

Meaningful Participation

- Session 3 -

This presentation refers to Section C
of the IASC Youth Guidelines



**Compact for
Young People**
in Humanitarian
Action



unicef 
for every child



**NORWEGIAN
REFUGEE COUNCIL**

Definitions

PARTICIPATION

Can be defined as young people (individually or collectively) engaging with opportunities to form and express their view and to influence matters that concerns them directly or indirectly.

ENGAGEMENT

The rights-based inclusion of adolescents and youth in areas that affect their lives and their communities across all stages. "Engagement" is closely linked to "participation", though differs in being a broader articulation of the public-facing aspect of participation.

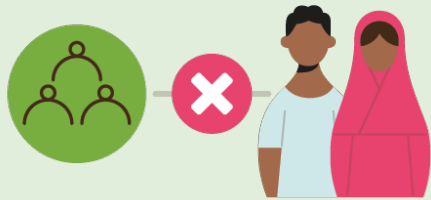
EMPOWERMENT

The outcome by which the target individuals, as change agents, gain the skills to impact their own lives and lives of other individuals, organizations and communities and realize/demand fulfillment of their rights.

MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION

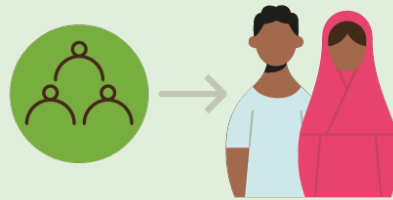
- Young people gain knowledge and skills, build competencies and gain confidence.
- Promote young people's capacities for civic engagement, collective organisation, tolerance and respect for others.
- Focus on the engagement of young people in preparedness, response and recovery.
- Ensure age-appropriate approaches, inclusion of marginalised groups, influence national strategies, educate peers on protection risks and referral mechanisms, or organise recreational activities.
- Young people are acknowledged and treated as part of the humanitarian architecture.
- Address barriers to young people's participation.

MODES OF PARTICIPATION



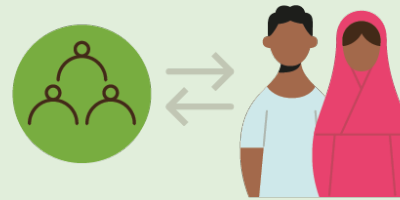
No participation or unethical participation

In most societies, the majority of young people have little or no opportunity to express their views.



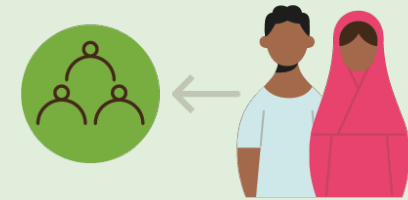
Consultative participation

- adult initiated;
- adult led and managed;
- lacking possibility for young people to control outcomes;
- recognizing the added value that young people's perspective, knowledge and experience can contribute.



Collaborative participation

- adult initiated;
- involving partnership with young people;
- enabling young people to influence or challenge both process and outcome;
- allowing for increasing levels of self-directed action by young people over a period of time.



Participation led by young people

- the issues of concern being identified by young people themselves;
- adults serving as facilitators rather than leaders;
- young people controlling the process and the outcomes.

Guess the Mode of Participation



EXAMPLE 1

A youth programme introduces a peer-to-peer component to engage educated youth to run educational activities with adolescent school dropouts. The Youth Educators receive training and then they make decisions on the focus and delivery of the activities.

Guess the Mode of Participation



EXAMPLE 2

A youth programme holds a ceremony for visiting guests. Field staff ask a youth participant to speak at the event and staff member writes a speech for the youth to read about how the staff member thinks youth benefit from the youth programme. The youth are not informed who the visitors are.

Guess the Mode of Participation



EXAMPLE 3

Youth establish an initiative to teach sewing to children with disabilities in the local community. The youth decide to assign roles among the group and prepare a budget and workplan. The INGO agrees to pay for the materials for a limited time.

Guess the Mode of Participation



EXAMPLE 4

A youth livelihoods team want to expand activities to a new location. The team hold a series of focus groups with youth to understand their needs, ambitions, and challenges. The team use this input to change the project design, which they then tell the youth about through feedback sessions.

MODES OF PARTICIPATION

- Should young people be able to voice their views and have access to safe spaces and responsive?
- Why or why not?
- What's the benefit and consequences of being able to or not being able to?



Why do we focus on these strategic areas for meaningful participation?



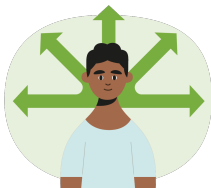
STRATEGIC AREA 1:
Influencing law and policy



STRATEGIC AREA 2:
Building skills and capacities



STRATEGIC AREA 3:
Addressing social norms



STRATEGIC AREA 4:
Supporting mechanisms and opportunities for participation

STRATEGIC AREA 1:

Influencing laws and policies



Development and humanitarian actors need to advocate with governments for law and policy reform and budget allocations that are responsive to the needs of young people and rooted in their participation.

Adolescent- and Youth-led Advocacy:

- Humanitarian actors should work to ensure that young people and decision-makers are 'at the table' together.
- Young people can also be supported into positions of leadership

CASE STUDY 1

Adolescent-led advocacy in the Central African Republic: War Child UK

Source: War Child UK (2019), provided for these guidelines.

- Training to young people to run their own advocacy project.
- Problem identification: sexual abuse, coercion from teaching staff towards pupils.
- Research design and data collection in 10 schools in Bangui.
- Results presentation to the Ministry of Education and Education cluster: demands for enforcement of staff codes of conduct and reporting mechanisms in schools.
- Ministry sent circulars to all schools emphasizing their responsibilities to prevent abuse.



Young participants at a VoiceMore training in Bangui, Central African Republic, learning how to effectively identify and research local issues, and how to articulate and communicate them, to drive positive change in their communities.

STRATEGIC AREA 2:

Building skills and capacities



RECOMMENDATIONS ON BUILDING YOUNG PEOPLE'S CAPACITIES:

- Strengthen partnerships with youth to build local capacity and resilience.
- Empower young people as positive agents of change and involve them in the design, delivery, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of programme activities.
- Enable young people to communicate about prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery within their communities.
- Mainstream gender equality and empowerment of young women in all trainings and planning to ensure inclusive policies.
- Train refugees and affected populations as facilitators and project managers.
- Equip youth with the skills to be effective peacebuilders and agents of reconciliation.

STRATEGIC AREA 2:

Building skills and capacities

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS WHEN WORKING WITH AND FOR YOUNG PEOPLE:

- MHPSS and/or GBV colleagues should train staff to handle disclosures from GBV survivors and how to engage crisis-affected young people that is trauma-informed.
- Employ working-age young people and adults who demonstrate youth-friendliness. Discuss barriers to hiring youthful or youth-friendly staff, and how can these be overcome.
- Establish roles for young people as volunteers, interns, mentors to younger children, etc.
- Work in coalition with others to identify dedicated adolescent and youth focal points within the humanitarian clusters/sectors.
- Prepare staff to facilitate young people's engagement.
- Ask younger staff how they want to be supported to show leadership and implement ideas.

CASE STUDY 2

Preparing young people for humanitarian action in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region: Education Above All Foundation/Reach Out to Asia (ROTA)

Source: Education Above All Foundation/ROTA (2019), provided for these guidelines

- Under the MENA Youth Capacity-Building in Humanitarian Action (MYCHA): 30 local NGOs from 15 countries supported youth with technical advice, in-kind support and grants for youth-led projects.
- Agencies nominate participants already active in emergency preparedness and response in their local contexts.
- Training in humanitarian practice to plan their own initiatives at the local level support of the nominating NGO.



▲ MYCHA participant assembling tent as part of shelter simulation. © Blessing Solomon/ROTA

STRATEGIC AREA 3:

Addressing social norms



- Entrenched hierarchies
- Traditional gender roles
- A need for discipline and respect for elders
- Assumptions of a lack of capacity of especially the younger adolescents and youth

Humanitarian actors should engage with older adults (caregivers, community leaders) for young people to safely participate in humanitarian response.

CASE STUDY 3

Inclusive approaches to address the needs of young people with disabilities in Panama: RET International

Source: RET International (2020), provided for these guidelines

- RET developed different measures to mainstream inclusive approaches in DRR within the education sector in Panama
- Implemented in school and community level to prevent and mitigate risks of natural hazards
- Reached over 4,000 children, adolescents and youth with special needs



Together with children, adolescents and youth, RET International works to understand the different disabilities and specific needs in emergency scenarios.

© RET International

CASE STUDY 4

Addressing negative adult perceptions in Kenya: RET International

Source: RET International (2017), provided for these guidelines

- Empowering young people and youth-led associations through “youth-adult partnership” initiatives in Dadaab Refugee Camps in Kenya
- Youth and adults explore concepts like respect and tolerance, conflict resolution and peacebuilding, to enable them to identify, prioritise and lead concrete social change initiatives together.
- Adult camp leaders have become significantly more positive towards youth, seeing them as capable and socially engaged members of the community and facilitates their inclusion in community decision-making processes at camp level.

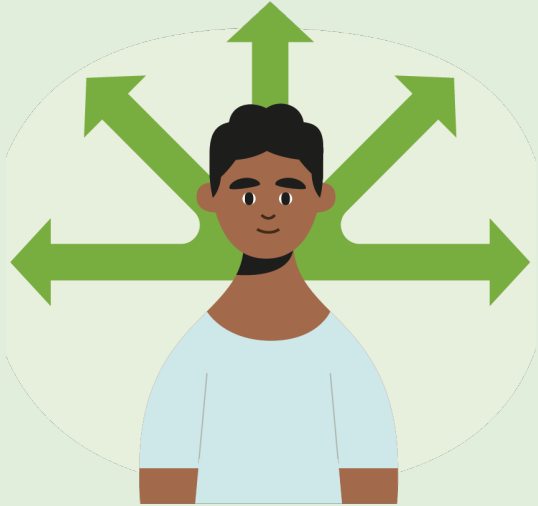


▲ Together with children, adolescents and youth, RET International works to understand the different disabilities and specific needs in emergency scenarios.

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STRATEGIC AREA 4:

Finding mechanisms and opportunities for participation



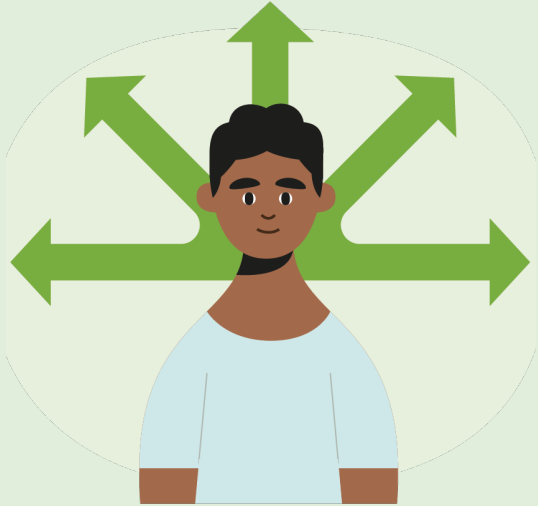
IDENTIFY PLATFORMS TO ENGAGE IN DECISION-MAKING AND COMMUNITY LIFE:

- Participatory action research
- Community media production
- Youth-friendly spaces
- Advocacy or awareness-raising campaigns
- Feedback mechanisms

For sustainability: engaging or revitalizing existing networks (Y-Peer, Girls Scouts, Red Cross / Red Crescent).

STRATEGIC AREA 4:

Finding mechanisms and opportunities for participation

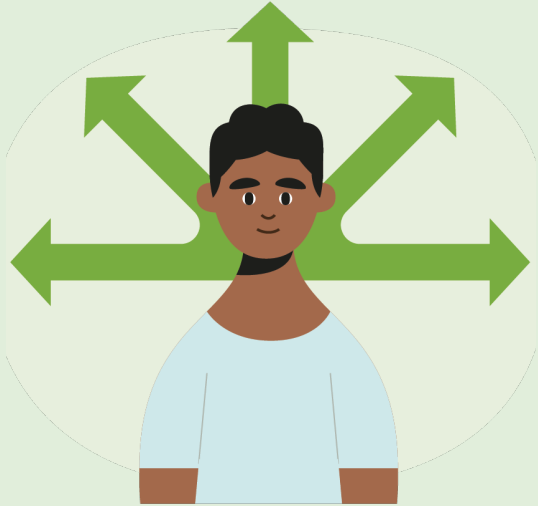


Keep in mind:

- Risk assessment tool to support safe participation (see annex)
- Engage young people in remote areas and marginalised communities who may not be affiliated with youth structures
- Information must be transmitted in relevant languages, formats and accessible channels at appropriate levels.

STRATEGIC AREA 4: Example

Young People and Cluster/Working Group Coordination



Consider how adolescents and youth can support cluster/sector coordination mechanisms when they are:

- conducting service mapping
- creating referral pathways
- developing standard operating procedures (SOPs).

CASE STUDY 17

Youth Task Force in Zaatari Refugee Camp, Jordan: The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and UNFPA

Source: Youth Task Force (2020)

Thousands of Syrian young people currently live in refugee camps in Jordan. The majority have not completed high school or university, and most have no access to paid employment, and are only allowed by the government to leave the camps for a limited number of hours a day. They complain of powerlessness, hopelessness, high stress and interpersonal tension. Adolescent girls and young women are often confined to their dwellings by their families. Duty-bearers acknowledge that young people have not received the same attention as other age groups. The Youth Task Force in Zaatari Refugee Camp aims to ensure that young people's needs are prominent within the planning processes of the Education and Protection sectors, and that they are on the agenda of key stakeholders and donors. This inter-agency body, co-led by NRC and UNFPA, is seen by external partners as a model of successful collaboration – less about showcasing individual members' initiatives and more about pursuing shared agenda items. The Youth Task Force is credited with helping to ensure the integration of needs identified by young people themselves into the Jordan Refugee Response Plan.



▲
The Youth Task Force in Zaatari Refugee Camp has been a platform for advocacy at the level of the camp, at national level and globally. © NRC/Jordan

CASE STUDY 18

Youth Working Group (YWG), Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh: UNFPA and Save the Children International

Source: Youth Working Group, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh (2020), provided for these guidelines

In Bangladesh, children and adolescents comprise 55 per cent of the Rohingya refugee population. YWG is a coordination structure built by the Education and Child Protection sectors to gather data on, advocate for, and support programmes for young people in the Rohingya and host communities. Co-chairs UNFPA and Save the Children International developed a skill development framework for displaced Rohingya adolescents and youth aged 10–18 years, in Cox's Bazar. The purpose of this framework is to empower young people through foundational, transferable and job-specific skills. The YWG also led development of advocacy messages for the Government of Bangladesh to allow Rohingya adolescents and youth to take part in an income-generating programme. YWG mapped existing initiatives for young people, and this was then shared among the YWG members to use as a reference. The YWG is collating existing life skills materials to complement the effort, and training partners in adolescent girl-centred programme design.



Although 13-year-old Moheesana, pictured centre, has made new friends like Nur Hasina (12), left, and Samira (11), she has not forgotten those she lost during the violence last year. “I had many friends back home in Burma. I miss them here,” she says. © Plan International/KM Asad/Bangladesh

ROLE PLAY EXERCISE

Divide the group into 5

Group 1 – Strategic Area 1: Influencing law & policy

Group 2 – Strategic Area 2: Building skills & capacities

Group 3 – Strategic Area 3: Addressing Social Norms

Group 4 – Strategic Area 4: Supporting mechanisms & opportunities for participation

Group 5 – Good Practice of Meaningful Participation

A photograph of three students in a classroom. A young man in a light blue polo shirt with 'Institución Agropecuaria Morales' and 'ENAH' logos is speaking to a young woman who is looking at a laptop. Another student is partially visible on the right. The background features a mural of people in traditional clothing and a bulletin board with various papers. A semi-transparent green banner is overlaid across the middle of the image.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS