concepts of “exclusion/ segregation,” and “inclusion/ integration.”
- An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online “breakout rooms” organized and encourage them to work collaboratively to use and organize online sticky notes, using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

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14. This exercise was adapted from a very useful website with numerous training tools and activities developed by: Training for Change (n.d.). Margin & Mainstream. Philadelphia, United States. Available in English only.
Extending the session

Tell participants they can contribute to create positive social change by becoming strong allies to vulnerable and marginalized individuals and groups by following a few simple steps. Encourage participants to educate themselves and the people around them about privileges. Encourage them to read and watch movies, and if possible, to meet with peers, authors, bloggers, artists, and other voices from vulnerable and marginalized groups. Encourage them to pay attention to what they say, and to avoid exclusionary, offensive, and derogatory language, sometimes we generalize and spread stereotypes without knowing it. If they make a mistake, they can apologize, and be ready to learn from the experience. Encourage participants to stand up for what they believe in! If participants witnessed discrimination, xenophobia, racism, or misogyny, would they be willing to confront derogatory and hateful speech, including online, and including if the person is a friend or family member, what concrete actions would they take in this situation?

SESSION 10: YOUTH ACTION IN CIVIL SOCIETY

Suggested total duration for the session: 120 minutes.

Description

Youth have a decisive role to play in driving social change by effectively and meaningfully participating in civil society and through collective action. This session will explore the following issues: what are the main avenues through which young people participate in civil society, and may create a positive impact on their communities? What challenges do they face and what opportunities exist to enable their civic participation? Participants will be invited to answer these questions through an interactive exercise on action planning and by identifying effective community mobilization and organizing strategies.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this introductory session, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Understand key trends, challenges, and opportunities related to youth action in civil society through participating in civil society organizations and collective action, particularly at community level.
- [Skills] Strategic thinking skills, how to effectively mobilize and organize one’s community, coalition-/alliance-building, and basic advocacy, awareness-raising, and communication skills.
- [Attitudes and values] Promote the importance of young people’s positive role as active citizens, demonstrate the value of volunteerism and lifelong civic action, and proclivity to helping others and acting in support of the common good and the welfare of their community.

After briefly introducing the main topic of the session, the trainer may consider explaining the learning outcomes above, and some of the key terms and concepts, based the needs/ level of the group.

Suggested duration: 10 minutes

Session content: Youth action in civil society

Terms and concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civil society actors</th>
<th>A diverse set of individual and collective actors that operate in the civil society arena. Among them, civil society organizations (CSOs) are the broad range of organized collective actors which can structure themselves in a variety of ways, from more to less formal.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volunteering</td>
<td>An altruistic activity carried out for the common good or (an) issue(s) of public concern, whereby an individual or group provides services for no financial or social gain to benefit another person, group, or organization, or to address societal issues that they believe to be important.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part 1: Introduction to youth civic participation

Why is youth participation important to civil society?

- Firstly, young people are part of the social fabric of communities and some may have greater access, scale, and legitimacy to reach out to other young people than civil society organizations (CSOs) and local governments. Thanks to their numbers, energy and passion, young people can strengthen the work of CSOs, particularly in the areas of community mobilization, organizing and campaigning, including online. Young people can also bring new, creative, and innovative strategies that may help CSOs achieve their objectives.

- Secondly, young people can play a key role in supporting CSOs to adapt policymaking to the needs of young people and the community. By generating research and evidence and identifying gaps in government actions, by advocating for new laws, policies, programmes or strategies, by holding governments and political actors to account on their commitments, young people can help CSOs to ensure that national policymaking does not overlook vulnerable and marginalized groups.

- Thirdly, young people can positively affect norms, values, attitudes, and behaviours regarding democracy, power, politics, policymaking, political and civic participation, both online and offline, by instilling values of diversity, inclusion, and active citizenship directly at the grassroots and community level. Through their awareness-raising activities and advocacy efforts, using information and communication technologies and social media, young people can increasingly connect with and influence the world around them.

- Lastly, young people also play a key role in supporting CSOs in the effective implementation, monitoring and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Alongside CSOs, young people and youth-serving organizations (YSOs) contributed to shape a vision for an ambitious and holistic agenda, and their role is widely acknowledged as essential to realize the “Leaving no one behind” commitment, to ensure that global and regional and national agendas reflect sub-national, local and grassroots needs, and to support grassroots and social movements dedicated to advancing social justice.

What are the key challenges and opportunities for youth participation in civil society?

Similarly to participating in political life, young people are facing multi-dimensional and inter-connected barriers when participating in civil society, which can lead them to feel disempowered and excluded, and therefore preferring more informal avenues for participating in civic life. The main challenges can be summarized as below:

- At the structural level, in many countries, shrinking civic space and lack of trust in civil society at large negatively impact young people and YSOs. In addition, young people face negative perceptions linked to their age and perceived inexperience, and young women are in many countries subject to ‘double discrimination’ based on their age and gender, thus facing additional obstacles compared with men.

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1. See the definition of “Social accountability,” p. 164.
2. See the definition of “Active citizenship,” p. 162.
3. See the session on “Youth participation and the SDGs,” p. 72.
4. See the definition of “Social justice,” p. 194.
5. See the session on “Space for youth participation,” p. 39.
On the other hand, young people also participate in informal structures such as carry out voluntary work, participate in informally organized advocacy or campaigning groups, peer-to-peer groups, support networks, including online using the Internet and messaging applications. In fragile and conflict settings, young people can act as informal peace- and resilience-builders and community mediators, supporting resilience of communities to shocks and conflict. The most common way young people participate informally in civil society is by helping others, providing service to the community as volunteers, for instance through their involvement in charitable organizations. Evidence shows that volunteering benefits the community and the volunteer.  

More information:

Activity 21: Develop a ‘Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop a tool to build an inclusive workplace for young people</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 30 min</td>
<td>Discussions in small groups (1 group per table)</td>
<td>Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Debrief in the full group</td>
<td>Pens for each participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Activity (20 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Debriefing (8 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity 20: Explore Youth Civil Society

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explore youth civil society</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 30 min</td>
<td>Discussions in small groups (1 group per table)</td>
<td>Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Debrief in the full group</td>
<td>Pens for each participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Activity (20 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Debriefing (8 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. See the definition of “Civil society organization,” p. 164.

Activity learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Learn how to design an “Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan” to promote access of young people from all backgrounds to leadership positions within a civil society organization.
- [Skills] Practice action planning skills by designing a tool to build an inclusive workplace as well as basic analytical skills, consensus-building, and teamwork.
- [Attitude and values] Promote the importance of diversity and inclusion as a basic principle of institutional strengthening and strategic vision in civil society organizations.

Preparation/ materials:

- Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group).
- Pens for each participant.

Activity instructions:

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**

- Remind participants about concepts of “diversity,” “inclusion,” and “positive discrimination” learned in the previous session. 

- Explain that the activity will require participants to work in small groups to design a “Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan” to address the issues stated in the scenario (underrepresentation of young people in leadership positions, gender imbalance, and underrepresentation of young people with disabilities).

- The trainer may consider illustrating each priority area for the “Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan” (see Handout) with an example to kickstart the conversations in each group. The trainer may consider not providing a Handout and conduct this activity as a discussion, using some of the guiding questions below.

**Activity: Up to 20 minutes**

- Tell participants they have up to 20 minutes to read the scenario provided, and to fill the table (see Handout).

- Participants are not expected to produce a fully-fledged action plan, with detailed goals, targets, and indicators. Within the given timeframe, they are encouraged to brainstorm the most effective and realistic solutions, based on their personal and professional experiences.

**Debriefing and evaluation: 8 minutes**

- After 20 minutes, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to fill every row of the table? If you did not manage, which rows, and why?
  - Are there priority areas in your “Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan” that you think are more important than others? For instance, do you think internal capacity-building is more effective at addressing the underrepresentation of young people rather than adopting new policies and frameworks?
  - Do you think an effective “Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan” should include more or fewer priority areas? For instance, can a plan be effective if it is not adequately monitored and evaluated?
  - Are there clear paths to and opportunities for more advanced work and access to leadership positions within your organization for young working-level staff and interns, and volunteers?
  - Does your organization (government, private sector, or civil society) have a diversity and inclusion strategy? Do you think it is effective, what could be improved about it?
  - What do you think about positive discrimination? Have you benefitted, or do you know someone from your immediate friends and family circle who benefitted from positive discrimination? Can you tell us more?
  - What is the most surprising or interesting information you learned from this exercise?

Cheat sheet for the trainer : Possible answers to the exercise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Organizational policies, practices, and culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Promote the positive affirmation of diversity and inclusion through inclusionary policies, championed by senior leaders who display a commitment to anti-discrimination in policy and practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Review and assess your organization’s recruitment, selection and outreach practices, and other relevant human resources policies and frameworks, to ensure young people from all backgrounds are given a fair chance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Integrate diversity and inclusion in the manner your organization operates and delivers its services, e.g., in policy and programming, in partnership building, in advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns, in the procurement of goods and services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Integrate benchmarks of diversity and inclusion as a measure for success for senior leaders in their performance assessments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Internal capacity-building</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Provide mandatory diversity and inclusion training for all employees to better understand, value and model diversity and inclusion, beginning with executive and senior leaders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide training funds to young working-level staff to complete leadership skills courses, targeting young people from underrepresented groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Set up “Leadership and Mentoring” schemes connecting senior leaders with young talents identified within the organization.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3. Special measures for young people from underrepresented groups

- Adopt a charter or by-laws to promote positive discrimination within the organization (e.g., quotas in the recruitment and selection framework, quotas for promotions within the organization).
- Provide career development opportunities and create strong pipelines of diverse leadership candidates (e.g., talent pools) for young people, including for young people from underrepresented groups.
- Create internal incentives, through recognition and award schemes, for teams or projects who champion diversity and inclusion, particularly of young people from underrepresented groups.

### 4. Monitoring and evaluation

- Create and empower structures (e.g., focal point, task force, working group or executive board for diversity and inclusion) responsible for overseeing and championing diversity and inclusion initiatives.
- Develop annual diversity and inclusion goals within the organization, monitor the progress, and conduct regular evaluations of the diversity and inclusion strategy/action plan.
- Allocate adequate resources to realize the strategy/action plan.

### Handout:

**Develop your organization’s ‘Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan’**

After several years of operation of your youth organization called “Nahno Nusharik” (نحن نشارك, “We Participate”), the average age of senior leaders has reached 34 years old, while the average age for working-level staff, interns and volunteers is still 25 years old. There is a gender imbalance within the organization, with 75 per cent of senior leadership positions held by men. Only 2 per cent of the organization’s staff include young people with disabilities.

You were given the responsibility to lead a working group with the objective to develop a realistic action plan to promote youth inclusion and leadership within your organization that considers ongoing operations and competing priorities. After some internal discussion within the working group, 5 priority areas were identified as key to improve the situation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority area</th>
<th>Proposed actions</th>
<th>How will you achieve this?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Organizational policies, practices, and culture</td>
<td>How can you improve your organization’s recruitment, selection, outreach, and internal promotion practices?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Internal capacity-building</td>
<td>How can you train organization’s staff, including senior leaders to promote diversity and inclusion?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Special measures for young people from underrepresented groups</td>
<td>Are positive discrimination measures needed for certain groups?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Monitoring and evaluation</td>
<td>How can you ensure that your action plan is monitored and evaluated, and create internal accountability?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional priority area(s):**
Variations:

- An easier version of this activity can discuss each priority area of the “Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan” and ask participants to provide examples based on their personal and professional experiences.
- An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online “breakout rooms” organized and encourage them to work collaboratively to use and organize online sticky notes, using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

After finishing Activity 20, the trainer is now encouraged to organize a brief energizer. Suggested duration: up to 5 minutes. The trainer may then wish to explain that the participants will now focus on understanding the power of (youth) collective action towards social change, using the session content in Part 2

Suggested duration: 15 minutes

Part 2: The power of youth collective action towards social change

Individuals and groups of individuals can voluntarily engage to act collectively toward a common goal, with the view to change specific patterns or sociocultural norms and beliefs in a given society. Collective action is important because it helps bring together different perspectives, experiences, and approaches (from various organizations, geographies, and sectors) and shape common visions and ideas on societal issues, often creating unusual alliances and solutions along the way. Collective action may often be necessary to challenge the political, economic, or social status quo. To better understand the diverse types, forms and drivers of collective action, there are several questions to consider.

What are the main types and forms of collective action?

It is important to note that not every gathering of people constitutes a form of collective action. The study of Turner and Killian is the reference in the field of sociology to explain different types of collective behavior. This study distinguishes between four main types of collective action:

- Casual crowds consist of people who are fortuitously in the same place at the same time, but who are not interacting, such as people standing in line at the supermarket.
- Conventional crowds are people who gather for a scheduled event, like a cultural or religious event.
- Expressive crowds are people who join to express emotion, for instance at a wedding or a funeral.
- Acting crowds, the topic of this session, are focused on a specific goal or action. This type of crowds can be spontaneous or organized, a single event or succession of different events, in-person or online.

Collective action can be nonviolent such as in the case of peaceful demonstrations, rallies, marches, strikes, or consumer activism, e.g., boycotting of products and other ways civic actors seek to influence the way in which goods and services are produced or delivered. It can also become hostile or violent such as riots, mobs, and other forms of civil unrest. Collective action can be spontaneous (e.g., flash mobs) or can take the form of structured dialogues, for instance in the case of collective bargaining (related to the terms and conditions of employment), the lobbying efforts by trade unions and consumer associations advocating for equal access to basic services (e.g., water, electricity, gas), coordinated actions of student groups/ clubs, and other forms of civil society coalitions.

Collective action becomes a social movement when it includes at least some of the following characteristics. It is a collective or joint action with change-oriented goals or claims (e.g., calculated efforts to oppose policies and practices that maintain power structures); there is some degree of organization, with extra-institutional or non-institutional collective action; it is sustained over time or at least there is some degree of temporal continuity; and there is shared solidarity or collective identity. Common examples include social movements that promote social change (e.g., Arab Uprisings, anti-corruption, or environmental movements), to resist change (e.g., anti-globalization movement), and to provide a political voice to marginalized and vulnerable members or groups within society (e.g., civil rights and human rights movements).

Another distinction is often made between traditional social movements – based on the grievances of groups striving to influence political outcomes or redistribute material resources – and “new social movements,” focused on postindustrial, quality-of-life movements and other movements that focus on goals of self-realization, autonomy, and identity. Examples include the environmental, peace and disarmament, and feminist movements and tend to cut across socio-economic status and political party affiliation to politicize aspects of everyday life traditionally seen as outside politics. Moreover, with the influence of ICTs, new social movements are considered more flexible, diverse, and informal in participation and membership than the traditional social movements, often adopting nonhierarchical modes of organization and unconventional means of political engagement.

The stages of social movements can be explained as a lifecycle with four different stages, focusing on how they emerge, grow, and eventually decline, based on the work of sociologists Blumer (1969), Mauss (1975), and Tilly (1978):

- In the emergence stage, people become aware of an issue, and movement leaders emerge.
- In the coalescence stage, people join and organize to raise awareness on the issue and advocate for specific solutions, largely based on grassroots engagement and volunteerism.
- In the institutionalization stage (sometimes referred to as the “bureaucratization stage”), the movement becomes an established organization, typically with paid staff.
- In the decline phase, the movement dies out as a result of positive (e.g., the movement is successful and brought about the change it sought, the movement becomes coopted, or part of the mainstream) or negative impacts (e.g., the movement fails because people become disinterested or adopt a new movement; the movement is repressed).

What are the main drivers of collective action, and how can collective action be more successful?

Instances of collective action multiplied around the world over the last decade and have been witnessed in every region and every type of political systems, in both developed and developing countries, in democratic systems and under authoritarian regimes.
While there are disparities within and between countries, common drivers of collective action reflect an underlying weakening of the social contract between governments and their citizens. There is a general discontent and distrust in government institutions and political elites to address major societal issues such as rising inequalities, inequity and injustice, corruption, limited access to social services or economic opportunities, climate change, and shrinking or closing civic space. In the Arab region, evidence shows that young people often play an active role in social movements, often as a reflection of lower levels of trust in formal politics and frustration over structural barriers that exclude them from political and decision-making processes. Young people also tend to prefer more informal, fluid and grassroots forms of civic activity, often as a strategy to get around the restrictions faced by organized civil society.

After all, the increasing availability of information and communication technologies has provided new ways for young people to connect both locally and globally, using online platforms and networks.

Young people are facing multi-dimensional and inter-connected barriers when participating in collective action, which can be summarized as below:

- At the structural level, in many countries, the rights of young people to freedom of assembly and freedom of expression are often poorly respected, which restricts the participation of young people in collective action. Examples include restrictions on locations of assemblies, with harsh penalties for non-compliance with the rules on the time, place, and manner of a demonstration, which are sometimes combined with the criminalization of peaceful demonstrators, journalists, and other media professionals. Cases of excessive and disproportionate use of force, torture or ill-treatment, arbitrary detention, and disregard of legal safeguards by law enforcement and security forces are also often recorded. This phenomenon in part explains why youth digital participation and e-participation has increased among youth populations. Restrictions also exist in the digital sphere with Internet shutdowns, the misuse of facial recognition and other surveillance and monitoring technologies, and other applications of artificial intelligence, some social movements may not be open to all young people, being stigmatized for their propensity for violence and extremism primarily creating change through conflict, which can be perceived as highly detrimental to some social movements.

- At the organizational level, YSOs and other youth-led groups and movements are commonly effective at mobilizing and organizing, by bringing large numbers of young people to peaceful demonstrations, rallies, and other forms of collective action, taking full advantage of a wide range of information and communication technologies. At the same time, youth collective action is commonly uncoordinated and siloed. Youth leaders often lack the strategic vision and experience to organize or sustain social movements and to forge lasting alliances and partnerships across sectors, for instance with trade unions, professional associations, and other civil society organizations.

- At the individual level, only a handful of youth leaders are trained about and have expertise in mobilizing and organizing strategies and tactics, direct citizen action, nonviolent action, etc. They tend to favour short-term actions and disregard long-term advocacy and lobbying of decision-makers, with limited use of the media and other ways to win over the public opinion beyond their own demographics.

Notwithstanding these challenges, there are many opportunities for young people to play a range of distinct roles in collective action effectively and sustainably, including by building on a few important entry points:

- Collective action can emerge from the actions of (a) specific group(s) in society (e.g., professions-based lobbying), but tend to be more effective and sustainable when broad-based and diverse, with participants coming from various socio-economic and political backgrounds. Collective action is most likely to be successful if it is based on widely held values, for instance civic leaders must convince the majority of the public that they, and not the power holders, stand for society’s best visions, ideas, and solutions on societal issues.

- Collective action depends on the selection and implementation of appropriate strategies and tactics, including a commitment to principles of nonviolence and resolution of conflict through peaceful means, which enable to attract a larger, more diverse base than groups or organizations which advocate for violent action. This is a particularly important given the negative perceptions linked with youth collective action (see above).

- Collective action which understands power dynamics and uses this understanding to influence diverse public institutions, e.g., political actors, civil servants, law enforcement, and publicly owned and operated media, as well as the private sector, tends to be more effective at influencing political and decision-making processes and effecting change.

- Collective action which engages and galvanizes the grassroots and community level, and wins the public opinion over, tends to be more effective at influencing political and decision-making processes and effecting change. This can be achieved through two main channels:
  - Community mobilization, which catalyzes power by motivating and enabling critical masses to act in support of issues of public concern. Mobilization can range from what are often considered low-risk engagements (e.g., signing a petition, sharing information on social media, donating money) to greater investments of a person’s time and/or social capital, such as attending, organizing, or speaking at an event or rally.
  - Community organizing: Effective organizing builds power and leadership of individuals and groups over the long-term by investing in the skills and capacity of individuals, including volunteers, communities, and allied groups. Organizing may involve building relationships with decision-makers and influencers, holding events, and providing the training, tools and resources people need to empower them to take a campaign into their own hands.

Learn more about creative activism


12. See the definition of “Social justice,” p. 194.
13. See the session on “Space for youth participation,” p. 38.
15. See Part 1 on “Youth participation in organized civil society,” p. X.
17. See the session on “Space for youth participation,” p. 38.
18. See the session on “Youth digital participation,” p. 248.
20. See the activity on “Busting myths about youth civic participation and social change,” p. 109.
21. See more examples of community mobilization and organizing activities in the cheat sheet for the trainer on the activity on “Mobilize and organize your community to prevent littering,” p. 207.
There are also several ways in which young people can convey political or socially relevant messages, mobilize, and organize their community in a creative or playful manner. For instance, artistic or cultural activities, sometimes referred to as "artivism," can be a powerful source of criticism and dissent. For instance, they can take the form of visual arts, music, dance, theatre, street art and comics and are increasingly used by UN and other development actors in the framework and civic and voter education.

More information:


Learn more about creative activism


Activity 22: Mobilize and organize your community to prevent littering

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify the most suitable activities to mobilize and organize one’s community on a policy issue</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 35 min</td>
<td>Discussions in small groups (1 group per table)</td>
<td>Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Debriefing (8 min)</td>
<td>Optional: Flipcharts and markers for each small group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Activity (25 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Debriefing (8 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Understand the advantages and disadvantages of different types of community mobilization and organizing activities, and identify practical examples based on their previous knowledge and experience.
- [Skills] Develop basic analytical skills, consensus-building, and teamwork.
- [Attitude and values] Promote the importance of community mobilization and organizing, volunteerism and other actions in the community that can positively influence one’s peers, family, colleagues, and the community.

Preparation/ materials:

- Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group).
- Flipchart and markers for each small group. Optional: scissors and glue.

Activity instructions:

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**

- Ask participants if they know about “community mobilization and organizing,” and examples of the most effective activities to reach the grassroots and members of one’s community. The trainer may or may not choose to display or provide a list of examples of community mobilization activities (see Cheat sheet).
- Explain that the activity will require participants to work in small groups to identify the most suitable activities to mobilize and organize one’s community on a policy issues, the problem of littering in the field.

After finishing Activity 20, the trainer is now encouraged to organize a brief energizer. Suggested duration: up to 5 minutes. The trainer may then wish to explain that the participants will now focus on understanding the power of (youth) collective action towards social change, using the session content in Part 2.

Suggested duration: 15 minutes
city streets. They will need to agree on up to 3 activities, explain the pros and cons of each activity they selected, and provide some information on how they are planning to use each activity to maximize the impact on the community, and hopefully change people’s behaviour regarding littering.

- The trainer may consider providing an example of a successful awareness-raising campaign from his/her own context that helped change people’s behaviour on a large scale and in a sustained manner. The example used by the trainer may not necessarily relate to plastic recycling; there are numerous examples of environmental awareness-raising campaigns related to other issues such as the risks of overfishing, industrial agriculture, freshwater depletion, deforestation, and loss of biodiversity and wildlife.

**Activity: Up to 25 minutes**
- Tell participants they have up to 20 minutes to read the scenario provided, and to fill the table. (see handout). Participants are encouraged to be collaborative and creative! They can write down key words, or decide to use flipcharts, pens, scissors, and glue to create a visual. The trainer may use some of the visuals during the debriefing.
- After 20 minutes, participants are encouraged to go around the room to see what other groups have prepared (5 minutes).

**Debriefing and evaluation: 8 minutes**
- After 25 minutes, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to fill every row of the table? If you did not manage, which row(s), and why?
  - Did you prioritize youth-friendly (accessible) activities, respectful of their views and backgrounds, as well as youth-led or voluntary activities? Why?
  - What are the pros and cons of in-person activities? What are the pros and cons of online activities? What are the pros and cons of creative activities? Would mixed methods be more effective and maybe reach more people?
  - Did you prioritize activities for young women, for young people from marginalized/vulnerable groups, or for the public?
  - Were you sensitive to risks and conflicts that may arise when selecting your activities? What are potential risks and conflicts that you envisaged?
  - Did you prioritize activities supported by training with an emphasis on learning-by-doing?
  - Were you able to create a visual or identify some key messages that would accompany your activities?
  - Can you think of examples of activities from your context that successfully mobilized and organized your community and changed people’s behaviour? What role did young people play in your examples?
  - What is the most surprising or interesting information you learned from this exercise?

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### Cheat sheet for the trainer: Examples of community mobilization and organizing activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In-person activities</th>
<th>Onlines activities</th>
<th>Creative activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community meetings, person-to-person discussions</td>
<td>Online outreach (targeted outreach, mass mailing lists)</td>
<td>Street plays, puppet shows and other forms of theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public events, e.g., lectures, debates</td>
<td>Social media campaigns</td>
<td>Folk arts such as songs, poems, dances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Edutainment,” e.g., moot/ model/ simulated parliaments or elections, competitions, quizzes</td>
<td>Electronic and print media</td>
<td>Youth-friendly contemporary music such as rap and hip hop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Door-to-door campaigns and petitions</td>
<td>Television programmes</td>
<td>Festivals of concerts, plays, or movies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human chains</td>
<td>Radio talks</td>
<td>Paintings, wall writings, street art, and other forms of visual arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pamphlets, leaflets, and handouts</td>
<td>Films and multimedia programmes</td>
<td>Posters, banners, and other forms of large public displays, e.g., multimedia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rallies such as clean-up drives and calls to boycott (consumer activism)</td>
<td>Interactive computer programmes</td>
<td>Sports and games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrations, strikes, pickets, walks, marches, religious and cultural processions</td>
<td>Online peer-support and knowledge-sharing networks and communities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of goodwill ambassadors (e.g., artists and sports players)</td>
<td>Virtual demonstrations, online boycott campaigns</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Handout:**

### Mobilize and organize your community to prevent littering

The municipal council of Olive City (Majlis Madinat Alzaytoon) is overwhelmed with a problem of littering in the city streets, with particular concern for the numerous plastic bottles discarded incorrectly, without consent, at unsuitable locations. The city has a well-organized waste collection and management system, with door-to-door collection, well-functioning household, and plastic waste recycling centres, as well as strategic partnerships with most stakeholders linked to the production and distribution of plastic. Several awareness-raising campaigns, including billboards and TV ads, were previously unsuccessful at changing the behaviour of the people of Olive City.

With your extensive expertise in community mobilization and organizing, your youth organization called “Nahno Nusharik” (نحن نشارك, “We Participate”) was assigned to create a campaign to raise awareness on the problem of littering in the city streets. You were tasked to identify the top 3 most suitable (accessible, youth-
friendly, risk-sensitive) activities, explain the pros and cons of each activity, and provide some insights on how you are planning to use each activity to maximize the impact on the community, and hopefully change their behaviour.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
<th>Illustrative examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community activity 1:</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community activity 2:</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community activity 3:</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional comments:**

- A longer version of this activity can provide participants with more time to prepare an activity (e.g., song, video, leaflet) and then present their work to the whole group.
- An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online "breakout rooms" organized and encourage them to work collaboratively to use and organize online sticky notes, using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

**Variations:**

- A longer version of this activity can provide participants with more time to prepare an activity (e.g., song, video, leaflet) and then present their work to the whole group.
- An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online "breakout rooms" organized and encourage them to work collaboratively to use and organize online sticky notes, using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

**Extending the session**

Encourage participants to be creative and imaginative when carrying out any action in the community as it is often unexpected, surprising, and fun ideas that may help to win over a campaign target, engage new people and attract media attention. Do not forget to emphasize the benefits of non-violent action and respect for the local laws and regulations! Invite participants to research about innovative ideas online, for instance by browsing resources such as:


**Suggested duration:** 10 minutes
SESSION 11: YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN CONFLICT SETTINGS

Suggested total duration of the session: 90 minutes.
This session addresses a cross-cutting theme that is relevant throughout the curriculum. It is suggested to hold this session between Modules 3 and 4, but the trainer may choose to use it at a different point.

Description
Young people have a decisive role to play in driving social change by effectively and meaningfully participating in civil society and through collective action. This session will explore the following issues: what are the main avenues through which young people participate in civil society, and may create a positive impact on their communities? What challenges do they face and what opportunities exist to enable their civic participation? Participants will be invited to answer these questions through an interactive exercise on action planning and by identifying effective community mobilization and organizing strategies.

Learning outcomes
By the end of this introductory session, participants will be able to:

• [Knowledge] Understand key trends, challenges, and opportunities related to youth action in civil society through participating in civil society organizations and collective action, particularly at community level.

• [Skills] Strategic thinking skills, how to effectively mobilize and organize one’s community, coalition-/alliance-building, and basic advocacy, awareness-raising, and communication skills.

• [Attitudes and values] Promote the importance of young people’s positive role as active citizens, demonstrate the value of volunteerism and lifelong civic action, and proclivity to helping others and acting in support of the common good and the welfare of their community.

After briefly introducing the main topic of the session, the trainer may consider explaining the learning outcomes above, and some of the key terms and concepts, based on the needs/level of the group.

Suggested duration: 10 minutes

Session content: Youth participation in fragile and conflict-affected settings

Terms and concepts

Civil society actors
A diverse set of individual and collective actors that operate in the civil society arena. Among them, civil society organizations (CSOs) are the broad range of organized collective actors which can structure themselves in a variety of ways, from more to less formal.

Volunteerism
An altruistic activity carried out for the common good or (an) issue(s) of public concern, whereby an individual or group provides services for no financial or social gain to benefit another person, group, or organization, or to address societal issues that they believe to be important.

Grassroots
The most basic level of an activity or organization.

Social movements
Large-scale informal combinations of (groups of) individuals striving to act purposefully, collectively and with continuity toward a common goal, with the view to change specific patterns in society.

Social justice
Seeks to improve the ability, opportunity, and dignity of all members of society, disadvantaged on the basis of their identity, by focusing on equality of opportunity for participation and decision-making in society, equality of rights within a society, and equal access to housing, health and education, and economic resources, amongst others.

After introducing the topic, the trainer may consider focusing on the session content in Part 1.

Suggested duration: 15 minutes

Part 1: The Youth, Peace, and Security Agenda

Fragile and conflict-affected settings refer to environments characterized by extreme polarization and division due to a lack of trust among political and civic actors, often a result of violent conflict and its aftermath. Such environments are sometimes found within a state but can also encompass regions overlapping the borders of several states. To better understand the participation of young people in such contexts, there are several questions to consider.
What are the key challenges for youth participation in support of peace and security?

Facts and figures related to youth, peace, and security

- 79.5 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide at the end of 2019 as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations, or events seriously disturbing public order. Source: UNHCR.
- In 2016, an estimated 408 million youth (aged 15-29) resided in settings affected by armed conflict or organized violence. This means that at least 1 in 4 young people are affected by violence or armed conflict. Source: UNFPA.
- In 2017, refugees were five times more likely to be out of school than other children. Only 50 percent of refugee children are enrolled in primary school. Less than 25 percent of refugee youth are enrolled in secondary school. Source: UNICEF.
- Young women make up 10-30 percent of armed forces and armed groups worldwide. In 2008, an estimated 100,000 girls under 18 were fighting in armed conflicts globally. Source: UNDP.
- Nearly 4 in every 10 of all women victims of homicide worldwide are killed by intimate partners. Women and girls make up 70 percent of all known human trafficking victims. Globally, the total direct and indirect costs of violence against women for countries are estimated to be as high as 1-2 percent of Gross National Product. Source: UN Women.

Young people face multi-dimensional and inter-connected barriers when participating in fragile and conflict-affected settings, which can be summarized as below:

- At the structural level, civic space has often shrunk in fragile and conflict-affected settings, due to a lack of security, trust, law, and other enabling factors. Young people face further challenges stemming from the negative sociocultural norms, beliefs, misconceptions, and stereotypes that often surround the relationship between youth and conflict, with young people often labelled as troublemakers, whether as perpetrators of violence, triggers-of-conflict, or spoilers-of-peace. For example, young men are often assumed to be the perpetrators and young women to be victims, narratives which disregard the positive and empowered role young men and women can play in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Young women also face additional biases based on perceived gender roles that can dissuade or even prevent them from participating in peace and security efforts.
- At the organizational level, similar to other civil society organizations (CSOs), youth-serving organizations operating in fragile and conflict-affected contexts can become first responders to humanitarian emergencies, including those caused by conflicts and disasters, and face human, operational, and financial challenges. More than in any other context, threats to their engagement emanate from both state and non-state actors that benefit from perpetuating governance failures (e.g., corruption) and violence. During and after conflict, youth-serving organizations working in peace and security (e.g., rehabilitation and reintegration programmes) tend to rely primarily on volunteer-based staff, and to be heavily dependent on local donations and the contributions of their own members for funding.
- At the individual level, young people often lack the competences and skills to participate in support of peace and security, often referred to as “education for peace and conflict prevention.” The main capacity gaps are:
  - Gaps in the capacity to work harmoniously with oneself, other living beings, and the environment both locally and globally, based on a commitment to social cohesion, tolerance, acceptance, mutual respect, intercultural and interfaith dialogue, and human rights.

What is the Youth, Peace, and Security Agenda, and why is it important?

In the field of conflict and peace studies, three of the most accepted theories and models explaining the relationship between youth and conflict, can be summarized as below:

- The “youth bulge theory” emphasizes population structures and highlights that countries with a large proportion of young men in the population are more vulnerable to instability and conflict, because young people, and young men in particular, are often associated with outbreaks of violence or armed conflict.
- The “greed-grievance model” emphasizes decision-making structures and highlights that countries in which young people lack economic opportunities, face inequalities, and are marginalized from politics make it easier for violent groups to recruit young people, because their discontent and frustration are met with concrete short-term solutions, e.g., access to food, education, and power.
- The “spoiler theory” emphasizes power structures and highlights that young people represent an inherent and latent threat as potential “spoiliers” who, given the means, tend to obstruct conflict resolution or peacebuilding processes.

A fundamental shift in how young people are portrayed in international policy discourse, from perpetrators or victims of conflict to valuable partners for peace and development, occurred in 2015 with the unanimous adoption of a UN Security Council resolution on Youth, Peace and Security. The resolution recognizes that “young people play an important and positive role in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security,” more specifically in preventing and resolving conflict, countering violent extremism and building peace. This international policy framework, often referred to as the “Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) Agenda,” was inspired by the “Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda” adopted in the early 2000s.

The YPS Agenda seeks to build partnerships and alliances across sectors with representatives of different sectors to generate inclusive conflict prevention and peace processes, including the UN, governments, donors, civil society, youth-serving organizations, the private sector, and the media. For the first time, the YPS Agenda offers a framework for action that is holistic, context-specific, and youth-centered, by focusing on five key pillars for action:

- Participation: Member States are called upon to increase inclusive representation of youth in decision-making at all levels in local, national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms focused on the prevention and resolution of conflict, including institutions and mechanisms to counter violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, and, as appropriate, to consider establishing integrated mechanisms for meaningful participation of youth in peace processes and dispute-resolution.

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3. See the definition of “Youth, Peace, and Security Agenda,” p. X.
• Protection: The YPS Agenda reafirms the obligation to ensure the protection of young civilians’ lives and human rights during armed conflict and in post-conflict contexts – to protect them from all forms of sexual or gender-based violence and to investigate and prosecute those responsible for crimes perpetrated against them.

• Prevention: The YPS Agenda emphasizes the need to support young people through inclusive policies and instruments that allow them to act as key players in the prevention of violence, especially through promoting a culture of tolerance and intercultural dialogue.

• Partnerships: The YPS Agenda underlines the need to increase the political, financial, technical, and logistical support from UN agencies and regional and international organizations for engaging with young people, youth-serving organizations, and community actors during and after conflict when developing peacebuilding strategies.

• Disengagement and reintegration: The YPS Agenda highlight the importance of investing in young people affected by armed conflict through employment opportunities, inclusive labor policies, and education promoting a culture of peace, including through disengagement and reintegration programmes. This includes enhancing efforts for rehabilitation and reintegration of violent extremist offenders and returning foreign terrorist fighters and supporting local communities and CSOs in preventing and countering radicalization and extremist activity.

Adopted just a few months after the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the YPS Agenda builds on the call for action made by UN Member States, which emphasized that development, human rights, humanitarian, and peace and security are deeply interlinked and mutually reinforcing: “We are determined to foster peaceful, just, and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.” Peace is considered one of the five foundational pillars of the 2030 Agenda, and Goal 16 focused on peace, justice and strong institutions further highlights the importance of significantly reducing all forms of violence and promoting peace, with two SDG dedicated targets, namely: “Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere” (SDG target 16.1), and “End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.”

More information:


Activity 23: YPS quiz, did you know...?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 25 min</td>
<td>Each participant individually</td>
<td>A piece of paper for each participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Answer quiz questions to review the basics about the Youth, Peace, and Security Agenda</td>
<td>• Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td>Debrief in the full group</td>
<td>Pens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Activity (18 min)</td>
<td>• Debriefing (5 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

• [Knowledge] Review the basic information about the Youth, Peace, and Security Agenda and the role of young people in its effective implementation.

• [Skills] Develop basic analytical and research skills.

• [Attitude and values] Promote young people’s active participation in the implementation of the Youth, Peace, and Security Agenda.

Preparation/ materials:

• Show the questions on a screen and invite the participants to answer them individually on their own piece of paper. Provide participants with a piece of paper and pens.

• Alternatively, print or write out the quiz questions and distribute them (1 quiz per participant). Provide participants with the Handout (see below) and pens.

Activity instructions:

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**

• Ask participants what they know about the Youth, Peace, and Security Agenda and the role of young people in preventing violence and conflict and in building peace and participating in peacebuilding processes.

• Explain that the activity entails to answer questions to a quiz to review the basics: what is the Youth, Peace, and Security Agenda, what does it entail, and how young people can contribute its effective implementation?

---


5. See the session on “Youth participation and the SDGs”, p. 72.
Activity: Up to 18 minutes

- Tell participants that they have about 20 minutes to answer the quiz questions (see Handout). Explain that this is not a test, just a fun way to review all the basic information about this topic.

Debriefing and evaluation: 5 minutes

- After about 18 minutes, review the answers to the quiz with the participants. Ask them to make a note of anything that is not clear or where they need further information from the trainer.
- Bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to answer all the questions in the quiz? If not, which ones were most difficult?
  - What do you know about the implementation of the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda in their city or country?
  - Are you working on the YPS Agenda, or have you participated in activities related to peace and security, what were they and how did they contribute to create a positive impact on your community?
  - How can you promote peacebuilding, mediation, conflict prevention and resolution, peace education, goal non-violence, and reconciliation in your everyday life?
  - Are young people in your community aware of the Youth, Peace, and Security Agenda?
  - What is the most outstanding information you learned from this exercise?

Handout:

It is up to the trainer to determine the number of questions to share with the participants. It is suggested, but not compulsory, to use the order of questions proposed below. The trainer is encouraged to review the session content in Part 1. The correct answers to the questions are: 1. d) [Statement b) refers to peacebuilding, and statement c) refers to reconciliation], 2. b) [Statement a) refers to conflict analysis, c) to conflict resolution, and d) to peace treaty or peace agreement], 3. a), 4. c), 5. b) [see UNESCO’s Work on Education for Peace and Non-Violence: Building Peace through Education], 6. c) [statement a) refers to reconciliation, b) to negotiation, and d) to mediation], 7. d), 8. d), 9. a), and 10. c).

YPS quiz, did you know...?

Respond to as many questions as you can! There is only one correct answer per question.

1. How does the UN define the concept of “peace?”
   
a. The absence of conflict.
b. The processes and activities involved in resolving violent conflict and setting up a sustainable peace.
c. The processes and activities involved in restructuring the relationships between the conflict parties to restore peaceful relations between the parties in a conflict.
d. As U.S. President Ronald Reagan said, “Peace is not absence of conflict, it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means,” referring to the absence of conflict plus the existence of dialogue, understanding and cooperation.

2. Which definition below refers to the concept of “conflict prevention?”
   
a. Systematic analysis of the profile, cause, actors, and dynamics of a conflict, including interpretation and evaluation of this information.
b. An approach aiming to stop conflicts from taking place by setting up early warning mechanisms, using planned co-ordination to prevent the creation of conflict, careful monitoring of potentially violent disputes, and institutionalizing the idea of preventing conflict at the local, regional, and international levels.
c. Approach aiming to solve the conflict completely and once and for all so that all the needs of the parties are met and the conflict disappears.
d. An agreement between two or more hostile parties, usually countries or governments, which formally ends a state of war between the parties.

3. What is the role of young people in preventing conflict and building peace?
   
a. Young people have a distinct positive role to play as peacebuilders, mediators, and leaders in the community to prevent conflicts and build resilience.
b. Young people and youth organizations can often take part as observers in government-led conflict prevention and peacebuilding processes.
c. Young people are often the perpetrators of violence.
d. There is no role for young people, even if there were, young people are ignored and under-utilized.

4. What does UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace, and Security not include?
   
a. Increase the active participation of young people in decision-making processes, at the various stages both of negotiations and of the implementation of peace agreements.
b. Protect civilians, making specific reference to young people, during armed conflict and in post-conflict contexts, and to protect them from any form of sexual or gender-based violence.
c. Support Member States to create job opportunities and provide livelihoods for communities, through youth-focused employment and entrepreneurship schemes.
d. Support young people through inclusive policies and instruments that allow them to act as key players in the prevention of violence, violent extremism, and terrorism, especially through raising awareness and education for peace.

5. What is education for peace and non-violence according to the UN?
   
a. Learning about negotiation and peace processes in the context of recent armed conflicts.
b. A holistic educational framework including training, skills, and information to promote a culture of peace and non-violence, based on human rights.
c. Studying the historical and philosophical theories related to peace, conflict, and violence.
d. Practicing love, compassion, trust, fairness, and cooperation for every human being and all life on our planet.
6. 20 June is celebrated as UN World Refugee Day, a day to recognize the strength, courage, and resilience of refugees who are forced to leave everything behind to escape persecution, conflict, violence, and human rights abuses. What is the definition of resilience?

a. A process that involves restructuring the relationships between the conflict parties to restore peaceful relations between the parties in a conflict.
b. An attempt to reach a solution that meets the interests of all involved parties through discussions between the parties themselves.
c. The ability of a person, system, community, or society exposed to shocks or conflicts to resist, absorb, accommodate to, and recover from its effects in a timely and efficient manner.
d. Process by which a third party facilitates the resolution of a conflict, without having the power to impose a solution on the parties.

7. Which of the following statements is true?

a. In contemporary conflicts, up to 90 per cent of casualties are civilians, mostly women and children.
b. Women in war-torn societies can face specific and devastating forms of sexual violence, which are sometimes deployed systematically to achieve military or political objectives.
c. Women continue to be poorly represented in formal peace processes, although they contribute in many informal ways to conflict resolution.
d. All of the above.

8. Which of the following statements is true?

a. Social cohesion is process of increasingly harmonious coexistence in a given society and helps create the enabling conditions to prevent conflict and to consolidate a durable peace.
b. Tolerance and intercultural dialogue are key drivers of peace and they enable to build bridges across differences and create channels of communication.
c. Education can lead to peace and be a part of “building back better” by supporting the transformation of political institutions, social development, economic growth, and the security situation in a given country.
d. All of the above.

9. Which of the 17 Sustainable Development Goal includes the objective to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development?

a. Goal 16.
b. Goal 4.
c. Goal 10.
d. All of the above.

10. Do you know which target is not part of Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals?

a. Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.
b. End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children.
c. Abolish the death penalty in legal systems everywhere.
d. Strengthen relevant national institutions for preventing violence and combating terrorism and crime.

Variations:

- Alternatively, participants can also start with the quiz from the beginning and work in small groups to answer the questions one by one. The trainer may encourage participants to pick a group name (e.g., names of fruits) and keep scores. Each group can have a brief discussion and will need to build consensus on the correct answer.

- An online version of this activity can be organized with remote participants by showing the quiz questions and the multiple-choice answers online, using a software like Mentimeter, and getting the participants to answer them behind their screen.

- Provided participants have a mobile phone or access to a computer, there are many online quizzes related to the YPS Agenda that can be used instead of the paper version. Such quizzes can be found by typing “YPS,” and “quiz” in your Internet browser.

Part 2: Main entry points for youth participation in support of peace and security

The effective and meaningful participation of young people in fragile and conflict-affected settings rests on several important principles, particularly the importance to recognize young people’s agency and leadership in peace and security, to enhance youth-inclusive policy and programming, and to build the abilities of young people including by working collaboratively with youth-serving organizations, summarized in the visual below:
There are several key entry points for young people to participate in support of peace and security, explained in detail in the flagship study from the UN Population Fund, entitled the "The Missing Peace." It is important to highlight that young people can operate at every level: peer-to-peer, family, community, national, regional, and international levels. At the grassroots level in particular, their engagement often serves as the connecting tissue between diverse peace efforts, by fostering social cohesion in their community, bridging divides between communities, and linking the peacebuilding at various levels. Social cohesion, defined as the extent of trust in government and within society and the willingness to participate collectively toward a shared vision of peace and inclusive societies, is a driver of political stability, prosperity and resilience to shocks including during and in the aftermath of conflict, and enable to prevent violent extremism and support responsive, inclusive, and resilient institutions.

In addition, young people can also respond to diverse types of violence including political conflict, organized criminal violence, violent extremism, and sexual and gender-based violence. In relation to preventing and responding to violent extremism (PVE), there are many examples of positive contributions young people are making, through a broad range of youth-led PVE initiatives, from small-scale and highly local action, carrying out advocacy campaigns in the media and through education programmes promoting the disengagement and reintegration of former fighters, to the transnational work of networked young peacebuilders.

Finally, young people can engage in all phases of peace and conflict: in prevention, in humanitarian contexts, and in post-conflict contexts:

- Young people can contribute to prevent the outbreak of violence in situations of relative peace or “pre-conflict” settings, including through early interventions to prevent violence. Young people can participate in governance and political processes to support peace and security, by exerting influence

7. See the activity on “What can YOU do to advance peace and security in your community?” p. 225.
11. See Module 2 on “Youth political participation,” p. 95.
through voting, public debate, and dialogue with decisionmakers, by taking part in or conducting civic and voter education, by becoming elected officials particularly at the local level, and by engaging in political and decision-making processes, including informal political processes such as national youth councils and youth parliaments. In fragile and conflict-affected contexts, the potential for young people to build bridges across political parties and special interests, be more future-oriented and demonstrate openness to change, feedback and learning can help manage conflict and promote peace. Young people can also engage in informal spaces of participation, such as youth-led coalitions advocating for peace and security, grassroots peacebuilding engagement and peaceful rallies and demonstrations, which can make critical contributions to peace.\(^1\) Community and youth centres and clubs, for instance, particularly when they youth-managed and supported by their communities, can play significant roles in fostering social cohesion and inclusion by reaching out to vulnerable and marginalized groups, who are often most at risk of violence and exploitation. Through the media and social media, young people can also disseminate messages of peace, and contribute to deconstruct disinformation campaigns, hate speech, and violent extremist ideologies on digital platforms.\(^2\) They can also use the Internet and information and communications technologies to promote peace and security through initiatives such as crowdsourcing platforms, technology-driven first responder programmes, geographic information system-based security applications, peace gaming, and many more applications.

- **During conflicts, disasters, protracted crises, and in humanitarian contexts**, young people can be found on the frontlines of emergency preparedness, response, and recovery efforts, protecting their communities and environments. In all stages of humanitarian action, the knowledge of young people about their community can help identify solutions for resilience, stability, and peacebuilding.

- **Engaging young people positively and giving them a stake in their societies during the transition period after violent conflict** is important for long-term peace and security. When young people are meaningfully included in all phases of the peace process, they can contribute and shape peace agreements to include youth-specific perspectives, monitoring ceasefires, resolving local-level disputes, raising awareness on peace agreements, and building local ownership. ICTs offer new opportunities for mediators and young peacemakers to engage with and include the perspectives of young people, for instance through online consultation mechanisms. There are numerous examples of peacebuilding initiatives, for instance, sports for development and peace (SDP)\(^3\) can create a collaborative and non-threatening environment conducive for building tolerance, inter-cultural or inter-ethnic dialogue, and reconciliation in the aftermath of armed conflict.

**More information:**


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13. See Module 4 on “Youth participation in the digital age,” p. 231.


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**Activity 24: What can YOU do to advance peace and security in your community?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify concrete actions in support of peace and security at the community level</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 25 min</td>
<td>• Discussion in small groups of 6 (1 table)</td>
<td>• Handout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Activity (20 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Pens for each participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Debriefing (8 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity learning outcomes:**

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Identify concrete actions in support of peace and security at the community level

- [Skills] Practice analytical skills, and teamwork.

- [Attitude and values] Promote the culture of peace and non-violence, and display a commitment to conflict prevention and resolution, peacebuilding, reconciliation, inter-cultural dialogue, tolerance, and social cohesion.

**Activity instructions:**

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**

- Ask participants if they know about resilience and youth participation in support of peace and security at the community level. The trainer may provide examples from his/ her own personal or professional experience.
• Explain that the activity will require participants to work in small groups to fill out a table (see Handout) and make proposals for concrete actions in support of peace and security at the community level. Encourage participants to build on the knowledge they acquired in Modules 2 and 3 on youth political and civic participation.

Activity: Up to 20 minutes
• Tell participants they have up to 20 minutes fill up a table (see Handout).
• Whether participants are from the same country or from different countries, the trainer may want to help the initial discussions by providing some examples so that participants can identify concrete actions more easily.

Debriefing and evaluation: 8 minutes
• After 20 minutes, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  ◦ How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  ◦ Did you manage to fill every box in the table during the exercise? If you did not manage, which box(es), and why?
  ◦ In which area (e.g., political, civic, media and digital) do you think you can have the most positive impact in support of peace and security? In which area do you think youth-serving organizations should operate and get support for?
  ◦ Do you think some of these actions are more impactful in which phase(s) of peace and conflict: in prevention, in humanitarian contexts, and in post-conflict contexts?
  ◦ Did you ever participate in activities in support of peace and security as a student or a volunteer? If you are working in an organization, what are the activities related peace and security implemented by your organization? What challenges and opportunities did you or your organization encounter?
  ◦ How are the learnings from previous modules (see the modules on “Youth Political Participation” and on “Youth Civic Participation”) relevant to this exercise?
  ◦ What is the most surprising or interesting information you learned from this exercise?

Cheat sheet for the trainer: Possible answers to the exercise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Ideas for action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Political participation  | • Stay abreast of current events in your country, in the region or at the global level, understand how these issues affect you, your peers, your family, your colleagues, and your community.  
• Take interest in your city, attend council meetings, engage in dialogue platforms, and feedback mechanisms, write to your politician/representative, or local government.  
• Register to vote (and actually vote!), promote the importance of elections and representation around you, and stand for elected office, including in local-level positions.  
• Organize community projects to address local political issues or causes that matter to you, e.g., clean-up drives, campaigns for inclusive education. |
| 2. Civic participation      | • Participate in events related to peace and security, e.g., peace debates and dialogues, networking sessions, inter-cultural and inter-faith seminars and workshops, peace rallies and demonstrations.  
• Invite peace speakers and experts to your events, workplace, and/ or community; wherever and whenever possible, give voice to the vulnerable and the marginalized.  
• Volunteer with youth-led organizations, volunteer groups, community centers working on promoting peace and security.  
• Use creative forms of civic engagement to promote peace, e.g., create art/ music, educational theatre, community radio, and sport and music festivals to promote peace and non-violence. |
| 3. Media and digital         | • Raise awareness, e.g., organize advocacy campaigns, write articles/ blogs and post on social media about promoting peace.  
• Create or participate in online fundraising activities for causes that matter to you.  
• Join and engage in online communities and groups focused on peace, reconciliation, intercultural dialogue, tolerance, and social cohesion, e.g., follow hashtags such as #Youth4Peace and #ActOn2250.  
• Organize or attend online trainings/ webinars on nonviolence, ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution), conflict management, conflict resolution, and peace studies. |

4. Cross-cutting area

- Educate yourself (and teach others): read books/podcasts about peace, about structures that produce injustice and inequality, and their historical legacy, learn about critical events and the people that created positive change and progress.
- Practice peace, nonviolence, and forgiveness in your everyday lives, e.g., listen with the intent to understand, be helpful to others when you can, be curious about other communities and languages, etc.
- Think hard about any prejudices you may have and work to deconstruct them; treat all people with respect and kindness, regardless of race, gender, ethnic background, etc.
- Practice self-care, meditate, so you can radiate goodness to others.

Handout:

What can YOU do to advance peace and security in your community?

What can YOU – from your individual level, operating from the grassroots level – do about it in practice to support peace and security? Be collaborative and creative to find the most impactful ideas for action in your community. Provide at least 3 examples per area: political participation, civic participation, media, and digital participation, and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Ideas for action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Political participation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Civic participation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Media and digital participation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Other ideas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Variations:

- An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online “breakout rooms,” and encourage them to discuss and fill out the table collaboratively, using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

Wrap-up and final questions, the trainer may consider using some of the questions in “Extending the session.”

Suggested duration: 5 minutes.

Extending the session

Encourage participants to take a deeper dive into peace and conflict studies, by focusing on strategic peacebuilding, conflict management, conflict resolution, mediation, peace studies, non-violent action, and ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution), for instance by using online self-paced courses from the [United States Institute for Peace](https://www.usip.org) and the [Positive Peace Academy](https://positivepeaceacademy.org), available in Arabic, English, and French. Remind participants that promoting peace and non-violence can be as simple as writing a blog, posting on social media, attending a peace rally, or inviting a speaker to their event, workplace, and/or community. Invite participants to reflect on the benefits of being tolerant, open-minded, and respectful of cultural and religious diversity in their everyday lives: how do they think being able to accept other’s differences can have a positive impact on one’s wellbeing and the wellbeing of the community?

REFLECTING ON MODULE 3

Suggested total duration for the reflection: 20-30 minutes.

Reflection activity: Learning journal tool

Insist that the group creates a quiet and learning atmosphere for each individual to reflect, without any distractions or interruptions. Please refer to the trainer tips previously provided in “Reflection Module 1.”

16. See the section on “Reflecting on Module 1” p. 91.
Handout:

Reflection: Your learning journal

Read the following questions carefully and reflect on what you learned today! Aim to write about 500 words (1 page).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guiding questions</th>
<th>Your journal entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What thoughts and emotions come up for you regarding this module?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What were your high and low points?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are your main learning takeaways about youth civic participation?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was there a time today that left you confused or frustrated? How did you deal with that feeling?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What or who has made a significant impact on your experience today/ in this module?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What has been your favorite experience so far? How has that experience demonstrated your growth?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe a moment when something “clicked”. How did it happen?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe an accomplishment that you will be able to draw on in the future.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you learned anything about yourself through this module?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you think that what you learned and accomplished today will help you in your educational/ professional goals?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you were giving advice to someone else who wants to learn this topic, what would you tell them?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What personal challenge would you like to set for yourself for the following module?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What feedback do you have for the trainer?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Youth Participation in the digital age
MODULE 4: YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN THE DIGITAL AGE

The fourth module will help participants develop their digital, media, and information literacy and understand the basic human, cultural, societal, and technological trends, threats, and opportunities related to traditional and new forms of media and digital technologies, and how they affect youth participation in public life. While there are many opportunities and aspirations for youth civic engagement associated with developments in media and technology systems, resources, and services, there is also a crucial need to understand and mitigate the challenges it presents to society and for youth participation. Through interactive activities, participants will practice relevant skills for effective action in the media and digital spheres, including being able to analyze, explain, evaluate, and defend the importance of the effective and meaningful youth participation in the digital era.

Terms and concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth media and digital participation</th>
<th>The wide range of actions by young people, undertaken either alone or in community with others, in and through the media and using information and communication technologies.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital, media, and information literacy</td>
<td>The wide range of technical, cognitive, social, cultural, and creative capacities that allow people to access, interact with, create, and critically evaluate diverse types of digital information and communication technologies, and the media. In other words, it encompasses a range of competences, attributes and behaviours that harness the benefits and opportunities of the online and media worlds afford while at the same time building resilience against potential harms.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SESSION 12: YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN AND THROUGH THE MEDIA

The wide range of communication outlets or tools used to store and deliver information or data.

See the definition of “Digital, media, and information literacy” above.

Sometimes referred to as “participatory journalism,” “street journalism,” or “collaborative media,” this form of engagement in the media consists of citizens playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing, and disseminating news and information outside of formal media organizations.

Description

Media is an important part of the enabling environment that influences (both positively and negatively) whether and how young people participate in public life, and frequently a pathway to many forms of youth civic engagement. This session will explore the numerous ways in which young people can participate in and through the media: what are the main challenges and opportunities for youth participation in the media and communications landscape, and how can young people engage both as media consumers and information/content producers? Participants will be invited to answer these questions by analyzing and evaluating a piece of news from different angles, and by exploring the escalation of bias, discrimination, and hate, and identifying ways to counter them.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

• [Knowledge] Understand the links between the freedom of expression and opinion, the right to receive information, informed participation in democracy and governance, media as a tool for transparency and accountability, the basic role of key media actors, and the importance of respect for diversity and inclusion in the media.

• [Skills] Develop information and media awareness and understanding (information and media literacy) relevant to young people’s effective engagement in the (social) media sphere, both as creators and receivers of information, including advocacy, awareness-raising, and communication, and improve their ability to identify and counter hate speech, propaganda, misinformation, and disinformation in (social) media.

After briefly introducing the main topic of the session, the trainer may consider explaining the learning outcomes above, and some of the key terms and concepts, based on the needs/level of the group.

Suggested duration: 10 minutes.

Session content: Youth participation in and through the media

Terms and concepts
Part 1: Main challenges and opportunities for youth media participation

Media refers to a wide range of communication outlets or tools used to store and deliver information or data and include all forms of expression and the means of their dissemination, including spoken, written, and signed language and non-verbal expression such as images and objects of art, cartoons, memes, and any other media of choice. It includes both the mass media communications industry (e.g., newspapers and other print media, radio and television broadcasting, publishing, the news media, photography, cinema, and advertising), individual information and content creators, and informal ways of sharing news and information, including online. To better understand the participation of young people in and through the media, there are several questions to consider.

What are the key challenges for youth media participation?

Young people are facing multi-dimensional and interconnected barriers when participating in and through the media, which can lead to them feeling disempowered and excluded. The main challenges can be summarized as below:

- At the **structural level**, shrinking civic space negatively affects young people when participating in and through the media, for instance in the form of legal restrictions and acts of intimidation or reprisals on their freedom of expression and the freedom to publish or campaign their work, including defamation/legitimization, digital restrictions and security, and self-censorship. When young people cannot access ideas, reports, initiatives, and decisions, they are restricted in their ability to become aware and informed about issues, articulate concerns, engage constructively, and contribute to solutions (demand side). When young people work as journalists and other media professionals, or share news and information informally (e.g., blogging, vlogging, photo-blogging, podcasting), restrictions to free and independent media negatively impact the free flow of information (supply side). In addition, young people face negative perceptions linked to their age and perceived inexperience, and young women are in many countries subject to ‘double discrimination’ based on their age and gender, thus facing additional obstacles compared with men.

- At the **organizational level**, while similar to the challenges faced by civil society organizations (CSOs) in general, media organizations tend to include fewer young people, who are often confined to junior or unpaid positions. Except in a few countries, there are rarely youth-led news or media organizations. In addition, youth-serving organizations tend to use informal communication and information channels, e.g., social media, messaging applications, rather than engage in strategic partnerships with media organizations.

- At the **individual level**, there are gaps in young people's media and information literacy where young people often also lack expertise about media organizations, and the job opportunities they offer. In the media landscape, there is also sometimes a risk of elite/urban/male capture in leadership roles. In addition, young people sometimes move away from working in the media industry for economic reasons, for they need to prioritize paid positions over volunteer or low-paid positions within media organizations.

What are the key opportunities for youth media participation?

Notwithstanding these challenges, there are many opportunities for young people to participate in and through the media, in two main roles: as consumers of media and as creators of information and content.

On one hand, as **consumers of media**, young people are exposed to an ever-increasing amount of news, information, and entertainment media, for instance by reading books, magazines, and newspapers, watching television and film, listening to the radio and increasingly by getting news and information through digital platforms and social media. The advancement in media development and the flow of information demand certain competencies from the audience, especially from young people, who need to be able to safely access, critically analyze and evaluate the sources, to effectively process news and information.

Learn more about media and information literacy

- UN Alliance of Civilizations and University of Gothenburg (2016). Opportunities for Media Information and Literacy in the Middle East and North Africa. Goteborg, Sweden. Available in English only.

Media and information literacy is recognized as an essential tool to promote and support young people’s civic engagement in and through the media. With growing connectivity and low prices for personal computers and smartphones, this literacy has become essential, particularly with the proliferation of mis/disinformation on digital platforms. **Critical thinking**, one of the most important 21st-century or life skills needed for effective and meaningful participation, is fundamental for young people to be able to examine and analyze information and ideas to understand and assess their values and assumptions, rather than simply taking propositions at face value.

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1. See the session on “Space for youth participation,” p. 35.
2. See the definition of “Digital, media, and information literacy,” p. 62
3. See the session on “Capacities for youth participation,” p. 61
Evidence shows⁴ that critical thinking is needed in the context of mis/disinformation. For instance, a person with a critical mind is more likely to question the information given, look for verification and try to understand the reasoning (the intent or potential harm) behind a message, the choice of format and words, and not to jump to quick conclusions.

On the other hand, as creators of information and content, young people can work in formal media organizations such as newspapers, radio stations, TV networks and journalist associations. Young people can work a wide range of media jobs, ranging from news correspondents, newspaper columnists, investigative reporters, editors, cartoonists, filmmakers, radio producers, photographers, and a range of other technical positions. Beside working in media regulatory bodies (facilitated by government in some countries), young people can contribute to improve professional reporting standards in the media sector, promote quality performance at media agencies, support information and (digital) media literacy and staff development at media organizations.⁵

Case study: Engaging Iraq’s youth in peacebuilding through journalism

Organization for Social Development, in cooperation with Sabaq Center for Media Development, developed a training manual on digital media tools and conflict-sensitive reporting. Using the manual, a series of training sessions were then delivered in 8 governorates in Iraq for media college students, journalists, bloggers, and other young media professionals. The training sessions focused on social cohesion, designing community-based initiatives, using media in building sustainable peace, photography, story editing, and social media. The training also helped to create a network of journalists who will contribute their written work to an online public platform managed by UNDP Iraq.


Activity 25: Analyzing and evaluating the news

Activity aim/objectives | Duration (Min) | Group organization | Materials/handouts
--- | --- | --- | ---
Participants will:  
• Assess a news story from two different sources to analyze and evaluate its reliability  
• Discussions in small groups (1 group per table)  
• Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group)

Total time: Approx. 30 min  
• Instructions (2 min)  
• Activity (20 min)  
• Debriefing (8 min)  
• Pens for each participant  
• Internet access

Activity learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

• [Knowledge] Understand the concepts of information pollution (e.g., disinformation, misinformation, propaganda) through the analysis and evaluation of a news story from two different sources.
• [Skills] Develop basic analytical skills, consensus-building, and teamwork.
• [Attitude and values] Promote the importance of basic information and media literacy and display a commitment to sharing this knowledge with peers, family, colleagues, and the community.
Preparation/materials:

- Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group).
- Pens for each participant.
- Internet access to do some online research. Alternatively, provide printed copies of newspaper articles.

Trainer tips:

- This curriculum does not provide specific examples of two news stories for the trainer to use as the hyperlinks might be inactive or the news stories irrelevant by the time the trainer has access to it. There are websites that include examples that can be used, such as the Media Bias/ Fact Check, an independent online media outlet based in the U.S. dedicated to educating the public on media bias and deceptive news practices.
- The trainer is encouraged to select a topic that is most adapted to his/her local contexts, and the level of the participants, based on the following tips:
  - Both news stories A and B should focus on the same issue, but cover/address it in subtle diverse ways, focusing on the evaluation questions provided in the Handout, looking at 4 primary areas, namely: 1. Basic information about the article/news piece, 2. Choice of language, 3. Factual/sourcing, and 4. Political and other affiliations. The choice of news stories needs to help participants identify similarities as well as differences.
  - In some contexts, it might be useful to analyze and evaluate political news (e.g., related to recent or upcoming election, political parties, policymaking), in most contexts, it might be recommended to select a scientific or medical news story (e.g., the outbreak of a disease, the impact of climate change, the efficiency of electric cars), something controversial but not necessarily inflammatory to your audience.
  - Irrespective of the political or other affiliations of the newspaper/author of the news stories, it is better if the reporter has done the reporting themselves, not just summarizing other media outlets’ reports.
  - One possibility is to select a news story from a reputable, national-level or pan-Arab newspapers, for instance the one with the most readers in a specific country or in the region, while the other news story may be sourced from lesser known/reliable newspaper. It is important to note that this assessment by the trainer is subjective!
- To avoid giving away the objective of the activity, in this case, it is recommended that the trainer does not ask participants beforehand what they know about bias, disinformation and misinformation, and how it affects young people participating in and through the media.

Activity instructions:

Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes

- Explain that the activity will require to read two news stories provided, do some online research, and fill out a table looking at 4 different areas, namely: 1. Basic information about the article/news piece, 2. Choice of language, 3. Factual/sourcing, and 4. Political and other affiliations.

Activity: Up to 20 minutes

- Tell participants they have up to 20 minutes to read the two news stories provided, and to fill the table (see Handout).

Debriefing and evaluation: 8 minutes

- After 20 minutes, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to fill every row of the table? If you did not manage, which rows, and why?
  - Are there evaluation questions that seem more important than others? For instance, do you think the choice of language has more influence on your/people’s opinion than inaccurate facts?
  - Do you think political and other affiliations of media organizations and other media actors is an issue in your community/country context? Why?
  - Is disinformation or misinformation an issue in your community/country context? Can you provide examples? Do you know about any examples from the international news?
  - As a media consumer, particularly on social media, do you think you have been subject to disinformation or misinformation? Do you think you ever shared news articles and social media content too quickly, without checking the source?
  - As a media producer, how much time do you dedicate to create fact-checked information/content? Do you always use well-sourced and reliable evidence, data, statistics, and infographics? If not, why?
  - What is the most surprising or interesting information you learned from this exercise?
Handout:

Scanning and understanding the news

Read both news stories and fill out the table below!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation questions</th>
<th>News story A</th>
<th>News story B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Basic information</strong></td>
<td>Both articles are talking about the same event. Summarize in two sentences what happened.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What media organization or website produced or published the articles?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it original content or do the articles relay information from secondary sources (analysis, interpretation, or opinion about or based upon a primary source)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it a known or registered news outlets, what does the domain name stand for? (e.g., &quot;org&quot; = organization)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the date of the article? How recent or old is this information?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Choice of language</strong></td>
<td>Do the articles report news from both sides or do they only focus on one side?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do the articles focus primarily on facts (a statement that can be proven true or false) or opinions (an expression of a person’s feelings that cannot be proven)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the reporter use loaded words to convey emotion to sway the reader? Do headlines match the story?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Factual/sourcing</strong></td>
<td>Does the reporter back up claims with well-sourced and reliable evidence, data, statistics, and infographics?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which sources did the reporter use or contact when drafting this article? Which source is more credible and reliable? Why?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Political and other affiliations</strong></td>
<td>Find an “About us” page for each website and summarize the key information.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the reporter remain impartial, or did s/he try to persuade the reader in a certain direction? How can you tell?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the website who published the content publicly or privately-owned?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How strongly does the website endorse a particular political ideology? Are there known political affiliations?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the site have advertising? What do they stand to benefit from disseminating the information?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional comments and ideas:

Variations:
- An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online “breakout rooms” organized by city or country and encourage them to discuss and fill out the table, using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

More information:
Part 2: Ways that media can be harmful and misused, and the impact on youth participation

The negative impact of information pollution and hate speech

Many societies are experiencing a significant polarization of views and a rise in ideological and religious intolerance, fundamentalism and other manifestations of national, racial, ethnic or other forms of collective hatred. The UN Secretary General explains political and social polarization as a global phenomenon "built on economic disparities and populism, competition for natural resources and environmental degradation, fragmented non-State armed actors and the absence of political solutions to evolving conflicts." Some of the most visible effects of this negative trend can be witnessed in the media and communication spheres, and disproportionally impact young people and create hostile environments for youth participation, particularly for the most marginalized among them.

On one hand, disinformation, misinformation, and propaganda (sometimes encompassed in the concept of "news or information pollution") refer to a range of ways in which sharing news or information causes harm, intentionally or unintentionally, most commonly in relation to the promotion of a particular point of view, or moral or political cause. What these phenomena have in common is that they consist in sharing information that is false or misleading (or at least contain some level of falsity) presented as facts, that they are strategically disseminated in the public sphere including online with the intention to influence societal processes on matters of public interest (e.g., politics, health, environment). Young people are particularly vulnerable to these phenomena in that they often lack the competencies to identify, analyze and evaluate disinformation, misinformation, and propaganda. This is particularly worrying given that young people spend a significant amount of their leisure time watching television, blogging, posting photos and chatting using the Internet and other information and communication technologies (ICTs), and that they rely strongly on news and information circulated online for their knowledge and perceptions of the world and reality.

On the other hand, hate speech, discrimination, and other forms of harassment such as defamation/ delegitimization of civil society and media actors, and public figures including social media influencers and bloggers, also negatively impact young people. In the digital sphere, these phenomena can be amplified and more visible to the public eye and take the form of cyber-hate (sometimes referred to more simply as "hate speech online"), cyber-bullying and other forms of online harassment. Combined, and sometimes with the de-multiplier effect that the media can create, these phenomena contribute to the disempowerment of young people with profound consequences: diminished self-esteem/ self-worth and sense of belonging, internalization and self-blame, increased stress levels and negative emotions, mistrust in the system, feeling of frustration leading sometimes to more discrimination and violence.

Hate speech is intricately linked to discrimination and hateful behavior and violence - ranging from intentional avoidance, name calling, openly denying people access to services to physical violence - that is based on intolerance, prejudice or bias towards a person or a group. Gender-based hate refers to actions or attitudes that discriminate against individuals or groups based solely on their gender, based on bias, false beliefs, and over-generalizations. A useful framework to understand the escalating nature of hate and to consider the difficulty of stopping the progression once it begins was created by the Anti-Defamation League. It describes several stages that negatively impact individuals and groups, with increasing levels of severity and potential harm:

- Level 1 Indirect prejudice and biased attitudes: Acts that can be witnessed in your everyday life, in your family, school, workplace. This level is the basis of the pyramid and highlight the vital importance of deconstructing some of the sociocultural norms, beliefs, misconceptions, and stereotypes that are pervasive and often go unchallenged in society.
- Level 2 Bias and prejudice: Acts that perpetuate the sociocultural norms, beliefs, misconceptions, and stereotypes by actively victimizing and harassing other people, often when they are perceived as weaker than oneself.
- Level 3 Discrimination: This level is quite pervasive in most societies, and only one step below moving to acts or intent to commit violence.
- Level 4 Bias-motivated violence: This level is characterized by acts with an important level of violence directed to specific groups with the direct intention to harm or kill.
- Level 5 Life-threatening acts: The top level are acts or intent to deliberately and systematically target and eliminate a group of people on a large scale.

What is the role of different development actors to address the misuse of media?

To counter information pollution and hate speech, governments and international organizations can support research efforts and develop early warning systems to monitor how information pollution and hate speech emerge and spread in a particular country context. The UN and other multilateral organizations can lead, and support coordinated efforts to address these issues by bringing together governments (e.g., relevant ministries, media regulators, election management bodies), media actors, civil society, and the private sector to create national and international coalitions.

Public and private media can promote professional and ethical journalism, including investigative journalism, and can contribute to a public discourse based on research and data, contributing to fact-checking the news and information they publish or disseminate, serving as a rampart to false, misleading, and hateful messages. In addition, while social networking platforms and Internet service providers generally do not create news and information themselves, but they do serve as platforms to transmit, organize, and amplify. Social networking platforms and Internet service providers have a distinct positive role to play to create news media moderation regulations, codes of conduct and user/ online community standards. Their users are vulnerable to believing that the news and information they see are spontaneous, objective, and user-generated, while in fact it may have been micro-targeted and politically motivated. All the above-mentioned stakeholders, including young people working individually and in community with others, can create or support existing
media and information literacy initiatives aimed at preparing young media users to interpret and react to false, misleading, and hateful messages, and can also raise awareness about these issues among their peers, family, colleagues, and the community.

More information:


Activity 26: Deconstructing the cycle of hate in and through the media

**Activity aim/objectives**

Participants will:

- Explore the escalation of bias, discrimination, and hate, identify ways to counter it and to be an ally to those who are targeted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total time: Approx. 25 min</td>
<td>Discussions in small groups (1 group per table)</td>
<td>Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td>Debrief in the full group</td>
<td>Pens for each participant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity (18 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debriefing (5 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity learning outcomes:**

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Explore the escalation of bias, discrimination, and hate, identify ways to counter it and to be an ally to those who are targeted.
- [Skills] Develop basic analytical skills, consensus-building, and teamwork.
- [Attitude and values] Promote the importance of deconstructing bias, discrimination and hate to support social cohesion and build peaceful and inclusive societies.

**Preparation/materials:**

- Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group).
- Pens for each participant.

**Activity instructions:**

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**

- Ask participants what they know about the concept of “bias,” “discrimination” and “hate” building on their personal knowledge.

**Activity: Up to 18 minutes**

- Tell participants they have up to 18 minutes to read the statements provided and match them to the corresponding level of the “Pyramid of Hate” (see Handout).

**Debriefing and evaluation: 5 minutes**

- After 18 minutes, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to link every statement to a level of the pyramid? If you did not manage, which statements, and why?
  - Do the lower levels of the pyramid seem unimportant when talking about hate and discrimination, compared to the higher levels?
  - Can you think of examples of how the lower levels of the pyramid are in fact the foundation upon which hate and violence are built?
  - At which level do you think the media can influence this pyramid? How?
  - What is the role of the media to amplify or counter bias, discrimination, and hate? Do they have a responsibility (civic duty) to do so?
  - Can you identify practical ways, at your individual and community level, to counter bias,
discrimination, and hate? What are concrete actions you can take to be an ally to those who are targeted?

- What are concrete measures that your (local or national) government should implement to counter bias, discrimination, and hate?
- At which level do you think policymaking is needed? Why? At which level do you think awareness-raising and education is most needed? Why?
- What is the most surprising or interesting information you learned from this exercise?

Handout:

The answers to the exercise are a) Prejudice based on the perceived lack of economic resources (level 1); b) Hate crime/ vandalism (level 4); c) Religion-based discrimination (level 3); d) Terrorism/ bombing (level 5); e) Bias-motivated violence/ gender-based violence (level 4); f) Stereotyping/ ethnic or racial profiling (level 1); g) Scapegoating based on the lack of economic opportunity (level 2); h) Social exclusion (level 3).

Deconstructing the cycle of hate in and through the media

Match the statements lettered a) through h) below with the correct level of the pyramid, either by drawing a line from the term to the matching level of the pyramid or by writing the letter of the statement next to the correct level of the pyramid:

a. A leading publisher does not recommend one of her star young writers for a youth literature programme in the capital city because she believes the family could not afford the required expenses.

b. A religious site was spray-painted with hateful and anti-religion graffiti and slurs. The pictures were subsequently posted anonymously on the social media pages of the religious community center managing the site.

c. An employer in a media organization does not recruit a young journalist who is otherwise qualified because the candidate is wearing a religious outfit as part of his community tradition.

d. The recent bombing targeting an ethnic minority community, with at least 50 victims confirmed as dead or seriously injured, was preceded by a series of radio talk shows inciting for mass violence against the group.

e. A group of young women started a blog to promote girls’ participation in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). As a result, in school, they were taunted and attacked by a group of young men.

f. Youth magazines rarely include pictures of persons from different ethnic and racial backgrounds in a positive way.

g. A TV show reports on a study using unreliable sources claiming that migrants are stealing people’s jobs and threaten their livelihoods.

h. A recently graduated university student was excluded from applying to join the association of media professionals because he is a refugee.

Variations:

- An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online “breakout rooms,” and encourage them to discuss and do the exercise collaboratively, using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

- Provided participants have access to the Internet, a simplified version of this activity with an interactive video was created by the Anti-Defamation League and is available online: The Pyramid of Hate, available in English only.

Wrap-up and final questions, the trainer may consider using some of the questions in “Extending the session.”

Suggested duration: 10 minutes.

Extending the session

As media consumers, young people have the responsibility to use their critical thinking and stay alert to the news and information they consume and share with their peers, family, colleagues, and the community. Encourage participants to do a search in their respective social media feeds. Are they sometimes confused between news and advertisements? Have they previously shared content with questionable sources? As information/content creators, young people also need to act responsibly, share evidence-based, fact-checked information, and avoid spreading disinformation, misinformation, and hate – even unintentionally. What concrete actions will participants undertake to counter information pollution and hate speech in their every lives?
SESSION 13: YOUTH DIGITAL PARTICIPATION

Suggested total duration for the session: 120 minutes.

Description

As societies have grown dependent on information and communication technologies (ICTs), people lacking access to ICTs and digital literacy face greater challenges to participate effectively and meaningfully in public life, leading to political, social, economic, and cultural exclusion. This session will explore the many ways in which young people can participate in and through ICTs by addressing questions such as: what are the main challenges and opportunities for youth participation in the digital sphere, and how can young people engage both as consumers and producers of ICTs? Participants will be invited to answer these questions by working in groups to identify the main challenges and opportunities related to youth digital participation, and by responding to a series of questions and providing examples to determine whether they qualify as digital citizens.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- **[Knowledge]** Understand key trends, challenges and opportunities related to youth participation using digital technologies, including basic digital rights and responsibilities, the Internet as a tool for transparency and accountability, the basic role of key digital actors, and the importance of respect for diversity and inclusion on the Internet.

- **[Skills]** Develop digital awareness and understanding (digital literacy) relevant to young people's effective engagement in the digital sphere, building on relevant skills such as online mobilizing and organizing, online advocacy and awareness-raising, and basic skills for health and wellness online/digital security skills.

- **[Attitudes and values]** Exhibit leadership, embody and promote among peers and community the importance of young people's positive role as digital citizens, and championing people’s right to access information, freedoms of expression and opinion and right to privacy online, and to respect diversity and inclusion online, while supporting a free, open, and safe Internet.

Session content: Youth digital participation

Terms and concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth digital participation</th>
<th>Sometimes also referred to as youth “cyber-participation” or “e-citizenship.” See the definition of “Youth digital and media participation” above.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital literacy</td>
<td>See the definition of “Digital, media, and information literacy” above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital citizenship</td>
<td>The process by which people have a competent and positive engagement with ICTs (see below) and participate safely and responsibly online, in accordance with principles such as the respect for privacy and intellectual property, anti-cyberbullying, and more. Like active citizens, digital citizens can participate online in different fields (political, economic, social, cultural, etc.) and levels (local, national, and supra-national).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital divide</td>
<td>The discrepancies and inequalities that exist between individuals and groups in society in terms of both their opportunities to access and use information and communication technologies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information and communication technologies</td>
<td>The wide range of technologies, including the Internet, wireless networks, cell phones, computers, software, middleware, videoconferencing, social networking, and other media applications and services enabling users to access, retrieve, store, transmit, and manipulate information in a digital form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>A broad term used to describe interactive communications, networking, and organizing activities that take place using digital technologies (web-based and mobile).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artificial intelligence</td>
<td>The theory and development of computer systems able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence, e.g., decision-making, speech recognition, visual perception, translation, and interpretation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic tech</td>
<td>Civic technology, or “civic tech,” includes a wide range of ICTs used to enable and promote civic engagement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gov tech</td>
<td>Sometimes referred to as “e-participation,” Gov Tech is the use of ICTs to enable interaction between people and their governments, and to engage citizens in decision-making, public service delivery and other related governance processes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After briefly introducing the main topic of the session, the trainer may consider explaining the learning outcomes above, and some of the key terms and concepts, based the needs/level of the group.

Suggested duration: 10 minutes.
Part 1: Main challenges and opportunities for youth digital participation

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) refer to the wide range of technologies, including the Internet, wireless networks, cell phones, computers, software, middleware, videoconferencing, social networking, and other media applications and services enabling users to access, retrieve, store, transmit, and manipulate information in a digital form. To better understand the participation of young people on the Internet and through ICTs, there are several questions to consider.

What are the key challenges and opportunities for youth digital participation?

Young people are facing multi-dimensional and inter-connected barriers when participating in the digital sphere, which can lead them to feel disempowered and excluded. The main challenges at the structural level can be summarized as below:

- First, shrinking civic space negatively impacts young people when participating in the digital sphere, for instance in the form of legal restrictions inhibiting a free and open Internet and acts of intimidation or reprisals against them for exercising their rights to access information online and express themselves. There are also concerns about the lack of encryption which protects their privacy and is essential for young people to express themselves freely and without the fear of reprisals or other forms of harassment in the digital sphere. Examples of interferences in digital rights range from Internet and communication restrictions or censorship, mass surveillance of communications by state intelligence agencies, to systematic collection and storage of private information by the private sector (e.g., social networking platforms, Internet service providers, and telecommunications companies), to defamation/delegitimization.

- Second, a digital divide, the unequitable access to modern ICTs, exists between countries, regions, and demographic groups. The availability of broadband network coverage, infrastructure, cost of connectivity, ownership of digital devices, and the ability to access and benefit from the Internet are some of the key factors that determine youth digital participation. Evidence shows that despite the high penetration and use of the Internet and mobile technologies, vulnerable and marginalized groups, e.g., young women, lower income/educated individuals, people living in rural communities, and the elderly are less likely to use ICTs than their male, younger, urban counterparts. In addition, evidence shows that, when compared to other world regions, the gap between men and women’s Internet usage is largest across Arab States, sometimes referred to as the “digital gender gap.” Young women are also more likely than men to face online abuse, to fall victim to Internet fraud and online financial schemes, and to believe and share disinformation online.

- Third, negative sociocultural norms, beliefs, misconceptions, and stereotypes often surround youth digital participation, with ICTs sometimes blamed for facilitating shallower relationships and weaker forms of youth civic engagement. For instance, young people are often blamed for clicktivism, sometimes referred to as “slacktivism,” which is the practice of engaging an issue of public concern via the Internet by means such as social media or online petitions, typically characterized as involving minimal effort or commitment. In addition, cultural norms, gender roles, biases, and stereotypes often dissuade and even prevent (young) women from accessing the Internet, gaining digital literacy, or participating in the digital economy or society.

- Fourth, there are extensive gaps in digital literacy. Evidence shows that digital literacy goes beyond technical know-how and refers to the knowledge, skills and attitudes that allow citizens and young people to be both safe and empowered in the digital sphere. It also encompasses their participation, socializing, learning and play, and varies according to the person’s age, local culture, and context. With growing connectivity and low prices for personal computers and smartphones, digital literacy has become essential, and builds on critical thinking, an essential skill that enables young people to access, interact with, create, and critically evaluate diverse types of ICTs.

- Lastly, there are risks of potential harms and negative applications of ICTs and artificial intelligence (see below). These include information bubbles and other biases created by algorithms based on who builds the ICTs, the way they are developed, and how they are eventually implemented, which impact citizens and young people’s voice and agency. They also include the manipulation of data, for instance in the form of “deep fakes,” a form of artificial intelligence enabling the creation of images or videos of fake events.

How can ICTs be used to empower young people to participate in public life?

Notwithstanding these challenges, ICTs remain a powerful tool that can contribute to promote and strengthen diverse, creative, dynamic forms of youth civic engagement, often referred to as “youth digital citizenship.” Encompassed in the term “civic technology” or “civic tech,” ICTs can be used in numerous ways to empower young people to participate in public life, be informed citizens, connecting them with each other and getting them to engage with their government in the decisions that affect their lives. The Civic Tech Field Guide, a crowdsourced, global collection of ICTs tools and projects, groups them in the six following categories:

First, gov tech, sometimes referred to as “e-participation,” is the use of ICTs to enable interaction between people and their governments, and to engage citizens in decision-making, public service delivery and other related governance processes. ICTs can support tools and platforms that share official communications (e.g., service alerts), support digital communication channels between representatives and their citizens (e.g., online complaints and other feedback mechanisms), and systems that help provide direct public services and benefits (e.g., e-government platforms), including services for social inclusion that target vulnerable groups. ICTs can also be used for a range of actions designed to improve the general functioning of government, e.g., platforms for managing government vendors, recruitment, and online learning platforms that enable people working in public administration to build their skills. See, for instance, the World Bank’s 2019 GovTech Global Partnership. In the field of election campaigning and management, ICTs can also help people vote by informing them about registration requirements, ballot information, districts, election dates, locations, and procedures, and e-voting through Internet and mobile technologies.

1. See the session on “Space for youth participation,” p. 39
3. See the definition of “Digital divide,” p. 249
6. See the definition of “Digital, media, and information literacy,” p. 232. See the session on “Capacities for youth participation,” p. 61.
8. See the definition of “Civic Tech,” p. 249.
Second, *engagement tech* refers to ICTs that can improve civic engagement, whether with formal governmental bodies or independent of them. ICTs can enable digital platforms that document, distribute, and otherwise make legible the legislative process (“crowdlaw”) or that invite citizens – including those from marginalized and vulnerable groups – to debate, contribute, respond to, and even develop public policies (e.g., online forums, surveys, public finance and participatory budgeting and monitoring, and open innovation or ideation challenges). See the many examples available in UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (2017’s Guidelines on Fostering Innovation in the Public Sector of the Arab Region).

Third, *advocacy tech* can be explained as ICTs that are used to harness public support for or influence a particular cause or policy. ICTs can be used for disseminating information easily, cheaply and on a large scale, for instance through peer-to-peer or mass SMS and email campaigns, call campaigns, or online petitions. ICTs can allow mobilization on a large scale, for instance by facilitating the coordination of large networks of online volunteers or supporters, e.g., advocacy or campaigning groups, peer-to-peer groups, and support networks. ICTs can also facilitate digital boycotts (e.g., help people direct their money away from companies with negative social and environmental footprints), and can support fundraising and resource mobilization through online donation collection and volunteer tracking. ICTs also provide enormous potential to track, monitor and evaluate the activities of the government and private sector, creating mechanisms for accountability and transparency.\(^\text{10}\) Online trackers and mappings focus on a range of topics: budget explorers to track government funds, promise trackers to check promises by political leaders made during campaigns against the actions of their government, community and citizen report cards and audits using ICTs, whistleblowing, and consumer watchdogging.

Fourth, *tech for media* refer to ICTs used in by media actors that share a commitment to the public interest. ICTs can be used for digital journalism, storytelling, citizen media, and other forms of interactive digital media.\(^\text{11}\) ICTs can also be used to fight misinformation, fake news, and hate speech, for instance through factchecking and other efforts by media actors, media organizations or independent media regulatory bodies to analyze patterns, flagging or eliminating untrue or wrong content, and sharing the verification of facts with organizations. See, for instance, the Fact-checking Resources from the International Fact-Checking Network at the Poynter Institute and Fatabyavno, an independent fact-checker based Jordan, which covers a wide range of misinformation throughout the Arab world, including 22 countries in the Middle East and North and East Africa.\(^\text{12}\) Media and social media analysis can use ICTs to quantify the impact of online campaigns or study how a campaign moves through the media ecosystem. ICTs can also be used to promote civic engagement and awareness through play (e.g., computer games), and advertising to invest money behind advertising and platforms.

Fifth, *civic data* can be explained as data or data-related products that share a commitment to the public interest. ICTs can help curate open government and other open civic data collections through web-based data access, publishing, and distribution platforms that promote transparency and accountability by making government data available to all. See, for instance, the UN Development Programme’s Transparency Portal which includes the source of funding, key donors and and thematic focus for every project managed by UNDP worldwide. Such platforms are called “crowdsourced” when they also allow a variety of external stakeholders to contribute data to a common collection. ICTs can also be used to create data visualization, for instance by enabling tools and platforms that visually present and analyze information useful for advocacy and campaigning, e.g., mapping platforms to understand the social networks of political actors, dashboards that help present and filter data related to public services, accessible digital databases of civic and media archives, etc. See, for instance, the Knowledge4All Portal developed by the UN Development Programme and Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Foundation, which presents data through innovative visualization tools, such as heat maps, scorecard techniques, as well as tree maps and charts, with the possibility to conduct a multi-country analysis developed by the UN Development Programme and Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Foundation, which presents data through innovative visualization tools, such as heat maps, scorecard techniques, as well as tree maps and charts, with the possibility to conduct a multi-country analysis developed by the UN Development Programme and Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Foundation, which presents data through innovative visualization tools, such as heat maps, scorecard techniques, as well as tree maps and charts, with the possibility to conduct a multi-country analysis. Last, *emerging tech* refers to ICTs whose development and/ or practical applications are still largely misunderstood or are unrealized with the potential to gain prominence soon. Emerging tech most relevant to youth civic engagement can be divided into hardware and artificial intelligence:

- On one hand, *hardware* such as consumer electronics and computers can be built and used for civic tech applications. Connected devices with cameras and audio processing (e.g., speech recognition, machine vision), drones, satellites and other sensor technologies can be used for a wide range of applications, e.g., to map neighborhoods, deliver goods, document corruption, track environmental factors like air quality, and monitor human rights violations. In this area, virtual and augmented reality is an example of the next frontier in bridging the digital and physical worlds and allowing information to be shared visually in an interactive way. See, for instance, the Electronic Frontier Foundation’s *Spot the Surveillance*.

- On the other hand, *artificial intelligence* (AI) includes ICTs that train computer models to autonomously support or function independently of direct human effort. AI is often predictive and automated, but at the same time seeking to personalize the consumption of digital content. In several countries, governments are also starting to use AI to become more efficient and effective, as well as offer citizens better, more personalized services. The three most common AI technologies include:
  - Blockchain, which allows data to be structured and distributed without the need for a centralized authority, and can have many applications including in digital government, digital tracking, and verification for fraud protection, blockchain-based mobile voting, fintech, and distance education. See many examples about how unconventional technologies such as blockchain can be leveraged to achieve sustainable development in UN Development Programme and Blockchain Commission for Sustainable Development (2018’s *The Future is Decentralised: Block Chains, Distributed Ledgers & the Future of Sustainable Development*).
  - Bots, which are autonomous or semi-autonomous chat agents that can interact with people for the purpose of achieving a civic goal, like registering a vote or capturing citizen feedback. See, for instance, the UN’s Act Now Bot on climate action.
  - Machine learning, which are computer algorithms that improve automatically through experience, including through deep learning, which mimics the workings of the human brain. Machine learning can be used to process data for use in Internet search engines to detect objects, email filters to sort out spam, websites to make personalized recommendations, recognizing speech, translating languages, and making decisions.

10. See the session on “Introduction to youth civic participation,” p. 163.
11. See the session on “Youth participation in and through the media,” p. 232.
How can various actors in supporting youth digital participation?

Governments can act as a catalyst and support youth digital participation by providing universal Internet access and creating opportunities for participatory and inclusive experiences in their interactions with citizens and young people. Governments can support coordinated efforts to address these issues by bringing together social networking platforms and internet service providers, political actors, election management bodies, media actors and civil society actors to create national and international coalitions. Both governments and the private sector can play a key role in mitigating some of the harmful and restrictive ways that Internet and ICTs can be misused, for instance by supporting research efforts and developing early warning systems to monitor how information pollution and hate speech emerge and spread in a particular country context.

In partnership with telecommunication regulators, governments can also support initiatives to encourage the private sector (e.g., social networking platforms, Internet service providers, and telecommunications companies) to play a more robust role in actively countering information pollution and online hate speech by, for instance, creating news media moderation regulations, codes of conduct and user/online community standards. In numerous countries, a range of actors (e.g., municipalities, schools, universities, civil society organizations, and the private sector) are now also providing Internet access through public kiosks, community centers, open labs, open Wi-Fi networks in public spaces, hotels, cafés, and restaurants, further democratizing the use of Internet and ICTs. Both governments and the private sector can also create or support existing digital literacy initiatives aimed at preparing digital users to interpret and react to false, misleading, and hateful messages.

More information:


Activity 27: Working group reports on youth digital citizenship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Bust myths about youth digital participation, and work in groups to identify the main challenges and opportunities related to youth digital participation</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 40 min</td>
<td>• Discussion in the full group</td>
<td>• There are no preparation/ materials necessary for this activity.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td>• Work in small groups (1 group per table)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Activity (32 min) discussion (8 min) followed by work in small groups (25 min)</td>
<td>• Debrief in the full group</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Debriefing (5 min)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Activity learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Deconstruct some of the sociocultural norms, beliefs, misconceptions, and stereotypes about young people, and their engagement with information and communication technologies.
- [Skills] Develop basic analytical skills and build consensus.
- [Attitude and values] Promote young people’s effective and meaningful participation in the digital sphere.

Preparation/ materials:

- There are no preparation/ materials necessary for the discussion (Step 1 of the activity).
- Printed handout for each participant for the work in small groups (Step 2 of the activity).
Module 4

Activity instructions:

Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes

- Ask participants what they know about concepts such as "digital participation or citizenship," and "digital literacy," reflecting on what they learned in previous Modules 1, 2, and 3 about youth participation in public life.
- Tell participants that the whole group will have a brief discussion to deconstruct some of the sociocultural norms, beliefs, misconceptions, and stereotypes about young people and their participation in the digital era.
- Tell participants that this will be followed by participants working in thematic working groups to identify opportunities and mitigate risks for young digital citizens, based on their personal and professional experience.

Activity: Up to 30 minutes

- In Step 1 of the activity [5 minutes], the trainer can choose to have an open discussion, or facilitate the discussion using some of the statements below. Participants can be invited to share about the common norms, beliefs, misconceptions, and stereotypes in their context, and to illustrate with concrete examples from their personal or professional experience. What are the main commonalities and differences between different participants/communities/countries?
  - Young people are too immature to be trusted with Internet tools or messaging applications without adult supervision.
  - Young people only engage in the digital sphere to play/be entertained or to socialize with their peers, not to participate in public life and create positive change.
  - Young people living in rural areas, hard-to-reach communities, vulnerable and marginalized communities lack the digital, media, and information literacy to conduct political or civic activities online.
  - Clicktivism and other forms of Internet-based slacktivism such as hashtag activism are replacing traditional forms of youth civic engagement.
  - Young people are born "digital natives" inherently competent and confident with information and communication technologies.
  - Young people do not care or understand concerns about digital surveillance and privacy.
  - The perceived anonymity of the Internet provides young people, particularly the ones who have a propensity for violence and extremism, with the opportunity to have a negative impact on peers and their community.
  - Other statements that may be relevant to the participants’ local contexts.

- In Step 2 of the activity [25 minutes], the trainer can invite participants to more in-depth discussion:
  - Divide the participants in three different working groups, organized by theme, namely: 1. Learning to become digital citizens, 2. Diversity and inclusion in the digital sphere, and 3. Data protection, privacy, security, and online safety.
  - Explain that participants are part of a working group on digital citizenship for young people, and their role is to identify key opportunities, challenges, and recommendations in relation to their theme.
  - Depending on the level of the group, the trainer may want to provide them with guiding questions (or use the questions below for the debriefing and evaluation, see below):

1. Theme 1: What are the knowledge, skills and behaviors that harness the benefits and opportunities of the digital sphere, while also build resilience against potential harms? How can young people access, interact with, create, and critically evaluate diverse types of digital information and communication technologies? Are there specific education policies, education tools and resources, that the government should set up to help young people become digital citizens? What are policy recommendations for youth-serving organizations, civil society including schools and universities, the private sector, and the government?

2. Theme 2: How do ICTs impact diversity, inclusion, equality, and dignity? Are there different opportunities and challenges for vulnerable and marginalized groups in the digital sphere? How can you include young people from all groups, e.g., disconnected young people living in remote or hard-to-reach communities, young migrants and refugees, young persons with disability, young people living in fragile and conflict-affected countries? How can you ensure that policymakers and the private sector ensure that ICT developers consider the diverse perspectives of all young people, including those from vulnerable and marginalized groups?

3. Theme 3: What is the importance of digital literacy in relation to data protection, privacy, security, and online safety? Are there research and awareness on good practices and standards? What legal frameworks and policies can help to hold the private sector (e.g., social networking platforms, Internet service providers, and telecommunications companies) accountable, and support the simplification of online terms of conditions and agreements? How can policymakers and relevant actors, e.g., independent telecommunication regulatory agencies, enforce independent auditing on the private sector (e.g., social networking platforms, Internet service providers, and telecommunications companies)? What kind of youth-friendly platforms would be useful for young people to receive information, guidance and legal advice when needed?

Debriefing and evaluation: 8 minutes

- After 30 minutes, consider conducting a debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the discussion? Was it useful?
  - What does it mean to you to be a changemaker? In the context of youth digital participation? Can you think of ways to encourage your peers, family, colleagues, and members of the community to be changemakers online?
  - Can you think of concrete examples of young people having a positive impact through information and communication technologies in your community or country?
  - Did you identify important risks and potential harms? Can you provide an example from your personal or professional experience?
  - What is the most outstanding information you learned today from the group discussion?

## Cheat sheet for the trainers: Potential answers to the exercise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Examples of current and future applications</th>
<th>Potential risks and negative impacts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gov tech</td>
<td>• Government service alerts, online complaints and other feedback mechanisms, and systems that help provide direct public services and benefits.&lt;br&gt;• Platforms for managing government vendors, recruiting, online learning platforms that enable people working in public administration to build their skills.&lt;br&gt;• Voting, election campaigning and management: inform voters about registration requirements, ballot information, districts, and election dates, locations, and procedures, and e-voting.</td>
<td>• Shrinking civic space in the digital sphere, e.g., Internet shutdowns, the use of facial recognition and other surveillance and monitoring technologies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement tech</td>
<td>• Crowdlaw (platforms that make the legislative process legible)&lt;br&gt;• Online forums.&lt;br&gt;• Surveys, public finance and participatory budgeting and monitoring.&lt;br&gt;• Open innovation or ideation challenges.</td>
<td>• Digital divide: inequitable access to modern ICTs, gender digital gap.&lt;br&gt;• Negative perceptions of youth digital participation: clicktivism and other forms of Internet-based slacktivism such as hashtag activism.&lt;br&gt;• Gaps in digital literacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy tech</td>
<td>• Internet and messaging applications: peer-to-peer or mass SMS and email campaigns, call campaigns, or online petitions.&lt;br&gt;• Online advocacy or campaigning groups, peer-to-peer groups, support networks, and digital boycotts.&lt;br&gt;• Online donation collection, volunteer tracking, and employer-matching funds.&lt;br&gt;• Digital tools, mechanisms, and platforms for accountability and transparency: budget explorers, political promise trackers, community and citizen report cards and audits using ICTs, whistleblowing, and consumer watchdogging.</td>
<td>• Negative applications of artificial intelligence, e.g., information bubbles, algorithmic bias, deep fakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech for media</td>
<td>• Digital journalism, storytelling, citizen media, and other forms of interactive digital media.&lt;br&gt;• Factchecking and any efforts by media actors, media organizations or independent media regulatory bodies to analyze patterns, deconstruct untruths, flag untrue or wrong content, and share the verification workload between organizations.&lt;br&gt;• Media and social media analysis.&lt;br&gt;• Civic engagement and awareness through play (e.g., computer games), and advertising.</td>
<td>• Hardware: connected devices with cameras and audio processing (e.g., speech recognition, machine vision), drones, satellites and other sensor technologies, virtual and augmented reality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic data</td>
<td>• Open government and other open civic data collections.&lt;br&gt;• Crowdsourcing platforms and databases.&lt;br&gt;• Data visualization: mappings, dashboards, digital archives.</td>
<td>• Artificial intelligence: blockchain, bots, machine learning.</td>
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### Handout:

#### Handout for Theme 1: Learning to become digital citizens

**Working group report on “education for digital citizenship” for young people**

You were appointed as a member of a working group on digital citizenship for young people. Your role is to identify key opportunities, challenges, and recommendations – what should be done and by whom, in the short/medium term, or in the long term – and offer proposals that could be the basis for future strategies and actions regarding youth participation in the digital age based on your theme. Be collaborative and creative!

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Potential harms and risks</th>
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**Your top 3 recommendations:**

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Handout for Theme 2: Diversity and inclusion in the digital sphere

You were appointed as a member of a working group on digital citizenship for young people. Your role is to identify key opportunities, challenges, and recommendations—what should be done and by whom, in the short/medium term, or in the long term—and offer proposals that could be the basis for future strategies and actions regarding youth participation in the digital age based on your theme. Be collaborative and creative!

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<th>Opportunities</th>
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Your top 3 recommendations:

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Handout for Theme 3: Young people’s privacy and safety in the digital sphere

Working group report on young people’s privacy and safety in the digital sphere

You were appointed as a member of a working group on digital citizenship for young people. Your role is to identify key opportunities, challenges, and recommendations—what should be done and by whom, in the short/medium term, or in the long term—and offer proposals that could be the basis for future strategies and actions regarding youth participation in the digital age based on your theme. Be collaborative and creative!

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<th>Opportunities</th>
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Your top 3 recommendations:

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Variations:

- An easier version of this activity can use the World café methodology, which consists in assigning a host to each table and giving each table a different theme to discuss. Participants will be switching tables periodically and getting introduced to the previous discussion at their new table by the host. Examples of topics around youth digital participation: What are the skills needed for young people to participate through ICTs? Are young people really interested in mobilizing and organizing online, or do they engage to socialize with their friends? Can young people really change or a positive impact online? If the group is large, it is possible to organize a fourth thematic group on information pollution and hate speech.

- An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online “breakout rooms” organized by city or country and encourage them to discuss and write down their main points, using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

After finishing Activity 27, the trainer is now encouraged to organize a brief energizer. Suggested duration: up to 5 minutes. The trainer may then wish to explain that the participants will now focus on best practices for safe and responsible digital participation, using the session content in Part 2.

Suggested duration: 10 minutes.

Part 2: Best practices for safe and responsible digital participation

A digital citizen is a person empowered to use the Internet and ICTs safely and responsibly to engage in public life. Digital citizenship is based on three principles: literacy, respect, and protection. The first principle, literacy, or the appropriate use of different digital tools and platforms, and the core knowledge, skills, and understanding citizens and young people need to succeed in a dynamic information society, was previously developed in Part 1 on above.

The second principle is to respect of the law and other digital users, understanding of one’s digital rights and responsibilities, of etiquette and other ethical online behaviours:

- **Digital law, rights, and responsibilities**: Digital law, or the legal rights and restrictions governing appropriate use of the Internet and ICT, applies in the digital sphere. When engaging online, it is the responsibility of individuals to know about laws related to related to illegal downloads, plagiarizing, hacking, creating viruses, sending spam, identity theft, and cyberbullying. This also underscores the need for digital citizens to be aware of and understand their own online rights and responsibilities and those of others. Digital rights include the rights to privacy, security, access and inclusion, freedom of expression and opinion, access to information, and association, and peaceful assembly.

- **Digital etiquette and other ethical online behaviours**: Digital etiquette is a sense of self-management and general responsibility for one’s actions on the Internet and for treating people like one would in real life, based on respect and dignity. Unethical behaviours can be illustrated by online piracy (practice of downloading and distributing copyrighted content digitally without permission, such as music or

14. See the session on “Youth participation in and through the media,” p. 232.
15. See the section in Part 1 on “Main challenges and opportunities for youth digital participation,” p. 234.
16. See the session on “Space for youth participation,” p. 39.
software), sharing offensive content, bullying, harassment, or trolling (the practice of creating discord on the Internet by starting quarrels or upsetting people by posting inflammatory or off-topic messages in an online community).

The third principle is protection, or the understanding of the importance of digital health and wellness, as well as safety and security in the digital sphere:

- **Digital health and wellness**: The nature of highly mobile and highly connected technology will continue to place pressure on the mental and physical health of young people, starting from an ever-early age. Digital citizens must be aware of the potential for dependency and physical stress placed on their bodies by Internet usage, including through eye strain, headaches, posture, and stress.

- **Digital safety and security**: Digital security encompasses the range of tools used to secure one’s identity, assets, and technology in the digital sphere. Digital citizens can judge risks and are aware of the dangers that are present on the Internet: they understand the public nature of the Internet and practice basic online safety, for instance by using secure passwords, up-to-date anti-virus software, encrypting external hard drives, and password-protecting key files. They are also aware of the dangers of software attacks, theft of intellectual property, identity theft, theft of equipment or information, sabotage, and information extortion.

More information:


Activity 28: Checklist – Are you a digital citizen?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 30 min</td>
<td>Each participant individually</td>
<td>Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Answer a series of questions and provide examples to determine whether they qualify as digital citizens</td>
<td>- Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td>- Discussions in small groups (1 group per small group)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Activity (20 min)</td>
<td>- Debriefing (8 min)</td>
<td>- Debrief in the full group</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Pens for each participant</td>
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</table>

Activity learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- **[Knowledge]** Understand the concept of “digital citizenship,” and identify best practices for safe and responsible digital participation.
- **[Skills]** Develop basic analytical skills, and self-assessment.
- **[Attitude and values]** Promote the importance of digital literacy and display a commitment to sharing this knowledge with peers, family, colleagues, and the community.

Preparation/ materials:

- Printed handout for each participant (at least several per small group).
- Pens for each participant.

Activity instructions:

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**

- Ask participants if they know about the “digital citizenship,” and if they can name any best practices for safe and responsible digital participation.
- Explain that the activity will require answer a series of questions related to their digital participation, and provide examples based on their personal and professional experience.

**Activity: Up to 23 minutes**

- Tell participants they have up to 20 minutes to fill out the table (see Handout).
- After 20 minutes, get participants to check their score to determine whether they are digital citizens: if they responded yes to 8 to 10 guiding questions, they are already digital citizens who have a good
understanding of the potential harms and risks of the Internet and ICTs. If they responded yes to less than 6 guiding questions, encourage participants to review the questions and to research online webinars on each topic by typing key words in their Internet browser.

Debriefing and evaluation: 5 minutes

- After 23 minutes, bring all participants back together for the debriefing and evaluation. Some guiding questions may include:
  - How did you find the task? Was it easy or difficult? Was it enjoyable?
  - Did you manage to fill every row/guiding question of the table? If you did not manage, which rows/guiding questions, and why?
  - How can governments, schools/universities, the private sector, and young people contribute to creating a safe and responsible digital environment for all?
  - Do you identify as a digital citizen, which are your areas of improvement? What will you do about it?
  - What is the most surprising or interesting information you learned from this exercise?

Handout:

Checklist – Are you a digital citizen?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guiding questions</th>
<th>Your inputs and examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do not forget to provide an illustrative example for as many guiding questions as possible!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Digital law, rights, and responsibilities

- Are you aware about any legal frameworks in your country related to illegal downloads, plagiarizing, hacking, creating viruses, sending spam, identity theft, and cyberbullying?
- Are you aware about your rights as digital citizens, related to the right to privacy, security, access and inclusion, freedom of expression and opinion, access to information, and association?

Digital etiquette and ethical behaviours

- Are you aware that different online communication tools and platforms such as email, instant messaging, mobile applications, have different rules of engagement?
- Do you understand illegal or unethical behavior on the Internet, e.g., online piracy, sharing offensive content, bullying, harassment, or trolling?

Digital health and wellness

- Are you aware of the potential for dependency and physical stress placed on your mental and physical health by Internet usage?
- Are you managing your digital activity, do you use time blocking for certain applications, do you make efforts to disconnect often?
- Are you in control of your digital consumption, by unsubscribing from email lists, setting up your notification preferences for all your apps, getting an ad blocker, and deleting digital tools that do not add value?

Digital safety and security

- Do you understand the public nature of the Internet, and that things that could damage your reputation, friendships or future prospects should not be shared electronically?
- Are you practicing basic online safety, by using secure passwords, up-to-date anti-virus software, encrypting external hard drives, and password-protecting key files?
- Are you aware of the dangers of software attacks, theft of intellectual property, identity theft, theft of equipment or information, sabotage, and information extortion?

Variations:

- An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online “breakout rooms” organized by city or country and encourage them to discuss and write down their main points, using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

Wrap-up and final questions, the trainer may consider using some of the questions in “Extending the session.”

Suggested duration: 10 minutes.
Extending the session

Encourage participants to raise awareness about the potential harms and risks related to the use of the Internet and ICTs among their peers, family, colleagues, and the community. Encourage participants to build digital resilience and remain in control of their digital lives to maximize the benefits and minimize the harms of connection! What will they do to remain in control of the digital tools they use and protect their mental and physical health? What will they do to create a safe and responsible digital environment for all, including the ones around who may not have access to the Internet and ICTs, and may lack the abilities to use them safely and responsibly? Remind participants of the need to be lifelong learners, to keep up with the rapid changes that digital technology is bringing to the world!

After session 13, time-permitting, the trainer may consider organizing a project-based learning activity focused on advocacy.

Suggested duration: 260-280 minutes.

[Optional] Youth in action: Creating your own advocacy plan

Time-permitting, the trainer may consider organizing a project-based learning activity focused on advocacy. Advocacy, defined as the deliberate process based on demonstrated evidence to directly and indirectly influence decision-makers, stakeholders and relevant audiences to act in support of a specific policy, is a good entry point for the topics of this curriculum. The trainer may start by introducing advocacy concepts and then guide participants through the steps of creating their own advocacy plan, before having them present their work to the full group. The kind of advocacy campaign participants would like to imagine, whether based on in-person outreach or strictly online through social media, is suggested to be up to the participants who can form groups based on their passions and interests. This activity would require an estimated 260 minutes (full morning or afternoon), see a suggested flow of the session as well as useful resources below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested steps of activity</th>
<th>Duration (min) and group organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction by the trainer</td>
<td>20 min, in full group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: Defining the problem you want to address</td>
<td>90-110 min, in small groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2: Developing and defining the aim and objectives</td>
<td>Followed by a break (15 min)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3: Identifying the advocacy targets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4: Identifying your allies and your adversaries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 5: Identifying your resources (e.g., human, financial)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More information:

SESSION CONTENT: THE VALUE OF FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION

Feedback and evaluation

Suggested total duration for the session: 90 minutes.

Description

This session, taking place at the very end of the training, will be dedicated to feedback and evaluation. Participants will have the opportunity to highlight and share their key learning outcomes, and verbalize the impact the curriculum has had on their personal and professional development through an interactive activity, and to provide feedback through a curriculum evaluation questionnaire. The session will culminate in a certificate ceremony to help participants feel and be recognized for their accomplishments during the training.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Reflect on their full learning journey and highlight key learning outcomes.
- [Skills] Practice expressing what impact the curriculum has had on their personal and professional development as a leader.
- [Attitudes] Take stock of their learnings, and celebrate their achievements throughout the curriculum as effective changemakers!

After briefly introducing the main topic of the session, the trainer may consider explaining the learning outcomes above, based on the needs/level of the group.

Suggested duration: 5 minutes.

Session content: The value of feedback and evaluation

This session on feedback and evaluation is important for two main reasons:

- On one hand, feedback involves communication to let someone know on a timely, ongoing basis how they are performing, and/or the messages that they are sending. Opportunities for feedback, including provided anonymously, should be provided throughout the training during every session and during reflection times at the end of each module. For trainers, receiving feedback from participants on specific topics can be used to revise future versions of the training. Instead of seeing feedback as a criticism on the trainer as a person, it is recommended for the trainer to see it as a useful constructive critique on his/her training behaviors and the curriculum, so that the trainer can incorporate it and improve future
versions of the training. A dedicated activity to collect the participants’ feedback in an interactive way is proposed in this session.¹

- On the other hand, an evaluation can be defined as an assessment, as systematic and impartial as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area or institutional performance. A dedicated activity to evaluate the impact of the curriculum on the participants is proposed in this session.² Note the suggested questions can be used both before and at the end of the training.

  - Sharing a pre-training evaluation questionnaire with the participants before the training can help identify the participants’ abilities and backgrounds, expectations, and help the trainer adapt the content of the curriculum to the participants’ specific needs and preferences. It can be used as a baseline to measure the progress or impact of the curriculum in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

  - Organizing a specific activity with a post-training evaluation questionnaire is important because no learning journey is ever complete without an evaluation. The post-training evaluation questionnaire provides an opportunity for participants to self-reflect on their main takeaways and learning outcomes throughout the entire duration of the training. It can also help the trainer to design future versions of the training.

More information:

Many options are available online by searching key words such as “feedback,” “evaluation,” and “youth participation” in your Internet browser, for instance:


Feedback activity: Feedback manakish (or pizza)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion in small groups of 6 (1 table)</td>
<td>Flipchart paper and markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide feedback anonymously for the trainer to reflect on in the future</td>
<td>Total time: Approx. 20 min</td>
<td>• Instructions (2 min)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Activity (15 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Debriefing (3 min)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Practicalities/ logistics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity learning outcomes:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- [Knowledge] Provide feedback on different areas of the training for the trainer to reflect on in the future.
- [Skills] Develop self-awareness (ability to pause, to pay attention to thoughts and feelings and to self-question) self-reflection (ability to pay attention to one’s own thoughts, emotions, decisions, and behaviors) skills through a non-verbal exercise.
- [Attitude and values] Encourage participants to provide honest and constructive feedback about the curriculum.

Preparation/ materials:

- Prepare a large flip chart paper with the image of “Feedback manakish” (or pizza), and five “slices” namely: 1) Substance/ content, 2) Group atmosphere, 3) Trainer/ training team, 4) Curriculum methods, and 5) Practicalities/ logistics.
- Markers or sticky dots for each participant.

Activity instructions:

**Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes**

- Tell participants they will be providing anonymous feedback on different parts of the training, in the “Feedback manakish,” divided in 5 “slices” namely: 1) Substance/ content, 2) Group atmosphere, 3) Trainer/ training team, 4) Curriculum methods, and 5) Practicalities/ logistics.
- Distribute markets or sticky dots for each participant. Remind them that just like with a slice of manakish (or pizza), the most flavorful part is towards the center. Therefore they should place a symbol or a dot on each slice closer to the middle if they are 100% satisfied and closer to the crust if they are 0% satisfied. Alternatively they can mark each slide with either a “+” (plus) or a “−” (minus), for whether they enjoyed, or did not enjoy, this or that aspect of the curriculum.
- For this activity, it is important that the trainer looks away or is not present in the room.

¹ See the activity on “Feedback manakish (or pizza),” p. 271.
² See the activity on “Curriculum evaluation questionnaire,” p. 273.
Debriefing and evaluation: 3 minutes
• After 15 minutes, bring all participants back together and provide an analysis out loud to identify the main preferences and dislikes among participants.
• Make sure to tell participants that their feedback is well noted and will be taken into account for the next version of the training.

Variations:
• An online version of this activity can be organized by assigning remote participants to online “breakout rooms” organized by city or country and encourage them to work collaboratively to work collaboratively on the virtual “Feedback manakish,” using a software like Zoom Whiteboard or Google Jamboard.

Evaluation activity: Curriculum evaluation questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Each participant individually</td>
<td>Printed handout and pens for each participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fill out an evaluation form to provide the trainer with valuable information about their abilities and backgrounds, expectations, and specific needs and preferences.</td>
<td>30 min</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity learning outcomes:
By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:
• [Knowledge] Fill out an evaluation form to provide the trainer with valuable information about their abilities and backgrounds, expectations, and specific needs and preferences.
• [Skills] Develop self-awareness (ability to pause, to pay attention to thoughts and feelings and to self-question) self-reflection (ability to pay attention to one’s own thoughts, emotions, decisions, and behaviors) skills through a non-verbal exercise.
• [Attitude and values] Encourage participants to reflect on their own knowledge about the topics presented the curriculum.

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:
• [Knowledge] Provide feedback on different areas of the training for the trainer to reflect on in the future.
• [Attitude and values] Encourage participants to provide honest and constructive feedback about the curriculum.

Preparation/ materials:
• Printed handout and pens for each participant.
Activity instructions:

[Optional] Before the training: Up to 20 minutes
- Ahead of the training, the trainer may request participants to fill out the exact same questionnaire online.

Explanation and set-up: 2 minutes
- Explain that the activity will require each participant to work individually and fill out an evaluation questionnaire. Remind them that the answers to the questionnaire are and will remain anonymous.

Activity: Up to 28 minutes
- Tell participants they have up to 28 minutes to fill out the table.

Debriefing and evaluation:
- There is no debriefing needed for this activity.

Handout:
The pre- and post-evaluation questions below are only suggestions that the trainer is encouraged to adapt for the needs and level of the participants. The trainer is encouraged to refer to the module descriptions at the beginning of each module, and to the learning outcomes at the beginning of each session. The suggested questions below are ordered by module: questions 1.1. through 1.4. relate to Module 1, questions 2.1. through 2.5. to Module 2, etc. There are four open-ended questions, and the rest

Curriculum evaluation questionnaire

Please fill out this evaluation form by carefully reading every question and providing an answer based on your personal and professional experience! Questions 1.1., 2.1., 3.1., 4.1. are open-ended questions, and the rest can be answered using the following scale: 1 = Disagree, 2 = Undecided, 3 = Agree (or by clearly marking the relevant column with an “X”). Your answers are and will be kept anonymous, and do not hesitate to add comments, suggestions, or requests you may have at the bottom of the sheet!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions and statements</th>
<th>Your answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1. Please answer in your own words: what is effective and meaningful youth participation?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2. I understand the importance of civic space and the human-rights based approach to youth participation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3. I am aware of the skills and competences needed to be a leader and changemaker in my community.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4. I am aware of the Sustainable Development Goals related to youth participation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1. Please answer in your own words: what is youth political participation?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2. I think I have (or other people say I have) good political networking, partnerships and coalition building skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3. I am aware of the core functions of the three branches of government: legislative, executive, and judicial.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4. I understand the basic principles on how to influence the making or implementation of public policy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5. I know the numerous ways in which young people can participate in the electoral process and in political parties.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6. I understand why the participation of young women in politics is important for a true democracy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.1. Please answer in your own words: what is youth civic participation?

3.2. I think I have (or other people say I have) good community organizing, mobilizing and campaigning skills.

3.3. I understand the vital role of young people and civil society actors to create social change.

3.4. I understand the importance of diversity, inclusion, and “leaving no one behind” for marginalized and vulnerable groups.

3.5. I know the numerous ways in which young people can participate in civil society and volunteer organizations.

3.6. I understand why collective action, such as participating in peaceful demonstrations, is important for a true democracy.

3.7. I understand how young people can play different roles in conflict settings, e.g. during conflicts, disasters and in humanitarian contexts.

4.1. Please answer in your own words: what is youth media and digital participation?

4.2. I think I have (or other people say I have) good advocacy, awareness and communication skills.

4.3. I understand the role of media as a tool for expression, transparency, and accountability of public actors.

4.4. I know how to identify and counter hate speech, propaganda, misinformation, and disinformation in (social) media.

4.5. I understand the main impacts of information and communication technologies on youth participation in public life.

4.6. I know the main competences needed to participate safely and responsibly on the Internet and social media platforms.

Add any additional comments, suggestions, or requests you may have:

---

After filling out the evaluation forms, it is now time to recognize the participants for their accomplishments during the training. **Suggested duration: 20 minutes.**

**Final activity: Certificate ceremony**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity aim/ objectives</th>
<th>Duration (Min)</th>
<th>Group organization</th>
<th>Materials/handouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants will:</td>
<td>Total time: Approx 20 min</td>
<td>Full group</td>
<td>Certificates printed with each participants’ first name and last name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Receive certificates and feel/ be recognized for their accomplishments during the training</td>
<td>Activity (20 min)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preparation/ materials:

- Certificates printed with each participants’ first name and last name.

Handout: There is no handout necessary for this activity.

Activity instructions:

**Before the session: Up to several hours**

- Ahead of the session, prepare certificates printed with each participants’ first name and last name. Remember that in certain contexts, participants may be using the certificates for university, therefore it is important to ensure that you have the correct spelling.

**Activity: Up to 20 minutes**

- Conclude the session by asking each participant to come up one at a time to claim their certificate of participation in the training.
- Encourage the other participants to clap and cheer and congratulate when they go up to receive their certificate.
- Invite someone to take photos so that participants can also keep a photo of the moment they were awarded their certificate. The trainer may consider also organizing a group photo.

**Debriefing and evaluation:**

- There is no debriefing and evaluation necessary for this activity.

Variations:

- The trainer may consider also awarding special award categories, if appropriate, such as “Most creative arguments,” “Best inclusion and diversity advocate,” or “Most likely future political or community leader,” etc. It is up to the trainer to come up with relevant and fun award categories that best fit the group.

Extending the session

As final words to the training, the trainer may encourage participants to consolidate their knowledge and to cement their networks. Encourage participants to keep track of the notes they took during the training, and organize and review the ones that they think are the most useful and interesting to them. The trainer is encouraged to make all session materials and content available in a centralized online platform accessible to all participants during and after the training, a collaborative online repository of all materials and knowledge. Are there session materials and content that participants would like to share with their peers, family, colleagues, and the community? Emphasize that networking and building relationships during workshops, seminars, and trainings is a unique opportunity to grow one’s professional network. If it was not already done before the start of the training, the trainer is encouraged to create an online group where participants can engage (before, during and after) the end of the training. Encourage participants, if they have not done so already, to add the training organizer(s), the trainer(s) and each other on social media platforms and online professional networks, to exchange their email addresses and, where relevant, their phone numbers to continue engaging in messaging applications.

Wrap-up and final questions, the trainer may consider using some of the questions in “Extending the session.”

**Suggested duration:** 10 minutes.
Curriculum on
Youth Civic and Political Participation
UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States