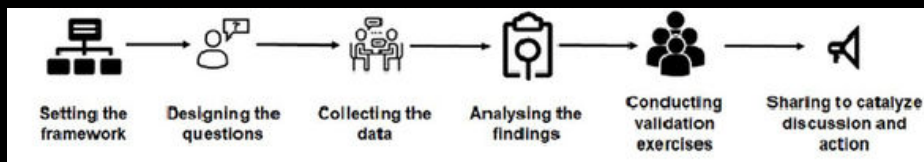


OUR 6-STEP METHODOLOGY

Our 6-step youth-led research methodology prioritises young people's leadership in producing, translating, and disseminating knowledge, enabling them to shape the entire research process from beginning to end. At its core, this approach shifts power to young people, allowing them to participate and lead the research efforts.

Young researchers are at the heart of this process, with their roles shifting from participants to active leaders throughout the research journey. What sets this methodology apart is the clear delineation of roles for young researchers and staff at every stage, ensuring that young people take on leadership responsibilities while being supported by the staff's technical expertise to maximise their impact.

HOW DOES IT WORK?




What makes this methodology unique is that each step has a clearly defined role for both staff and young researchers designed to maximise young people's leadership, supported by the technical expertise of staff.



**RESTLESS
DEVELOPMENT**




STEP 1: SETTING THE FRAMEWORK





Before setting the framework, young researchers are intentionally recruited based on their alignment with the study's focus, the respondents' ages, and their geographical locations, ensuring that those involved have a direct stake in the subject matter. To ensure rigour and relevance, after recruitment, the young people undergo a training program on conducting literature reviews, where they are equipped with the necessary information and skills to perform the literature review before the foundational training. Information gathered through the literature review contributes to setting up the research framework and confirming the methodological approach.



The literature review focuses on understanding the existing body of work surrounding the subject matter, refining the research problem using the “5 Why” process to arrive at multiple layers and the root problem. Accurate identification of the knowledge gap is a pre-requisite to defining the methodology and segueing into the designing study tools. The process ensures the findings are directly relevant and impactful for programming and advocacy efforts. Through this process, we guarantee that the research remains grounded in high-quality information while empowering young people to apply their knowledge and insights throughout the research journey. This methodology ensures that the study is rigorous, meaningful, and reflective of the perspectives and expertise of young people themselves.




After the literature review process, the young researchers undergo a comprehensive one-week training program led by the technical research team. This training enables them to define the research framework, identify adequate methodologies, and learn more about ethical considerations and safeguarding practices.





STEP 2: DESIGNING THE QUESTIONS



In Step 2, the technical team supports young researchers in co-designing research tools, such as focus group discussion guides, questionnaires, and semi-structured interview formats, in line with the selected methodologies. This collaborative approach shifts the power dynamics, ensuring that young people are not just recipients of research findings but active contributors to shaping the entire research process.

By giving them ownership over the design and execution of the research, we are fostering a sense of agency and ensuring that their perspectives and expertise drive the research process.



STEP 3: COLLECTING THE DATA

Young researchers work collaboratively in teams to collect data using the methods established in Step 2. To reduce inter-observer bias, the researchers are trained on the researcher's positionality during the foundational training. Equipping young people with the necessary skills to collect data shifts the power to young people and values their lived experiences as essential expertise in the research process.

Recognising the diversity of the respondents, we ensure that the research uses an intersectional approach and captures a wide range of perspectives, as each group brings unique insights shaped by their contexts. By drawing on the lived experiences of young researchers, we enrich the data collection process and ensure that the research reflects the authentic voices and realities of the communities involved. This guarantees that young people take ownership of both the process and the outcomes, ensuring the research truly reflects the diverse experiences within the study.



STEP 4: ANALYSING THE DATA

Following data collection and transcription, young researchers participate in a one-week workshop to collaboratively analyse the findings using different analysis approaches based on the methodology used (quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods). This research phase is a key moment for shifting power, as it places young people at the centre of the analysis process, drawing on their lived experience and insights to interpret the data.

Their unique perspectives are crucial in identifying and addressing gaps or overlooked aspects in the initial data collection, ensuring the analysis is comprehensive and inclusive of all voices. The analysis plan highlights the diverse experiences of different groups within the research population, allowing young researchers to document and reflect on the nuanced realities that may not have been fully captured in earlier stages. By supporting young people in leading this critical phase, we ensure that the research process is grounded in real-world experiences and attentive to the complexities of the data.



STEP 5: CONDUCTING VALIDATION EXERCISES

Young researchers play an integral role in the validation process by engaging with community members to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the findings. Building on the gap analysis conducted in the previous stage, they will actively incorporate any newly identified information, ensuring that the data reflects the full spectrum of community experiences. This collaborative validation exercise enables young people to check the integrity of the research, integrating insights from those directly impacted by the study.

Additionally, young researchers will be involved in the report-writing process, weaving their perspectives into the narrative to ensure the findings are valid, meaningful, and reflective of the communities' voices. Through this process, young researchers take ownership of both the validation and dissemination phases, further shifting the power and ensuring the research is authentic and responsive to the participants' lived experiences.



STEP 6: CONVENING CONVERSATIONS FOR ACTION

Young researchers lead advocacy and accountability convenings, presenting their findings and engaging in discussions with diverse audiences, including government representatives, civil society organisations, and community stakeholders. This critical phase positions young people as key voices in influencing decision-making and driving social change. Young researchers actively facilitate conversations, challenging stakeholders to reflect on the findings and consider how they can contribute to meaningful action. This approach ensures that young people are not just research subjects but powerful advocates for their communities, holding duty-bearers accountable and amplifying the voices of those often marginalised.

In addition to convening discussions, young researchers also engage in a comprehensive report dissemination strategy, ensuring their findings reach a wider audience through various platforms. This includes sharing research outcomes through blogs, digital communications, social media, and other online platforms, making the findings accessible and impactful to local and global communities. These efforts help create a broader conversation around the issues and ensure that the research contributes to long-lasting change. By leveraging these digital tools, young researchers ensure that their work doesn't just remain within the walls of meetings but is actively shaping public discourse. Through these combined efforts, young researchers demonstrate their leadership, ensure the research leads to tangible outcomes, and amplify the insights and needs of the communities they represent.