

Preface

What does this publication do?

This publication serves as a set of analysis and implementation guidance to support youth mainstreaming (YM) initiatives and fill a noted gap in the sector on this topic. It comes in three parts, Part I: Concepts and Discussions, which facilitates pre-planning dialogue and discussion, Part 2: Implementation, which provides practical guidance and tools for implementing YM, including short case studies, and Part 3: Full Case Studies, which provides more detailed examples of YM within sectors.

Besides this, the tools and discussions put forward a vision, and stimulate us to examine our own views and practices around justice, equality and participation, and bringing young people, along with other marginalised social cohorts, to the forefront in development planning.

Who is it for?

This handbook serves:

- the youth sector¹ – ideally the key driver of YM as advocates and providers of technical assistance;
- national and subnational all-of-government planners – who lead inter-sectoral development strategies, particularly national development strategies;
- all sectors – (social, political and economic) that are involved in planning, including multiple intra-sector players, such as youth, youth networks, non-governmental players, academia, professional associations, the private sector and other key players; and
- organisations – putting in place YM processes and mechanisms.

Institutional commitments to youth mainstreaming

The Commonwealth began a dialogue on systematically incorporating youth mainstreaming within the Commonwealth Secretariat, as well as among partners, in 2007 when the Secretariat stated its intention to pay 'particular attention' to women and young people and observed that 'to mainstream youth, through education, knowledge and awareness is a huge global challenge ... the litmus test of development is whether [mainstreaming] has a transformative effect on women and young people'. Its publication, *the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE)*, placed a further strategic focus on youth mainstreaming.

The 2008 Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting consolidated this commitment and recognised that youth ministries need support and resources to 'enable ministries to more effectively lead the multi-sectoral youth mainstreaming approach to youth development and empowerment'.² This commitment was further reaffirmed in the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting of 2009.³ The Baku Commitment to Youth Policies, which highlight the importance of 'a holistic approach to youth development, through increased collaboration across policy sectors'⁴ and 'transversal and cross-sectoral co-ordination and work, as well as efficient and effective national-to-local implementation',⁵ indicated the widening of this global recognition of the centrality of youth mainstreaming.

Development organisations such as the African Union Commission,⁶ the World Bank,⁷ the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization⁸ and the World Programme of Action for Youth have also committed to institutional youth mainstreaming. This has significant implications for replication of YM strategies across other global development and lending institutions, and for the way these institutions help shape change for youth.

Notes

- 1 The youth sector comprises all players whose central strategies are based around policies, programmes and research around youth empowerment, and will be further discussed in Chapter 6.
- 2 Commonwealth Youth Programme 2008, 3.
- 3 Commonwealth Secretariat 2009, 1.
- 4 United Nations 2014.
- 5 Ibid, 3.
- 6 African Union Commission 2016.
- 7 Le Cava and Ozbil 2016.
- 8 UNESCO 2002. See also UNESCO 2006.

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