

Chapter 18

Financing Youth Mainstreaming

18.1 Introduction

This chapter begins a discussion, to be elaborated on in your contexts on:

- the importance of financing for youth mainstreaming
- leveraging the interest of donors and financial institutions to ensure sustained, impactful youth mainstreaming.

18.2 Long-term, strategic financing

To ensure strategic, long-term financing for youth mainstreaming, YM strategies must be integrated into financing for development (FFD) strategies. While youth mainstreaming involves integrating a youth lens into existing planning processes, the added requirements on policy and planning – in terms of youth-specific research, youth participation and so on – imply costs that may not otherwise have been accounted for.

A positive sign is the recognition, for the first time, of young people as a specific social category for financial investment in the resolutions of the Financing for Development Conference held in Addis Ababa in 2015. The resolution acknowledged the importance of:

- investing in children and youth as critical to achieving inclusive, equitable and sustainable development for present and future generations,¹

and committed to:

- ‘promote appropriate, affordable and stable access to credit to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as adequate skills development training for all, particularly for youth and entrepreneurs’;
- ‘promote national youth strategies as a key instrument for meeting the needs and aspirations of young people’;
- develop and operationalise, by 2020, ‘a global strategy for youth employment and implementing the International Labour Organization (ILO) global jobs pact’;² and

- promote access to technology and science for women, youth and children.³

These commitments indicate a focus for specific thematic areas such as credit, employment, technology and science, but also for broader, cross-sectoral approaches – as implied through commitments to ‘national youth strategies’. This creates an excellent opportunity to advocate for investment in youth mainstreaming as a specific strategy that development planners should be aware of.

Each subnational and sectoral planning strategy should also ensure this harmonising with financing, as discussed above.

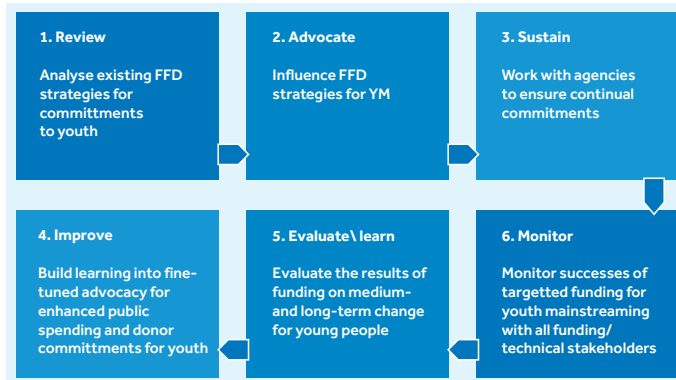
These FFD commitments must be buttressed by:

- targeting all sources of finance, including the private sector;
- advocating for increased public spending on youth, based on evidence and as a foundation for all sustainable development; and
- ensuring an intergovernmental follow-up process for FFD financing and integrating youth mainstreaming into FFD processes.

For donors to be convinced that holistic youth mainstreaming is a strategy that both benefits youth and benefits reaching the Sustainable Development Goals, the youth sector and all sectors need to provide credible evidence of the relevance of a holistic approach to integrating youth capacities, participation and interests into global, national and subnational planning (see Figure 18.1). This can be done by:

- highlighting the nature of youth empowerment in relation to intergenerational equity, and the value of youth empowerment strategies and programmes across sectors in making programmes more relevant and responsive;
- highlighting the rationale behind working with youth as a specific, unique category, with their own unique needs and interests in all social, political and economic spheres; and
- demonstrating the impact of youth-mainstreamed work, both for youth and for larger society.

Figure 18.1 Youth mainstreaming stakeholders engaging finance and donors



As much as youth mainstreaming stakeholders engage donors and development finance institutions, it is imperative that donors and finance institutions play a proactive role in supporting youth mainstreaming globally, nationally and at the subnational level. Box 18.1 shows possible ways in which donors can engage in the process.

Box 18.1 Donors engaging youth mainstreaming stakeholders

- Ensure that youth stakeholders and central planning processes talk to each other, particularly that alternative voices are heard in planning
- Ensure that YM planning is viewed against trends of social exclusion, economic turbulence, military conflict and so on
- Ensure long-term aid flows for youth mainstreaming
- Support governments in integrating aid planning for YM and other mainstreaming processes
- Promote and adhere to aid effectiveness principles in financing YM
- Promote co-ordination with debt management and trade processes
- Promote a long-term view: conflict prevention, decent work agendas
- Facilitate knowledge management: input to the process, allowing reciprocal government input into donor planning, and refer back to sectors if youth analysis is missing
- In building consolidated expenditure programmes, ensure that tools are built in at this stage to monitor and evaluate impact of programmes on youth
- Promote and invest in data disaggregation methodologies and data gathering for youth across sectors and nations
- Ensure that proposal writing guidance calls for integrating YM.

Ensuring budgeting and allocation for the processes and programmes of youth mainstreaming is critical to successful implementation.

Notes

- 1 UN General Assembly 2015, 5.
- 2 Ibid, 7.
- 3 Ibid, 31.

Reference

UN General Assembly (2015), Conference on Financing for Development, *Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 27 July 2015 [without reference to a Main Committee (A/69/L.82)]*, 69/313, Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International, Conference on Financing for Development, available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/69/313&Lang=E