



ECO-MEDIA

Module: Engagement of Young People

Lesson 3: Youth engagement action plan

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Contents

- Introduction
- Where to start with the engagement action plan
- Engagement principles, purpose and objectives
- Risk, challenges and mitigation strategies
- Level of engagement & engagement methods
- Conclusions
- References
- Additional resources



Introduction



“Give your youth the chances that you never had, so that they can reach the heights that you never did.”

Unknown



Learning outcomes

- Understanding the **importance of youth engagement** in decision-making processes.
- Recognizing the **potential impact** of youth involvement on community development.
- Enhancing **communication and facilitation skills** to effectively collaborate with young people.
- Understanding the **challenges and barriers** to youth engagement and exploring ways to overcome them.
- Recognizing the value of **diversity and inclusivity** in youth engagement efforts.
- Developing **critical thinking and problem-solving skills** to address community issues through youth-led initiatives.



Targeted skills

- Communication skills
- Leadership skills
- Collaboration skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Empathy and cultural sensitivity
- Advocacy skills
- Reflection and self-assessment skills



Where to start with the engagement action plan



First steps for an engagement action plan

Assessing needs and priorities

Define engagement purpose and objectives

Engagement principles on how to engage with the youth community

Risk, challenges and mitigation strategies

Level of engagement

Negotiables and non-negotiables

Key messages

Stakeholder analysis

Engagement methods

Designing engagement strategies

Allocating resources

Monitoring and evaluation



Engagement principles, purpose and objectives

Inclusivity:

Ensuring that all young people, regardless of their backgrounds, identities, or abilities, have equal opportunities to participate and contribute.

Empowerment:

Encouraging young people to take ownership of their engagement, empowering them to make decisions, and providing opportunities for leadership and skill development.

Collaboration:

Promoting collaboration and teamwork among young people and other stakeholders, fostering partnerships and collective action for positive change.

Transparency:

Maintaining open and transparent communication channels, sharing information, and providing feedback to young people throughout the engagement process.

#purpose&objectives

Equip #youngpeople with:

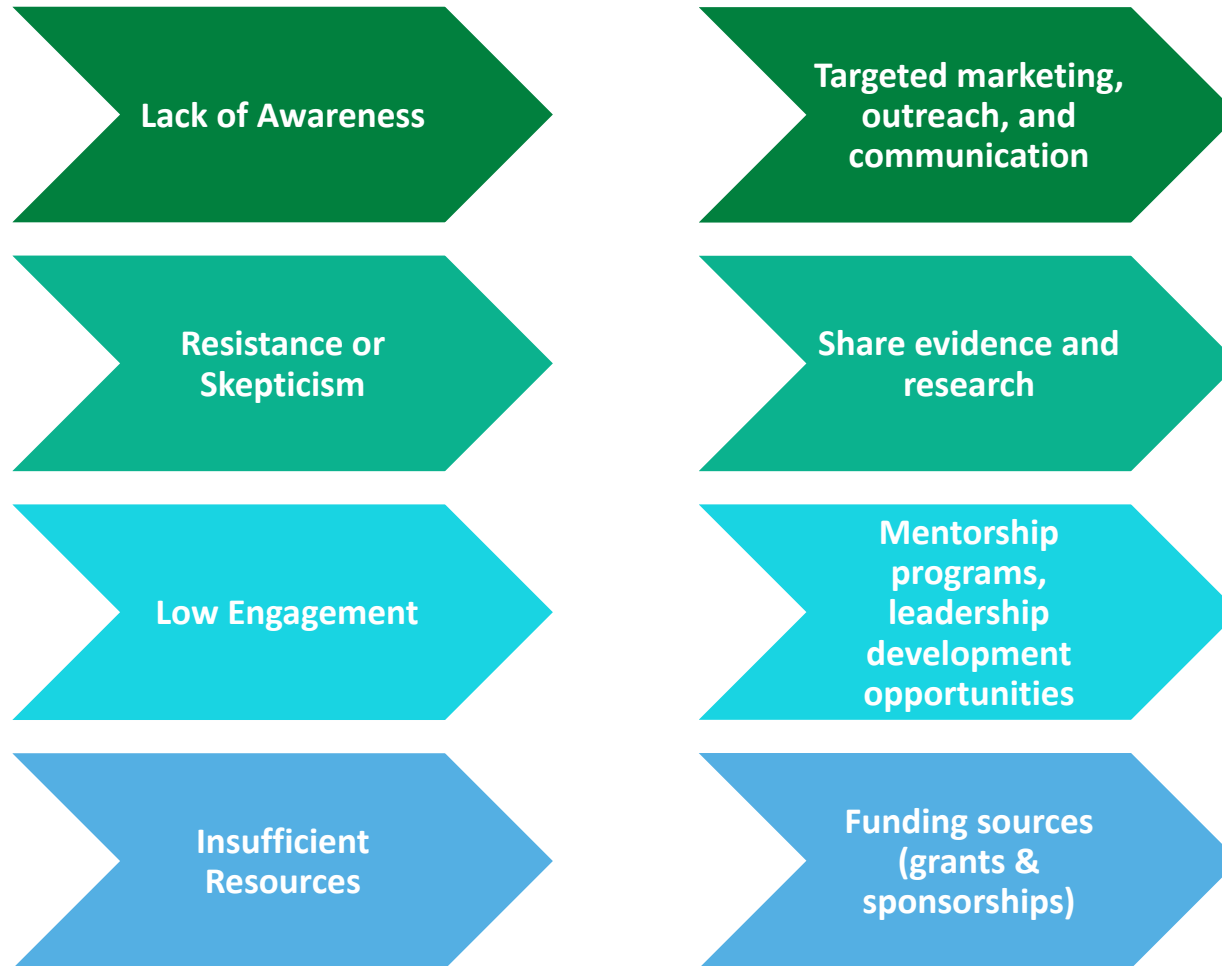
- ✓ Knowledge
- ✓ Skills
- ✓ Attitudes

Necessary to actively participate in **decision-making processes** and contribute to community development.

- Understand the importance and benefits of youth engagement in decision-making processes and community development.
- Explore the principles and values that underpin effective youth engagement initiatives.
- Identify the specific issues and areas where youth engagement is needed within their community.
- Develop skills in effective communication, active listening, and constructive dialogue with diverse groups of young people.
- Foster leadership skills among young people, empowering them to take on meaningful roles and responsibilities.



Risk, challenges and mitigation strategies



#engagementactionplan



Challenges associated with youth engagement



Organizational & Other Challenges associated with youth engagement

Insufficient laws

Limited budget

Conflict of interest

Attitudes and behaviors

Bad recruiting

Unclear expectations

Unforeseen challenges

Poor support systems

Complication of the cause



Level of engagement & engagement methods



Engagement & engagement methods

Surveys &
Questionnaires

Focus Groups

Workshops &
Training
Sessions

Youth Advisory
Groups

Online
Platforms &
Social Media

Mentorship
Programs

Community
Events &
Activities

Participatory
Decision-Makin
g



Surveys and Questionnaires

Collecting data and opinions from young people through structured surveys or questionnaires to **gather insights** and assess their perspectives on relevant topics.



Focus Groups

Facilitating **group discussions** with a small number of young people to explore specific issues, generate ideas, and encourage dialogue and exchange of views.



Workshops and Training Sessions

Conducting **interactive workshops or training sessions** that provide young people with skills, knowledge, and tools related to youth engagement and community development.



Youth Advisory Groups

Establishing a **dedicated group** of young people who provide ongoing input, feedback, and guidance throughout the development and implementation of the action plan.



Online Platforms and Social Media

Utilizing **online platforms**, such as websites, forums, or **social media channels**, to engage with young people, share information, and gather their input and ideas.



Mentorship Programs

Pairing young people with **mentors** who can provide guidance, support, and opportunities for skill development and leadership growth.



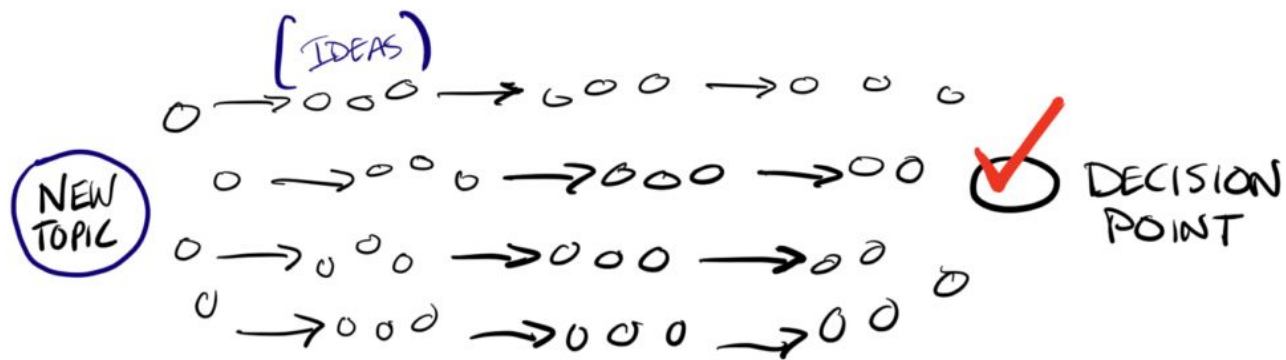
Community Events and Activities

Organizing **community events or activities** that encourage young people to participate, express their views, and collaborate with other community members.



Participatory Decision-Making

Actively involving young people in decision-making processes by including them in meetings, forums, or committees where they have the opportunity to **contribute** their opinions and perspectives.



Tracking the success of youth engagement efforts

- Classify **adapted measurement indicators** as outputs (products) or outcomes (benefits or impacts).
- Have young people provide **input** or decide on what standards or indicators are used and how they are measured.
- **Disaggregate measurement indicators** by age, sex, disability, and socio-economic status. For those that are measuring the level and type of youth inclusion, consider disaggregating by education level to ensure representation of various populations of youth, including those most marginalized.
- For measurement indicators, consider using ‘the change in number or percent’ versus only ‘number or percent’ to **capture differences** over time.
- When measuring youth engagement in committees and decision-making bodies, assess whether these opportunities for youth voice are **actively sustainable**. There are many committees that include youth that exist on paper but do not actually meet or are not sustainable mechanisms for youth engagement.

Tracking the success of youth engagement efforts

- Make sure that measurement statements chosen allow you to get to the **'quality of youth engagement'** as well as the **'quantity or level.'** Albeit harder to do, it is important to ensure that opportunities for youth inclusion are not tokenistic.
- When setting targets and measuring youth engagement in monitoring and evaluation, ensure efforts are made to design the system, **collect and interpret the data.**
- When measuring improvements in programme outcomes as a result of youth engagement, consider how to control for the youth engagement in the design of your study. This could be done by **comparing** two programmes with and without youth engagement. It could also be done by examining the outcomes of a youth programme before and after youth engagement strategies are initiated.
- When measuring the skills and competencies youth develop as a result of engagement, consider **knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors** such as leadership, communication, public speaking, goal setting, facilitation, coordination, confidence, and planning.

Conclusions



Conclusions

By applying the engagement principles of **inclusivity, respect, empowerment, collaboration, and transparency**, young people are encouraged to become agents of change and contribute their unique perspectives, ideas, and skills.

By identifying the **specific needs and priorities** of their community, young people are able to acquire necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to effectively engage and participate in decision-making processes.

By fostering a **supportive and inclusive** environment, young people gain the confidence and tools to actively contribute to their communities and address social issues.

By **celebrating their achievements and recognizing the contributions** of young people and stakeholders, young people will get further motivated in the long term.

By **embracing the voices and perspectives** of young people, communities can harness their energy, creativity, and passion to create positive change, build resilient societies, and pave the way for a better future.



References & Additional Resources



References

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) - Youth Empowerment: A Guide to Action
- International Youth Foundation (IYF) - Engaging Youth: A How-To Guide for Creating Youth Engagement Initiatives
- National Youth Agency (UK) - Youth Engagement Principles and Practices Guide
- Checkoway, B. (2011). What is youth participation? *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33(2), 340-345.
- Zeldin, S., Christens, B. D., & Powers, J. L. (2013). The psychology and practice of youth–adult partnership: Bridging generations for youth development and community change. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 51(3-4), 385-397.
- Youth.gov - U.S. government website on youth programs and engagement.
- The National Youth Agency (UK) - Resources and publications on youth engagement.
- The Australian Youth Affairs Coalition - Resources and guides on youth engagement and participation.

Additional resources

- "Youth Engagement and Empowerment: Creating Change in Our Communities"
- "Youth-led Action and Decision Making: Inspiring Examples"
- "Building an Effective Youth Engagement Action Plan"
- "Youth Participation in Policy and Decision Making: Case Studies"
- "Youth Voice and Advocacy: Making a Difference"
- "Creating Youth Engagement Opportunities: Best Practices and Strategies"
- "Youth-Led Initiatives: Impacting Communities for Positive Change"
- "Youth Engagement and Leadership: Stories of Success"
- "Youth as Partners in Community Development: Lessons Learned"
- "Youth Engagement in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)"



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