

# Commonwealth Year of Youth

Comprehensive Results Assessment



The Commonwealth



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COMPREHENSIVE RESULTS ASSESSMENT



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## Evaluators

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# In Memoria



Dr Henry Wallace Charles, an internationally recognised expert in youth and policy development, dedicated over 30 years to advancing positive youth engagement across the Commonwealth. His extensive career included pivotal roles such as the Regional Director and Acting Director of the Commonwealth Youth Programme, where he significantly influenced youth development strategies. In January 2023, Dr Charles was appointed as the Co-Chair of the Year of Youth Advisory Committee, a position he held with

distinction until his untimely passing in July 2023. Dr Charles's sudden departure was deeply felt across the Commonwealth. In tribute to his enduring legacy, the Commonwealth Secretariat announced the launch of the Henry Charles Youth Football Tournament, aiming to inspire and empower young people through sports. Dr Henry Charles's contributions continue to inspire efforts towards youth empowerment and development within the Commonwealth.



The Honourable Sarah Mateke Nyirabashitsi was the Minister of State for Gender, Labour and Social Development (Children and Youth Affairs) of Uganda, and Chair of the Commonwealth Youth Ministerial Taskforce. She was a dedicated advocate for youth empowerment within the Commonwealth and played a pivotal role in advancing a forward-thinking youth policy agenda, ensuring that young voices remained central to decision-making processes. Her leadership was instrumental in designating 2023–2024 as the Year of Youth across the Commonwealth, reflecting her unwavering commitment to nurturing the next generation. Minister Mateke's compassion and dedication left

an indelible mark on both Uganda and the broader Commonwealth community. Her passing is a profound loss for all Commonwealth stakeholders and young people around the world, but her legacy continues to inspire progress towards youth development and empowerment.



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- Dr Henry Wallace Charles
- Solange Tetero

The evaluators thank the YoY team for their support throughout this evaluation.



# Acronyms and Abbreviations

AO	Accredited Organisation
CAYWA	Commonwealth Alliance of Youth Workers Association
CCYDN	Commonwealth Children and Youth Disability Network
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
CLGF	Commonwealth Local Government Forum
CYC	Commonwealth Youth Council
CYHRDN	Commonwealth Youth Human Rights and Democracy Network
CYMM	Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting
CYP	Commonwealth Youth Programme
CYSU	Commonwealth Youth for Sustainable Urbanisation
EOI	Expression of Interest
IOSH	Institution of Occupational Safety and Health
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
RLSS	Royal Life Saving Society
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
YoY	Year of Youth



# Executive Summary

In June 2022, during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Rwanda, leaders declared 2023 as the Commonwealth Year of Youth, dedicating it to youth-led action for sustainable and inclusive development. This declaration coincided with the 50th anniversary of the Commonwealth Youth Programme, established in 1973 to empower member countries to support young people under 30 in reaching their full potential.

The celebration of the Year of Youth (YoY) occurs during special designated years that focus on youth empowerment. The relationship between the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) and the Year of Youth celebrations is synergistic. The CYP leverages the YoY celebrations and global or regional youth-focused observances to enhance its activities and initiatives, such as:

- Promoting youth leadership. The CYP uses the momentum of the YoY to further encourage young people to take leadership roles, especially on governance and policymaking, through its existing leadership development programmes.
- Advocating for youth rights. The YoY provided an opportunity for the CYP to advocate more strongly for the protection and promotion of youth rights, emphasising issues such as education, employment, mental health and environmental sustainability.
- Collaborative initiatives. The celebrations often lead to partnerships with governments, non-governmental organisations and other youth organisations across the Commonwealth, enabling joint programmes that address key issues facing young people in the context of global challenges such as climate change, unemployment and inequality.
- Youth engagement in policy. The CYP supports youth representation in Commonwealth decision-making bodies and advocates for youth participation in the political process, which aligns with the YoY's focus on political engagement and civic responsibility.

In essence, the CYP uses the energy and focus of YoY celebrations to intensify its mission of empowering young people and to align their

efforts with broader, often global, calls for youth-driven action and policy reform. This collaboration highlights the Commonwealth's ongoing commitment to ensuring that young people are central to efforts in building inclusive, resilient and forward-thinking societies. Additional background on the YoY is provided in Annex A.

## Overview of Findings

The YoY effectively brought youth voices to the forefront and catalysed a wide array of positive activities, benefiting individuals, communities and nations alike. While it is too early to measure fully the achievement of YoY's vision and mission, the initiative has undeniably set the groundwork for long-term impact, demonstrating progress in the right direction.

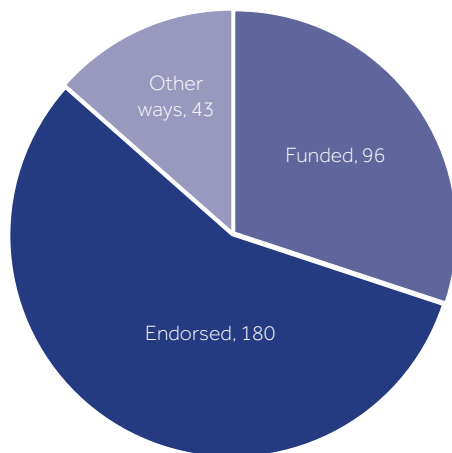
The YoY initiative was successful despite some of the challenges, such as lack of dedicated staff at the beginning of the year, absence of a funding structure and some communication challenges. While many of the issues were addressed as the year progressed, the Commonwealth Secretariat could benefit from streamlining some of its procedure.

There were many layers to the YoY and support was provided in different ways. The YoY encouraged member countries to develop and support projects throughout the Commonwealth. Projects ranged from local events to global virtual events, all related to youth. The types of support provided is indicated in Figure 0.1.

The Commonwealth YoY:

- Endorsed 16 initiatives developed by member countries and funded 14 with grants.
- Endorsed 18 initiatives developed by Accredited Organisations (AOs) and funded nine with grants and three in other ways.
- Endorsed 54 initiatives developed by various organisations from around the Commonwealth and funded three with grants and 35 in other ways.
- Endorsed 72 initiatives submitted to the Secretariat through an Expressions of Interest portal by various organisations from around the Commonwealth and 27 of them were

**Figure 0.1 YoY support provided to projects**



Endorsed – by the Secretariat to acknowledge alignment of activities with the goals and objectives of the Year  
 Funded – by the Secretariat to selected endorsed projects through grants.  
 Other ways – advice, in-kind supports such as promoting, communications, cost of venue, catering, per diems, accommodation, flights etc.

funded with grants, five in other ways and two with letters of support that supported them in seeking funding.

Although it remains difficult to determine whether all output and outcome targets were achieved because of the lack of information available, the evidence points to the accomplishment of many of the YoY’s overarching goals. This suggests a clear need for improved monitoring mechanisms to accurately track progress and outcomes in future endeavours.

The initiative’s effectiveness was evident, but its operations demonstrated potential for improved efficiency. For example, it was a challenge to get the money out to funded projects in a timely manner. New systems were established specifically for the YoY. Continued implementation of selected YoY activities and systems could enhance resource utilisation and help to maintain impact. Additionally, the YoY yielded more positive than negative unintended outcomes, further validating its overall success.

The personal benefits to youth participants were profound, with many reporting transformative experiences such as gaining skills and knowledge as well as developing increased confidence, becoming more engaged in the youth movement and being better able to express their views. On a broader

scale, participants believed that their countries and communities experienced tangible benefits from the initiative such as:

- Youth are more energised and engaged.
- Youth are more empowered.
- More attention is being paid to youth voices and views.
- Increased attention to providing opportunities for youth.
- Increased focus on youth policy and strategies.

Perhaps one of the YoY’s most notable achievements is the legacy it leaves behind. The initiative empowered a generation of youth and also established a model for future youth-centred initiatives. The CYP will continue the following activities:

- The stronger regional presence established during the YoY.
- Formal recognition of youth workers as key contributors to the youth development agenda.
- Strengthened partnerships with institutions such as the Commonwealth Foundation and the Commonwealth of Learning.
- Updated objectives that reflect modern challenges and opportunities.
- The recognition of the Commonwealth Youth Council as an official body.
- Creation of a formal link between the Commonwealth Youth Ministerial Task Force and the Commonwealth Board of Governors.
- National focal points for youth development embedded within each member state.
- Stronger recognition of the dependency on member countries.
- CYP funding maintained as a separate entity.
- Commitment of Commonwealth member countries to the CYP fund.

A new arrangement between member countries and the Secretariat has been established for young people, including expanded current youth priorities, new stakeholders, and affirmation of the new governance framework that is more inclusive.

Along the way, valuable lessons were learned, offering insights for refining similar programmes.

## Recommendations

Based on this evaluation of the YoY programme, we recommend five key strategies to build on current successes and strengthen future impact:

1. Strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems
 

Create a practical monitoring framework that tracks both immediate results and longer-term impact. This includes:

  - developing clear, measurable indicators,
  - implementing user-friendly data collection tools,
  - setting up real-time tracking systems, and
  - establishing regular review processes for data-driven decisions.
2. Enhance programme efficiency
 

Conduct an operational review to identify where resources can be better used:

  - Map current processes to find bottlenecks.
  - Document successful, cost-effective activities.
  - Scale what works while maintaining quality.
  - Streamline delivery methods.
3. Capture and build on unexpected positive outcomes
 

Document and analyse unplanned positive results from YoY to:

  - identify which elements led to these benefits,
  - include successful approaches in future programme design, and
  - share learnings across similar youth initiatives.
4. Strengthen communication impact
 

Create authentic media campaigns that:

  - share participant stories and experiences,
  - use compelling visuals and testimonials,
  - engage stakeholders through multiple channels, and
  - demonstrate programme value through real examples.
5. Expand YoY's influence
 

Position YoY as a model for youth development by:

  - sharing evidence of programme impact,
  - building partnerships at local, national and international levels,
  - contributing to youth policy discussions, and
  - supporting other organisations to adopt successful approaches.



# 1. Introduction

In June 2022, during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Rwanda, leaders declared 2023 as the Commonwealth Year of Youth, dedicating it to youth-led action for sustainable and inclusive development. This declaration coincided with the 50th Anniversary of the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP), established in 1973 to empower member countries to support young people under 30 in reaching their full potential.

The celebration of the Year of Youth (YoY) occurs during special designated years that focus on youth empowerment. The relationship between the CYP and the YoY celebrations is synergistic. The CYP leverages the YoY celebrations and global or regional youth-focused observances to enhance its activities and initiatives, such as:

**Promoting youth leadership:** the CYP uses the momentum of YoY to further encourage young people to take leadership roles, especially on governance and policymaking, through its existing leadership development programmes.

**Advocating for youth rights:** the YoY provided an opportunity for the CYP to advocate more strongly for the protection and promotion of youth rights, emphasising issues such as education, employment, mental health and environmental sustainability.

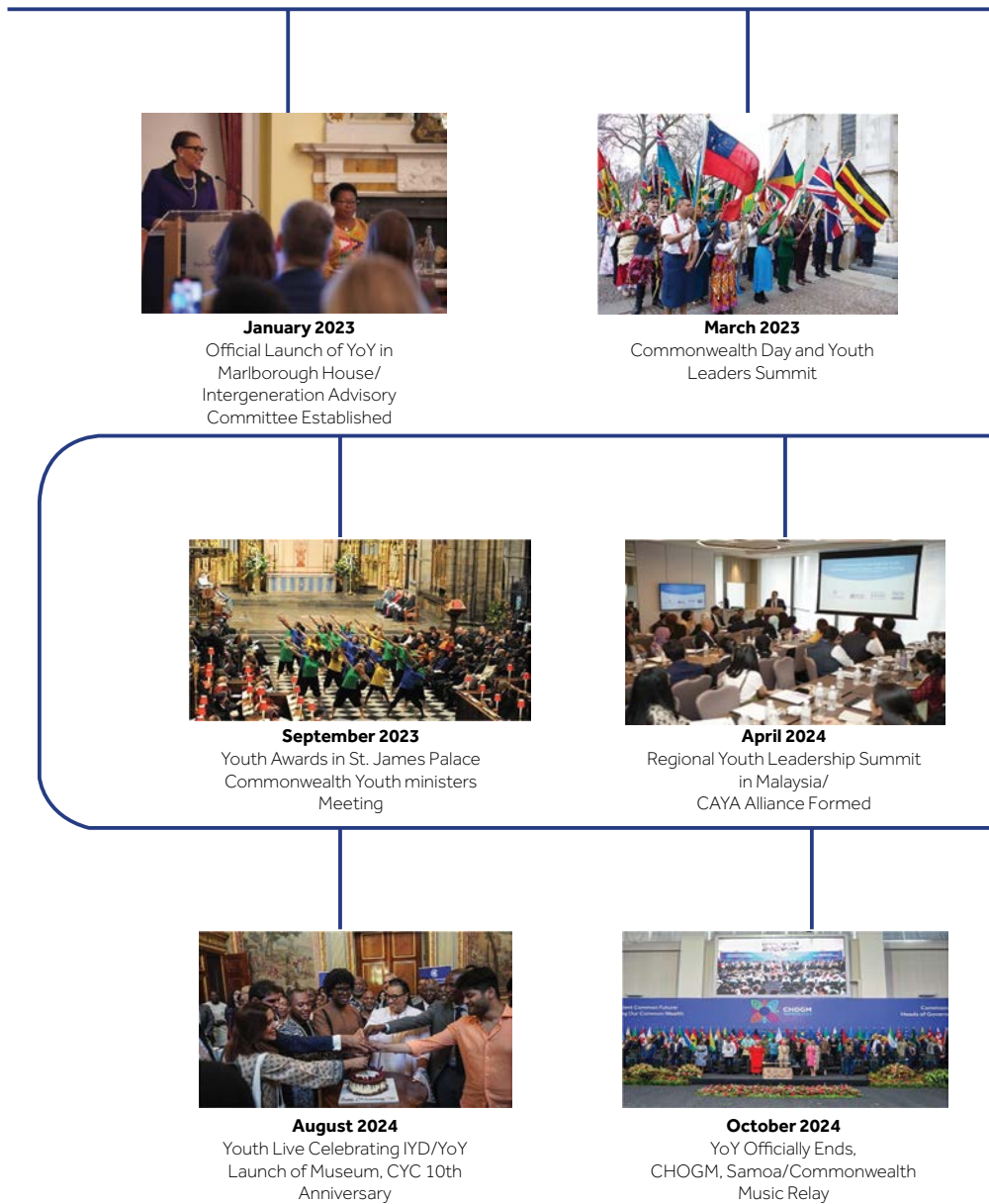
**Collaborative initiatives:** the celebrations often lead to partnerships with governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other youth organisations across the Commonwealth, enabling joint programmes that address key issues facing young people in the context of global challenges such as climate change, unemployment and inequality.

**Youth engagement in policy:** the CYP supports youth representation in Commonwealth decision-making bodies and advocates for youth participation in the political process, which aligns with the YoY's focus on political engagement and civic responsibility.

In essence, the CYP uses the energy and focus of YoY celebrations to intensify its mission of empowering young people and to align their efforts with broader, often global, calls for youth-driven action and policy reform. This collaboration highlights the Commonwealth's ongoing commitment to ensuring that young people are central to efforts in building inclusive, resilient and forward-thinking societies. Additional background on YoY is provided in Annex A.

The following diagram maps out some key events occurring during the YoY. It should be noted that activities occurred across all regions within the Commonwealth.

## 1.1 YoY Key Milestones



## 1.2 Overview of Findings

The YoY initiative was successful despite some challenges, such as lack of dedicated staff at the beginning of the year, absence of a funding structure and some communication challenges. While many of the issues were addressed as the year progressed, the Commonwealth Secretariat could benefit from streamlining some of its procedures.

The YoY effectively brought youth voices to the forefront and catalysed a wide array of positive activities, benefiting individuals, communities and nations alike. While it is too early to measure fully

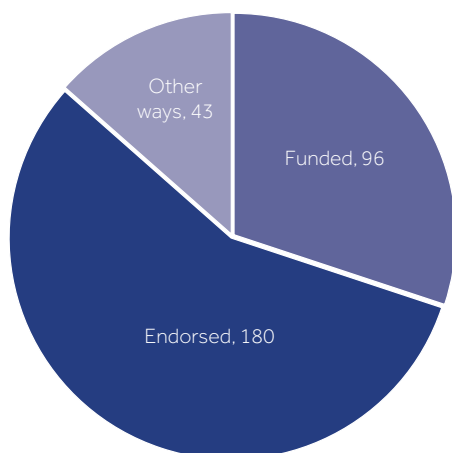
the achievement of YoY’s vision and mission, the initiative has undeniably set the groundwork for long-term impact, demonstrating progress in the right direction.

There were many layers to the YoY and support was provided in different ways, as indicated in Figure 1.1.

The Commonwealth YoY

- Endorsed 16 member countries and funded 14 with grants.
- Endorsed 18 Accredited Organisations (AOs) and funded nine with grants and three in other ways.

**Figure 1.1 YoY support provided to projects**



Endorsed – by the Secretariat to acknowledge alignment of activities with the goals and objectives of the Year.

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Other ways – advice, in-kind supports such as promoting, communications

- Endorsed 54 non-Expression of Interest (EOI) submission activities from various organisations from around the Commonwealth and funded three with grants and 35 in other ways.
- Endorsed 72 EOI activities submission from various from around the Commonwealth and 27 of them were funded with grants, five in other ways and two with letters of support.

Although it remains difficult to determine whether all output and outcome targets were achieved, the evidence points to the accomplishment of many if the YoY's overarching goals. This suggests a clear need for improved monitoring mechanisms to accurately track progress and outcomes in future endeavours.

The initiative's effectiveness was evident but its operations demonstrated potential for improved efficiency. For example, it was a challenge to get the money out to funded projects in a timely manner. New systems were established specifically for YoY. The continued implementation of selected YoY activities and systems could enhance resource utilisation and help to maintain impact. Additionally, the YoY yielded more positive than negative unintended outcomes, further validating its overall success.

The personal benefits to youth participants were profound, with many reporting transformative experiences such as gaining skills and knowledge as well as developing increased confidence, becoming more engaged in the youth movement and being better able to express their views. On a broader scale, participants believed that their countries and communities experienced tangible benefits from the initiative such as:

- Youth are more energised and engaged.
- Youth are more empowered.
- More attention being paid to youth voices and views.
- Increased attention to providing opportunities for youth.
- Increased focus on youth policy and strategies.

Perhaps one of the YoY's most notable achievements is the legacy YoY leaves behind. The initiative empowered a generation of youth and also established a model for future youth-centred initiatives. The CYP will continue:

- the stronger regional presence established during the YoY,
- formal recognition of youth workers as key contributors to the youth development agenda,
- strengthened partnerships with institutions such as the Commonwealth Foundation and the Commonwealth of Learning,
- updated objectives that reflect modern challenges and opportunities,
- to recognise the Commonwealth Youth Council as an official body,
- the creation of a formal link between the Commonwealth Youth Ministerial Task Force and the Commonwealth Board of Governors,
- the expansion of the national focal points for youth development embedded within each member state,
- the stronger recognition of the dependency on member countries and their commitment to the CYP fund, and
- to ensure that CYP funding is maintained as a separate entity.

A new arrangement between member countries and the Secretariat has been established for young people including expanded current youth priorities, new stakeholders and an affirmation of a new governance framework that is more inclusive.

Along the way, valuable lessons were learned, offering insights for refining similar programmes.

A detailed background to the YoY is included in Annex A. A list of known events is contained in Annex B. Examples of a specific event in each region is provided in Annex C.

### 1.3 Assessment Methodology

This comprehensive results assessment of YoY was conducted by LogicalOutcomes from October through January 2025, gleaning information from the sources in Table 1.1

A list of people interviewed can be found in Annex D. The list of documents reviewed is provided in Annex E. The detailed survey responses are in Annex F. All assessments such as this have both strengths and limitations.

#### 1.3.1 Strengths of the Evaluation

Data were collected from different sources and triangulated to compare findings across sources. Overall, the findings across the various sources were consistent, which increased our confidence in the findings from each of the sources.

Although an evaluation plan was not established at the beginning of YoY, some key success indicators were established. Data were collected through stories, project reports, surveys and Google analytics. All of this information was made available to the evaluators, making it possible to address all of the evaluation questions.

#### 1.3.2 Limitations of the Evaluation

The primary limitation is the lack of an evaluation plan to guide the data collection. Although the YoY team established some performance targets, these were not consistently monitored. Hence some of the information did not address the evaluation questions.

While all activities reported to the YoY staff were recorded, they were not tracked to provide information about what actually occurred. This is because the YoY was a campaign and not a development programme for which activities were not formally assessed. The information provided in tracking documents was constantly being updated and data across documents was not consistent, resulting in different information being available on different documents.

Hence the information in this review presents an underreporting of the actual activities that occurred.

The following box contains the evaluation questions.

**Table 1.1 Interviews Documents Survey responses**

Interviews	Documents	Survey responses
<b>Total: 25 interviews</b>	Background information	163 Participants from 36 countries
4 Internal staff	Tracking documents	93 Organisers from 38 countries
13 Organisers	Concept notes and reports	16 Other stakeholders such as YoY team and country focal points
8 Other stakeholders	Social media reports	

#### Key evaluation questions

1. To what extent was the Mission of the YoY achieved?
2. In what ways did the YoY contribute to target outcomes for participating youth/countries?
3. How effective and efficient was the implementation of the initiatives led by the young people, partners and stakeholders within the YoY? Data from the monitoring and evaluation forms will be used to determine the effectiveness.
4. What were the experiences and perceptions of youth participants and other stakeholders, who hosted, delivered and participated in YoY activities?
5. What challenges and barriers were encountered and how were they addressed?
6. What lessons can be learned for future youth development initiatives?
7. What is the legacy of the YoY?
8. What were the unintended outcomes of the YoY initiatives if any?

## 2. Achieving the Vision and Mission

I believe the vision and mission were largely achieved. There is a noticeable shift, with young people becoming more aligned with and engaged in youth development initiatives.

Youth organiser

YoY generated interest in the Commonwealth – participants reached out to ask how they could join the Commonwealth youth networks.

YoY staff

The Commonwealth YoY is a transformative initiative designed to empower young people to become active leaders and changemakers in their communities and beyond. Its vision centres on fostering an inclusive world where young people have the resources, tools and platforms needed to drive progress on critical issues such as climate change, equality and sustainable development. By cultivating a generation of resilient, innovative and engaged youth leaders, the initiative seeks to create a ripple effect of positive change across the Commonwealth's diverse member countries. The vision reflects a commitment to ensuring that young voices are not only heard but are at the forefront of shaping policies and programmes that impact their futures.

At the core, the mission of the Commonwealth YoY is to amplify the voices of young people and break down barriers to their meaningful participation in governance, entrepreneurship and social innovation. Through youth-centred programming, capacity-building opportunities and cross-cultural collaboration, the initiative is structured to provide young people with the skills and necessary support to lead effectively. The ideal was to strive to create a unified network of youth equity to address local and global challenges while advocating for equity and justice. By prioritising inclusivity and opportunity, the mission underscores the belief that investing in young people is essential for achieving long-term progress and fostering a more connected and sustainable future.

The participants interviewed said that the activities in which they were involved were inspiring, with a view to the future.

As shown in Figure 2.2, 94 per cent of stakeholders, excluding organisers and participants, indicated that the vision and mission were achieved to some or a great extent. Some respondents and interviewees commented that it was too early to know the extent to which the mission and vision were achieved.

If the vision and mission are achieved, most people interviewed suggested that the YoY would have contributed to it. Almost everyone interviewed made reference to projects that they felt contributed to achieving the vision.

The following indicate a large-scale mobilisation of young people during YoY:

- 66 youth-led summits/conferences across all five regions.
- 48 conferences (including Webinar, Lecture, Symposium, Summit, Seminar, Dialogue, Meeting, Fair) across the Commonwealth.

Youth were mobilised through social media and the website, which included links to an EOI form to register interest in organising a YoY activity, a Yourcommonwealth, Your Future survey, a post event survey, a social media toolkit, a manual to set up a Commonwealth Youth Club, interest in joining a network and introductions to over 80 Commonwealth professional associations/societies.

Figure 2.1 Commonwealth youth development ecosystem

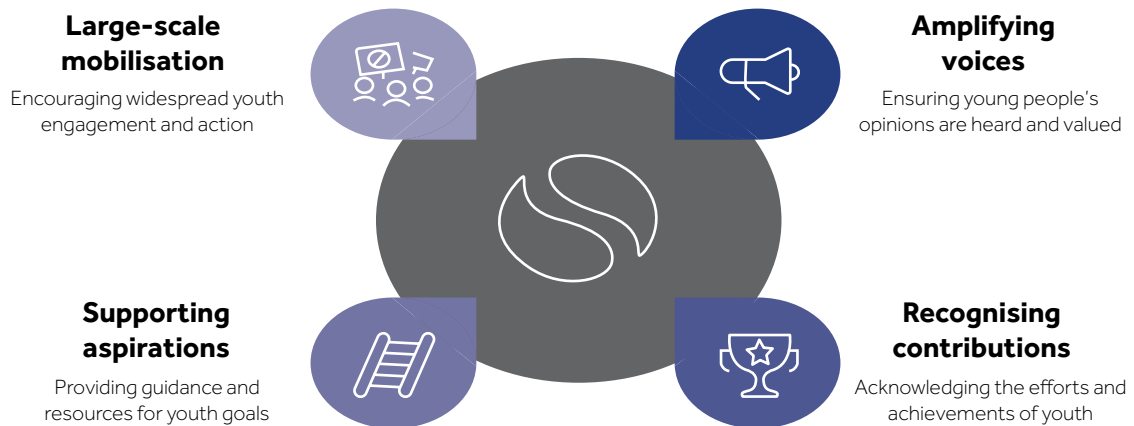
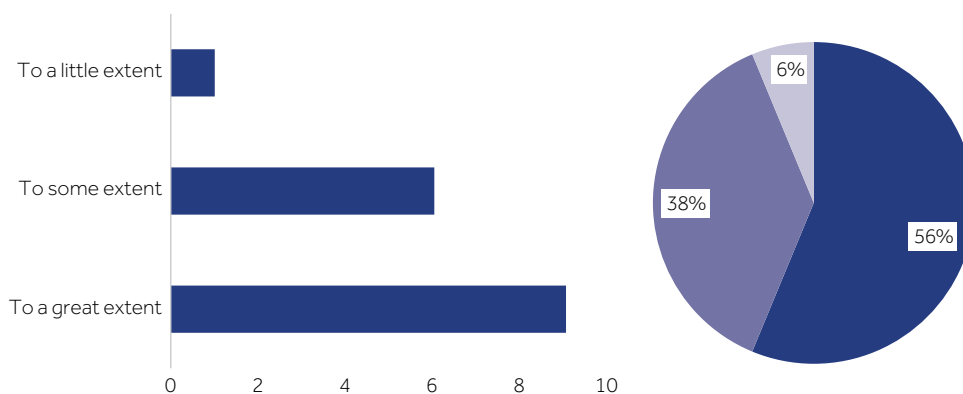


Figure 2.2 Stakeholders' perceptions of the extent to which the vision and mission were achieved



## 2.1 Achieving the Targets

The YoY initiative set ambitious targets to empower young people and promote intergenerational collaboration across the Commonwealth. Through a combination of dialogue sessions, conferences and digital innovations, the initiative aimed to create a vibrant platform for youth engagement and leadership. The following provides an in-depth review of the target outcomes and achievements attained, highlighting successes and areas for improvement.

The YoY initiative aimed to engage millions of young people, provide learning and upskilling opportunities and recognise the outstanding contributions of youth development. Through a combination of events, social media campaigns and capacity-building efforts, the initiative sought to

create meaningful opportunities for young people and policy-makers alike. Table 2.1 is a detailed account of the progress made towards these ambitious targets.

As indicated in Table 2.1, most of the YoY outcome targets were achieved or exceeded. At least 252 projects were brought to the attention of the Commonwealth Secretariat spanning the five Commonwealth regions. There are likely more of which the YoY has no knowledge.

One of the central goals was to meaningfully engage at least 5 million young people, although the term 'meaningfully engaged' was not explicitly defined. Some examples of progress towards achieving this goal include:

- The International Youth Day campaign generated 1 million social media impressions.

**Table 2.1 YoY targets, outcomes and achievements**

Target outputs	Achievements
YoY Engagement Toolkit downloaded at least 10,000 times	58
At least five high-level intergenerational dialogue sessions	At least 10
At least five regional youth-led youth summits/conferences	66 across all 5 regions
At least one pan-Commonwealth youth development conference	At least 3
CYP@50 and Beyond digital research and virtual exhibition curated	Yes
Commonwealth Youth Information Portal developed and launched	Yes

- The Capacity-Building Workshop and National Youth Conference on Climate Change involved 129 participants.

On social media, the initiative recorded 275,100 Facebook views, 11,800 content interactions and 757 new followers along with 71 posts generating 2,763 reactions.

The Peace One Day campaign alone generated 2.264 million social media impressions, underscoring the effectiveness of these efforts in reaching youth globally.

Similarly, the initiative set a target of 10 million young people through CYP social media or increasing traffic to the Commonwealth Information Portal media sites by 25 per cent. During the Peace One Day campaign, the initiative reached 1.9 million people and recorded over 700,000 video views. These numbers demonstrate strong movement towards achieving the goal. However, the lack of data regarding attendance at all events makes it impossible to know whether this target was achieved.

In the realm of education and skills development, the initiative surpassed expectations. It aimed to provide 20,000 young people with new learning or upskilling opportunities but delivered far more. With over 100 documented events attracting more than 1 million attendees, it is estimated that at least 200,000 people gained new skills, assuming just 20 per cent of attendees benefitted from these opportunities. This success reflects the initiative's robust capacity-building efforts. At least one additional event is anticipated in March 2025.

For youth development policy-makers and practitioners, the initiative sought to create opportunities for 5,000 individuals. This target was exceeded by a wide margin, as an estimated 50,000 policy-makers and practitioners benefitted, assuming 5 per cent of the over 1 million event

attendees fell into this category. This achievement highlights the programme's broader impact on youth development ecosystems.

Recognition was another key aspect of the initiative. It celebrated 50 young leaders through the Commonwealth Youth Awards. The YoY Spotlight Series provided another opportunity to recognise the achievements of young people.

The initiative also prioritised securing resources to revitalise the CYP. This goal was met by leveraging funding and endorsement that enabled the execution of numerous events, ensuring sustainability for future efforts. Table 2.2 outlines the YoY target outcomes and the achievements related to them. These were much more difficult to measure because of insufficient data. The data available indicate the following outcomes were achieved or exceeded:

- At least 20,000 young people were provided with new learning/upskilling opportunities.
- At least 5,000 youth development policy-makers and practitioners were provided with new learning/upskilling opportunities.
- 50 young people were recognised through the Commonwealth Youth Awards.
- At least 50 youth development practitioners and policy-makers were recognised.

### Key Reflections on Achievements

In addition to 48 conferences (including Webinar, Lecture, Symposium, Summit, Seminar, Dialogue, Meeting, Fair) across the Commonwealth, 66 local activities were carried out in almost all Commonwealth countries, as shown in Figure 2.2, with the UK, Rwanda and Pakistan having the most events. It should be noted that this does not represent all events, as many occurred that were not reported to the YoY team.

Table 2.2 Outcome targets and achievements

Target outcomes	Achievements
At least 5 million young people were meaningfully engaged	1 million social media impressions of International Youth Day 129 participants in Capacity-Building Workshop and National Youth Conference on Climate Change 275,100 facebook views, 11,800 content interactions, 757 followers 2,264 social media impressions of Peace One Day 71 social media posts, 2,763 reactions
At least 10 million young people engaged on CYP social media or 25 per cent increase in traffic to Commonwealth Information Portal media sites	Peace One Day: 1.9 million reached 786,000 video views
At least 20,000 young people provided with new learning/upskilling opportunities	With over 100 documented events attended by over a million people, if we assume at least 20 per cent of attendees obtained new learning/upskilling, the estimate is 200,000 people
At least 5,000 youth development policy-makers and practitioners provided with new learning/upskilling opportunities	If 5 per cent of the over 1 million attendees were youth development policy-makers and practitioners, 50,000 were provided with opportunities
At least 50 young people recognised through Commonwealth Youth Awards	50 young people shortlisted for and awarded Youth Awards
At least 50 youth development practitioners and policy-makers recognised	50 youth development workers were recognised
Renewed and increased resources for a revitalised CYP secured	This has yet to be determined
The vision and mission of CYP announced	Yes

*"The logistics of the Malaysian summit could have been a nightmare, but the Secretariat was very helpful and very easy to reach."*

YoY project organiser

- "Overachievement in events:** the initiative far exceeded expectations for youth-led summits and pan-Commonwealth conferences, with at least (including Webinar, Lecture, Symposium, Summit, Seminar, Dialogue, Meeting, Fair), 66 youth-led events. This success demonstrates robust youth enthusiasm, excellent mobilisation efforts and effective outreach strategy.
- Digital innovations:** achievements in digital deliverables such as the virtual exhibition reflect the initiative's commitment to leveraging technology for accessibility and outreach. The initiative leveraged social media effectively, with millions of impressions and interactions, reinforcing its ability to connect with young people in the digital space.
- Scaling impact:** surpassing many targets indicates that the initiative gained significant traction and perhaps identified more opportunities than initially planned.
- Exceptional upskilling outcomes:** with at least 48 events, the estimated figures for learning and upskilling opportunities far exceeded expectations, highlighting the initiative's success in fostering capacity-building efforts.
- Reporting gaps:** missing data, such as recognising youth development practitioners, whether events were carried out as planned and the number of people attending events, underscores the need for stronger monitoring and reporting systems to fully capture the scope of achievements.
- Strategic resource mobilisation:** the ability of projects to secure funding and

endorsements reflects a forward-thinking approach to sustaining youth programmes. The team was able to establish a new funding structure to support projects during the YoY.

In summary, the YoY initiative achieved remarkable success in several areas, including engagement, capacity building and resource mobilisation. It demonstrated exceptional reach through digital platforms, with millions of impressions and interactions across social media. The capacity-building outcomes were particularly impressive, far exceeding initial targets and reflecting the initiative’s impact on youth and policy-makers alike.

The YoY initiative showcased the transformative potential of youth engagement, emphasising the importance of ambitious targets, strategic outreach and sustained investment in youth development, and future initiatives can drive even greater impact across the Commonwealth.

## 2.2 The Secretariat’s Contribution to Target Outcomes

The Secretariat provided a team of four project managers dedicated to implementing the YoY. The team members demonstrated various skill sets, including administrative and operations, understanding of the Commonwealth institutional infrastructure and ability to engage stakeholders. They were responsible for communications, administering the funds (application, selection and distribution processes) and providing advice and support to event organisers. Specifically, they were expected to:

- promote youth-led action for sustainable and inclusive development,
- encourage the renewal and strengthening of commitment to youth engagement and empowerment,

- honour the commitment made by Heads to establish the CYP in 1973, and
- inspire a renewed vision for the Commonwealth.

A total of 80 events were provided with funding:

- Member countries – £5,000 each.
- AO – £2,500 each.
- Grassroots/community organisations – £1,000–£2,000 each.
- Commonwealth youth networks – £2,000 each.

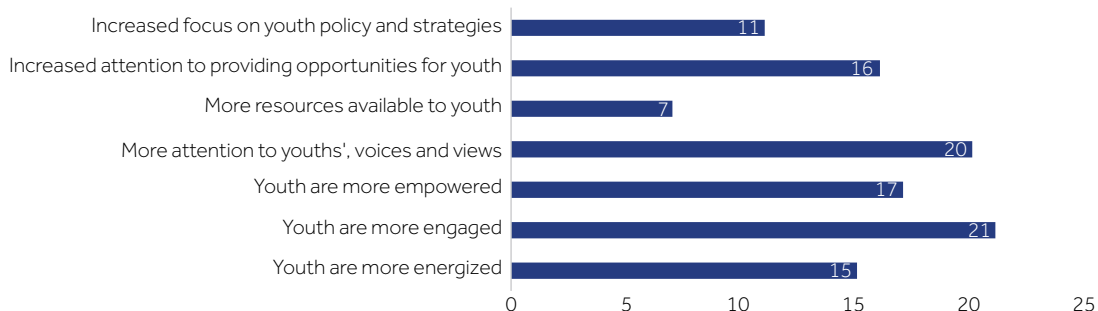
A total of £150,000 was distributed according to the YoY tracking data. Interviewees noted that even if they did not receive funding the Commonwealth YoY endorsement helped them to leverage other funding.

## 2.3 Effectiveness in Achieving the YoY Aims

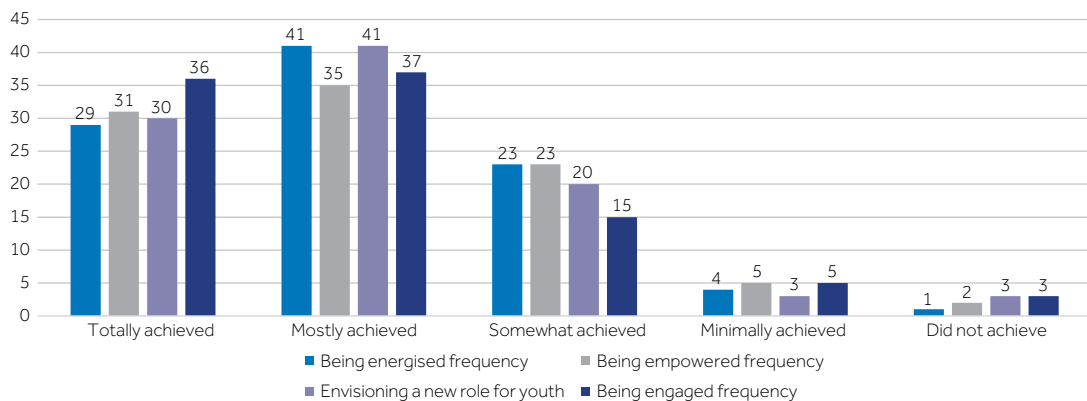
Most of the 32 responding organisers noted changes in their countries, organisations or institutions, and enough organisers of events observed changes, such as more attention being paid to youths’ voices and views, to get a sense that some changes are occurring. As seen in Figure 2.3, they also indicated that youth are more energised, more engaged and more empowered. Some countries are already paying significant attention to youth, so the respondents would not have indicated change.

As indicated in Figure 2.4, a vast majority of participant survey respondents indicated some changes in their work, education or personal life. Many reported that events engaged, energised and empowered them as well as helping envision a new role for youth.

**Figure 2.3** Number of organisers who noted changes to their country/organisation/institution



**Figure 2.4 Participant experience of changes to their work, education or personal life**



The documents and interviews support this and indicate more specific information about how this occurred.

Youth shared their visions for the future through:

- an online survey;
- conducting research on the past 50 years of the CYP and making recommendations for the future and co-curating a virtual exhibition;
- an online focus group; and
- using the opportunities for youth to envision more peaceful, prosperous and sustainable futures through the Commonwealth Legacy Project, which produced a number videos from around the Commonwealth, endorsing projects that advocated for sharing their dreams and aspirations at regional and pan-Commonwealth conferences (including Webinar, Lecture, Symposium, Summit, Seminar, Dialogue, Meeting, Fair), including the Debating Championship; Commonwealth Youth Forum (and the production of a Youth Declaration); Conference of Parties (COP) participation (insert other high-level summits for youth over the period in Caribbean, Africa and Asia in particular).

Youth were energised by:

- enabling young people to develop and lead projects engaging at least 2 million young people;
- 48 conferences (including Webinar, Lecture, Symposium, Summit, Seminar, Dialogue, Meeting, Fair) across the Commonwealth and 66 local or regional projects;

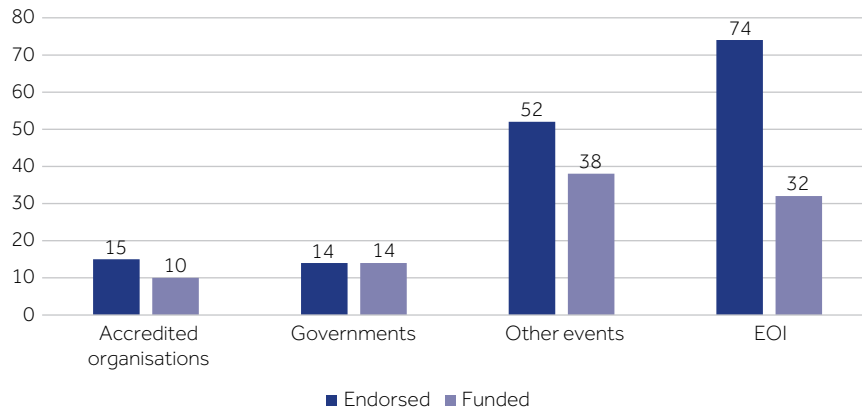
- 28 member countries indicating an interest in organising special YoY initiatives;
- grants made available to support some initiatives;
- 50 young people given Commonwealth Youth Awards for Excellence; and
- 50 trophies for work done by youth workers in last five years.

Youth were engaged by:

- social media and the YoY website;
- promoting collaboration, partnership and knowledge exchange by linking EOIs from member countries to AOs;
- increasing access to knowledge resources by ensuring stakeholders have access to both soft and hard copies; and
- celebrating the achievements of the CYP by supporting CYP archival research project, supporting market research and supporting the recruitment of young researchers.

Youth were empowered by:

- providing learning and upskilling opportunities through supporting the official launch of artificial intelligence (AI) for youth online, supporting the Commonwealth Youth Leadership Summit and providing access to online learning via the Commonwealth Youth Academy and Commonwealth Youth Mainstreaming Programme;
- increased access to decision-makers by endorsing submissions where youth are involved in dialogue with government officials

**Figure 2.5 Number of funding approvals and endorsements**

and ensuring youth a seat at the table with government; and

- creating new opportunities for youth capacity building and advocacy through travel support and supporting leadership and work conferences/summits.

## 2.4 Efficiency

Efficiency is defined as the Secretariat's ability to get the word out, to get funding in pace, to assist projects and to track funded and/or endorsed projects.

### 2.4.1 Getting the Word Out

The YoY project was not fully staffed initially, and as such many things could not begin until the appropriate staff were hired. As soon as possible, the YoY team used the website, social media and their country contacts to promote the year. They also took advantage of existing programmes and agendas to promote YoY. There were 390 EOIs in organising a YoY initiative, indicating that people were hearing about YoY.

### 2.4.2 Getting the Funding Out

The Secretariat had not been a grant-making organisation so it needed to establish the

infrastructure for advising on the availability of grants, receiving applications, reviewing applications and providing the funding to approved applicants. The grants budget was approved and made available in January 2023. A total of 94 projects received funding approval. However, some of the funding was not provided until after 31 October 2024, the end date of YoY.

### 2.4.3 Assisting Projects

The YoY team assisted projects through funding, endorsements, resources, advice, connecting projects with partners and in-kind services. The YoY team noted that young people wanted to move quickly. Providing seed money allowed the projects to move forwards more quickly and not be held back by the Secretariat's bureaucracy.

### 2.4.4 Tracking Funded Projects

The Secretariat tracked funded and endorsed projects, depending on responses from project organisers. Generally, funders require specific reports from grantees. A list of funded and endorsed projects is provided in Annex B. The tracking documents do not indicate whether the projects achieved their goals. Tracking was primarily for financial accountability.

# 3. Experiences and Perceptions of Youth Participants and Other Stakeholders

The experiences and perceptions of youth participants were gathered through surveys and interviews as part of the process of this evaluation.

## 3.1 Types of Activities Organised

A diverse range of activities, shown in Figure 3.1, enabled youth organisers to engage with various audiences and platforms, tailoring their approach to specific needs and interests. Many organisers reflected on how the consolidation of such diverse

activities under one umbrella had a substantial impact on their communities.

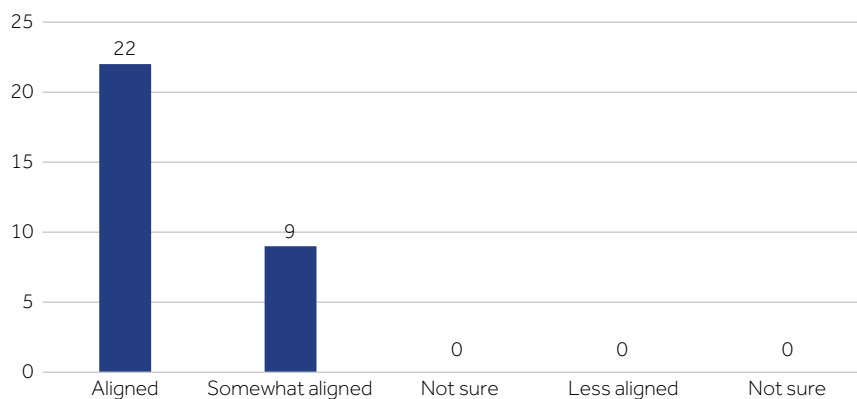
## 3.2 Alignment with Personal and Professional Goals

A majority of youth organisers reported that the activities were well aligned with their personal and professional goals. These responses are shown in Figure 3.2. Youth organisers frequently cited personal and professional growth as key outcomes in their involvement in the YoY.

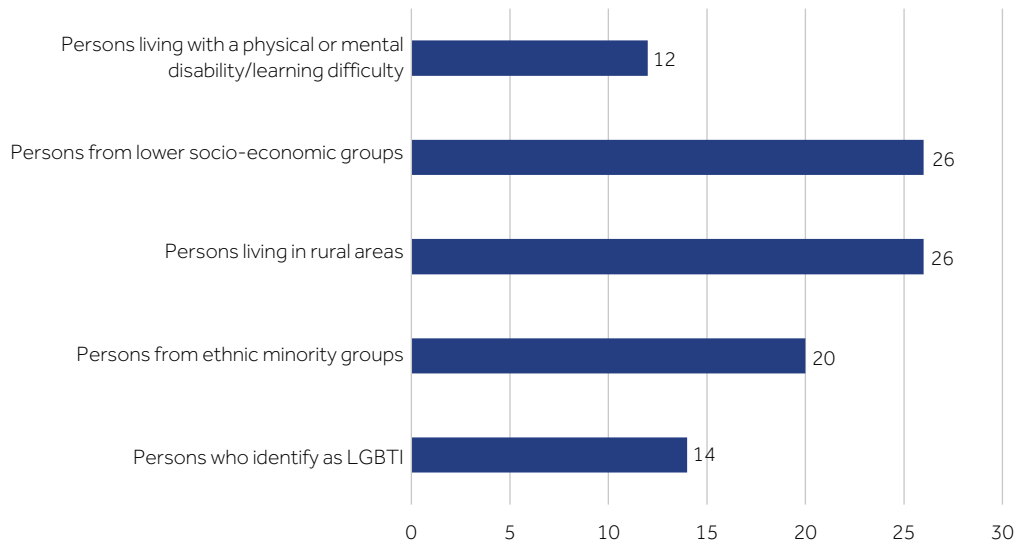
Figure 3.1 Types of activities organised



Figure 3.2 Alignment with personal and professional goals



**Figure 3.3 Participation of Underrepresented Groups**



### 3.3 Participation of Underrepresented Groups

The inclusion of underrepresented groups in the YoY activities was another key focus of the YoY. Respondents indicated that the initiative made deliberate efforts to engage various marginalised groups, including those from poorer backgrounds, rural areas and ethnic minority communities. The participation breakdown is shown in Figure 3.3.

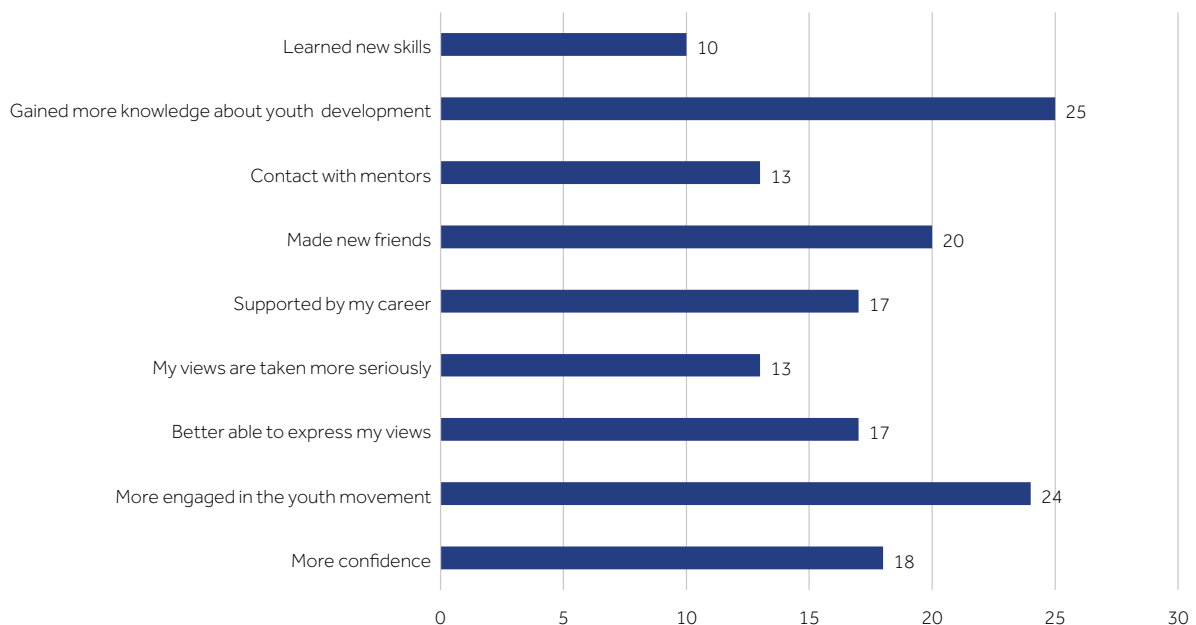
### 3.4 Impact of the YoY on the Organisers as Individuals

A majority of organisers reported personal growth as a result of their involvement in YoY. The responses revealed the distribution shown in Figure 3.4.

### 3.5 Skills and Knowledge Gained

Organisers reported a wide range of skills gained from the YoY activities, the most common being in leadership, youth participation and youth

**Figure 3.4 Impact on individual organisers**



**Figure 3.5 Skills and knowledge gained by participants**



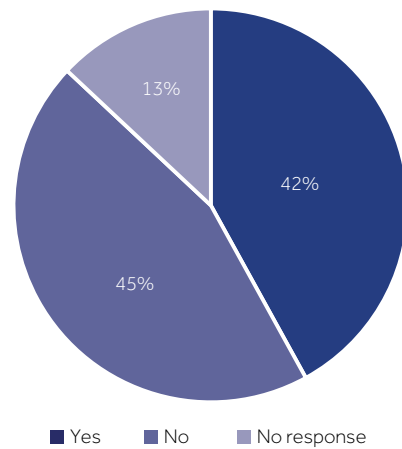
development. The distribution of skills gained is as follows. A majority of the organisers (97 per cent) indicated that they had applied the skills they gained from organising the YoY activities. As indicated in Figure 3.5, participants also reported gaining skills and knowledge.

Figure 3.7. This needs to be explored further in consultations with youth and the programmes serving them to determine what additional challenges are being faced by youth.

*An excellent event organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat in March 2023 was an opportunity to learn, engage, collaborate, network and partner with youth leaders from different Commonwealth countries. It allowed for developing a professional relationship that continued beyond the event.*

Youth Organiser

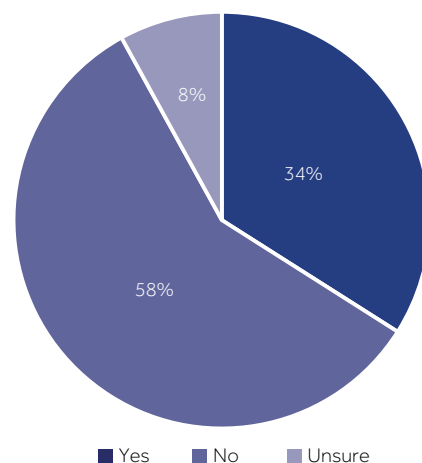
**Figure 3.6 Engagement opportunities**



### 3.6 Tangible Engagement Opportunities

While some youth organisers reported gaining tangible benefits from their participation, such as awards, recognition or new engagement opportunities, others noted a lack of such outcomes (Figure 3.6). However, these relate only to what emerged during the actual year. Follow-up would be required to determine what opportunities were desired that were not offered during the YoY. Several organisers recognised the personal value of the connections made and the professional opportunities that arose from the YoY.

**Figure 3.7 Participant's views on whether the programme addressed the challenges faced by youth**



### 3.7 Addressing Youth Challenges

Despite the positive benefits reported by event participants, the majority felt that the YoY programme did not address the issues or challenges that youth face today, as indicated in

# 4. Challenges and How They Were Addressed

The implementation of the YoY initiative faced several significant challenges, but proactive measures helped to mitigate their impact. Figure 4.1 depicts some of the challenges and how they were addressed. More detailed information is provided in this section.

## 4.1 Lack of a Dedicated team at the Start of the Initiative

Although the CYP team guided the launch event and put some processes in place, the absence of a dedicated team initially hindered the smooth implementation of the initiative. However, the formation of a cohesive team ensured that the initiative could be executed effectively. Establishing clear roles and responsibilities among team members likely contributed to the programme's eventual success.

## 4.2 Absence of a Funding Structure and Delays in Funding

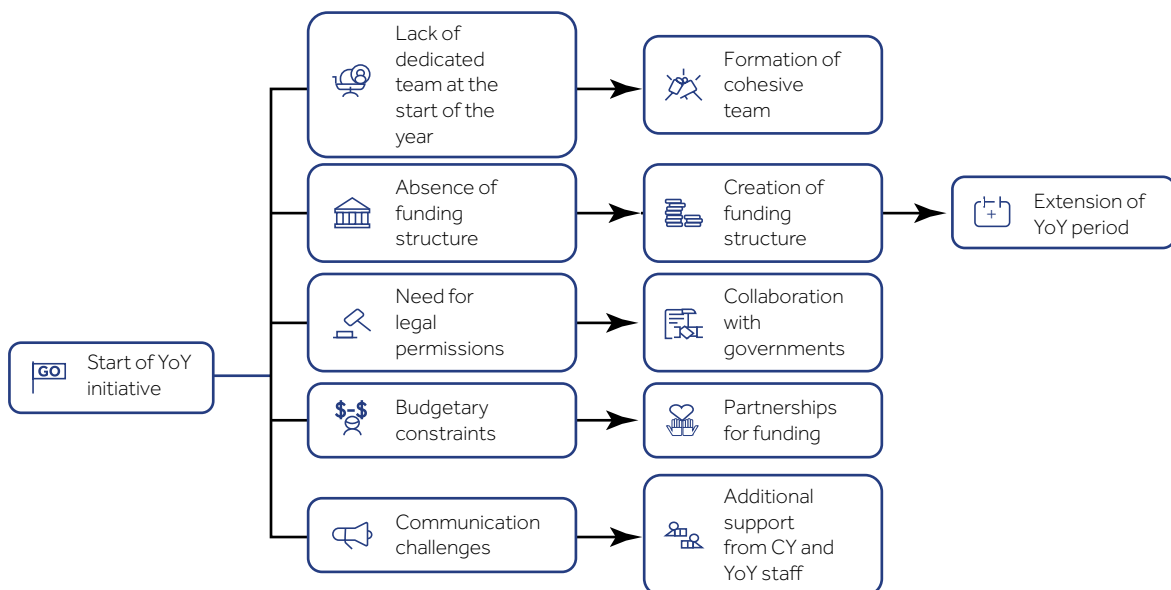
As the Commonwealth Secretariat had no prior experience as a funding body, there were delays in securing the necessary funds for the YoY

activities, as funds were not available until 2024. A large number of funding requests were received, which also interfered with the ability to get money out quickly. This challenge was addressed by creating a dedicated funding structure, which laid the foundation for more efficient financial management in future initiatives. Despite these changes, the internal approval and payment processes are still long and tedious and need more attention. Additionally, funding delays impacted the planning and preparation of events. Extending the YoY beyond 31 October 2024 allowed organisers to execute planned activities and provided the necessary flexibility to utilise approved funds effectively.

## 4.3 Legal Permissions for Certain Activities

Some YoY activities, such as Cameroon's Signals from Grassroots, required legal permissions, which posed logistical challenges. By collaborating with governments, organisers secured the necessary permissions. This collaboration demonstrates the importance of leveraging partnerships to navigate bureaucratic processes.

Figure 4.1 Challenges and how they were addressed



## 4.4 Budgetary Constraints

Budget limitations were a recurring challenge throughout the initiative. To address this, the YoY team partnered with other organisations and sought funding from alternative sources, such as local NGOs and governments. These strategies not only alleviated financial pressures but reinforced the value of collaboration and resource sharing in programme implementation.

## 4.5 Communication and Staff Support

The programme did not have dedicated communication personnel and relied heavily on the Commonwealth Secretariat's communication unit, which played a crucial role in supporting the YoY initiative, contributing to its positive impact and reach. While managing a broad spectrum of communication responsibilities, the team's dedication to the YoY programme was clear. As the initiative progressed, the Commonwealth Youth (CY) and YoY team provided additional support, ensuring the programme's message remained strong and consistent. This collaboration demonstrated the power of effective communication and the value of having dedicated resources for major initiatives.

## 4.6 Accessibility for People with Disabilities

Inflexibility in scheduling and inadequate accessibility considerations posed challenges for

at least one person with a disability. However, data from the organiser and participant surveys indicate that over 5 per cent of organiser respondents and 6 per cent of participant respondents are living with a physical or mental disability. The YoY team did prioritise accessibility but had no control over events.

While the YoY initiative faced numerous challenges, the proactive steps taken by the Secretariat and the YoY team ensured its continued success. The ability to adapt through the formation of a dedicated team, the creation of a funding structure, partnerships and extensions reflects the initiative's resilience and commitment to achieving its objectives.

## 4.7 Lessons Learned throughout the YoY

The YOY initiative provided valuable insights that can guide the design and implementation of future youth-focused programmes and initiatives.

These lessons underscore the importance of designing comprehensive, inclusive and sustainable approaches to youth engagement, ensuring that young people are not only participants but also leaders and contributors to their own development and the broader goals of the Commonwealth.













**Expansiveness and Inclusivity** The success of the YoY demonstrated the power of an expansive and inclusive approach to planning and execution. By integrating diverse participants from various races, religions and communities, the initiative fostered deeper connections and broader perspectives. This inclusivity extended to marginalised groups, including people with disabilities, showcasing a commitment to ensuring that no one was left behind. The approach also inspired entities such as the Commonwealth Foundation to invest in youth-focused programmes, highlighting the tangible benefits of inclusivity in action.



**The Power of Connections** The initiative underscored the significance of fostering relationships and networks. The connections formed among participants, organisers and partner organisations not only enhanced collaboration during the initiative but also created lasting opportunities for mentorship, career advancement and knowledge-sharing. These relationships have the potential to drive continued innovation and impact beyond the programme's duration.



**Youth as Assets, the Present and Not Problems** A critical mindset emerged during the YoY: youth are assets, not problems to be solved. This perspective emphasised recognising and leveraging the unique skills, creativity and energy of young people. Viewing youth as capable contributors rather than passive recipients of aid allowed the initiative to build programmes that empowered participants to take ownership of their development and community impact.

	<p><b>Intergenerational Approach and Youth-Led Committees</b> The YOY highlighted the effectiveness of combining youth-led initiatives with intergenerational collaboration. By empowering young leaders to take charge of committees while receiving mentorship and support from experienced stakeholders, the initiative balanced fresh perspectives with seasoned guidance. This model ensured that programmes were both innovative and pragmatic, aligning with the needs of young people while maintaining organisational accountability.</p>
	<p><b>Maximising the Use of Digital Platforms</b> Digital platforms emerged as an underutilised resource with immense potential for youth engagement. By integrating more robust digital strategies, such as virtual workshops, webinars and social media campaigns, future initiatives can reach a broader audience, facilitate real-time interaction and engage youth who might otherwise be excluded due to geographic or financial barriers. Virtual platforms enabled widespread participation, breaking down geographical and economic barriers. However, the YoY also underscored the need to integrate digital tools with in-person opportunities to create a holistic approach to youth development.</p>
	<p><b>Moving beyond Workshops: Enabling Youth Success</b> While workshops and training sessions were valuable, they must be paired with follow-up mechanisms to ensure young people can implement what they learn. This includes creating pathways for internships, funding opportunities, access to mentorship and spaces for youth to take on leadership roles. Providing tangible resources and opportunities to apply new skills is essential for driving long-term success and empowerment.</p>
	<p><b>Meeting Young People Where They Are</b> A key lesson was the importance of designing activities and outreach efforts that align with the realities and preferences of young people. Whether through online platforms, local community settings or thematic areas of interest, meeting youth 'where they are' ensures higher levels of engagement, inclusivity and relevance. It also highlights the importance of addressing diverse needs, including accessibility for those with disabilities and reaching marginalised communities.</p>
	<p><b>Receptiveness to Human Rights and Advocacy</b> Participants demonstrated a strong interest in the receptiveness to human rights discussions, particularly as they relate to issues such as climate justice, gender equity and social inclusion. This provides an opportunity to integrate human rights education into future programmes, empowering youth to be advocates and change agents in their communities.</p>
	<p><b>The Value of Context-Specific Solutions</b> The initiative highlighted the importance of tailoring interventions to local contexts. By addressing specific challenges faced by youth in different regions, such as access to education, employment opportunities or climate resilience, programmes can deliver more impactful and sustainable outcomes.</p>
	<p><b>Agency through Investment</b> Young people's potential can be realised through intentional investment in their growth. This includes funding, mentorship, capacity-building programmes and access to technology. Providing young people with tools and opportunities to exercise their agency allows them to turn their ideas into impactful actions. The YoY reinforced the need to move beyond rhetoric about the importance of youth and deliver practical support that empowers them to lead.</p>
	<p><b>Need for Institutional Support Flexibility</b> The success of YoY also emphasised the importance of institutional support, including funding, communication and policy alignment. Building robust systems for youth initiatives requires flexibility to adapt to challenges, such as delays in funding or logistical constraints. Partnering with governments, NGOs and private sector stakeholders can amplify the reach and effectiveness of youth-focused initiatives.</p>
	<p><b>Need for Monitoring and Evaluation Built in from the Beginning</b> The lack of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan resulted in data being collected in an ad hoc manner without placing any reporting expectations on funded or endorsed projects. This resulted in challenges in getting accurate and complete data during the evaluation. This was mitigated to some extent by the collaborative efforts of the evaluation and the YoY team.</p>
	<p><b>Long-Term Engagement and Follow-Up</b> Effective youth programmes require sustained engagement beyond the initial event or initiative. Providing ongoing opportunities for participants to remain involved, share their progress and access resources ensures that the momentum generated during the programme translates into lasting impact.</p>

# 5. Unintended Outcomes

## 5.1 Increased Awareness and Advocacy

One of the most rewarding unintended outcomes was the increased awareness and advocacy among younger youth. Youth advocacy inspired children to claim their space in social and political discourse with notable calls for the Commonwealth to address children's issues. The initiative also spurred engagement among high school students. These students took it upon themselves to create climate change awareness projects in their schools, demonstrating genuine enthusiasm and commitment to the cause. Their proactive actions underscored the event's lasting impact, as they not only participated but continued to spread the message.

## 5.2 Diversity in Partnership Models

The initiative also brought to light a diversity of support from stakeholders. While many organisations initially sought financial support, some were more than satisfied with non-financial contributions, such as being highlighted on social media or simply receiving endorsements. More established organisations, for instance, were open to collaboration opportunities, such as participating in webinars without demanding funding. This demonstrated that there are multiple ways to support initiatives beyond direct financial contributions, which proved to be a valuable realisation.

## 5.3 Adaptability of the Commonwealth Secretariat

The Commonwealth Secretariat, despite not traditionally being a grant-making institution, demonstrated creativity and adaptability by stepping into this role during the YoY. Faced with limited resources, the Secretariat found innovative ways to provide financial support and endorsements to meet the demands of organisers and stakeholders. This adaptability was an unexpected, positive outcome, allowing the Secretariat to play a more proactive and supportive role than anticipated.

## 5.4 New Collaborations and Recognition

An additional unexpected outcome was the influx of new actors and organisations joining the initiative, drawn by the growing interest in youth issues. This led to more collaborations and greater recognition of youth-related initiatives. Local projects, such as the Tobago Parliament initiative and various youth awards, gained visibility even without direct funding, further showcasing the broadening of support and engagement across diverse stakeholders.

## 5.5 Diversity in Engagement

The initiative also brought to light a diversity of support from stakeholders. While many organisations initially sought financial support, some were more than satisfied with non-financial contributions such as being highlighted on social media or simply receiving endorsements. More established organisations, for instance, were open to collaboration opportunities, like participating in webinars without demanding funding. This demonstrated that there are multiple ways to support initiatives beyond direct financial contributions, which proved to be a valuable realisation.

*We may say youth is the future, but yesterday is gone, youth is now.*

YoY staff

## 5.6 Strain on Resources and Capacity

The initiative inadvertently raised expectations that the Secretariat struggled to meet due to limited resources. While the YoY attracted numerous stakeholders and generated increased interest, this enthusiasm also placed a significant burden on the Secretariat's capacity to fulfil all requests. Large-scale events such as conferences and summits required far more resources and coordination than originally planned, straining available funding and human resources.

## 6. Legacy of YoY

The full legacy of YoY cannot be fully known at this moment as its impact continues to be felt. Its full legacy will depend on whether:

- the CYP continues to build on the momentum of YoY by providing grants and endorsements to encourage the continuation of projects throughout the Commonwealth;
- Commonwealth member countries use the YoY to strengthen their attention to and policies related to youth;
- the youth themselves continue to ensure that their voices are heard; and
- programmes started during YoY continue after 31 October 2025.

Interviewees report that:

- some member countries have put a youth agenda at the forefront at a country level;
- there is increased motivation within the Secretariat for cross-divisional, multidisciplinary work because the YoY was celebrated Secretariat-wide;
- small island nations experienced increased interaction with the Commonwealth, with the hope that such connections will continue;
- there has been increased use of digital spaces within the Commonwealth;
- many event participants increased their belief they could succeed;
- there is increased involvement of youth in civic engagement and human rights; and

- there are improved connections among the regions.

Perhaps one of the YoY's most notable achievements is the legacy it leaves behind. The initiative empowered a generation of youth and also established a model for future youth-centred initiatives. The CYP will continue:

- the stronger regional presence established during the YoY;
- formal recognition of youth workers as key contributors to the youth development agenda;
- strengthened partnerships with institutions such as the Commonwealth Foundation and the Commonwealth of Learning;
- updated objectives that reflect modern challenges and opportunities;
- the Commonwealth Youth Council as an official body;
- exploring the creation of a formal link between the Commonwealth Youth Ministerial Task Force and the Commonwealth Board of Governors;
- national focal points for youth development embedded within each member country;
- to develop stronger recognition of the dependency on member countries;
- CYP funding that is maintained as a separate entity; and
- the commitment of Commonwealth member countries to the CYP fund.

# 7. Recommendations

Based on this evaluation of the YoY programme, we recommend five key strategies to build on current successes and strengthen future impact.

Strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems

Create a practical monitoring framework that tracks both immediate results and longer-term impact.

This includes:

- developing clear, measurable indicators;
- implementing user-friendly data collection tools;
- setting up real-time tracking systems; and
- establishing regular review processes for data-driven decisions.

Enhance program efficiency

Conduct an operational review to identify where resources can be better used to:

- map current processes to find bottlenecks;
- document successful, cost-effective activities;
- scale what works while maintaining quality; and
- streamline delivery methods.

Capture and build on unexpected positive outcomes

Document and analyse unplanned positive results from YoY to:

- identify which elements led to these benefits;
- include successful approaches in future programme design; and
- share learnings across similar youth initiatives.

Strengthen communication impact

Create authentic media campaigns that:

- share participant stories and experiences;
- use compelling visuals and testimonials;
- engage stakeholders through multiple channels; and
- demonstrate programme value through real examples.

Expand the YoY's influence

Position the YoY as a model for youth development by:

- sharing evidence of programme impact;
- building partnerships at local, national and international levels;
- contributing to youth policy discussions; and
- supporting other organisations to adopt successful approaches.

# Annex A: Year of Youth Background

## The Commonwealth

The Commonwealth, established in 1949, is a voluntary association of 56 diverse nations representing 2.7 billion people, encompassing both advanced and developing countries, including 33 of the world's smallest countries, many of which are islands. Though historically tied to the British Empire, membership today is open to any nation regardless of its past, as exemplified by recent additions such as Gabon and Togo in 2022, and Mozambique and Rwanda, none of whom share those historical ties. At its core, the Commonwealth strives for development, democracy and peace, guided by the values enshrined in the Commonwealth Charter.

The Commonwealth is supported by three key intergovernmental bodies: the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Commonwealth Foundation and the Commonwealth of Learning. While the Secretariat focuses on assisting member countries in achieving the organisation's goals by managing initiatives such as the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP), the Commonwealth Foundation works to foster public participation in democracy and uphold freedoms. The Commonwealth of Learning promotes open learning and distance education across member countries.

The Commonwealth Secretariat was established in 1965. It serves as the central intergovernmental body that facilitates the Commonwealth's work. The office provides support to member countries in achieving the Commonwealth's objectives, which are summarised as follows:

- Promoting shared values; advocating for democracy, human rights, good governance and the rule of law.
- Economic cooperation: facilitating trade and economic partnerships among member nations.
- Development initiatives: focusing on areas such as education, climate change and ocean sustainability.

- Diplomatic bridge: providing a forum for bilateral and multilateral cooperation among the diverse membership.

The CYP is a key initiative under the Commonwealth's broader mandate of promoting democracy, development and peace across its member countries. Established in 1973, the CYP focuses on empowering young people by providing them with the skills, opportunities and support to participate in governance, economic development and community building. Through its various programmes, the CYP works to improve youth leadership and engagement, encourage youth-driven solutions to social and economic challenges and promote cross-cultural understanding among the Commonwealth's diverse membership.

The YoY celebrations, as often proclaimed by international or regional bodies, aim to spotlight the significant role that young people play in shaping societies and addressing global challenges. These celebrations typically involve a year-long series of events, initiatives and campaigns that raise awareness about youth issues and promote policies focused on youth development. During these periods, institutions such as the CYP tend to amplify their work, aligning it with the theme of the YoY to ensure broader visibility and impact.

The Commonwealth YoY was first celebrated in 1985, in alignment with the United Nations' International Youth Year. That year marked a significant global focus on the contributions, challenges and development of young people. The celebration was part of a broader push within the Commonwealth to promote youth empowerment, active citizenship and the involvement of young people in decision-making processes.

While 1985 was the formal beginning of YoY celebrations within the Commonwealth, the CYP had since its establishment been actively working to engage and support youth development. Following the 1985 celebration, the Commonwealth has continued to observe various

youth-themed initiatives, some connected to international observances and others as part of the organisation's internal youth agenda.

The celebration of the YoY is not an annual event but occurs during special designated years that focus on youth empowerment. Different themes may be selected and events organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat or its member countries in those years, with the CYP playing a central role in organising youth programmes and initiatives.

The relationship between the CYP and the YoY celebrations is synergistic. The CYP leverages YoY celebrations, including global or regional youth-focused observances, to enhance its activities and initiatives, such as:

**Promoting youth leadership:** the CYP uses the momentum of YoY to further encourage young people to take leadership roles, especially on governance and policymaking, through its existing leadership development programmes.

**Advocating for youth rights:** the YoY provides an opportunity for the CYP to advocate more strongly for the protection and promotion of youth rights, emphasising issues such as education, employment, mental health and environmental sustainability.

**Collaborative initiatives:** the celebrations often lead to partnerships with governments, NGOs and other youth organisations across the Commonwealth, enabling joint programmes that address key issues facing young people in the context of global challenges such as climate change, unemployment and inequality.

**Youth engagement in policy:** the CYP supports youth representation in Commonwealth decision-making bodies and advocates for youth participation in the political process, which aligns with the YoY's focus on political engagement and civic responsibility.

In essence, the CYP uses the energy and focus of YoY celebrations to intensify its mission of empowering young people and to align their efforts with broader, often global, calls for youth-driven action and policy reform. This collaboration highlights the Commonwealth's ongoing

commitment to ensuring that young people are central to efforts in building inclusive, resilient and forward-thinking societies.

## Current Global Context

The Commonwealth Heads of Government declared 2023, later extended to October 2024 at the 10th Commonwealth Youth Ministerial Meeting in September 2023, as a year dedicated to youth-led action for sustainable and inclusive development. This initiative, coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the CYP and the 10th anniversary of the Commonwealth Charter, highlighted the critical role young people play in advancing the Commonwealth's core objectives of peace, democracy and development. This period also marked the midpoint towards achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), further emphasising the importance of increased youth engagement in this global effort.

With young people comprising about 60 per cent of the Commonwealth population, their involvement is essential to the present and future vitality of the association. As citizens of the 56 member countries, their understanding and commitment to the Commonwealth's shared values is key to the organisation's growth and renewal. To stay relevant, Commonwealth governments, organisations, youth networks and partners must actively engage with young people as co-creators in development, with special attention to those facing challenging circumstances and social exclusion and to grassroots communities. The YoY provided these groups with a platform to be heard, to represent their views and to experience Commonwealth values in action.

The YoY underscored the strategic importance and invaluable contributions of young people to the sustainable and inclusive development of their countries, highlighting their priorities, challenges and the potential to further strengthen their role. It aimed to leave a lasting legacy by looking towards the future, engaging a wide range of Commonwealth stakeholders and partners to emphasise the role of young people as co-creators of sustainable futures. This year also represented an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the CYP and lay the foundation for its revitalisation (CYP 2.0), aligning it with needs of young people and the supporting member countries in achieving the SDGs.

An inclusive programme of activities was designed and developed primarily by youth stakeholders, spanning January 2023 to October 2024. These activities were planned to take place at national, regional and pan-Commonwealth levels, leveraging key Commonwealth events and platforms such as Commonwealth Day/Week, the Commonwealth Youth Awards, the Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting (CYMM) and the Commonwealth Youth Games.

While the YoY focused on youth mobilisation, it also emphasised advocacy and policy engagement

to foster renewed commitments to youth development within the Commonwealth. The programme operated through an opt-in model, allowing projects aligned with its targets to register for endorsement through the CYP. Over 300 stakeholders interested in participating expressed their intent by submitting an EOI form available on the YoY webpage. Stakeholders also had the flexibility to engage at their own pace and to request specific support from the Secretariat, with access to resources such as a social media tool kit to promote their involvement as desired.

## YOY Programme

Figure A1. Commonwealth Youth Forum, London 2018.



In June 2022, during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Rwanda, leaders declared 2023 as the Commonwealth YoY, dedicating it to youth-led action for sustainable and inclusive development. This declaration coincided with the 50th anniversary of the CYP, established in 1973 to support young people under 30 in reaching their full potential.

At the 2023 CYMM in London, it was decided to extend the YoY until the next CHOGM, scheduled for October 2024 in Apia, Samoa. This extension

aimed to provide more opportunities for pan-Commonwealth initiatives addressing global issues that affect young people, such as climate change, gender quality and unemployment, while partnering with new organisations on projects that can be sustained beyond the YoY.

An advisory committee was established to guide the implementation of the YoY, ensuring that young people are given a platform during a series of high-profile youth events throughout 2023 and 2024. These events were designed to promote youth-led

action for sustainable and inclusive development, encourage renewed commitment to youth engagement and empower youth engagement and empowerment across the Commonwealth and inspire a refreshed vision for the future.

## Milestones of the Commonwealth YoY

The official launch of the YoY on 30 January 2023 at Marlborough House, the Commonwealth Secretariat headquarters in London, set the stage for a series of youth-led activities and strategic engagements designed to strengthen youth participation in governance and development.

In March 2023, Commonwealth Day and the Youth Leaders' Summit took place, providing young people a platform to engage with policy-makers and shape discussions on pressing global issues. These events reinforced the Commonwealth's commitment to youth-led development and intergenerational dialogue.

A major highlight of the year was the Youth Awards ceremony held on 14 September 2023, at St James Palace, alongside the CYMM. These awards celebrated outstanding contributions by young changemakers across various fields, reinforcing the Commonwealth's dedication to recognising and supporting youth-led innovation.

On 21 April 2024, the Regional Youth Leadership Summit took place in Malaysia, coinciding with the formation of the Commonwealth Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs. This milestone strengthened cross-border collaboration among young entrepreneurs and leaders, fostering economic empowerment and sustainable growth.

Several activities and organisations contributed to the events and activities:

1. Advisory Committee and working groups: an intergenerational, regionally representative task force played a pivotal role in championing the YoY, encouraging widespread participation and partnerships. The Advisory Committee, in collaboration with the CYP, successfully guided the coordination and monitoring of activities and outcomes throughout the year. Support from the Advisory Committee and CYP included the following:
  - The YoY Engagement Toolkit was produced and widely distributed,

helping to facilitate engagement across all regions.

- A Calendar of Activities was maintained and stakeholder initiatives were constantly registered, ensuring broad participation.
- The Advisory Committee provided endorsement and advice on various stakeholder-led activities, ensuring alignment with the YoY's objectives.
- Numerous local, national, regional and pan-Commonwealth initiatives were organised, unifying young people across member countries in activities that showcased their leadership and innovation.
- Most YOY activities were monitored and tracked using online Microsoft forms.

The Advisory Committee was co-chaired by Dr Henry Charles and Christabel Derby. For more than a decade, Dr Charles, a respected youth policy expert, played a pivotal role to the Commonwealth Youth Council from its inception, building a lasting connection within the organisation. His passing in July 2023 left a deep sense of loss and sorrow among the Advisory Committee, colleagues and young people across the Commonwealth.

2. YoY project managers: four project managers were internally hired to support the day-to-day work of the initiative, from hosting the Advisory Committee meetings to all administrative-related activities, as well as manage the EOI submissions. They were also responsible for the implementation and monitoring of all YoY activities with support from the CYP team.
3. Key events and platforms: Commonwealth platforms and events, such as the Commonwealth Day/Week, Commonwealth Youth Week, Commonwealth Youth Ministers' Meeting, Commonwealth Youth Games and International Youth Day served as major milestones. These events were leveraged to spotlight youth contributions and amplify their voices across the Commonwealth.
4. Mass engagement at the national level: the bulk of the YoY's activities were driven by youth stakeholders at the grassroots level in various countries. Organisations

registered their initiatives to access YoY resources, and a public-facing calendar of events allowed broad visibility. Ministries of Youth and National Youth Councils played a crucial role in promoting these activities within their respective countries, ensuring local engagement.

5. Pan-Commonwealth and regional initiatives: several high-profile initiatives took place throughout the year, fostering a vibrant Commonwealth youth movement. Led by Commonwealth partners and youth networks, these initiatives provided opportunities for young people to develop new skills, express their voices and contribute to sustainable development. Notable examples included the Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition, the Commonwealth Youth Awards and advocacy efforts such as the Young Carers' Charter, the Commonwealth Children and Youth Disability Network's (CCYDN) Global Disability Children and Young People's Charter and Commonwealth Youth Gender & Equality Network's (CYGEN) Gender Agenda.
6. Kitemarking: a select number of impactful projects and initiatives were awarded the licence to use the YoY-branding materials, recognising their alignment with the YoY's goals and their contribution to youth empowerment.

## Goals of YoY

### Energise

- 1.1. Equipped young people and partners actively to deliver youth empowerment activities, paying particular attention to promoting the engagement of underrepresented young people on the basis of gender, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, nationality or other identities.
- 1.2. Increased engagement of Commonwealth organisations in delivering projects for youth.
- 1.3. Strengthened partnerships and the enabling environment for youth empowerment and development.
- 1.4. Increased recognition of youth and youth worker contributions to development.

## Empower

- 2.1. Increased the capacity of young people and youth workers in youth development work and practice.
- 2.2. Increased representation and participation in Commonwealth high-level intergenerational dialogue.

## Envision

- 3.1. New youth vision of the Commonwealth's role and purpose in the world.
- 3.2. Increased visibility of youth views and perspectives on key development priorities.
- 3.3. New Vision and Mission for the renewed CYP 2.0.

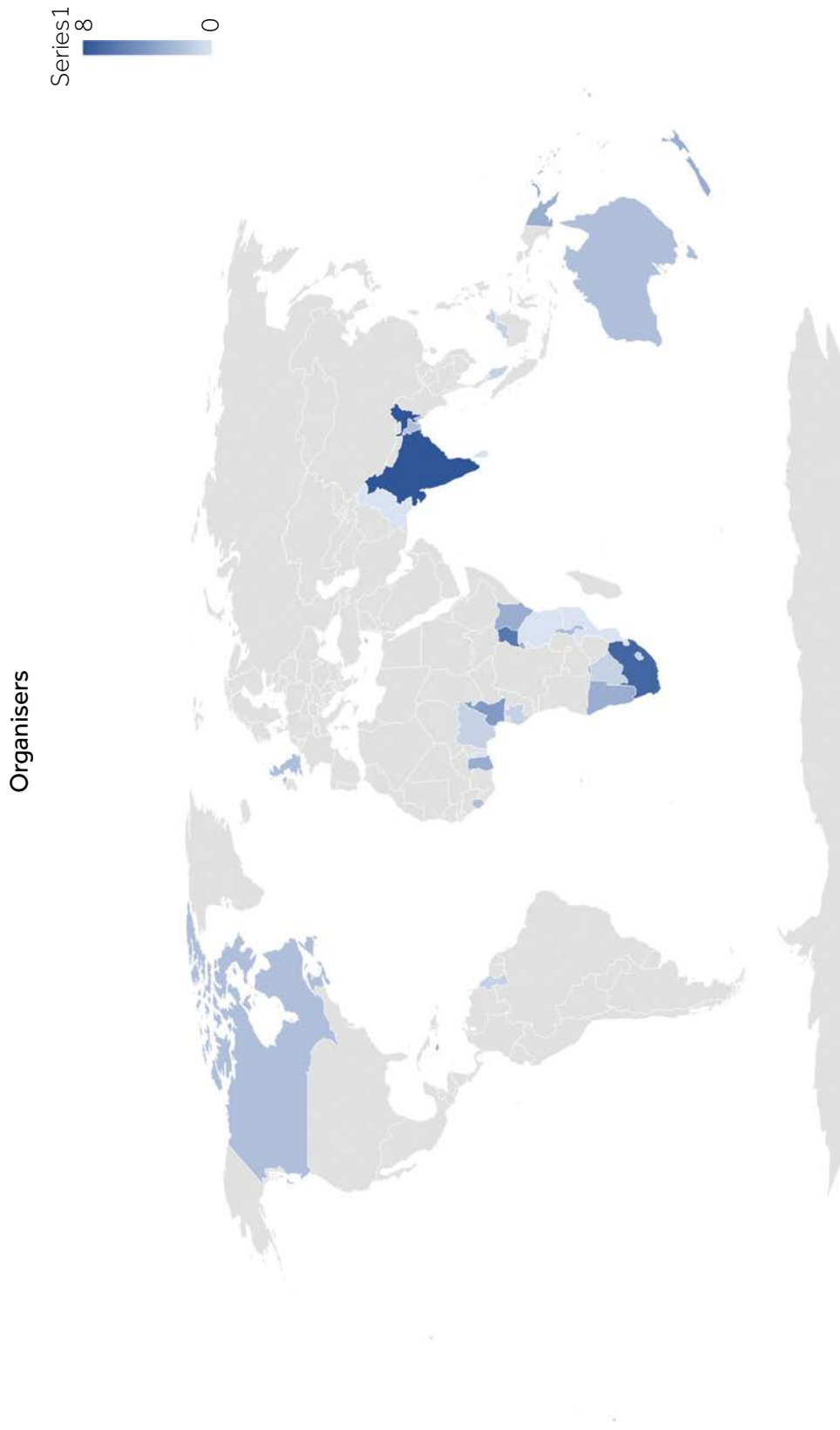
## Engage

- 4.1. Increased collaboration, partnership and knowledge exchange among Commonwealth youth development partners.
- 4.2. Increased access to knowledge resources to support the enabling environment for youth empowerment and development.
- 4.3. Greater recognition of the contributions and relevance of the CYP.
- 4.4. Increased investment/resourcing for the CYP.
- 4.5. Increased connectedness and access to information among young people and youth development stakeholders.

## Demographics of Youth Organisers

Overall, 32 organisers provided responses to the survey, while 13 of these participated in interviews to offer deeper insights and context to the survey data. Among the survey respondents, half were male and the other half female. The majority (97 per cent) of organisers who completed the survey had attained a university degree. The age distribution among the organisers was 15–29 years while the other half were aged 30 years or older. Additionally, more than two-thirds (66 per cent) of organisers identified as belonging to an underrepresented group. Collectively, the organisers reported organising activities across multiple countries within the Commonwealth, as shown below.

Figure A2. Organised activities across multiple countries within the Commonwealth.



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# Annex B: Endorsed and Funded Projects

## Pan-Commonwealth

Event	Organisers	Location	Funded	Endorsed
Conference of Parties – COP28	Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network/ Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP)	United Arab Emirates	✓	✓
Teach Something New	Commonwealth Education Trust	Online	✓	✓
Model Commonwealth Summit	Organization for Policy and Leadership Development	Ghana	✓	✓
4th Commonwealth Conference on Youth Work	Commonwealth Secretariat	UK	✓	✓
Empowering Youth for a Healthier Tomorrow: A Webinar Series for Young Pharmacists and Pharmacy Students	Commonwealth Pharmacists Association	Online	✓	✓
Empowering Youth Webinar Series (*3)	Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH)	Online		✓
Youth Work Week – Conversations Café – Connect with Youth Workers from around the World	CYP/Commonwealth Alliance of Youth Workers Association (CAYWA)	Online		✓
Youth Work Week – Youth Work in Every Place and Space	CYP/CAYWA	Online		✓
Youth Work Week – Global Launch – Recipient of Capacity Grants (Malawi/Tanzania/Ghana/T&T)	CYP/CAYWA	Online		✓
Annual General Meeting and 3rd Patsy Robertson Memorial Lecture	Commonwealth Association	Online	✓	✓
Listening to Young Carers: The Commonwealth Charter for Young Carers Digital	Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work	Online	✓	✓
Splendours of the Commonwealth	Commonwealth Girls Education Fund	UK	✓	✓
Youth in Cities Discussion	Commonwealth Local Government Forum and Commonwealth Youth for Sustainable Urbanisation (CYSU)	Online		✓
Commonwealth Civil Societies Policy Forum 2024	The Commonwealth Health Professions and Partners Alliance	Online		✓
Webinar Series: Part 1 – The Beginner's Guide to the Profession	IOSH	Online		✓

(Continued)

Event	Organisers	Location	Funded	Endorsed
Dialogue on Youth Professionalization	University of West Indies	Online		
Youth Work Week – Conversations Café – Connect with Youth Workers from around the World	ComMutiny India/Commonwealth Secretariat/CAYWA	Online		✓
Virtual Dialogue: Leveraging Social Entrepreneurship for Youth Employment, Skills and Entrepreneurship	Commonwealth Secretariat	Online		✓
Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network Ocean Hackathon	Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network	Online		
1. Survey on Young People with Disabilities Participation, Representation and Leadership in Disability Rights, Advocacy and Public Decision Making	CCYDN	Online	✓	✓
2. Three Thematic Seminars Series on Young People with Disabilities				
3. Development of a portal to map UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and UN Convention on Rights of a Child (CRC) observations summaries on Commonwealth countries in relation to children and youth disability rights and inclusion				
4. Video and social media campaign – Global Disability Children and Young People's Charter #YearOfYouth Call to Action				
Youth Membership Drive for Commonwealth-Accredited Organisations	CYP/Strategy, Portfolio, Partnerships and Digital Division, Commonwealth Secretariat/AOs	Global	✓	✓
AGM Meeting and 4th Patsy Robertson Memorial Lecture	Commonwealth Association	UK	✓	✓
Launch of Faith Festival	Commonwealth Secretariat/Khalili Foundation	Global		✓
Children and Youth Challenge	Commonwealth Sustainable Energy Transition Youth Action Group	Global	✓	✓
Webinar on Youth-led Non-Communicable Diseases Guiding Framework and discover how collaboration across sectors drives impactful change	Health Team, Commonwealth Secretariat	Virtual		✓
A Commonwealth Music Relay	The Commonwealth Resounds	Global	✓	✓
Adolescent drama teaching about sexual and reproductive health right	Rachel Chomba/Commonwealth Disabled People's Forum/ Zambia Federation of Disability Organisations	Zambia		✓

(Continued)

Event	Organisers	Location	Funded	Endorsed
A celebration of Youth and 50 Years of Commonwealth Youth Work programmes across 56 member countries – #WeAreOneTeam	Catalyst In Communities		✓	✓
CW Youth Delegates Exhibition Cricket Match	Zalmi Foundation	UK		✓
Making the UN Human Rights Mechanisms Work for Youth workshops ensuring that local activity can be at any level and making sure that no one is left unable to be part of this! Facilitating 'a powerful and meaningful conversation between young people and youth workers throughout the Commonwealth'	Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative and Commonwealth Trade Union Group	Online	✓	✓
Athlete Impact Labs: Trinidad and Tobago	UNICEF UK	Trinidad and Tobago		✓
Athlete Impact Labs: Learning about the Rights of Young People in Sport	UNICEF UK	Trinidad and Tobago	✓	✓
Launch of the Commonwealth Youth Academy (CYA), a digital learning platform to strengthen youth development across the Commonwealth	Commonwealth Youth Council (CYC) in Partnership with CYA	Online		✓
Kicking It For Her project	Mathare Foundation	Kenya	✓	✓
Conversations and Cocktails	Artistic and Cultural Youth Development Canvas	St Lucia		✓
International Monologue Contest	TNS Monologue Slam	Pakistan		✓
Human Rights and Civic Participation For Adolescents	Commonwealth Youth Human Rights and Democracy Network (CYHRDN)	Sri Lanka	✓	✓
#TakeActionNow	DO Grassroots Forum and Citizens Empowerment Foundation	Global		✓
Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) and Commonwealth Sustainable Cities Network: dialogue sessions on the Youth Agenda for Cities in the Commonwealth	CLGF	Online	✓	✓
CYSU session on key services for young people in cities and the challenges they are facing across the Commonwealth	CLGF	Online	✓	✓
Employability webinar – Agriculture in the Commonwealth	Agrivine	Online		✓

## Africa

Country	Organisers	Event	Funded	Endorsed
East Africa	East Central and Southern Africa-Health Community and the Commonwealth Secretariat	Research Project on a Regional Youth Project on Mental Health	✓	✓
Cameroon	Commonwealth Students Union	'Evergreen Save Us'	✓	✓
Cameroon	Community Action for Advancing Sustainable Development	Solar Bright Future	✓	✓
Cameroon	Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education Cameroon	Cameroonian Youth and the Commonwealth: 2024, a Year of Resilience for a Sustainable Climate Action and Peace	✓	✓
Cameroon	Youth Advocates for Peace and Community Empowerment Cameroon (YAPCEC)	Environmental Peace Training Workshop	✓	✓
Egypt	UN Habitat/Young Planners/CYSU	12th World Urban Forum	✓	✓
Eswatini	Ministry, Culture, Sports and Youth Affairs Eswatini	Empowering Young Voices: Commonwealth Charter workshop	✓	✓
Gambia	Gambia National Youth Council	Inter-ministerial Dialogue on the Revised National Youth Policy	✓	✓
Ghana	Asante and Partners	Asante and Partners Employability Training Project	✓	✓
Ghana	National Youth Authority Ghana	Strengthening Youth Advocacy, Climate Action and Mentorship for Sustainable Development	✓	✓
Ghana/Malawi/Tanzania	CYP/CAYWA	Youth Work Week – Ghana Youth Workers Webinar	✓	✓
Ghana/Malawi/Tanzania/Trinidad & Tobago	Commonwealth Secretariat/CAYWA	Youth Work Week – Global Launch – Recipient of Capacity Grants (Malawi/Tanzania/Ghana/Trinidad & Tobago)	✓	✓
Kenya	CYP	Kenya Innovation Week	✓	✓
Kenya	Commonwealth Sport Canada	Cheza Healthy	✓	✓
Kenya	ICON Data and Learning Labs	Promoting Positive Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Intersex (LGBI) Youth Development through Digital and Data Rights Advocacy in Kisumu County, Kenya	✓	✓

(Continued)

Country	Organisers	Event	Funded	Endorsed
Kenya	Commonwealth Sport Canada	Collaborative capacity-building sport for development and peace projects for youth throughout the Commonwealth.	✓	✓
Kenya	Mathare Foundation's Kicking it for her project	Kicking It for Her project		
Malawi	Malawi Public Universities Students Union	Youth Sensitization Campaigns – Empowering remote primary and secondary school students towards the desire to pursue a higher education		✓
Nigeria	Federal Ministry of Youth Development Nigeria	Commonwealth-Nigeria Youth Agriculture Initiative: Youth Development Farms and Processing Cottage Industries		✓
Nigeria	Nigeria Youth Workers Association/COMSEC/CAYWA/Federal Ministry of Youth Development Nigeria	Youth Work Week – Youth Work in Every Place and Space		✓
Nigeria	Ester Olamide Olayinka/Commonwealth Secretariat	Chatter Champs		✓
Nigeria	CYP/Federal Ministry of Youth Development Nigeria	Africa Region Youth and Students Summit	✓	✓
Nigeria	United Organization for Education and Sports Development Nigeria	Inter-Schools Debating Championship		✓
Rwanda	Commonwealth Universities' Debating Championship (CUDC2024)	Aspire Debate Rwanda	✓	✓
Rwanda	CLGF	Youth Forum	✓	✓
Rwanda	Port Harcourt Male Ensemble (Commonwealth Community Choir)	Youth Enlightenment, Climate Change and Peace for All Nations Concert		✓
Rwanda	MAMA Care Children Rwanda	Training on tailoring with starter-up kits for adolescent mothers – Improve the well-being of adolescent mothers and their Childs by training them on tailoring and equipping them with starter-up kits		✓
Rwanda	AIIESEC in Rwanda	Youth to Business Rwanda 2024	✓	✓
Rwanda	Commonwealth Secretariat/Ministry of Youth Rwanda/PLATFORMA/CYSU	Youth Leadership for Resilient Future	✓	✓

(Continued)

Country	Organisers	Event	Funded	Endorsed
Sierra Leone	Ministry of Youth Affairs Sierra Leone	Conference on Peace and Security for West African Youth	✓	
South Africa	Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities South Africa	Capacity-Building Workshop for Youth Workers	✓	✓
Tanzania	Builders of Future Africa	Skills development workshops that focus on topics relevant to Tanzanian youth, such as entrepreneurship, coding, digital marketing, public speaking, financial literacy or leadership		✓
Tanzania	Saratani AI	Awareness campaign providing tailored, group-specific knowledge on risk factors and cervical cancer preventive measures		✓
Togo	Coalition Nationale pour l'Emploi des Jeunes	Youth for Youth	✓	✓
Uganda	Signals from Grassroots	Dialogue for the Future: Empowering Youth by Building a Culture of Dialogue and Advocating for Their Inclusiveness in Community Affairs		✓
Uganda	Nabisunsa Girls School Climate Action Club	The Clim'r Festival		
	Sisi Ni Nyota	Climate Change Awareness Festival		✓
Zambia	Ministry of Youth, Sports and Arts Zambia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mindset change Commonwealth Training Workshop</li> <li>2. Commonwealth Youth Employment Programme</li> <li>3. Startup Kits for Skills Development and Employment</li> <li>4. Commonwealth Day Tree Planting</li> <li>5. Commonwealth Support towards SDGs in Zambia</li> </ol>		✓

## Asia

Country	Organisers	Event	Funded	Endorsed
Asia Region	CYP/CAYWA	Asia Regional Dialogue		✓
Bangladesh	Network for Educational and Economic Development (NEED)	NEED Carnival		✓
Brunei Darussalam	Green Brunei/Brunei Youth Council	SDGs Youth Camp	✓	✓
United Arab Emirates	United Nations Climate Change Conference	COP28	✓	✓
India	Heartfulness/Commonwealth Secretariat	Youth Unite		✓
India	Commonwealth Chambers of Commerce	Commonwealth Youth Empowerment Conclave		✓
India	Krishna Vadher, Puna International School	Providing Nutrition Kits to TB Patients		✓
India	ComMutiny – The Youth Collective	Four online film screenings of our series of seven films, 'It's Not Working – 7 Mistakes That Took Us Somewhere!'; along with successive dialogue sessions around the films	✓	✓
Malaysia	Commonwealth Youth Peace Ambassador's Network/CYP	Commonwealth Asia Regional Youth Summit	✓	✓
Pakistan	CYP	Asia Region Senior Officials Meeting/Youth Leadership Summit	✓	✓
UK	Universiti Putra Malaysia/Commonwealth Secretariat	Commonwealth Diploma in Youth Development Work – Certificate Presentation Ceremony	✓	✓
Pakistan	Gujranwala Medical College Welfare Society	Commonwealth Youth Empowerment Seminar		✓
Pakistan	Prime Minister's Youth Programme	Green Enovate Conference on Liquid and Solid Waste Management		✓
Pakistan	TNS Monologue Slam	International Monologue Contest		✓
Sri Lanka	CYHRDN	Youth Consultation on Racial and Other Forms of Discrimination in Sri Lanka	✓	✓
Sri Lanka	CYHRDN	Training for Women-Led households on Entrepreneurship	✓	✓
Sri Lanka	The Open University of Sri Lanka	Human-Centred Design for Youth Development Work	✓	✓
Sri Lanka	GenUth	Menstrual Hygiene Workshops	✓	✓

## Caribbean and Americas

Country	Organisers	Event	Funded	Endorsed
Anguilla	Ministry of Social Development and Education	The Electrical Skills Development Project with literacy and soft skills introduction	✓	✓
Antigua & Barbuda	Commonwealth Foundation	Fostering Resilience: An Intergenerational Dialogue on Health and Climate in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)	✓	✓
Antigua & Barbuda	Caribbean Region Youth Council (CRYC)	International Conference on SIDS	✓	✓
Antigua & Barbuda	Antigua & Barbuda Youth Symphony Orchestra/ Commonwealth Resounds	Caribbean Composition Training Programme		✓
Canada	Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS)	RLSS Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships		✓
Jamaica	Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration and Management	Symposium at the IEAL - J conference		✓
Caribbean Region	CYP/CAYWA	Youth Work Week – Launch of Caribbean Youth Development Work Alliance		✓
Montserrat	National Youth Parliament	Roots of Resilience: Montserrat Reforestation Drive Tree Planting	✓	✓
St Lucia	Caribbean Regional Youth Council	Caribbean Youth and Student Leaders Policy and Advocacy Workshop 2024	✓	✓
St Vincent and the Grenadines	The Commonwealth Resounds	Go Compose! Eastern Caribbean		✓
Trinidad & Tobago	Commonwealth Secretariat	Commonwealth Youth Games Athlete Impact Labs	✓	✓
Virtual	One Young World (Caribbean)	Pieces of Peace – a virtual or hybrid moderated discussion centred on the intersectionality of the concept of peace and its applicability to non-war-stricken areas across the Commonwealth		✓
Turks & Caicos	Department of Youth Affairs Turks and Caicos	Environmental Summit 2024	✓	✓
United States	United Nations Economic and Social Council, hosted by the Government of Pakistan and Commonwealth Secretariat	Youth Forum Side Event on the YoY: Co-creating Solutions for a Common Future		✓
United States	UN Women	Commonwealth Women's Forum – New York	✓	✓

## Europe

Country	Organisers	Event	Funded	Endorsed
Cyprus	Beach Sports Foundation/Cyprus Youth Diplomacy	Harmony by the Shore: Youth Beach Tennis for Peace	✓	✓
Switzerland	World Health Organization	'No Health Without Mental Health' Intergenerational Dialogue	✓	✓
UK	Elevate Young Minds/Catalyst in Communities and Young Creative Leaders	Face Festival		✓
UK	Lifeline Projects	Female Netball Tournament	✓	✓
UK	Commonwealth Girls Education Fund	Splendours of the Commonwealth	✓	✓
UK	UK Y20 Delegation/CYP	How Young People Can Affect Political Change	✓	
UK	Royal Commonwealth Society	Commonwealth Day Service	✓	✓
UK	Zalmi Foundation	Exhibition Game		✓
UK	CYP	Youth Engagement Event-Panel Discussion	✓	✓
UK	CYP	Commonwealth Youth Leadership Summit	✓	✓
UK	CYP	4th Commonwealth Conference on Youth Work	✓	✓
UK	Non-Resident Indian Institute	NRI World Summit 2023	✓	✓
UK	CYC/Commonwealth Secretariat	Commonwealth Youth Council 10th Anniversary	✓	✓
UK	Never Such Innocence (NSI)	Mini Event to celebrate 10th anniversary of NSI+Competition		✓
UK	Commonwealth Secretariat/Khalili Foundation	Commonwealth Faith Festival		
UK	Governance and Peace Directorate (GPD), Commonwealth Secretariat	Marlborough House Get-Together – 'Climate Justice: Empowering Today's Actors for Tomorrow's Leadership' – Minister of Water, Forests, the Sea and Environment in Gabon, Prof. Lee White CBE	✓	✓
UK	GPD, Commonwealth Secretariat	Marlborough House Get-Together – 'Footballer Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang on Youth Are the Future'	✓	✓
UK	GPD, Commonwealth Secretariat	Marlborough House Get-Together – HE Danny Faure, President of the Seychelles (2016-2020) – 'The Experience of a Head of State on the Separation of Powers in a Small Island State'	✓	✓
UK	CYP	CYMM and Commonwealth Youth Awards	✓	✓

(Continued)

Country	Organisers	Event	Funded	Endorsed
UK	Sports for Development and Peace Team, Commonwealth Secretariat/University of Edinburgh	Commonwealth Debate on Sport and Sustainable Development	✓	✓
UK	CYP/Peace One Day/Commonwealth Museum	International Youth Day	✓	✓
UK	CYP	YoY Launch	✓	✓
UK	CYP	Commonwealth Week 2023: 'Forging Peaceful and Sustainable Common Futures'	✓	✓
UK	Commonwealth Association	4th Patsy Roberson Memorial Lecture	✓	✓
UK (online)	IOSH	Seminars/Webinars on Occupational Safety and Health, Worker Well-being, Social Sustainability and Future Leaders		✓
UK (online)	Commonwealth Education Trust	Teach Something New: The Commonwealth Learners' Competition – Teach Learners from around the World about Something You Think is Important	✓	✓
UK	Young Creative Leaders and Elevate Young Minds	Rotation Dance Exchange		✓
UK	Safe Sport International	Global Safe Sport Conference		✓
UK (online)	It's a Penalty	It's a Penalty Virtual Workshop		✓
UK (online)	Commonwealth Pharmacists Association	Webinar on 'Young Voices, Big Choices: Pioneering Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) Solutions'		✓
UK	Catalyst in Communities	Football League and the Henry Charles Trophy		✓
UK	Royal Commonwealth Society	Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS) Bath Annual Lunch – Celebrating the Commonwealth Year of Youth		✓

## Pacific

Country	Organisers	Event	Funded	Endorsed
Samoa	Commonwealth Human Ecology Council	Atamai Sio'siomaga ('Restoring Joy to the Environment')	✓	✓
Samoa	Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development Samoa	Annual Commemoration of the International Youth Day along side Samoa National Youth Week	✓	✓
Samoa	Peace Corps/Commonwealth Secretariat	Blue Pacific Initiative		✓

In addition, there were 72 unendorsed and unfunded projects.

# Annex C: Examples of Projects

**Name of project:** Youth to Business

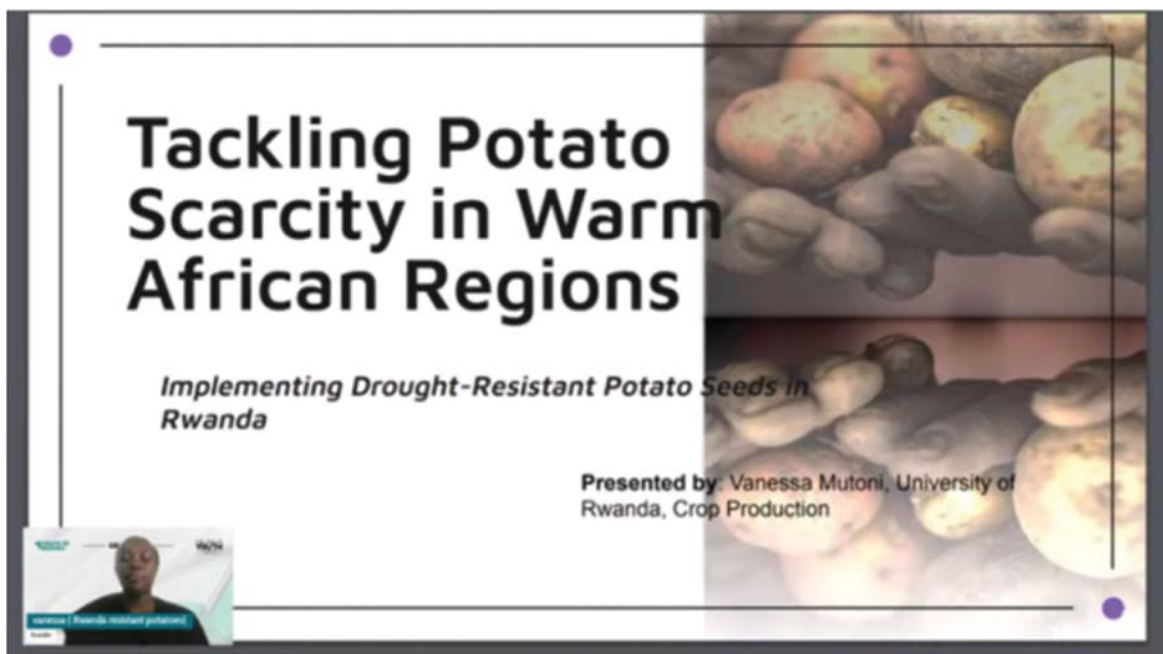
**Organiser:** International Association of Students in Economics and Business (AIESEC)

**Location:** Rwanda (Africa Region)

**Brief description:**

The Youth to Business project was a three-month initiative by AIESEC in Rwanda, endorsed by the Commonwealth Year of Youth, aimed at

fostering innovation and entrepreneurship among Rwandan youth. It involved three phases: soliciting business ideas, providing incubation and training, and awarding the best ideas in collaboration with industry experts. The project aimed to equip youths with the skills and support to turn their ideas into successful businesses, thus contributing to Rwanda's economic growth. There were 500 attendees at the Forum and 22 youth completed the training and incubation stages.



**Name of project:** Advancing the Mission of Mainstreaming Youth-centric Development.

**Organiser:** ComMutiny – the Youth Collective

**Location:** India (Asia)

**Brief description:**

There were two key events in September 2024 to advance the mission of mainstreaming youth-centric development:

1. The Online Collective Dialogue brought together members of ComMutiny's VartaLeap coalition and ecosystem members to discuss critical issues surrounding youth-centric development. The session focused on exploring wicked challenges facing the youth development sector and promoting knowledge exchange among

key stakeholders. There were 117 youth participants from diverse backgrounds.

2. Youth Development Workshop – Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD), Chandigarh. This offline workshop, titled 'Youth Development in Practice', brought together development practitioners and students from RGNIYD to discuss why youth leadership is crucial for social progress and how to encourage youth-led initiatives in their respective contexts. The event was interactive, combining activities, film screenings and reflective dialogues. The curriculum, built in-house by ComMutiny – The Youth Collective and named 'Moving People with Movies', was used as the session flow. Forty plus young people attended.



**Name of project:** Commonwealth Drowning Prevention

**Organiser:** Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS)

**Location:** Canada (Caribbean and Americas)

**Brief description:**

The RLSS organised various events around the world for the YoY. For 2023, members of the Youth Advisory Group created messages for World Drowning Prevention Day that could be shared on social media pages. During 2023 and 2024, Young Lifesaver of the Year honours were presented to youngsters in Lesotho, Kenya, Canada, Ghana and the UK. The World Conference on Drowning Prevention was held in Perth, Australia in December 2023. The RLSS offered sponsorship

to cover the costs of travel, accommodation and registration for youngsters who had abstracts accepted for the conference. In July 2023, the RLSS co-hosted an event at Marlborough House, London following a resolution by World Health Assembly. Speakers came from the RLSS, Royal National Lifeboat Institution, World Health Organization, UNICEF, Bangladesh and the Black Swimmers Association. The presentations focused on the child-drowning issue and projects that have focused on teaching children survival swimming. The RLSS also developed a new strategic plan during 2023 that focused on developing a clear youth engagement strategy, using relevant platforms to build youth networks and providing employment and exchange programmes for young people.

**Commonwealth Drowning Prevention - The Royal Life Saving Society**  
 Published by Jo Preece  
 · 25 July 2023 ·

As 2023 is The Commonwealth's 'Year of Youth', we asked our Youth Advisory Group if we could share the content they had created for World Drowning Prevention Day 2023. This is from Vincent Kigen Kipkuruie from Kenya #WDPD2023 #drowningprevention #commonwealthdrowningprevention #RLSS #kenya



**Name of project:** Harmony By the Shore

**Organiser:** Beach Sports Foundation/Cyprus Youth Diplomacy

**Location:** Cyprus (Europe)

**Brief description:**

This project included an opening and closing ceremony with three workshops:

1. Team Building and Peacebuilding Dialogue
2. Rise and Thrive: Mental Health Awareness
3. Tackling SDGs and Climate Action

The project's activities not only addressed pressing issues such as pollution and mental well-being but also strengthened connections and mutual understanding among participants.



**Name of project:** Promotion of Youth Projects in Small Island StatesMem

**Organiser:** Commonwealth Human Ecology Council

**Location:** Samoa (Pacific Region)

**Brief description:**

Atamai Sio'siomaga (the Samoan words for smart/intelligent and environment, which in translation/context mean 'Restoring Joy to the Environment') aims to prepare Samoa's youth for climate change

through education, training and practical activities such as carbon audits and tree planting. It involves workshops with climate professionals, carbon audits in schools and a tree-planting event to offset emissions. The initiative seeks to empower youth to become changemakers and promote sustainable careers. Atamai Online and Carbon Audit are two ongoing projects with the Global Shapers Apia Hub. The goal was to combine the educational aspect of Atamai with the environmental and sustainability efforts of Carbon Audit.



# Annex D: List of Interviewees

Name	Designation
<b>Layne Robinson</b>	Head of Social Policy Development Division
<b>Terri-Ann Gilbert-Roberts</b>	Research Manager
<b>Christabel Derby</b>	Co-chair of Advisory Committee
<b>Helen Jones</b>	Committee member representing the Accredited Organisation
<b>Robin Lockhart</b>	Committee member representing the Commonwealth Association of Youth Workers
<b>Daniel Grice</b>	Committee member representing the Commonwealth Children and Youth Disability Network
<b>Amjad Saleem</b>	Committee member representing International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
<b>Joseph Adeyemi</b>	Founder of Rahuls Clubhouse in Trinidad and Tobago; winner of Youth Award
<b>Maya Nanan</b>	Founder of Rahuls Clubhouse in Trinidad and Tobago; winner of Youth Award
<b>Jada Chambers</b>	Young journalist – attended the Commonwealth Youth Games in Trinidad and Tobago
<b>Nicole Barbiye</b>	Climate Action Club (Nabisunsa Girls' School), Uganda
<b>Elisante Ephrahim</b>	Builders of Future Africa, Tanzania
<b>Jolaade Taiwo</b>	CW Pharmacists Association
<b>Nahjae Nunes</b>	Commonwealth Youth Council
<b>Abbas Mian</b>	Chief Operating Officer of Zalmi Foundation
<b>Amlan Jyoti Chaudhuri</b>	ComMutiny
<b>Ndze Noel Lifogha</b>	Community Action for Advancing Sustainable Development
<b>Kohtem P Sambit</b>	Commonwealth Students Union of Cameroon
<b>Hyacinth Augustine-Bradley</b>	Ministry of Social Development and Education, Anguilla
<b>Jane Afua Ntiforo</b>	National Youth Authority, Ghana
<b>Jasmine Thomas</b>	Department of Youth Affairs, Turks and Caicos
<b>Luis Franceschi</b>	Assistant Secretary General
<b>Dona Kannangara</b>	Program Manager, Year of Youth

# Annex E: Documents Reviewed

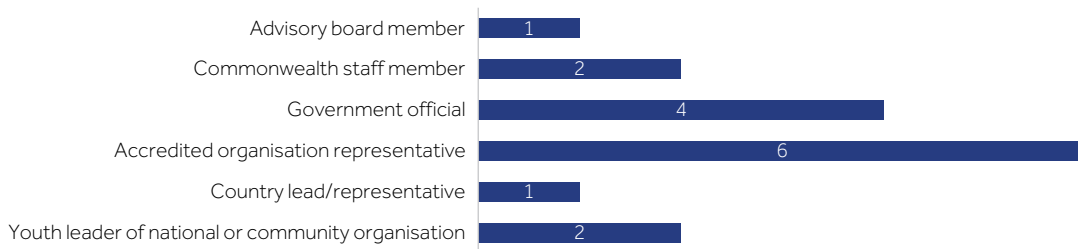
- Co-creating Youth Spaces – A practice-based guide for young facilitators
- Commonwealth Annual Results Report July 2023–June 2024
- Commonwealth Universities Debating Championship Concept Note
- Samples of Final Report
- Commonwealth Universities Debating Championship Letter of Endorsement
- Commonwealth Year of Youth Project 2024: Strengthening Youth Advocacy, Climate Action, and Mentorship for Sustainable Development
- ComMutiny – The Youth Collective YoY Report
- CYP Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) Revised
- EOI Submission List
- Facebook analytics January – December 2024
- Harmony by the Shore Report
- Henry Charles Commonwealth Cup Invitation
- Implications and Benefits of the Revised CYP Memorandum of Understanding
- International Youth Day Report
- M&E Forms Data Summary
- Model Commonwealth Summit Ad
- Model Commonwealth Summit Concept Note
- Model Commonwealth Summit Final Report
- RLSS Year of Youth Report
- Year of Youth Activity List
- Year of Youth Concept Note
- Year of Youth Engagement Toolkit
- Year of Youth M & E Form
- Year of Youth Project Tracker
- Youth to Business Report 2024 Rwanda
- YoY Outcome Reporting
- YoY Review

# Annex F: Detailed Survey Results

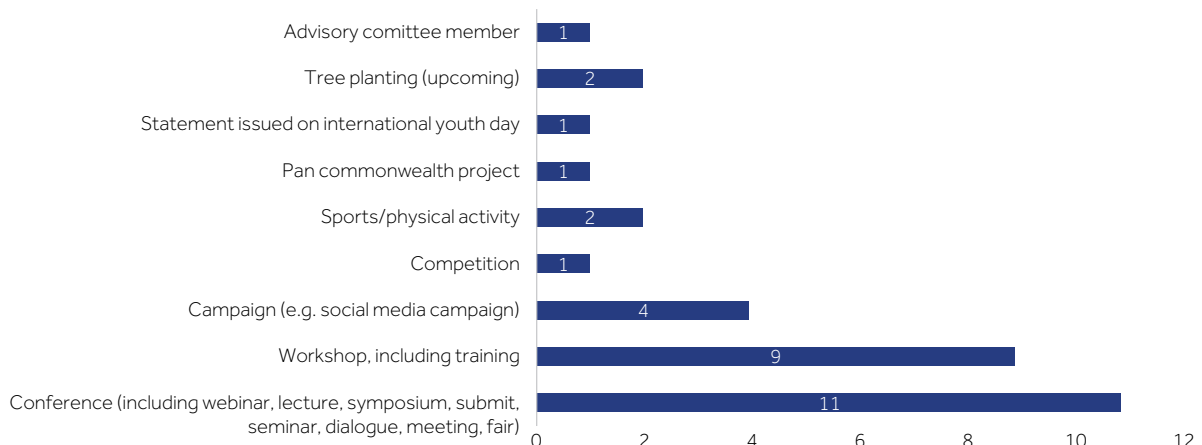
## Stakeholder Survey Results

N = 16

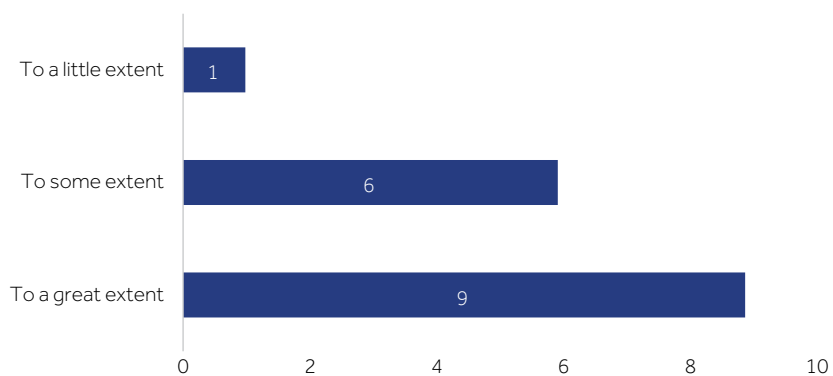
### 1. How did you participate in the Commonwealth's Year of Youth (YoY)?



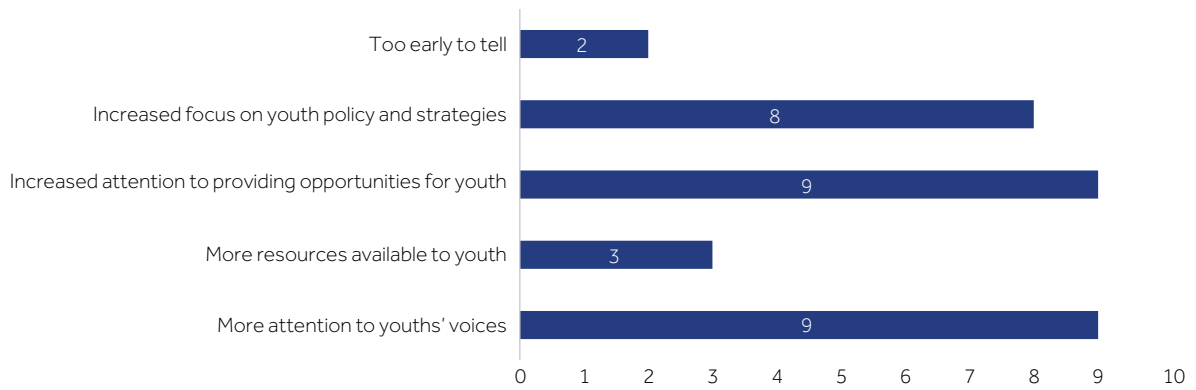
### 2. What type of activity did you participate in or attend?



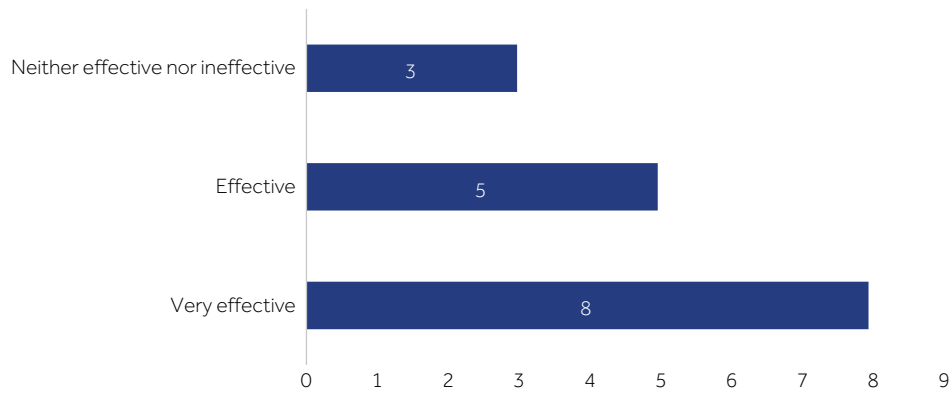
### 3. To what extent do you believe that the vision and mission were achieved?



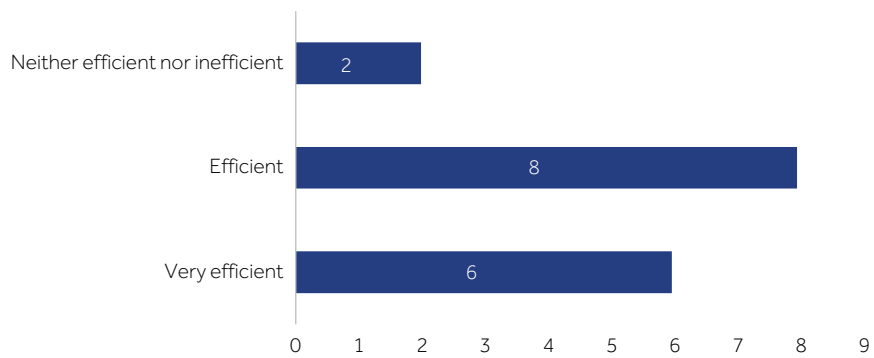
### 4. What changes have you noticed in your country/organisation/institution that you believe are aligned with the YoY?



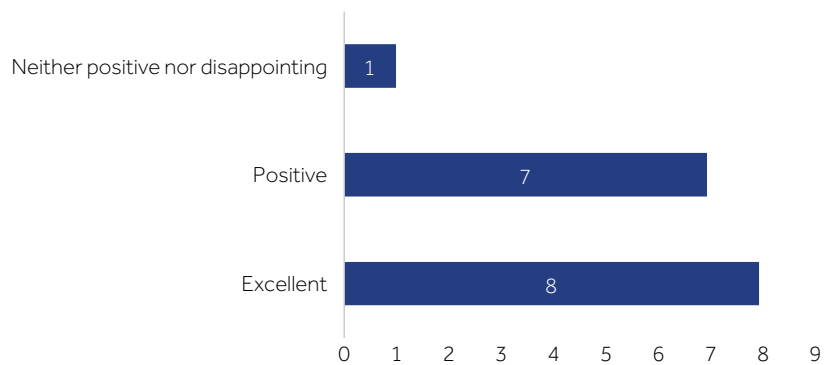
**5. How effective do you believe the implementation of initiatives led or co-created by young people were in your country?**



**6. How efficient do you believe the implementation of initiatives led or co-created by young people were in your country?**



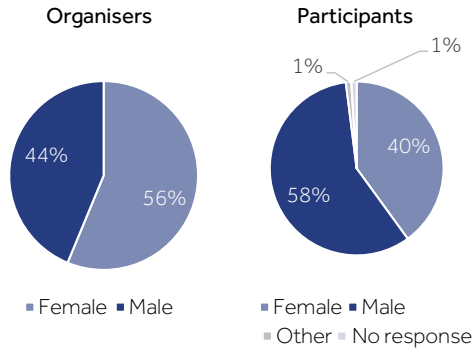
**7. How would you rate your experience with YoY?**



## Organiser and Participant Survey Results

N = 93 Organisers, 163 Participants

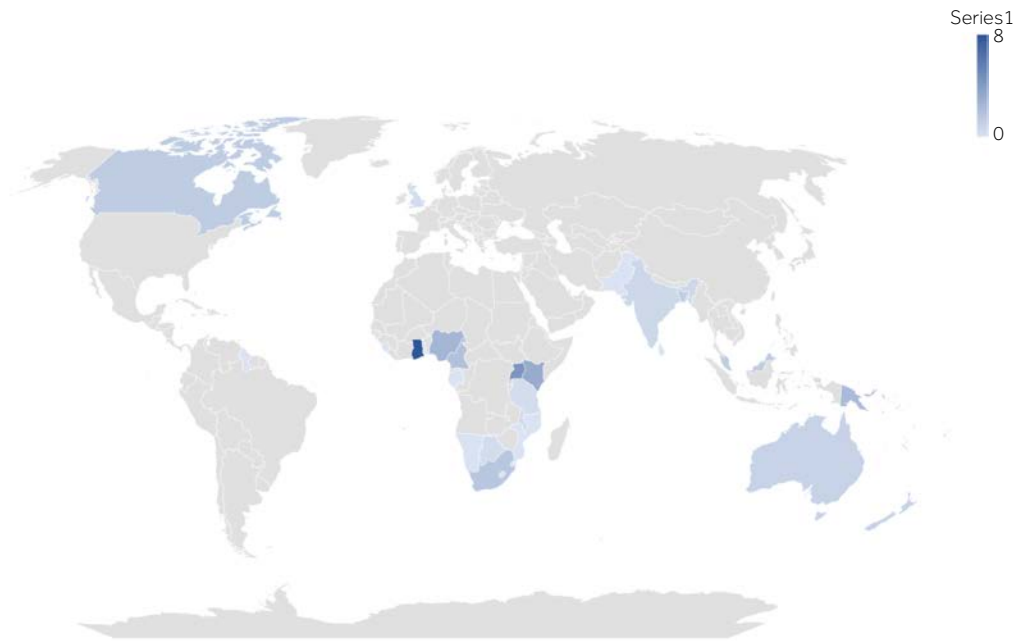
### 1. Gender of respondents



### 2. In which country did the project take place?



## Participants



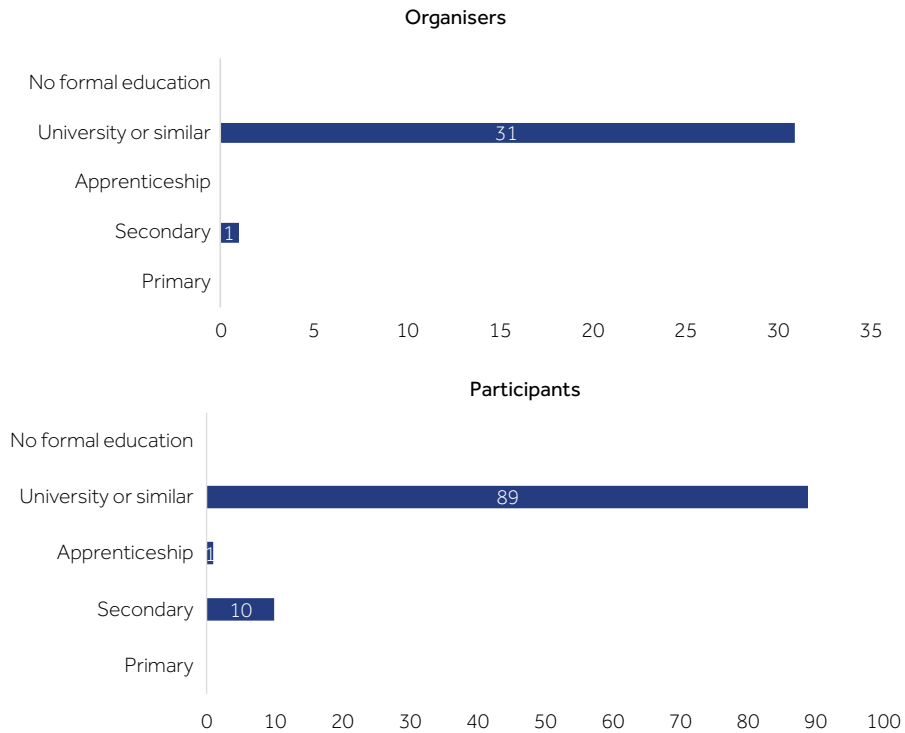
Powered by Bing  
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Frequency of Response				
Country	Organisers	Participants	No response	Total
Australia	2	3	0	5
The Bahamas	0	1	0	1
Bangladesh	2	4	0	6
Barbados	0	3	0	3
Belize	0	1	0	1
Botswana	1	1	1	3
Brunei Darussalam	0	11	0	11
Cameroon	4	6	0	10
Canada	2	4	0	6
Cyprus	2	0	0	2
Dominica	0	0	0	0
Eswatini	0	0	0	0
Fiji	1	0	0	1
Gabon	1	0	0	1
The Gambia	0	7	0	7
Ghana	3	26	0	29
Grenada	0	1	0	1
Guyana	1	0	0	1
India	8	2	0	10

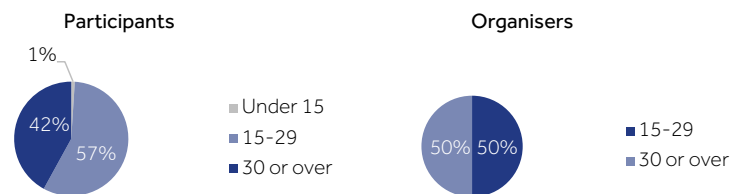
(Continued)

Frequency of Response				
Country	Organisers	Participants	No response	Total
Jamaica	4	1	0	5
Kenya	3	10	0	13
Kiribati	0	0	0	0
Lesotho	1	0	0	1
Malawi	2	2	0	4
Malaysia	1	4	0	5
Maldives	0	1	0	1
Malta	1	1	0	2
Mauritius	1	0	0	1
Mozambique	0	0	0	0
Namibia	3	0	0	3
Namibia	0	0	0	0
Nauru	2	1	0	3
New Zealand	3	3	0	6
Nigeria	1	8	0	9
Pakistan	0	0	0	0
Papua New Guinea	3	7	0	10
Rwanda	3	2	0	5
Saint Lucia	0	3	0	3
Samoa	0	0	0	0
Seychelles	2	3	0	5
Sierra Leone	2	0	0	2
Singapore	0	2	0	2
Solomon Islands	4	4	0	8
South Africa	7	5	1	13
Sri Lanka	0	0	0	0
St Kitts and Nevis	0	0	0	0
St Vincent and The Grenadines	1	0	0	1
Tanzania	0	1	0	1
Togo	0	0	0	0
Tonga	3	1	0	4
Trinidad and Tobago	0	0	0	0
Tuvalu	2	3	0	5
Uganda	6	14	0	20
United Kingdom	2	1	0	3
Vanuatu	2	2	0	4
Zambia	6	14	0	20
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>258</b>

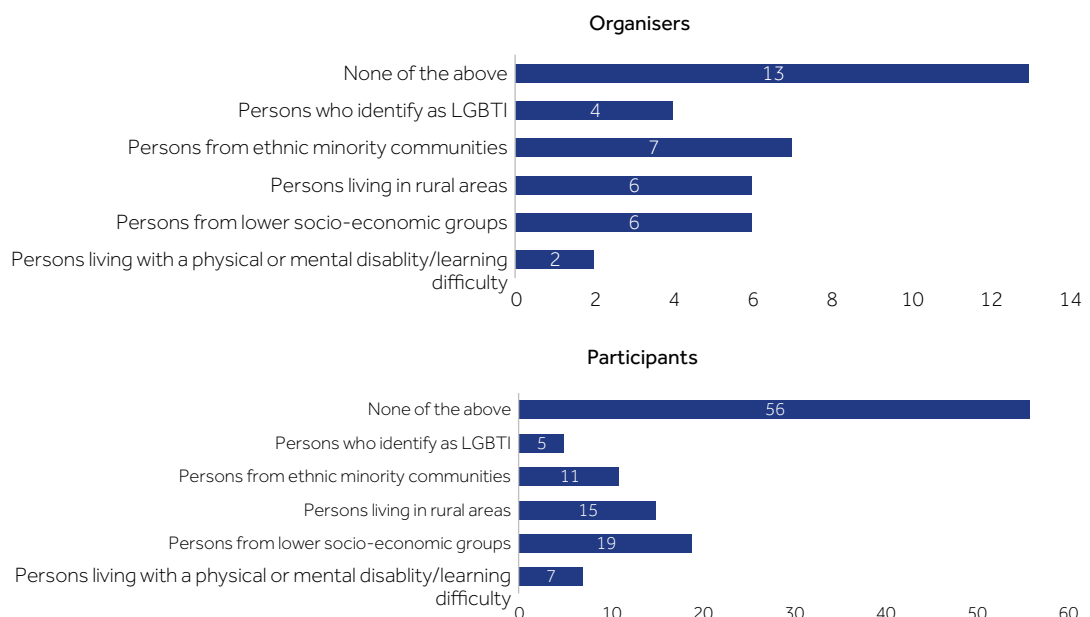
### 3. What is the highest education level that you've attained?



### 4. How old are you?

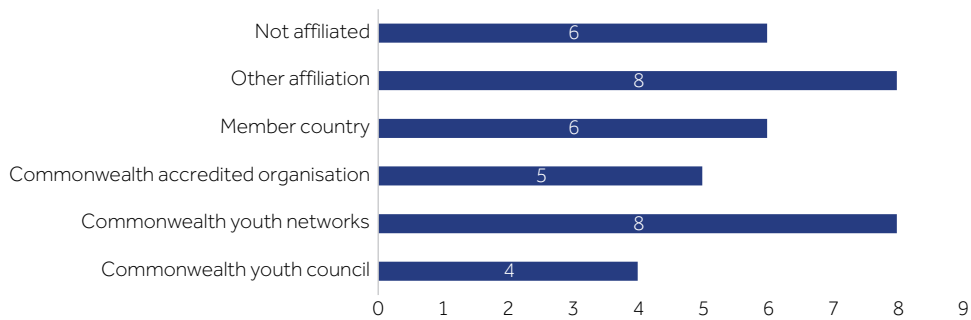


### 5. Do you belong to any of the following underrepresented groups?

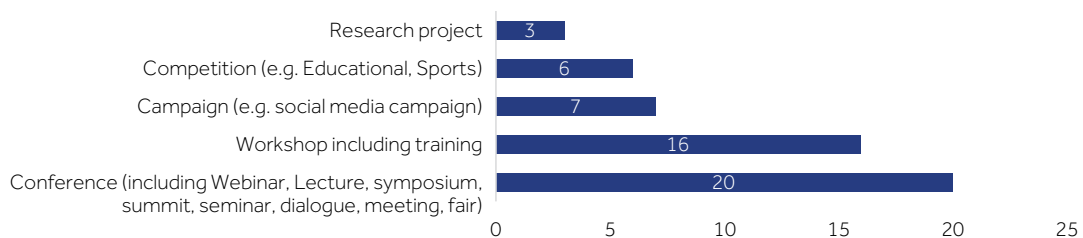


## Organisers Only

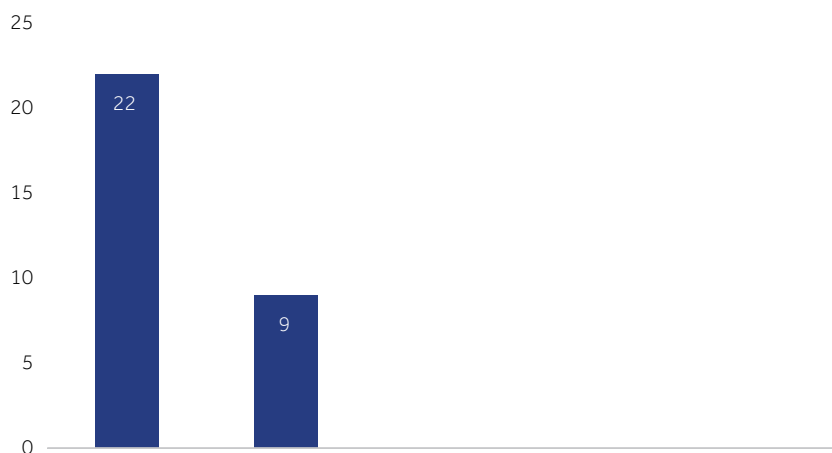
### 6. How are you affiliated with the Commonwealth? (Commonwealth Youth Council)



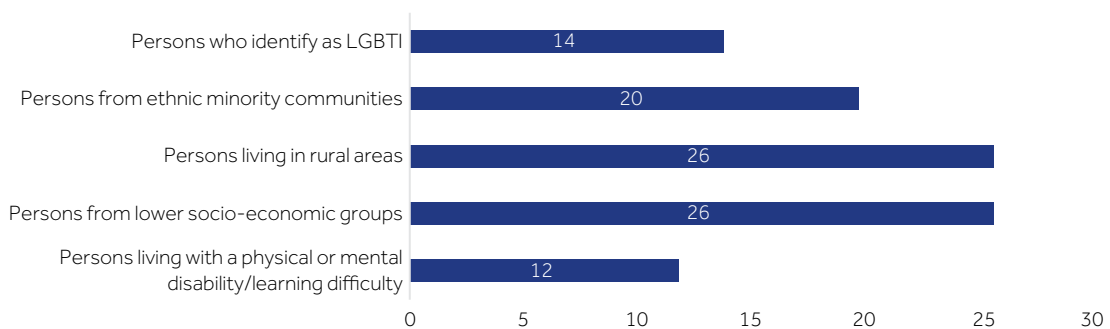
### 7. What type of activity did you organise?



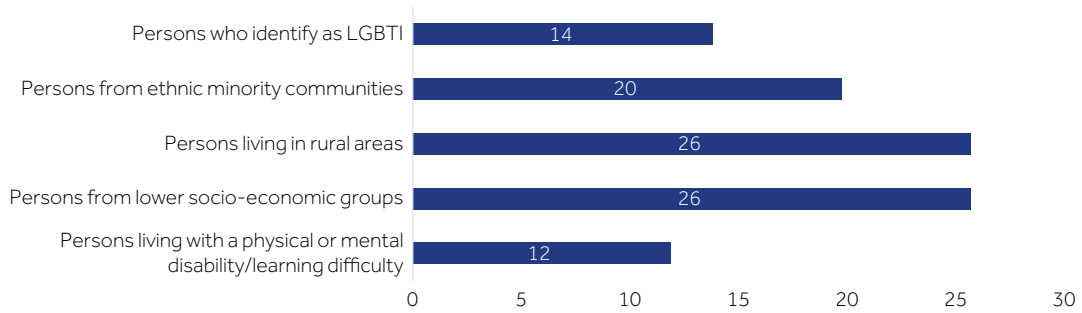
### 8. To what extent did these activities align with your personal and/or professional goals?



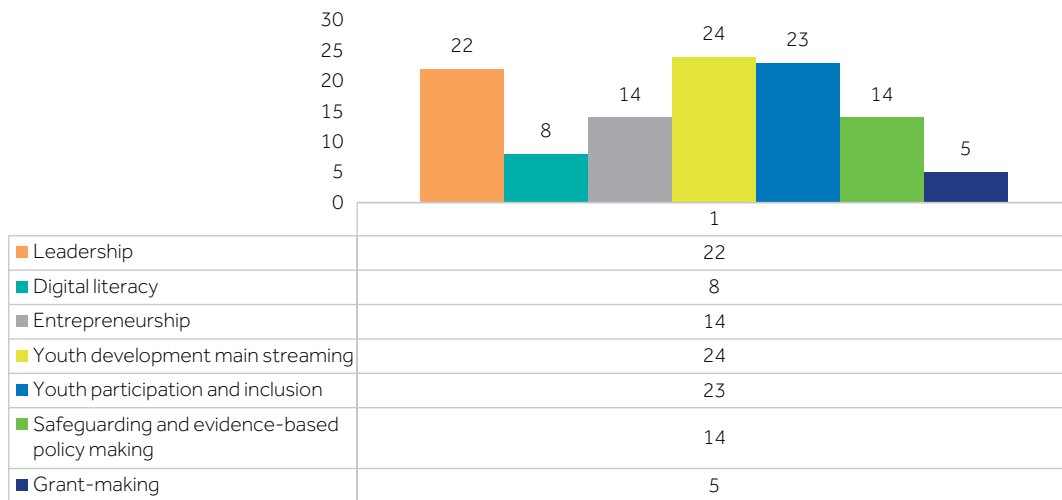
### 9. Did any of the following underrepresented groups participate in your project? (check all that apply)



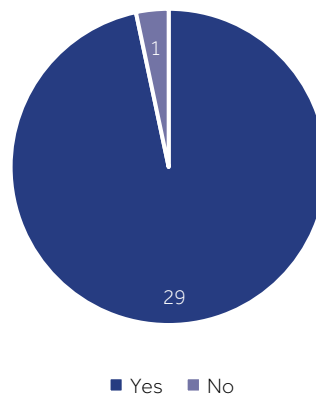
**10. What was the impact of YoY on you as an individual? (check all that apply)**



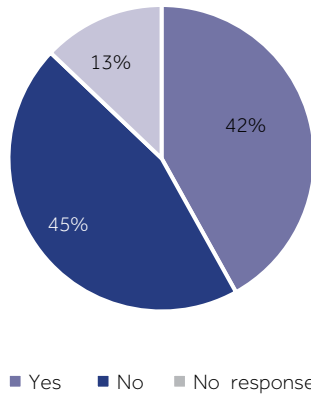
**11. What new skills and knowledge did you gain as a result of YoY?**



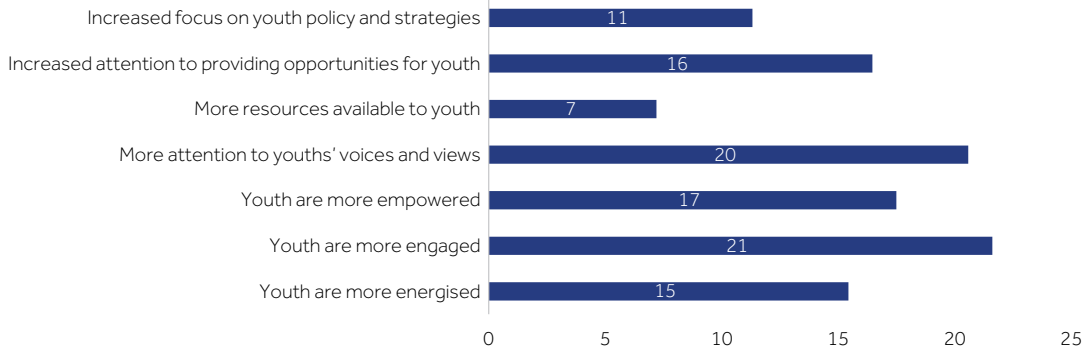
**12. Have you applied these new skills and knowledge?**



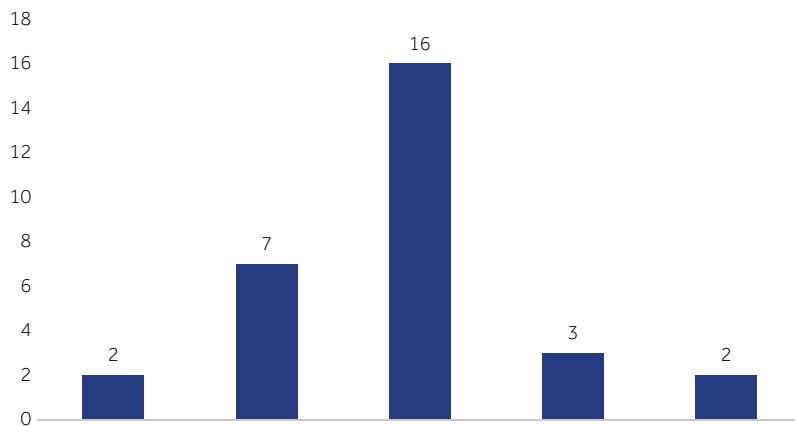
**13. Have you gained any new tangible engagement opportunities, pathways, awards or recognition as a result of organising YoY activities?**



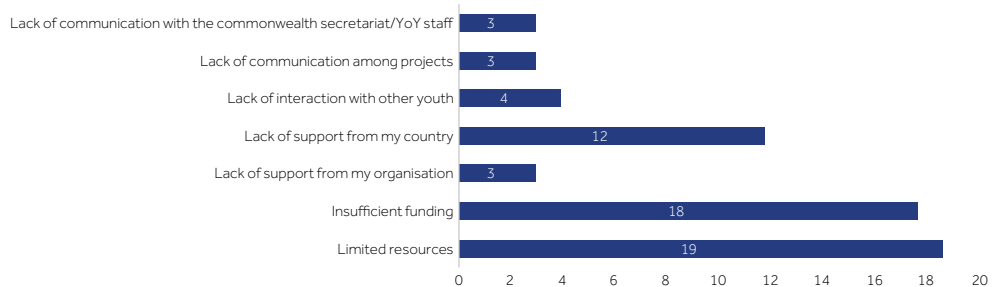
**14. What changes have you noticed in your country/organization/institution that you believe are aligned with the YoY? (check all that apply)**



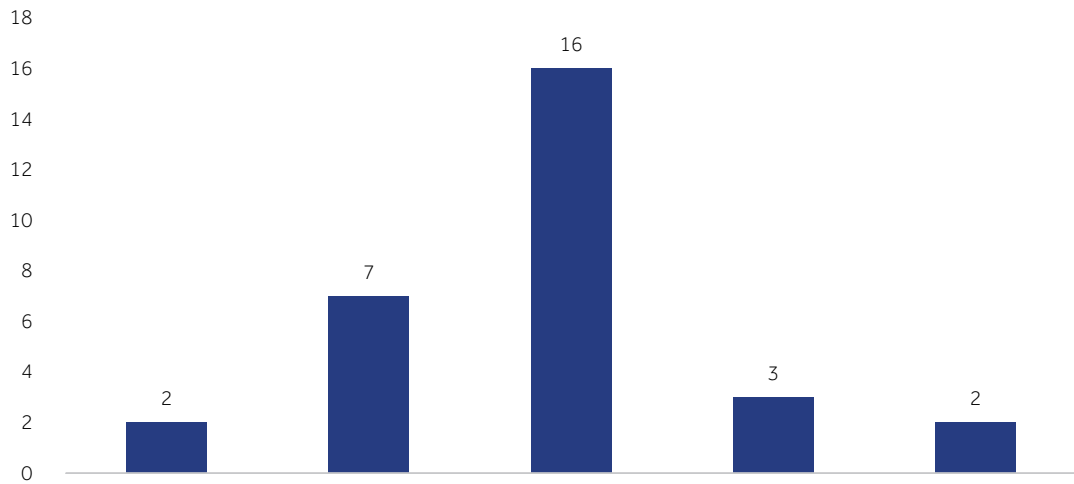
**15. How well were you supported by the Commonwealth?**



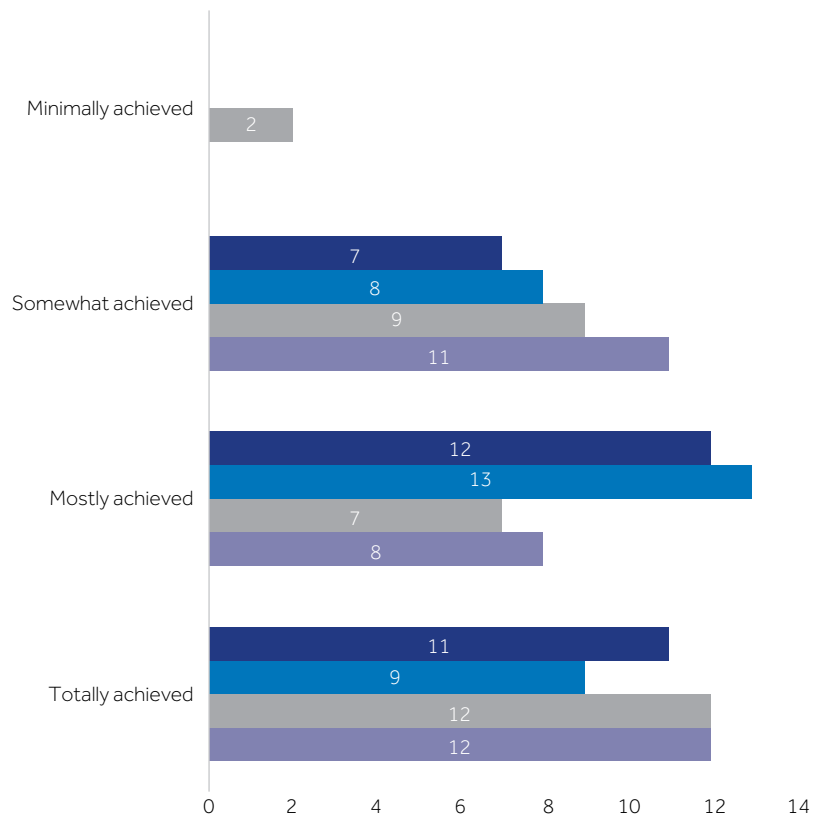
**16. What were some of the challenges you experienced in organising your activity? (check all that apply)**



**17. To what extent were these challenges addressed?**

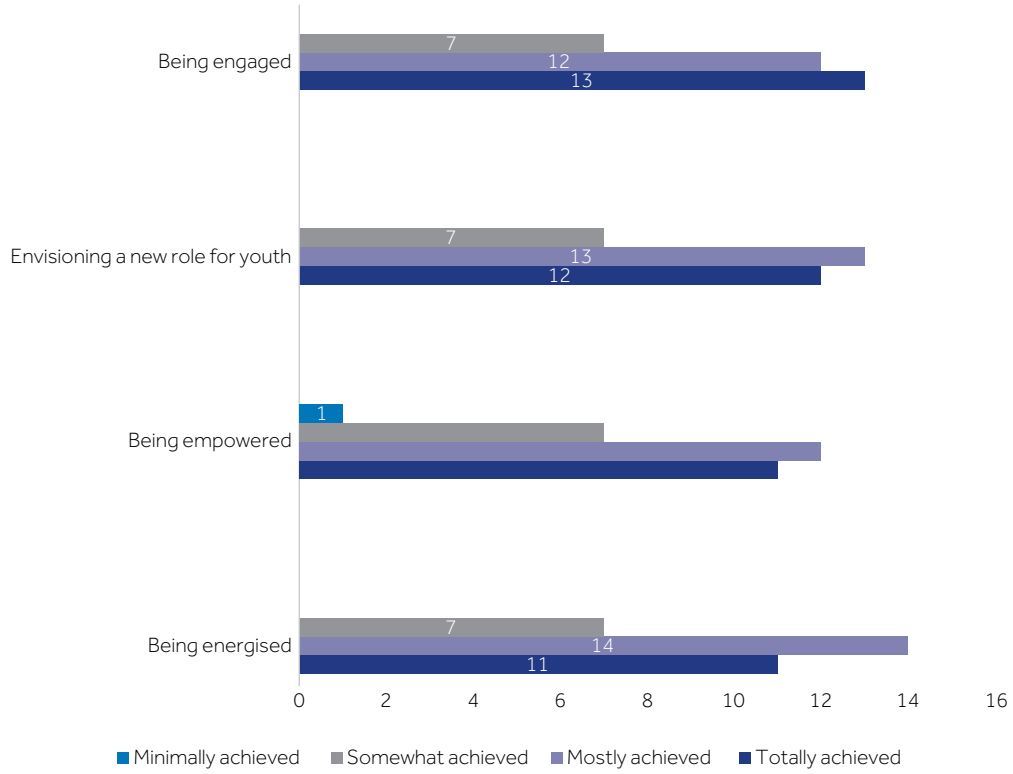


**18. To what extent do you feel you achieved the following:**



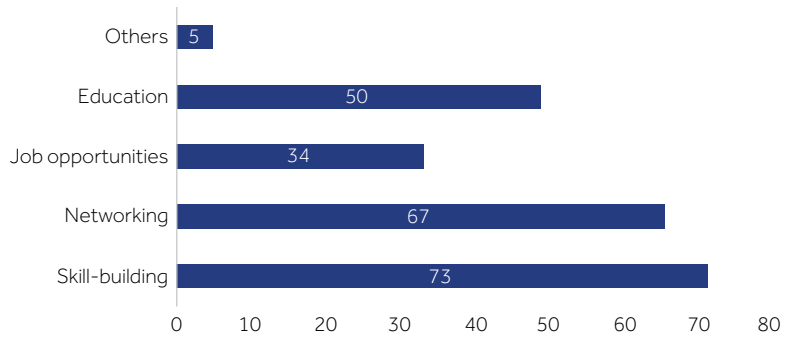
	Totally achieved	Mostly achieved	Somewhat achieved	Minimally achieved
■ Being engaged frequency	11	12	7	0
■ Envisioning a new role for youth frequency	9	13	8	0
■ Being empowered frequency	12	7	9	2
■ Being energized frequency	12	8	11	0

**19. To what extent do you feel that participants in your activity achieved the following?**



**Participants**

**20. What were your main reasons for taking part in a YoY activity?**

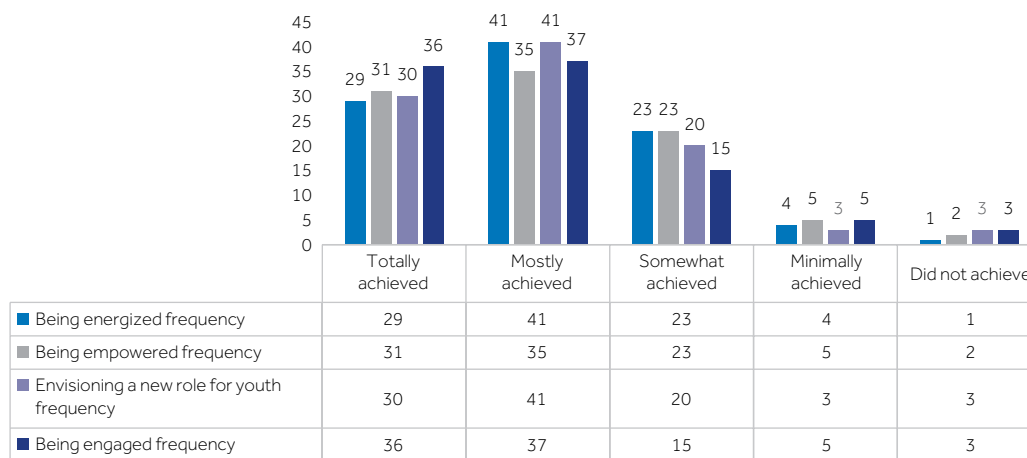


**21. What skills or knowledge have you gained from the programme?**

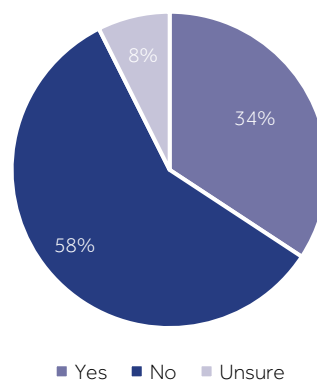


Leadership	Digital literacy	Entrepreneurship	Youth development main streaming	Participation and Inclusion	Safeguarding and evidence-based policy making	Grant-making	Negotiation skills	Research skills	Climate advocacy
66	32	67	54	28	14	4	1	1	2

**22. Have you experienced any changes in your work, education or personal life because of your participation?**



**23. Do you feel that the programme addressed issues or challenges that youth face today?**



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