



Essentials of Meaningful Youth Participation

WHY



Countries in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, the Middle East and North Africa have very young populations. Much can be achieved if we gear policies and interventions towards the specific challenges and opportunities of the youth.

For that to happen, we need to make sure youth voices are heard and integrated. Young people can tell best what works for them after all. This is why strengthening voices of youth is one of the central ambitions in the Youth at Heart strategy.

WHAT



Meaningful Youth Participation (MYP) is about ensuring that young people have the opportunity to be involved in processes of decision making on policies, strategies and programmes that affect them.

This implies working with youth as leaders, partners and beneficiaries and listening to what matters most. Our aim is to take their views, concerns and suggestions into account in developing or implementing our policies, strategies and programmes.

HOW



If you are working for the MFA - either in The Hague or at an Embassy or representation office you have the opportunity to engage youth in the dialogue about policy or programmes that are of direct relevance to them.

MYP has no blueprint. Meetings, interactive discussions and consultations and the use of technology, such as Radio, SMS, Social Media platforms or online surveys, can enable you to incorporate larger cohorts of youth voices in your policy or programmes. This requires a well-thought outreach strategy to target the right young people. In some cases, one-time consultative Focus Group Discussion-meetings (Consult-level) may suffice. Youth Advisory Committees, as the one established at HQ level, enable collaboration with youth over a longer period of time (Collaborate level). Several Embassies have already started to develop specific programmes geared towards youth empowerment (Empower-level). The Civic Space Fund provides opportunity to finance such activities.



The MYP toolkit will support you in determining how you can best approach MYP in your own context and theme.

Did you know that?

Incorporating youth voices in your policy or programme...

- ✓ ...leads to more effective & accountable policies & programmes
- ✓ ...reduces the generational gap & enhances intergenerational justice
- ✓ ...empowers involved youth socially, civically & economically

What's in it for you?

You get to enrich your understanding of the dynamics that need to be addressed by the policy, strategy or programmes based on first-hand information about the challenges and opportunities young people face. You will enhance your understanding of strengths of proposed policy, strategy or program, as well as potential flaws in them.



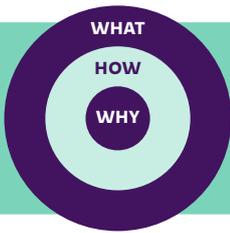
You benefit from creative and out-of-the-box ideas which will make your work more effective & relevant with regards to youth.

Reader's Guide

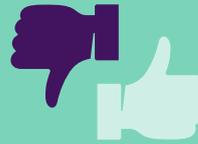
The MYP toolkit was put together with great care by the team for Youth, Education and Work. The background information as well as suggestions for tools and methods will guide you in making sure youth voices are heard in relation to matters that are relevant to them.



The MYP toolkit consists of five parts and takes about 40 minutes to read. It is not a blue print rather an inspiration and guidebook.



Part A serves to develop a basic understanding of *why* it is a central ambition of the ministry, *how* it will benefit your work & *what* MYP is.



Part B serves to deepen your understanding of the *Do's* and *Don'ts* of organizing, mobilizing & including youth.



Part C serves to provide you with practical *examples, tools, methods* & *exercises* to apply meaningful youth participation in your work.



Part D serves to provide you with *practical tools & methods* to measure the outcome and level of youth participation and to deepen your understanding of how it benefits all.



Part E provides sources & background information

Ministry Staff

In your position, MYP will most likely be applied within the Policy Cycle, during Policy preparation, formulation, execution or evaluation. Your role can also be to monitor incorporation of youth voices at policy implementation level across your portfolio.

Embassy Staff

In your position, MYP will most likely be applied within the Policy and/or Portfolio Cycle, during portfolio analysis, (multi-annual) planning, or execution. It may be worthwhile identifying opportunities to support youth empowerment programmes.

In any position, it's important to distinguish between different roles & mandates:

- ✓ Incorporating youth voices in own programming, e.g. annual plan cycle, events, policy dialogues;
- ✓ Stimulating others/implementing partners to incorporate youth voices (e.g. in tendering). Different roles can be applied in different sorts of programmes;
- ✓ Directly facilitate/finance/support youth-led programmes or specific youth engagement programmes (e.g. from Civic Space Fund);
- ✓ Addressing youth issues in diplomacy, e.g. address cultural barriers in wider society



The MYP toolkit is developed by the MFA team for youth, education & work, in collaboration with colleagues & youth.

We are available for support in using the MYP toolkit. You can contact us via:
team-JOW@minbuza.nl

Tailored MYP training for ministry & embassy staff can be provided upon request



www.youthatheart.nl

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