

## Annex 7

### Example Youth Analysis Frameworks

Table A7.1 shows some forms of analysis that the Commonwealth articulates in the Commonwealth Diploma in Youth Development Work.<sup>1</sup> We either implicitly or explicitly engage in assessing the realities of young people through one or several of these frameworks. These forms of analysis can be either deficit- or asset-based.

Table A7.1 Example analytical frameworks

Analytical framework	Example as applying to youth analysis
<p><b>1: Analysis based on social order (functionalist):</b> This analysis sees society as an organism composed of many parts, each with its own function. These functions are specific but interrelated and help maintain <i>social order</i>. Parts of society are considered to be <i>institutions</i>, which are family, politics, education, religion and the economy, and each has its own functions – for example, a family would reproduce and train new members of society.</p> <p>Functionalists focus on social order and, if change is to occur, this is gradual, so that the whole society maintains order. Dysfunctional institutions, such as the drug trade, must be eliminated, according to functionalists, and action will be taken to restore equilibrium.</p>	<p>Efforts to <i>conform</i> youth to subscribe to the 'social order' in the youth sector would belong in this category. This is evident in youth development work that focuses on attitude and behaviour change in young people, at the cost of limited or no focus on other approaches to asset-based youth development. The inference here is that young people should 'fit into' the status quo and this is a broad premise of most youth policies.<sup>2</sup> This may be seen as a framework that is based on a model of social control.</p>
<p><b>2: Analysis based on social conflict:</b> While the functionalist model stresses organisation, order and stability, the conflict model stresses that 'social order' is superficial; that, underneath, there are deep conflicts of interest between the various social groups, and that this suppressed conflict is what leads to social change and development. They also stress the use of coercion based on power. These differing ideas lead to social change, such as the Marxist class struggle or the feminist struggle for social equality for women.</p>	<p>Many social political education aspects of analysing young people's contexts rely on references to identities of gender, class, caste etc., the conflicts created because of these identities, and action for social equity that attempts to minimise the impact of these conflicts.</p>

(Continued)

Table A7.1 Example analytical frameworks (cont.)

Analytical framework	Example as applying to youth analysis
<p><b>3: Analysis based on social interactions:</b> This analysis examines the processes by which small groups of people interact with each other and build symbol systems that get converted to social roles, and thereon to social structures. This maintains that, within a particular society or culture, the members always share a common set of symbols, so that they can communicate the same meanings to each other. Language is one way of embodying these symbols, as is our house, our school or our dress sense.</p> <p>This analysis focuses on small groups of people who are really the actors who construct dominant social values. We often accept the social structure that the elite have formulated. Language and icons are means by which the elite may maintain their power invisibly.</p>	<p>If you keep telling a young person that he or she is a 'troublemaker', then the young person will tend to <i>become</i> the troublemaker they have been labelled (labelling theory). Therefore, in modern youth development work, we highlight the need to help young people build positive images of themselves in the way we interact with them, so that youth symbolically represent positivity rather than negativity.</p>
<p><b>4: Analysis based on social exclusion:</b> Social exclusion refers to systematic ways in which individuals or communities are obstructed from fulfilling their rights, and from accessing opportunities or resources by virtue of their gender, class, ethnicity and other identities, thereby marginalising them from mainstream society. The Commonwealth Diploma looks at social exclusion in relation to structural adjustment policies, where lower levels of investment in public spending and greater reliance on the free market to drive wealth creation and employment have resulted in many forms of social exclusion, including in employment trends.<sup>3</sup> However, there are many other root causes of social exclusion, including racial discrimination, forms of violating disability rights, gender discrimination etc.</p>	<p>If data from Country X demonstrate that a minority ethnic group in that country has lower secondary school enrolment, this trend will be analysed in terms of the laws and policies, social, cultural and political norms, and institutional rules, cultures and practices that exclude certain groups from education.</p>
<p><b>5: Analysis based on human rights:</b> The Commonwealth Charter is based on the principles of human rights. Rights pertain to entitlements in relation to human rights conventions/protocols, including the Commonwealth Charter itself, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and other regional and national instruments. Outcomes for young people are analysed here in terms of their ability to realise rights in relation to rights frameworks. This could refer to sexual discrimination, access to justice, protection, the right to participation, the right to freedom of expression etc., where young people are <b>rights-holders</b> and the state and other parties responsible for young people are <b>duty-bearers</b>. Young people therefore may have claims against those who do not fulfil rights obligations.</p>	<p>Young women are often denied access to information and services on reproductive healthcare in public health institutions. In a rights-based analysis, this context will be analysed in terms of international conventions on the right to health and the right to information and any existing country legislation. Young women are seen as rights-holders in this context and the state as duty-bearers accountable to young women. Young women will also be at the centre of such an analysis, as determined by the centrality of participation and agency in rights language.</p>

## Notes

- 1 Commonwealth Youth Programme 2007.
- 2 Ibid., 34.
- 3 Ibid., 41.

## Reference

Commonwealth Youth Programme (2007), *The Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment 2007–2015*, Commonwealth Secretariat, London.

