

MODULE 5



Introducing and improving youth participation and YCA in your MA

This module is designed for the staff (and board) of the MA.

Introduction

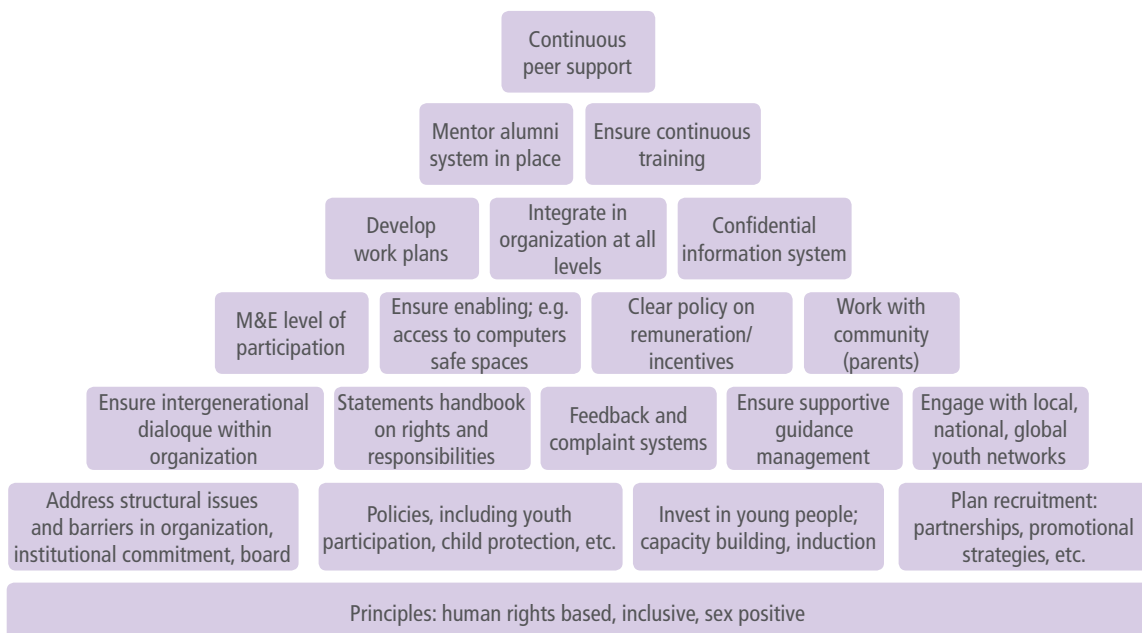
Just as with any other program, introducing or improving a youth-centred approach in your organisation should follow a program cycle approach, where organisations invest time and resources in design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and scaling up. First of all, though, we need to gain an understanding of which elements make up structured youth participation in a youth-centred MA. We will explore the various roles young volunteers can play in your organisation. This module has been written with staff and management of the MA in mind.

This module consists of 2 elements

1. The pyramid of structured youth participation in a youth-centred organisation
2. Stages of introduction and/or improvement of a YCA

1. The pyramid of structured youth participation in a youth-centred organisation

To ensure a well-structured and systematic introduction long-term adoption of youth participation in your MA, you will need to consider the various layers of youth participation. This pyramid shows how well-structured youth participation can thrive in a youth-centred organisation



The foundation of youth participation are the principles that underpin your youth-centred organisation. The next two rows up describe the management, policies and investment in young volunteers required for effective youth-centred organisation.

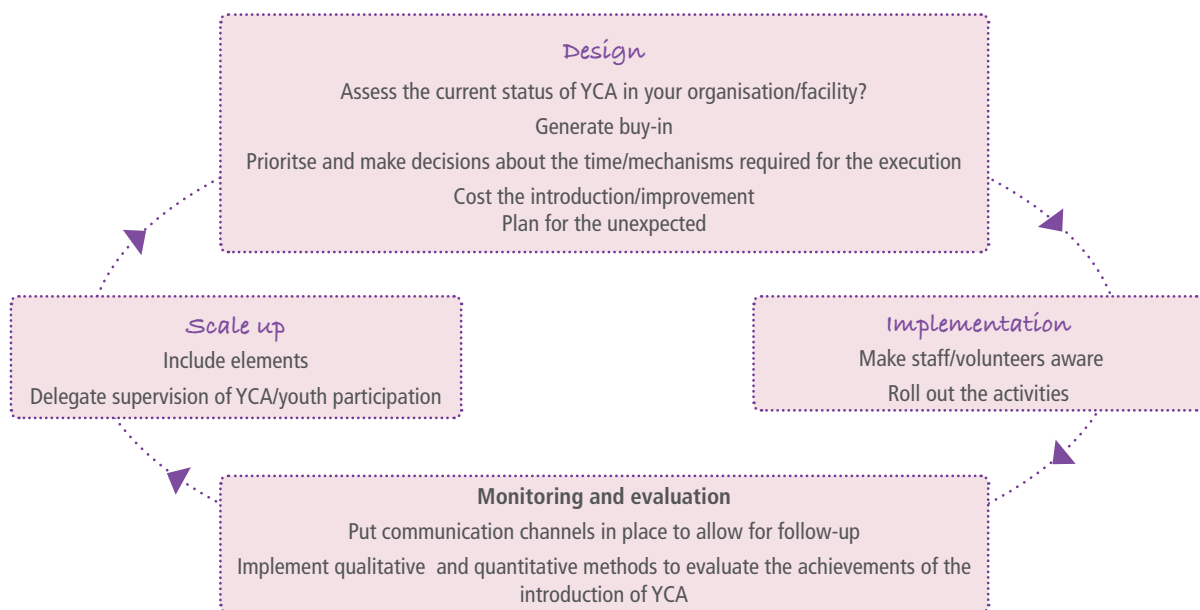
The next pair rows set out the elements needed to set youth participation into action.

The top two rows will secure the sustainability of youth participation in your organisation. Setting up a framework for 'aged-out' young volunteers who support new volunteers will ensure that institutional knowledge is not lost.

2. Stages in introduction and improvement of structured youth participation in a youth centred organisation



There are 4 phases for introducing and/or improving the YCA in your organisation: design, implementation, monitoring/evaluation, scaling up. These phases are not always executed consecutively (e.g. you monitor implement simultaneously) and the tasks proposed under each should be implemented flexibly, according to your organisation's needs and circumstances. The figure below provides a snapshot of your journey as an organisation interested in introducing and improving a YCA systematically. Below we provide a more detailed explanation of each step:



STEP 1. Design stage



Youth participation is not a miracle solution to strengthening your MA. However, it offers you the opportunity to work towards a more democratic, equal and inclusive organisation with effective programmes for young people. It is good to be open to a wide variety and diversity of young volunteers, so they can fulfil different roles according to their motivation and enthusiasm. (see module 2)

- **Orientation**

Orientation is a process for new employees and young volunteers (or all employees, and young volunteers when you want to bring about more radical changes in structure/strategic vision), aimed at sharing the basics of the organisation with regard to youth participation (mission, vision, main programmes and projects), structure/accountability and management lines, policies, protocols, health and safety standards, among others.

Critical components for the orientation process, to ensure to high quality youth participation include clearly communicating the commitment of the organisation to youth empowerment, how the YCA is integrated in the organisation's programmes/efforts, policies legal frameworks that guide the youth participation in your organisation. See Example of an introductory session to a Youth-Centred Approach (2 ½ -3 hours)

- **Self-assessment:**

Evaluating the standards against which the organisation assesses the status of youth participation and the YCA in the MA, as well as the development of a work plan with priorities for improvement, in consultation with young volunteers/youth group and other members of the team.

Self-assessment checklist

The following checklist aims to help review and assess to what extent and how well youth participation has been adopted as well as gauging the level of youth-centredness in the organisation. The checklist should be discussed by a team, a steering group, the ED staff members, young volunteers and other relevant stakeholders

The checklist is based on IPPF's lessons learned and international evidence on youth participation and empowerment. It includes programmatic, institutional and organisational sections. The checklist should not be used as a menu to choose from but should be seen as systematic assessment where all elements need to be in place to ensure success.

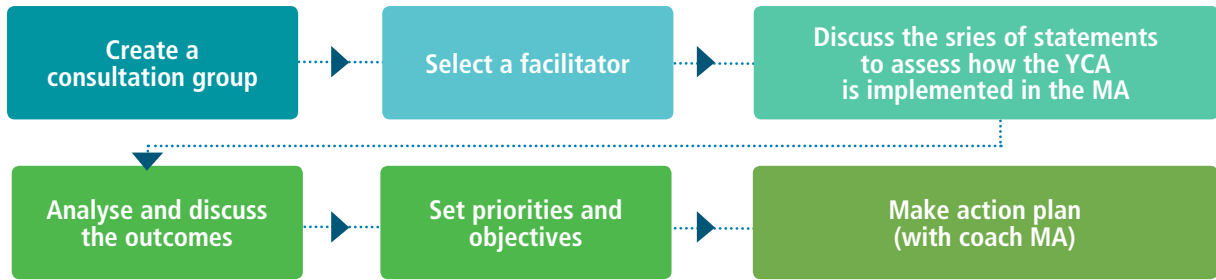
- MAs wishing to put a youth-centred approach into practice need to start from within. They must ensure that they are ready to place young people at the centre. An integral part of starting from young people's point of view is to review organisational structures, policies, budgeting, hierarchies and ways of working.
- The assessment works best when you bring together for a consultation representatives with as many different profiles as possible, for example medical/non-medical staff, educators, management, young volunteers, youth board members, volunteers, and experts from outside the organisation, such as representatives of the community or clients. One person needs to be the facilitator.
- By discussing and answering together the series of statements/questions, you can see which areas need more attention or have room for improvement.
- The assessment tool distinguishes between essential elements (red) and desirable elements (green) elements of the YCA

How does it work?

Please keep in mind the data on the current status of the YP in your MA (introductory section of the check-list, "Describe the YP in your MA") while completing the checklist. This will help you to develop actions tailored to your needs and context, and most of all to address some of the necessary issues in your MA before you start developing a sustainable YCA programme. For example, as a minimum standard, you will need to have some YP involved in your MA before proceeding.

In the checklist you will find statements/questions regarding the application of YCA in management and programmes. You will judge whether you are addressing, not addressing, or not sufficiently addressing the issue. The checklist also includes space for comments and actions to improve the situation. The group needs to through the questions and to provide answers by analysing and discussing why certain areas are not or not sufficiently in place.

Step by step guide for improving YCA



- When completing the check list please follow these guidelines:
- **If you answer “yes” to any check** you will need to provide some evidence in the Comments/Evidence box, describing what you already have in place for the specific component and why you think that this is sufficient.
- **If you tick the “needs improvement” box**, please provide an example in the Comments/Evidence box on what you currently have in place and suggest realistic future action for improving the component.
- **In case you answer “no”**, please explain in one sentence why this the case in the Comments/Evidence box. By doing so you will be able to propose a tangible action (in the “Action” box) that should improve the specific YCA component. Here you can also indicate that the specific component is not relevant for your MA (for example your MA doesn’t run youth friendly centres or doesn’t provides services).

Please see the example below.

Components	Yes	No	Needs improvement	Comments/evidence	Actions
Creating safe spaces There are youth-friendly places available, where young people can meet, network and support each other, both off- and online			X	The MA premises can be considered safe for YP, but a there is no specific youth friendly space where YP can meet. The MAs has established an online platform through which YP can safely communicate.	Consider the possibility of adapting a space were YP can meet at a time that is convenient for them.



Assessment tool

Describe the YP in your MA

1. Service delivery and (non-formal) education

	<i>You answer</i>	<i>What you can do to improve this</i>
How many young people are active in your MA?		
What do they usually do in your MA?		
How are they organized; how often do they meet?		
Is there a staff member responsible for the youth volunteers or youth programming?		

Components	Yes	No	Needs improvement	Comments/evidence	Actions
Service delivery					
There are youth-friendly places available, where young people can meet, network and support each other, both off- and online				The MA premises can be considered safe for YP, but there is no specific youth friendly space where YP can meet. The MAs has established an online platform through which YP can safely communicate.	Consider the possibility of adapting a space where YP can meet at a time that is convenient for them.
Young people are included in the design, implementation and evaluation of safe spaces					
The MA has an active approach to the implementation of safeguarding, child protection and youth policies					
Young people are included in the assessment of youth-friendliness of services and how they address the sexual health needs of young people					
Young people are included as peer providers of services (within the context of the law)					
CSE					
There is a standard training programme for young volunteers and/or peer educators/providers which includes all elements of IPPF's CSE framework					
Young people are included in the assessment of existing CSE programmes/activities					

Working in/with the community					
Young people are engaged in work with different communities, and opportunities are created for communities to work with young people					
A diverse range of young people are included at all levels of programming; there is representative diversity of age, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, ethnicity, socio-economic background, disabilities; underserved youth are included.					

2. Institutional/managerial components of a Youth Centred Approach

Components	Yes	No	Needs improvement	Comments/evidence	Actions
Governance					
The MA has an understanding of both the challenges and the opportunities of building an enabling environment for young people to participate					
Youth issues are included as priorities in strategic and annual plans					
Formal mechanisms exist for young people (of all genders and representative of their diversity) to participate in strategic and annual planning - including budgeting					
Young people participate in project and programme designs					

Policy and guidance are in place for young people's participation in governance, including an induction programme for young people and a commitment statement by all board members					
The MA is held accountable to comply with 20% youth representation target					

Human resources

The MA recruits staff members who are committed to young people's sexual rights and includes this requirement in advertisements/recruitments for all staff					
HR policies eliminate structural barriers to hiring young people, especially for entry-level positions					
There is a system in place to create opportunities for young staff members to take leadership and management roles					
Career planning and professional development is included in annual performance reviews, entry/exit interviews and staff objectives					
There is a system in place to support the personal and professional development of young volunteers (including employment, learning and training opportunities) to build a future workforce					
A coordinator and/or focal point is in place for the youth group					

Capacity building					
All new staff and volunteers receive an induction on young people, sexual rights and the youth-centred approach					
There is ongoing development of adult staff, to raise awareness of youth issues, to clarify values and reflect on their attitudes towards young people					
There is a mentorship programme in place between current and former young volunteers					
The MA has an apprenticeship/ work-training programme in place or it coordinates internship programmes with schools/universities					
There is a programme in place for supervision, mentoring and support for young volunteers					
Financial commitment and sustainability					
The MA commits core funding to youth programmes					
The MA integrates a focus on YCA s in all funding proposals for youth programmes					
The MA evaluates the impact that volunteering has on young people's lives in a systematic way and publicizes it					
The MA commits core funding and dedicated staff members to support the youth networks' development and annual running costs, including participation in (inter-)national events					
The MA has an alumni network for those who 'age out' of youth networks					

3. Advocacy

Components	Yes	No	Needs improvement	Comments/evidence	Actions
The MA documents and disseminates evidence-based approaches to addressing social norms and laws that discriminate against young people and prevent them from accessing services and education					
The MA has a mechanism to identify new policy initiatives and create opportunities for young people to work with local communities, legal organisations and policy makers.					
Young people and youth networks are engaged and mobilised in national advocacy initiatives					
Young people are involved in setting MA's advocacy priorities and leading coalitions					
Partnerships					
The MA has partnered with youth groups and youth networks, and are in national, regional and global advocacy initiatives					
The MA has alliances with youth-led or youth-focused organisations and networks inside and outside SRHR					

Once you have jointly prioritized what needs to be done to introduce or improve a structured YCA, you need to make work plans with steering group staff, board members and young volunteers. See [Work plan](#) after assessment exercise



Sometimes you will need to do some digging to get to the root cause why a certain element of the checklist has not been achieved. It is helpful to use the why-why-why technique, often used in quality of care programs.

The why-why-why method helps to determine the cause-effect relationships in a problem or a failure event. The method can be used whenever the real cause of a problem or situation is not clear. Using this method is a simple way to try solving a stated problem without a large detailed investigation that requires many resources. When problems involve human factors, this method is the least stressful on participants. It is supposedly a simple form of root cause analysis. By repeatedly asking the question, 'Why?' you peel away layers of issues and symptoms that can lead to the root cause. Most obvious explanations have further layers of underlying problems. However, it is never certain that you have found the root cause unless there is real evidence to confirm it. You start with a statement of the situation and ask why it occurred. You then turn the answer to the first question into a second Why question. The next answer becomes the third Why question and so on. By refusing to be satisfied with each answer you increase the odds of finding the underlying root cause of the event. Often 3-5 whys are enough to get to the root cause. Then you can tackle the root cause with a targeted action.

Example

The MA is not complying with the 20% youth representation target:

Why: Young volunteers don't seem to be interested, they think it is too difficult

Why: It's not clear to them what the task involves

Why: There are no youth-friendly materials about the role and responsibilities of being a board member and all the documents use jargon

Why: Board members didn't take the time and effort to support the new board member and help with documents

Solution: a board member and the ED should ensure more frequent informal communication with youth volunteers, establish a good induction process and support the youth board member by using language that is understandable for everyone.



STEP 2. Implementation

Generating buy-in



More structured youth participation may be new to your organisation, which means not everyone will be on board. Some people may be doubtful about the benefits of a YCA for the organisation or have concerns about the sustainability of the idea. Below, you'll find some tips for generating interest and commitment to a YCA in your organisation:

- Organize consultation meeting/sessions to share the motivation and objectives of your work plan. See: [Work plan](#) after assessment exercise and ask for feedback.

Meetings may have different objectives according to the target audience. A session with senior staff or the board may focus on ensuring support, financial and human resources and commitment to sustain the programme, whereas a session with programmatic staff and young volunteers may focus on helping them to understand how the program will translate into better services/health outcomes for youth beneficiaries and listening their views. A session with the youth group/young volunteers can focus on explaining, in more detail, how the work plan works in practice, and asking for practical recommendations.

Make decisions about time/mechanisms required for the execution of your work plan

There are many things to consider when introducing a more structured approach to youth participation. The following questions will help you to keep in mind critical considerations for the process:

- What is most feasible to work on? We recommend establishing a start and an expected end date for your intervention. For example, to expand young's representation on your board, to adhere to the accreditation criteria of the IPPF, you need to set a date by which time this will have happened. However, flexibility is a must! Including young people on the board necessitates a democratic process to choose a new member, it needs capacity building, preparation and a rule about the period within which board members must prepare the board meetings and give feedback to the youth group or young volunteers in the organisation. It is best to have a standardised scenario for this process.
- How will you communicate with the young volunteers/youth groups? It is preferable to have one/two contact people in your team who can be contacted by young volunteers. You need to be sure that this person has enough time to fulfil this task.

Tip: Regardless of who is give this responsibility, you need to keep in mind the expected and unexpected time dedication of a contact person and adjust their tasks in the facility to be able to carry their role with minimal disruption to other tasks.

- How do want to introduce a new youth participation intervention? As for any program, we recommend a pilot scheme. For example, if you want to start a peer education programme, do not go full scale, before trying out the program in one or two sites and adapting according to lessons learned.

STEP 3. Monitoring and evaluation



Some conditions are crucial for an organisation to become more youth-centred. This may help you to make your work plan:

They include:

- The board and management of the organisation appointing young people to positions of governance.

Progress markers:

- At least 20% young people on the governing board
- There is a youth focal point and this person is connected to the youth network
- Young people feel involved and empowered in decision-making processes
- Staff and/or volunteers, including young people, have articulated a vision for being youth-centred.

- Staff and young volunteers complete training on values, capabilities and skills relating to youth involvement and non-discrimination.

Progress markers:

- All staff and young volunteers in the organisation, including management and governing board members, have received training on being youth-centred
- Service provider partners and partners involved in implementing programmes have received training on being youth-centred
- A diverse range of young people feel listened to and valued by the organisation

- Situational analysis of youth sensitivity and involvement applied across all programmes, at all stages of the programme cycle.

Progress markers:

- Programme staff demonstrate an understanding of the youth demographic, and youth marginalisation in their communities
- Programmes have an action plan for involving young people across programmes

- The organisation has in place ethical protocols for working with young people, including child protection policies, to protect staff and young people.

Progress markers:

- Staff and volunteers are trained and are implementing the child protection policy
- There is a clear procedure for reviewing the child protection policy periodically
- Young people know how to report abuse and where to go for help

- Adults and young people have mutually respectful relationships, and young people are entrusted with substantive roles in programmatic work.

Progress markers:

- Young people (including through advisory groups or networks) participate in annual planning exercises, budgeting and evaluations
- Strategic and annual plans include youth issues as priorities
- Young people feel listened to and their recommendations are acted upon

- Young people, including young volunteers can access programmes within safe and participatory spaces

Progress markers:

- Young people can access the organisation's services/programmes. Young volunteers are consulted and involved in evaluation to ensure that the spaces where information and services are offered make them feel safe and comfortable. Young people feel empowered by programmes and services. The organisation uses contextually specific indicators that reflect local young people's vision of what it means to be youth-centred.

Progress markers:

- MA staff and/or volunteers, including young people, have articulated a vision for being youth-centred in different programmatic areas: comprehensive sexuality education, youth-friendly services and advocacy
- MA staff and/or volunteers, including young people, have agreed on a set of key indicators across programmes with mechanisms for monitoring and review
- Markers/indicators include qualitative measures of young people's wellbeing and experiences of sexual rights, including their interactions with services
- Monitoring and evaluation systems disaggregate data to understand the situation for marginalized young people

- There is a youth-centred strategic business plan that integrates youth participation across the organisation.

Progress markers:

- The business plan incorporates social objectives, including programme elements
- Putting young people at the centre should be mainstreamed across the entire organisation. It takes into account power relationships within and between generations and understands transitions for young people through life as they grow up in divergent cultural and political contexts. Realising youth sexual rights will also include working with adults and improving the overall context for delivering sexual and reproductive health services
- Young volunteers help develop and are implementing the business plan, including the progress markers and indicators

Follow up

Monitoring the program will ensure it achieves its objectives and ultimately helps you identify whether it is improving the experiences of young volunteers and your staff. To minimize the burden of preparing written products, we recommend following up via calls, email and/or regular meeting with youth group/young volunteers. Whatever the method chosen, ensure that key findings and solutions identified are documented. Examples of questions for young volunteers, managers/ staff and board members:



- Young volunteers: ask about achievements (e.g. ask for examples of how young people are making use of their new knowledge/skills/confidence), areas of concern, recommendations and required institutional support to continue the process. This should be a regular exercise, taking place at least once a year.
- Staff: ask about achievements, compliance with the original work plan developed with the staff/board, delays (and explanations), challenges and required institutional support to continue the process.
- Managers: ask about challenges observed, positive examples on how the program is contributing to improved quality (if any), areas of concern, required institutional support to continue the process.
- Board members: If there are (more) young board members, ask about changes in the process and outcomes of the board meeting and decision-making processes, areas of concern, required institutional support to continue the process.



Qualitative evaluation

To evaluate the process and impact of the YCA you can use the following evaluation forms:

Tool A. Evaluation form for young people (anonymous)

Role: young volunteers involved in the work of MA

1. Please score the following statements, according to your level of agreement
2. Provide additional comments about your experiences as a young volunteer in the program of the MA (what did you like, what could have worked better)

Components	Strongly agree	Partially agree	Partially disagree	Strongly disagree
Being a young volunteer has helped me to improve my capacity to work as part of a team of the MA				
The program has helped me grow				
Before participating in the programme, I was provided with sufficient information and I had time to consult my peers				
The program has helped me to increase my motivation to volunteer for the organisation				
The program was well planned				
I was matched with the right activities in the program				
The program could benefit other young volunteers in the organisation				
The program met my expectations				
The activities took me more time than expected				
I received the necessary support from the organisation/facility to participate in the program				
I would recommend the program to other young volunteers				
I have been given all the information related to the MA's policies, regulations, protocols etc.				
My role and responsibilities were clear and well described				
I felt safe to express my ideas and suggestions				

Tool B. In depth interview staff/ managers (anonymous)

Role: staff member/ manager of program with young volunteers

1. What were the most positive aspects of program?
2. What were the most negative aspects (if any) of the program?
3. How young volunteers could gain more from the program?
4. What is the expected impact of the young volunteer program, in your view, on the overall work of the organisation?
5. Is there anything the facility/organisation could have done better to ensure smooth running of the program?
6. Would you recommend this program to continue?

STEP 4. Sustaining and growing of youth participation int your organisation

In an ideal world, youth participation should get stronger with time, after making adjustments to incorporate feedback. However, scaling up is not always an option, due to resources, competing priorities and other factors. If you are considering how to sustain the existing program, scaling it up or letting the program go unsupervised, take into account the following:

Taking the youth group/young volunteers to new activities

- Keep in mind additional costs –if you have a very new kind of activity, e.g. include young people as researchers, it is possible that scaling up translates into having to create a team for the coordination of the program.

Letting the program go unsupervised

- Communicate your decision, the motivations for this decision and other measurements you plan to take to continue investing in young volunteers' participation, growth and quality improvement.
- Young people may decide to continue collaborating informally as they feel they have gained a lot from the process. If this is the case, ensure you provide as much support as possible, even if you are not planning to invest in monitoring and evaluation of these informal activities.

Barriers	Incentives
Desire to relax and "hang out"	Provide both space and time at the organisation for recreation, snacks, and talking with friends after school
Desire or need to work	Provide structured employment preparation, résumé writing and volunteer or paid work experience for young volunteers
Boredom or disinterest	Conduct an assessment of both participants and non-participants' activity interests
Transportation/Safety	Organize "buddy systems" of walkers
Family responsibilities	Remind families of oppourtunities for students to learn new skills

Source Harvard Family Research Project: Moving Beyond barriers: Attracting and Sustaining youth participation, 2004
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED483274.pdf>



Finally, the journey over time

Positive progress towards achieving IPPF's new vision of youth programming can already been seen. IPPF and most of its MAs already have a lot of credibility internationally when it comes to serving young people. We need to capitalise on this image. In addition to our long history of serving young people, promoting young people's meaningful participation and recognising and advocating for young people's sexual rights, many MAs have already begun the process of institutionalising youth leadership. Young board members, members of the governing council and volunteers are already shaping a future for IPPF programming, and should be supported and encouraged to lead the process of taking the MA from a youth-friendly to youth-centred organisation

Here is a checklist with a summary of the elements that are needed to implement a YCA in the MA:

	<i>Elements of Youth centred approach</i>	<i>What needs to be done</i>
1	Young people and peers at the centre	Understanding of diversity and sexual rights of Young people Young people as drivers for change
2	Gender equity/sexual diversity	Cross cutting in all activities
3	Spaces for participation	Capacity building Participation at all levels Recruitment Career paths for young volunteers
4	Families and building supportive communities	Understanding the root causes of stigma and discrimination and harmful practices Developing thought leadership on age-based discrimination and young people's rights Building alliances Youth branding Positive communication about young people
5	Building youth-friendly services	Keys to youth-friendly services implemented Positive approach to sexuality and sexual rights Client centred without seeing young people as risk takers Lifetime approach to sexuality Recognising young people as sexual rights holders Focus on non-sexually active young people IPES youth-friendly services module Youth centred standards Training and values clarifications tools on youth sexuality and sexual rights Using innovative approaches and new technologies to provide services

6	Comprehensive sexuality education	<p>From behavioural change to critical thinking and empowerment approach</p> <p>New empowerment and educational indicators and measurements of success</p> <p>Participatory teaching methods and critical engagement pedagogy</p> <p>New technologies</p>
7	Advocacy and broader policy context	<p>Young people as advocates</p> <p>Partnership with youth-led advocacy organisations</p> <p>Youth leaders setting advocacy priorities and leading coalitions</p> <p>Better connections between advocacy, Youth and sexual rights teams</p> <p>Addressing issues like age of consent</p>
8	Organisational development	<p>Increasing institutional commitment</p> <p>Supportive management and supervision</p> <p>Removing barriers to recruitment for young staff</p> <p>Creating clear support and career pathways for young staff</p> <p>New technologies for capacity building</p> <p>Active child protection policy</p>
9	Financial management	<p>Change in budgeting</p> <p>% core funding to Youth programming</p>

Some after-thoughts

- Changing is a complex process and needs to be clarified and communicated at all levels.
- It is a dynamic process and should have linkages between increasing coverage, keeping quality and increasing youth participation.
- Transforming and expanding youth programming needs to be based on learning how to scale up and on very efficient monitoring and evaluation.

Further reading



[Participate: The voice of young people in programmes and policies, 2008](#)

[Choice: Meaningful youth participation](#)

Example of an introductory session to a Youth-Centred Approach (2 ½ -3 hours)

Aim:

To introduce IPPF's Youth-Centred Approach

Objectives:

- Understand what IPPF's new youth-centred approach and its implementation mean within IPPF and the Member Associations
- Develop a common understanding and commitment to the most important elements of the youth-centred approach and its implementation
- Consider obstacles and challenges to implementing the approach and identify strategies and solutions to address these

Agenda:

Time	Activities
25 minutes	Introduction to aims & objectives of session Where are we now: analysis of MA's approach to young people
30 minutes	Introduction of youth-centred approach
60 minutes	Working groups: what can we change in programmes/ activities, management
20 minutes	Next steps

Participants:

Management, young volunteers, board members and programme staff
Ideally the session should be co-facilitated by a young volunteer

1. Welcome

Time: 10 minutes

- Introduction of participants
- Introduction of workshop

Steps:

- Getting to know each other exercise (if needed)
- Open the workshop and give a brief overview of what the workshop aims to do and for whom it is intended.
- Explain how the workshop will be conducted and that the participatory approach depends on people being willing to share their ideas and experiences. Introduce the background material. Explain the agenda. Answer any questions.

1.2: Where are we now?**Time:** 10-15 minutes**Material:** flipcharts**Steps:**

- On flipcharts participants give examples of the MA's 'youth-friendly' approach in its programmes and how much young people are participating in the MA
- Discuss in plenary

2. Exercise on young people as partners in programming**Aim:** To discuss how young volunteers and adults see each other as partners in the MA**Time:** 30 minutes**Steps:**

- Make two groups: ensure that there is a balance of gender and age
- The first group will have to mime the 3 main characteristics that are commonly attributed to adults by young people. The participants not taking part in the game will have to guess them.
- The second group will do the same, but representing the characteristics attributed to youth by adults.
- At the end of the exercise the facilitator highlights the fact that we make many assumptions about adults and young people.
- Facilitator should stress these key facts about making assumptions:
 - we need to be aware of when we are making them and;
 - we need to be careful that the assumptions we are making are not hindering our SRHR programmes with and for young people
- Discuss what youth involvement, youth participation and youth-adult partnership mean.
- Explore with the group what needs to be in place for equal partnership between young people and adults to succeed
- What are the characteristics they need to have in common; what is specific for adults/young people?

For example:

Adults	Young people	Both
Understanding of youth participation Inclusion in job description and induction in the organisation	Accessible facilities (computers etc.) Conducive management	Mutual respect Capacity building Clarity about roles and responsibilities

Talking points:

Usually there are many more ways for young people to be involved in an organisation than people have tried, and it can be useful to start thinking creatively about the many different opportunities organisations can make for young people to participate.

Make the point that participation is not about any one of these means, but about all of them. Different young people will be interested in being involved in different ways. While one young person might be happy to attend board meetings regularly, another one might only want the chance to give their views anonymously on services from time to time.

Other things you can bring into the discussion:

- Different levels of youth participation require different levels of responsibility from young people and adults
- Some forms of youth participation are forms of tokenism and are not considered youth participation
- Young people have different timetables and obligations to adults, and may want to participate in different ways.
- Be clear on the required commitment and accompanied responsibilities in youth-adult partnership from both adults and young people.
- Youth participation requires a shift in power within the structure of an organisation
- Youth participation requires training because of the different experiences and knowledge of youth and adults.
- It is important to be clear with the young people and adults on what will happen to their input.
- Representation – it is a very common to undermine young people on committees by saying they are there because of who they represent, rather than because of what they can bring to the committee.
- Turnover is not a negative thing and change is a dynamic process. (More young people always coming in, keeps things fresh, means moving with the times, not a single aging group).
- Decision-making groups need to make clear why decisions are made so young people don't feel that things are going on behind their backs.
- The balance of power between different groups e.g. being honest about who makes the final decision and how much power the young people really have.

Discuss: What strategies do we use in our organisation to deal with obstacles of cooperation between people?

- How do we cope with difficult cooperation partners?
- What did we learn about policy, management, activities, and capacity building for the future?

Discuss with participants what challenges their organisations face in youth participation in policy making (being part of the board), programme development (having a say in what is going to happen) and implementation (being responsible for the activities)

- How do we encourage partnerships between organisations in networks for SRHR?
- It is not only important to take into account the needs and problems of young people concerning youth participation, rather it should be seen as a right and a benefit to make policies and programs more successful.

2.1 Introduction to the Youth Centred Approach

Time: 15 minutes

Material: power point, Handouts

Steps:

- Short introduction on the role of young people in IPPF (policy/ values/ participation etc.); what is already there. (power point); Introduction of Youth-centred approach (power point); difference between youth friendly and youth centred (power point, handout)

Most MAs use three strategies of education, services and advocacy in their programmes for young people. What is often missing is the role of young people themselves. Youth participation is high on the agenda in IPPF and defined as a cross cutting issue in the new Strategic Framework. However, the recognition and appreciation of young people as individuals that are key to the implementation of youth programming is not explicit; the missing elements are young people who need to be understood in the context of their marginalisation in society, as well as the adults and decision-makers whose attitudes need to be changed to implement a rights-based approach successfully.

2.2 From programmes for young people to a youth-centred approach in practice

Aim: To gain understanding of the process of becoming more youth-centred and to become more aware of different strategies to do so

Time: 60 minutes

Material: Case studies

- Creating safe spaces for young people in the MA
- Working with the community
- Management

Steps:

- Divide participants into four groups; ask each group to discuss one of the case studies and do the following:
 - Identify how to make the programmes/management more youth-centred
 - Analyze the root cause of it not being youth-centred
 - Discuss various solutions
 - Propose a best solution
 - Determine 2-3 indicators for monitoring progress.
- Come back and discuss as a group
- Introduce assessment guide; divide participants and let them work on different parts of the assessment
- Give presentation; how to create a youth-centred business plan; benchmarks for progress

Talking points as introduction

- An MA's starting point on this journey depends on the context. The internal context: history, mission, priorities, structures and resources, as well as the external context: political, economic, social and cultural factors, as well as the level of stability or conflict. For example, MAs may have started out as providers of modern family planning technologies and illness-related reproductive health services, mainly to adult women at one time. Rather than a well-integrated youth-focused programme, the organisation takes a project approach, often driven by donor interests about what they think is important to fund. Donor dependency often creates implementation problems, including with staffing, due to disbursement delays. There may not be as much learning across projects, and institutionalisation of project benefits and results is likely to be difficult. Every organisation has its own unique context, and it is important to understand it deeply in order to plan pathways for change that are appropriate for the context.
- Organisational change and development is a long-term, complex process that usually occurs in a complex, changing and often very challenging contexts. Using the checklist can help the MA discuss and identify how they are working, what they want to change, and to choose mechanisms that will help them along their development journey. This approach to thinking, planning, management, programming and change does not focus on one issue or target group. It is a way of working that promotes organisational development and activities that are holistic and integrated. This assessment underscores the importance of youth participation and youth rights. However, this is not possible if the organisation trying to make these changes does not have a useful way of examining how it is working, why it is working and what constellation of changes need to happen to become a sustainable, successful, rights-based SRH service organisation.

- Youth programmes need to be driven by the organisation, based on their organisational strategies and business models. Sustainability will be achieved when these programmes are designed in context. If they are designed globally, an in-depth adaptation exercise is needed at MA level at inception to adapt the objectives, indicators and activities. These exercises should be inclusive and participatory. This rights-based, inclusive approach strengthens all types of programming, keeping context and the participation of the direct beneficiaries at its centre.

Moving to a youth-centred approach is a complex process, which needs to be clarified and communicated at all levels.

- It is a dynamic process and should have linkages between increasing coverage, keeping quality and increasing youth participation.
- There may be a conflict between the how and where to transform organisational thinking to expand each of quality, coverage and impact.
- Transforming and expanding youth programming needs to be based on learning how to scale up and on very efficient monitoring and evaluation.

3. Next steps

Aims: to discuss with the participants the next steps for introducing a youth-centred approach and

- What needs to happen first– concrete action points?
- Who needs to be involved and how?
- What support is required?

Case studies (session 2.2.)

Case studies

Case study 1: *Creating safe spaces in a youth centred approach*

You are a volunteer of 16 years old. You are invited to be part of an advisory committee to organise World AIDs day. You attend the meeting and realise that everyone in the room is much older than you. You seem to be recognised as a 'new voice'. However, you feel that your ideas are being dismissed as unrealistic by staff and other more experienced youth volunteers.

- What are your dilemmas?
- What can you do to have your voice heard?
- What is needed to create a safe space for you?

Case study 2: *Working with the community using a youth-centred approach*

You are a staff member of the MA and project leader of a successful peer education programme. You hold a meeting with the peer educators twice a month. Today you want to have a meeting with the peer educators to work with the community to raise awareness and promote CSE in school. Some peer educators are not very happy about this because they fear that religious leaders and other stakeholder will turn against them. It also seems that they need a lot of support for this new task.

- What are the challenges the staff member faces in introducing CSE awareness?
- How could the staff member motivate the peer educators to get involved in the programme?
- What support do the peer educators need to work with religious leaders and other stakeholders?

Case study 3: *Management of youth group*

You are the ED of the MA. Your youth group in your MA has been very successful. that the committed group works very well with the staff. Lately, however, the members of the youth group have become less dedicated and are leaving because they feel that there is no future for them in the organisation. This also has an impact on the staff and their work with the youth group.

- Which challenges are you are facing?
- What can you do to motivate youth group members to stay on?
- How can you keep the staff motivated?

Case study 4: *Self-organized youth group*

You are a member of a youth group of 7 young volunteers. You meet twice a month and you usually work with the staff member from your MA. The youth volunteers are providing peer education and distributing Information Communication and Education materials. Now you have been invited to take part in the workshop for development of a new organisational strategy. You haven't received any agenda, you are not informed about your role and no one from the youth group has any experience in developing strategic documents. The group is also having difficulties in selecting the right representative and most of the members do not feel comfortable with participating at the strategy workshop. up until this point, all the members signed up for activities if they were available and so far the group hasn't elected a representative – a coordinator.

- What would you ask from the MA staff?
- What would you suggest to other members? Should the Youth Group take or reject this opportunity?
- What kind of mechanism you would suggest to the youth group regarding the election of representative for the strategy planning or representatives for forthcoming events?

Case study 5: *Motivating volunteers*

You are a young person who wants to apply for a conference, but you need a recommendation letter from your ED. Your ED recognizes the value of your work and agrees to recommend you as youth representative from your MA. However, the ED has one small condition. They say that if you are admitted to the conference, you will need to prepare a report for the other youth members; share the conference resources with staff and youth volunteers and take responsibility for organising the educational sessions on CSE for the next 3 months.

- What are the challenges you are facing?
- Which of the tasks that you need to implement after the conference are acceptable?
- What would you do?

Case study 6: *Young people in decision making*

Young people should be involved in strategy planning, programme development, monitoring and evaluation reporting. You can start involving young people in developing the aspects of the programme that concern them and their peers. In providing meaningful participation, you need to take in consideration the following aspects:

- inform the youth group in timely manner about the process of programme development
- if they don't have previous experience, provide some capacity building
- be sure that they have access to all the background information as the other staff members
- leave some time for the youth group to reflect and develop its opinion so the elected representative represents the collective voice of the group
- inform them that they are equal participants and not external observers and that the decisions about the programme will be reached in consensus

Work plan after assessment exercise

	Activity	Responsible	Time line
Programming			
Safe spaces			
CSE			
Services			
Working with the community			
Advocacy			
Other			

Management			
Institutional commitment/policies			
HR			
Capacity building			

Goal: e.g. Increase participation in governance of MA	Activity: e.g. Increase number of young board members
How will this goal benefit young volunteers/MA?	
What are the challenges?	
What is the step-by-step approach to achieving the goal?	
What resources are available?	
What is the timeline?	
What is the responsibility of the young volunteer in making this happen?	
What is the responsibility of the MA in making this happen?	

