

Chapter 11

Implications for Development Planning

This chapter looks at:

- integrating a youth lens into planning, including drawing in key players and expertise
- the importance of planning beyond ‘youth activities’

11.1 Integrating youth mainstreaming

How do the discussions in Part 1 influence our approach to development planning? How is a youth lens ‘integrated’ into the way we plan? This is the focus of Part 2.

Youth mainstreaming ‘connects the dots’ between legislation and policy, finance and political commitment, organisations and programmes within the context of a comprehensive sociodemographic lens in all planning. Youth mainstreaming is not random youth initiatives, but integrated, co-ordinated planning. It intentionally incorporates youth capacities and rights in analysis, planning, implementation and the measurement of outcomes at all levels of the development process.

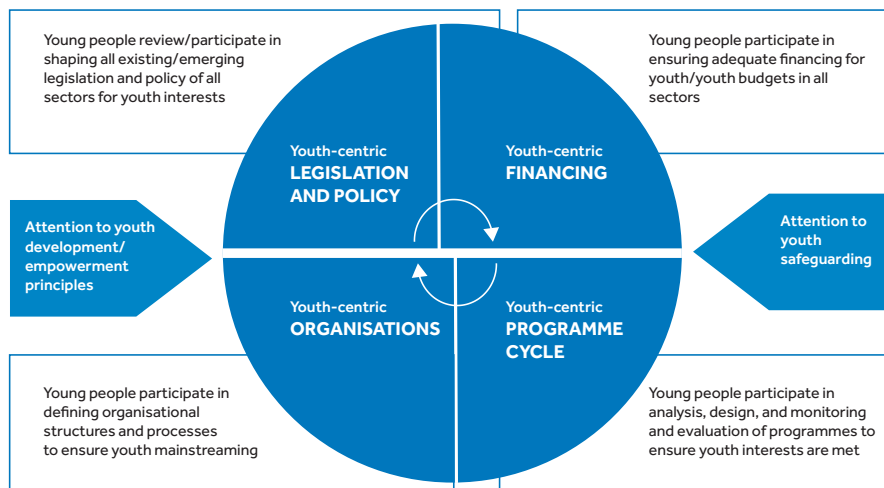
What we are looking for as results, then, is changes in resource distribution of all kinds (human and natural resources, financial and political power) in ways that better serve both youth and non-youth populations. As discussed in Part 1, the work of youth mainstreaming manifests itself as improved access to education, public health, improved incomes, improved civic and political participation, and so on.

To achieve this, several youth mainstreaming (YM) considerations and expertise requirements have to be factored in (Table 11.1) and a youth lens should be integrated at all levels and spaces of planning, so that they ensure equity and justice for young people (Figure 11.1). This harmonisation ensures co-shared youth-adult guarantees of accountability of the process to youth.

Table 11.1 Youth mainstreaming planning considerations and principal expertise

YM considerations	Cross-sectoral expertise
1. A full comprehension of the implications for youth in planning, including their developmental rights.	Youth empowerment/psychosocial Youth development/empowerment specialisation
2. Systematic and meaningful youth participation structures for decisions across the programme cycle, including incorporating the skills and expertise of the youth sector in building in youth empowerment strategies.	Participation and democracy Youth development specialisation Youth participation expertise Expertise in democracy Initiatives
3. Ensuring an evidence base and data disaggregation to measure a) youth cohort involvement, b) outputs and c) outcomes for youth, including for youth age and social subgroups and including global harmonisation of data disaggregation.	Data Census and data specialisation Quantitative and qualitative research specialisation Expertise of young researchers' collectives
4. Integrating youth safeguarding within the planning process and in programmes where young people are safe and secure within participation and programme implementation processes.	Safeguarding Child and youth safeguarding specialisation
5. Ensuring financing and budgets for youth at the global, national and subnational levels.	Finance Youth budgeting expertise Youth-centric financing and planning specialisation

Figure 11.1 Integrating youth mainstreaming into development planning



11.2 What does this mean for planning?

Our discussions in Part 1 have several implications for integrating a youth lens into planning in all sectors and organisations, including in inter-sectoral co-ordination and drawing in relevant expertise. Some of these are set out in Table 11.1.

YM policy, tools and accountability mechanisms (designed and implemented with young people) need to be in place to ensure that this collaborative planning occurs.

In this cycle, which aligns cross-sectoral policy, financing, programming and connected planning, how do we perceive youth mainstreaming that goes beyond youth programmes and projects within sectoral silos to holistic, cross-sectoral planning? The case study in Box 11.1 examines such broad strategic implications.

Box 11.1 Youth-centric employment strategies in development planning

Youth mainstreaming would mean perceiving all strategies as being cross-sectoral and multipronged, with a youth-centric paradigm at the heart of planning. Youth employment strategies, for example, are not just youth employment projects. It would mean holistically examining global, national and subnational policy contexts and strategies through a youth lens that considers young people's social, political and economic aspirations.

Young people's historic aspirations in employment have included full participation in numbers in employment, job security, education that meets employment needs, pay commensurate with contributions, work with dignity and the right to participate in labour associations. These aspirations are strongly aligned to the economic and social rights articulated in human rights conventions and SDG Target 8, which relates to employment. How then do national employment strategies ensure that consolidated initiatives bring together public, private and other sectors to ensure these aspirations are met?

Research conducted in Country X (left unidentified here for reasons of political sensitivity and the need to retain anonymity) is indicative of how some forms of employment strategy may not necessarily support the employment stability, commensurate pay and decent work that a youth-mainstreamed employment approach might suggest. What the research highlights in the context of Country X may be a lesson for countries where a better relationship needs to be built between youth aspirations and employment strategies that serve national development goals and the economic, social and political rights of the most marginalised.

(Continued)

Box 11.1 Youth-centric employment strategies in development planning (cont.)

The analysis of this subnational employment strategy, which targets youth as a significant cohort of 'beneficiaries', points out how focusing predominantly on self-employment, which indeed had good outcomes for some, and would have been an integral part of a holistic employment strategy, did not have the desired outcomes for the large numbers of youth and adults that were reached by the programme. This initiative, in which evidence shows millions of dollars have been invested, has resulted in high levels of indebtedness on the part of expected beneficiaries. In general, documentation from across the Commonwealth also shows that strategies that focus primarily on self-employment also leave large groups of young people, especially poor young people, and others, isolated in an informal sector, which may not be adequately organised for support or benefits in the event of failure. This is particularly so for marginalised groups.

These trends also come in the face of a failure to adequately invest in larger and disappearing strategic industries that could generate secure and dignified employment, catalyse investment and meet strategic economic and social objectives. This, in more formal employment contexts, has resulted in limited opportunities for secure employment options, low-paid work, where many youth, particularly young women, are employed in often adverse working conditions, pay barely able to support a decent quality of life, significant pay inequality across organisational hierarchies, and often restrictions on the right to association and the formation of labour unions.

From the perspectives of youth mainstreaming and organisational planning, this implies a multipronged approach by all stakeholders in delivering on youth-centric employment strategies. This is not possible without long-term, transformative, collaborative efforts where all organisations involved reflect youth-mainstreamed planning paradigms, listen to young people about their priorities, and examine ways of working creatively within existing policy and financial contexts for young people's economic and social empowerment. This would include collaborative partnerships with the private sector, national industrial sector and so on.

11.3 Conclusions

Youth mainstreaming has specific planning implications across a range of policy, legislative and institutional processes, underpinned by principles of youth development and safeguarding. For this to become a reality, planning processes should be holistic, and need to be self-reflective and open to self-critique and innovation. This requires long-term vertical and horizontal accountability to young people.



Box 11.2 Reflections on Chapter 11: Implications for Development Planning

- Which of the above planning elements for YM exist in your planning context?
- Is relevant expertise drawn in?
- Is there a holistic, strategic approach to planning in general that goes beyond random activities for youth?
- If not, how can more strategic approaches be integrated, and what would be the challenges of this integration?

