

**RESTLESS
DEVELOPMENT**

YOUTH POWER

Training Toolkit

Introduction



ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

The Youth Power Training Toolkit was developed by Restless Development as a key resource to guide young leaders and youth civil society organisations to lead facilitative discussions with young people to understand and acknowledge their diverse and intersecting experiences and identities and how this impacts their power, and their ability to navigate and dismantle structural inequalities.

The framing of the toolkit around feminist power also aligns well with Restless Development and the We Lead consortium's principles around powershifting, feminism and youth leadership.

What is the We Lead Programme?



We Lead is an innovative programme that aims to improve the Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRH-R) of young women. The We Lead consortium consists of six civil society organisations (Positive Vibes, Restless Development, Marsa, FEMNET, the Central American Women's Fund and Hivos) and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The programme works with young women disproportionately affected by discrimination and gender-based violence. The programme ran from 2021-2025.

[Find out more information here.](#)

What can **facilitators** expect from this toolkit?

The toolkit is divided into four modules which will support young leaders to claim, use and share their “youth power”.

The first module will enable young leaders to use their youth power to develop as a leader. The second module focuses on using this youth power to lead others in their organisations and networks. The third module focuses on sharing this power to bring others in and more meaningfully engage young people in their organisation or network. The fourth and final module looks at how you can shift power to bring about change, through holding leaders and yourselves accountable

Each module is divided into three steps, which will help you as a facilitator guide young leaders on a journey.

Step 1: Grounding & Sharing

To help young leaders focus on the present moment and create a safe space for learning and exchange. This will also give space for young leaders to share their lived experience and realities and exchange skills and knowledge with each other.

Step 2: Learning & Testing

To create an opportunity for young leaders to gain new knowledge and skills and test out and build confidence in using them in a supportive environment.

Step 3: Action & Accountability

To encourage young leaders to identify their own actions and put these into practice and hold each other accountable following the training session.

Under each module, you will also find specific guidance for how to adapt activities to ensure they are inclusive and accessible, as well as ‘facilitators top tips’ to assist you.

What can **young leaders** expect from the training?

The toolkit has been designed to help guide young leaders on a journey to be able to identify, share and use their individual and collective youth power.

The training has been designed to be delivered to young leaders, who are working within a youth organisation or movement, or have a leadership role within another civil society network, such as a women’s collective or disability rights organisation.

The training is designed to be interactive and participatory and young leaders are encouraged to engage actively in discussions and group activities. Young leaders can expect to participate in activities that will enable them to reflect on their own personal and professional experiences. The activities have been designed in a way that centres the lived experience and expertise of participants, with a focus on peer learning and exchange.

Where new concepts or ideas are introduced by the facilitator, participants are always encouraged to reflect and critique and contextualise the information.

At the end of each module, young leaders will be asked to reflect on their learning and share a commitment or action going forward, which can be shared back with their organisation or networks.



How can you use and adapt this toolkit module to your context?

This training toolkit has been designed for those facilitating groups of young leaders and activists. The facilitation plan below outlines how to deliver activities for groups of 15-30 people in an in-person setting. Each step of the toolkit equals five hours of activities, which could be delivered over one day or divided across days depending on your schedule and environment. We recommend a 30 min break for every two hours of training content. We also recommend using energizer or focusing activities as needed throughout the sessions [[here is a list if you need ideas!](#)].

This training toolkit has been designed to be used and implemented with consideration of the communities that youth civil society organisations work in. Before delivering the training, consider the current cultural, social and political climate that the participants are living and working in.

You may decide that certain topics are not appropriate or need to be delivered in a more sensitive way. You may also find there are pressing issues that you need to hold space for and address before being able to move forward.

What will you need to deliver the training?

The toolkit has been designed to allow you as the facilitator to adapt and use it- depending on the resources you have available and the environment you are working in. But here are some things that it might be useful to have to hand.

- Seating that can be moved around (chairs, stools, cushions).
- Something for the facilitator to write on (e.g. flip chart, large papers, chalk board.)
- Something participants can write on (post-its, notebooks)
- Somewhere you can display work (bring tape, string).
- Some copies of the Annexes (either printed or saved digitally)

You may wish to use the material in the toolkit to create a presentation or worksheets, but this is optional.



How can you ensure the training is accessible for everyone?

We want to make sure that the Youth Power Training is inclusive and accessible to young leaders in all their diversity. For each activity you will find an 'Include and Adapt' box which will give guidance on how to change the activities depending on the context and access needs of the group you are working with. This includes people with physical disabilities and people with learning disabilities or neurodiversity. This also includes adapting your facilitation to be inclusive of participants from marginalised groups, including religious minority, refugees, displaced or indigenous community.

There is some accessibility guidance that applies across all the activities.

Be inclusive and gender-sensitive and trauma-informed with your language

It's important to use language that makes people feel comfortable and safe. If you are not sure what language or pronouns to use, just ask! Be sensitive and respectful when you are speaking about issues participants may have experienced.

Example: Say 'Hey everyone' instead of 'Hey guys'.

Avoid using technical terms and too much jargon

It's important to use words that everyone can understand to make people feel welcome and included. This includes titles of projects or acronyms that may seem common in your organisation.

Example: Ask 'What have you done to help people access sexual health services?' 'What is your CSO doing to ensure SRHR and SDG3 are being upheld?'

Be led by the group, not the agenda

It's important to adapt the training to the speed of understanding and learning of the group. If you rush through, some participants may miss the key messages and disengage. It's also good to create space to explore and discuss new issues or topics that come up, so participants feel listened to.

Example: Ask an open question such as 'Are there any topics you would like more information on?' rather than a closed one 'Everyone understood?'

Provide multiple ways to digest information

Everyone takes in new information differently. Make sure you deliver the information in multiple ways. Always consider how you can share information visually and audibly, and have information people can access after the session to revisit the topic.

Example: When people are introducing themselves, encourage them to describe what they are wearing and how they look, to help those who are visually impaired or digest information audibly.



KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

Youth leadership

is the process of empowering young people to develop skills and knowledge that enable them to take charge and contribute to their communities.

Youth Power

is the idea that young people can use collective action to create change in the world. Young people are diverse and complex, and this is powerful. Young people are experts and their collective power can help solve the world's biggest challenges

Powershifting

is a way to challenge the status quo and move power away from existing systems. Through powershifting, you can dismantle power structures that disadvantage communities and young people.

Meaningful youth engagement

is a process that involves young people in the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs, policies, and other structures that affect their lives.

Youth-led accountability

is the enabling of young people to hold decision-makers accountable for the commitments they have made towards sustainable development, through increased capacity, access and agency. '

Acknowledgements

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We Lead is an inspiring, innovative, and far-reaching program that aims to improve the Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRH-R) of young women. The We Lead consortium consists of six civil society organisations (Positive Vibes, Restless Development, Marsa, FEMNET, the Central American Women's Fund, and led by Hivos) and is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The program supports young women's groups and organisations. We connect them with one another in local Communities of Action (CoAs), support, and coach them, so that they are better able to advocate for, claim, protect, and promote their SRH-R. The program is being implemented across three regions: Africa, Central America, and MENA.

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RESTLESS DEVELOPMENT is a global non-profit agency. We support the collective power of young leaders to create a better world. We are independently registered and governed in nine countries (India, Nepal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, UK, USA, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) bound together by our vision for youth power. We run youth-led programs to tackle the issues that young people care about the most. We also run the Youth Collective, a growing network of over 4,000 local youth civil society groups and organisations in 185 countries. This Youth Power Toolkit has been developed for use and adaptation by organisations and youth to enhance the leadership skills of young leaders. It is important to note that these training materials and their content are not to be monetized through delivery nor employed for commercial purposes.

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