

## Chapter 13

# Financial Investment and Youth Worker Remuneration

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### 13.1 Introduction

This chapter represents the minimal data that was received on a. State investment in youth work and b. youth worker remuneration. It was difficult for countries to assess investment in the profession, i.e. in education and training of youth workers, as well as investment in youth work delivery, due to the fact that it is not recognised as a distinct profession in most member states. Youth worker remuneration was equally hard to assess and compare across regions/member states.

### 13.2 Investment in youth work

The rationale for the inclusion of this section was to seek to achieve some understanding of investment in the education and training of youth workers, in quality assurance and regulation, and in the implementation of youth work programmes, training and qualifications for youth workers, including partnerships with universities for creating professional routes to practice.

Investment could be taken to refer to financial inputs, but it can also be considered as the deployment of expertise and the creation of relevant structures and mechanisms. Much of the latter considerations have already been examined.

As in other elements of the recognition of youth work as a profession, there was little continuity or evidence around investment in the education and training of youth workers, or investment in youth work programmes, processes and spaces. Few contexts have a clear, delineated or demarcated budget for youth work. Provinces, counties, local authorities, regions, states and even parishes often generate their own finances and/or receive block funding from central national funds, perhaps for all child and youth services. This is then syphoned into delegated areas, one or some of which could include youth work services.

For example, a number of local authorities in the UK have a budget for ‘integrated children’s services’. However, the definition of this will vary according to needs and the relationship with other services. It can encompass everything from early years (0 to 5), including health visiting and residential care to Child and Adolescent Mental Health services and care-leavers (up to the ages of 21 or 25). This said, much of the youth work footprint in the UK has widely been subject to commissioning and is now in the hands of the commercial sector, while remaining the responsibility of the local authority.

In other Commonwealth contexts, youth work finance replicates some of this, although there is at least as much variation as commonality. Broadly speaking, youth

work is underpinned by some State funding, social and charitable enterprises (NGO's), commercial interests and elements of international aid. This said, professionalisation is by and large dependent on State and educational partnerships.

The question asked in the baseline research with regard to budgets was:

*What percentage of the Youth Ministry/Youth portfolio agency budget is set aside for professionalizing the youth work sector including investments for education and training of youth workers and supporting sustained field practice with young people through youth clubs etc.*

It was, however, not possible to obtain meaningful, systematic data for this question across the sample countries. Therefore, the following narrative will summarise what is possible to elicit from the given data. It should be noted that without knowing the percentage of overall government expenditure on youth work components in relation to gross domestic product (GDP), gross national product (GNP), etc., it is hard to understand the significance of stark figures, and such comparisons have been beyond the scope of this study.

It should also be noted that budgets indicated as for youth activities are not always necessarily devoted to youth work-like activity (i.e. genuine youth engagement).

### 13.2.1 Africa

Overall, the key stakeholders in both the Government and non-governmental agencies working in the youth sector appear to have limited knowledge about funding allocations for youth work. Budgets allocated to the area of youth development and empowerment services were available in some countries, and in others, budgets allocated to the nodal youth agencies were available. It was not possible to draw conclusions on the adequacy of the budget, or how this enabled quality youth work/ youth engagement practices.

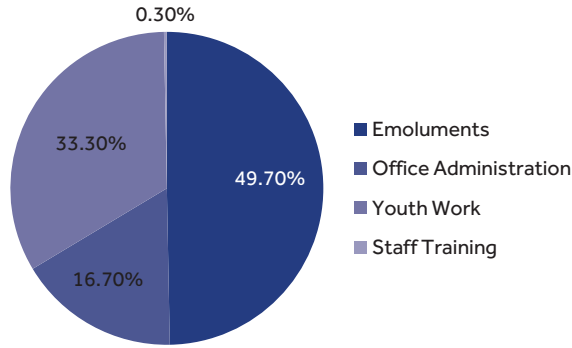
### 13.2.2 Asia

It was stated in the Asian baseline that this data is not available for any of the countries surveyed as there is no separate line item for youth work per se. While, budgets for the youth, youth and sport and other designated ministries with some responsibility for youth were made available, these are general, and not comparable, as each budget covers either a permutation of services, describes services in different ways or combines services in a distinctive manner. In some cases, anecdotal evidence was available, such as that in Sri Lanka the National Youth Services Council, a State youth development implementing agency, allocates funds for the training of their youth officers in the Commonwealth Diploma in Youth Development Work run by the Open University of Sri Lanka.

### 13.2.3 The Caribbean

While countries such as St Lucia, Dominica and St Vincent and the Grenadines were able to demonstrate budget allocations for youth services, in other contexts only

**Figure 13.1 Dominican Youth Development Division Annual Budget - Youth Work**



ministerial or department budgets were traceable. Dominica is the only country that specifically indicated budget allocations for youth work. Again, it was not possible to clearly ascertain what percentage of these budgets was actually invested in genuine youth youth/youth engagement practices.

The chart from Dominica shown in Figure 13.1 is the best example of an articulation of spending on youth work as opposed to salaries, administration and training.

### 13.2.4 Europe and Canada

In some contexts, particularly Europe and Canada, it was difficult to ascertain investments for youth work as this is often seen as an integrated service. Malta presented the clearest example of budgets for youth-related programmes and activities, as well as for grants to the Youth Agency. It would be safe to surmise that the distinct recognition of youth work as a professional category in Malta, and the accordance of legislative status, also creates a greater likelihood of specific budget breakdowns for youth work.

In the United Kingdom, despite local cuts, a relatively large budget has been allocated to the NCS, which is proving successful in removing barriers and providing opportunities for social development to young people in the UK.<sup>1</sup>

### 13.2.5 The Pacific

Australia spends significant funds on youth support services, education and health for young people and had a separate budget for youth affairs up to the budget period 2013–14. It is not clear how this will be demarcated in future budgets now that the new Cabinet has incorporated the previous Ministry of Youth into the Ministry of Education and the country no longer has a specific youth portfolio, an office for youth, or specific Ministry for youth. In New Zealand, budget allocations existed for the implementation of youth development, the Youth Development Partnership Fund, and service deliver to promote the interests of, and improve outcomes for, young people.

In most of the Pacific small islands, while agency-related budgets were available, it was not possible to obtain specific budgets for youth work.

### 13.3 Youth worker remuneration

Across the Commonwealth, youth worker salaries are calculated and expressed in a range of ways and numerical data did not allow for any form of adequate analysis.

However, what a youth worker earns is likely to be dictated by their employment circumstances; in some contexts, an NGO will not always provide a comparable salary to State employment, but in others NGOs might be providing higher salaries than the State, particularly country officers of international NGOs. Therefore, there will be disparity between NGOs, not only with regard to their origins (local or overseas) but also according to their reputation and how well they are established.

#### 13.3.1 Africa

Data on the remuneration for youth workers is not available for all the countries. Most of those working in the youth sector have qualifications in the social sciences rather than youth work and there are few systems to guide youth worker practice or salary. Even though South Africa and Zambia have made recognisable progress through the inclusion of youth work in national youth policies, deriving youth worker salaries for these countries has been difficult. This may indicate a need to ensure stronger measures to translate policy into practice.

Ghana reported that the remuneration for youth workers is decided via negotiation between the employer and the employee. This perspective appears to contradict the operations of most Governments, where remuneration in the public sector is pre-defined.

Zambia reported that it was difficult to stipulate youth worker salaries as the country had 'youth workers by default' and not by qualification, in spite of the policy commitments to youth work.

#### 13.3.2 Asia

Again, salary assessments were not possible, and no specific salary issues were raised.

#### 13.3.3 Caribbean

Salary assessments were not possible.

#### 13.3.4 Europe

In the UK for example, the figures quoted below relate to the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for youth and community workers. This body has for many years set the national framework used to grade and pay youth work jobs.

There are two grades within the JNC framework:

- youth support worker
- professional youth worker

The JNC recognises youth and community workers' qualifications which have been professionally approved by the Education Training Standards (ETS) Committee of the National Youth Agency. The NYA endorse youth support worker qualifications and have a process of professional validation for higher education programmes.

Many people work with young people without JNC-recognised qualifications, often with related qualifications or extensive experience of working with young people.

### JNC Terms and conditions

The JNC has also negotiated pay and agreed terms and conditions of service. It consisted of an employers' side and staff side and ensures that all views within the youth and community field were represented.

In December 2015 the JNC employers' representatives announced their intention to withdraw from national bargaining through the JNC and pursue the assimilation of youth and community staff to National Joint Council (NJC – the generic local government instrument) terms and conditions. It is likely this will undermine the professional standards of youth work education in the UK and have serious long-term implications for the sector (see National Youth Agency, UK (2017b)).

However, many local authorities and commercial employers are abandoning JNC guidelines as youth work becomes more and more a type of temporary and/or part-time form of employment and increasingly the supply of qualified youth workers outstrips employer demands.

The conditions of work and salaries for youth workers in many of these commercial/entrepreneurial (not philanthropic) manifestations of youth work described elsewhere in this report have been less than satisfactory. Moreover, work is often temporary, part-time and/or relatively derisory.

#### 13.3.5 The Pacific

In Australia, youth workers are remunerated under the Social and Community Services Employees (State) Award (AN120505). Pay rates change from 1 July each year, and rates are applied on 1 December of the same year.

An entry-level youth worker would be paid as a 'community services worker Grade 1' at AUS\$731.50 per week or AUS\$19.25 per hour. At the top end, a worker would be paid as a 'community services officer Grade 6 – Year 2' at AUS\$1701.74 per week or AUS\$44.78 per hour. This does not include overtime, shift or penalty rates. Compulsory retirement savings known as superannuation is 9.5 per cent of salary, and annual leave is four paid weeks per year.

In New Zealand rates of remuneration for youth work have decreased against the national average wage over the last 10 years, despite comparative evidence that youth workers are far more qualified than they were in 2006 (see Ara Taiohi, n.d.).

Employment as a youth worker tends to be precarious and short term in nature. The fledgling professional association for youth workers in New Zealand has placed a priority on improving youth workers' pay and conditions alongside general advocacy for the profession.

## 13.4 Conclusion

There is much more to be done in terms of youth work budgeting and understanding youth development budgets in relation to investments for professionalising youth work considering the eight dimensions referred to throughout this document. There is a greater likelihood, such as is the case in Malta, of definitive budget allocations for specific dimensions of professionalisation such as education and training, support to youth workers' associations, youth engagement practices as opposed to general youth programmes, youth work supervision and professional accreditation, etc., in contexts where there are clear policy commitments to recognising youth work as a profession.

## Note

- 1 To date, more than 200,000 young people have completed the programme, which is not only innovative in terms of course content, but it is also delivered by the third sector, creating valuable partnerships nationally. The UK Government spent £130.4 million on NCS in 2014/15 (figures for 2015/16 are at the time of writing unavailable). It is projected that the NCS will serve 300,000 young people a year at a cost £1.1bn by 2020.