TACKLING
POVERTY
TOGETHER

Keeping the Promise:

A toolkit for young people to assess national policies for youth in Ghana

Keeping the Promise:

A toolkit for young people to assess national policies for youth in Ghana

Writing and Coordination Team

Emmanuel Edudzie
(Editor and Project Manager)

Kwesi Anderson Nketsia   Yussif Abdul-Mumim
Adwoa Yeboah Bosompem-Twum   Emmanuel Duker
Sally Appiagyei-Frimpong   Adam Abdul-Rashid

Peer Reviewers

Sidney Hushie   **Isaac Ampomah**
Global Youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS   Concern Health Education Project
Ishmael Fianu   **Matthew Ewusi Nyarkoh**
Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana   Youth for Democracy
Mohammed Awal   **Isaac Twumasi Ampofo**
United for Development   Richbone Initiative Foundation
Mohammed Salma   **Leonard Ackom**
Youth Action Movement   Ghana MDGs Campaign Coalition
Samuel Kissi   **Prosper Yaw Hoetu**
Curious Minds   Youth Network for Human Rights and Democracy
Simon Eyram Tsike –Sossah   **Joyce Laryea**
Abusua Foundation   Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana
Doriane Pressé
Volunteer at Abusua Foundation

Technical Readers and Advisory Team

Julie Larsen   **Bob Huber**
Social Development Specialist   UN DESA, New York

Artemy Izmestiev   **Robert Mensah**
UNDP, Dushanbe   UNFPA, Accra

Mwaura Kaara   **Sher Verick**
UNMC, Nairobi   ILO, Geneva

Christine Mangale   **Kwabia Boateng**
LOWC, New York   UN ECA, Addis Ababa

KEEPING THE PROMISE:
A toolkit for young people to assess national policies for youth in Ghana

An initiative of the Tackling Poverty Together (TPT) project, jointly undertaken by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations (LSU), in collaboration with the UN Population Fund (UNFPA)

Table of Contents

Acknowledgement

Foreword

The idea of a toolkit for assessing national policies for youth in Ghana emerged from youth participants of a Youth & Poverty Reduction Strategies" E-Course. As a component of the TPT project, the E-Course took place from January to March 2009, involved over 150 participants and mentors, and was coordinated by UN-DESA and UNFPA. Participants gained insight into the need for youth participation in the development and implementation of national development policies and programmes. As part of activities outlined in an action plan developed by all participants at the end of the e-course, this toolkit was proposed to help youth in monitoring those national development policies and programmes that affect them.

All over the world, there is growing recognition of the importance of youth participation in development at all levels. Meaningful youth participation is crucial for achieving sustainable development and peace among nations. Young people are invaluable partners for social development, bringing creativity, enthusiasm and leadership to the table. Permanent and profound damage is caused when their contributions are excluded.

Undoubtedly, Ghana is a country of the young, with more than 70% of the total population below the age of 35 (source: Ghana 2000 Population & Housing Census). Any strategic policy for social, political and economic development in the country must recognize the importance of young people, especially in promoting social progress, reducing political tension and maximizing economic performance. The pace, depth and scope of the country's development depend on how well its youth resources are nurtured, deployed and utilised.

The challenge for all stakeholders therefore is to generate sufficient opportunities for all young people to participate meaningfully in the development process at all levels – doing so under conditions of freedom, security, equality and human dignity.

We hope that this toolkit will spur more efforts in youth participation by enabling young people to take individual or group action, at local, regional and national levels in measuring progress in youth policies. In this toolkit, young people would also have access to essential pillars and strategies for effective advocacy and partnership building.

Altogether, we trust that when more and more young people engage in holding government (both local and central) accountable to their promise, we would have achieved a more inclusive, participatory and sustainable development in Ghana.

Keep the promise!

Emmanuel Edudzie
Project Manager

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

- The African Youth Charter of the Africa Union defines 'youth' or 'young people' as persons within the ages of 15 and 35 years.

- The draft National Youth Policy of Ghana in conformity with the African Youth Charter also defines 'youth' as persons between the ages of 15 and 35 years.

- For the purpose of this toolkit, the above definition of 'youth' as persons between the ages of 15 and 35 years is adopted. However, considering the transitional nature of youth and the influence of social, economic, political, cultural and others factors, this definition does not exclude youth or young people below and above the specified age-range who may be engaged in this transition.

Purpose of the
TOOLKIT

This Toolkit is meant for young people, youth-led and youth-serving organisations at local and national levels as a tool for assessing national progress in reaching youth development priorities contained in the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY). As a member of the United Nations, Ghana joined other nations to commit themselves to undertake actions in 15 priority areas of WPAY to better the lives of youth. One key area of work for youth organisations in Ghana is thus to monitor government progress in realising these commitments to young people.

Young people and their organisations will particularly find this Toolkit as a relevant starting point for determining what government and development partners have done to improve the living conditions of young people across the country.

Aside from offering concrete ways of measuring progress, the Toolkit also provides essential pillars for involving youth, and strategies for effective advocacy and partnership building.

The Toolkit can also be used as a tool for prioritising the work of youth organisations and initiating local and national level actions.

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

General Assembly resolution A/RES/58/133 passed in November 2003 recognises the importance of full and effective participation of youth and youth organizations at the local, national, regional and international levels in promoting and implementing the World Programme of Action for Youth and in evaluating the progress achieved and the obstacles encountered in its implementation.

2

The World Programme of Action for Youth:
A Blueprint for Action

In 1995, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the World Programme of Action for the Youth (WPAY) as an international strategy for addressing more effectively the problems of young women and men and to increase opportunities for their participation in society. This was the international community's response to the challenges facing youth, recognising that the imagination, ideals and energies of young women and men are vital for the continuing development of the societies in which they live.

Through WPAY, governments committed to be more responsive to the aspirations of youth for a better world, as well as to the demands of youth to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

The WPAY covered an initial ten priority areas. Subsequently, the United Nations General Assembly in 2003 adopted five additional areas. In each of these areas, the WPAY looks in-depth at the nature of the challenges and presents proposals for action. The priority areas are interrelated and intrinsically linked.

The WPAY has been established for governments to use as blueprints in their youth development efforts.

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Young people everywhere:

- Have aspirations and want to participate fully in the lives of their societies
- Are key agents for social change, economic development and technological innovation
- Should live under conditions that encourage their imagination, ideals, energy and vision to flourish to the benefit of their societies
- Are confronted by a paradox: to seek to be integrated into the existing society and to serve as a force to transform it

(Source: www.un.org)

What is
Monitoring?

Monitoring can be defined as a continual and systematic examination of all aspects of a programme, project or event. It is used to measure progress in relation to the expected or desired outputs. Through monitoring, it is possible to ensure that one's objectives are attained in an effective and efficient way. Monitoring is used to identify successes and problems as early as possible (in relation to programmes or projects), in order to make any necessary corrections.

Monitoring systems are thus used to collect information for daily programme or project decisions such as use of resources, identification of achievements and constraints. Monitoring systems can also help improve accountability to donors, partners and target group to show progress made, resource allocation, and encourage wide participation.

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

The 15 WPAY priority areas are:

1. Education
2. Employment
3. Hunger
4. Poverty
5. The environment
6. Drug abuse
7. Juvenile delinquency
8. Leisure-time activities
9. Girls and young women
10. The full and effective participation of youth in the life of society and in decision-making
11. Globalization
12. Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
13. HIV/AIDS
14. Conflict prevention
15. Intergenerational relations

Monitoring
Steps

Monitoring involves many different steps in achieving desired results. For the purpose of this toolkit, the following key steps are reviewed:

- *What is the monitoring for?* It is important to know beforehand why you are undertaking a monitoring exercise. In this case, the purpose of the monitoring is to assess Ghana's progress towards achieving the goals agreed upon in WPAY.

- *Who will do it?* Identify who in your organisation or group will undertake the monitoring. It might be good to assemble a team of people who can work together, and divide the key tasks. If necessary, provide training to the team members on gathering information and keeping records.

- *Preparations.* Make sure you develop a process for collecting information before you begin. It is important to gather relevant background information on national policies and programmes before you begin, and to set objectives for your monitoring exercise.

- *Information collection.* There are many different ways to gather information, and answer the key questions listed in Section Three. These include: group meetings, individual interviews, and field visits.

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

We monitor in order to:

- Measure progress
- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Assess effectiveness
- Determine the costs and benefits
- Collect information
- Share experiences
- Improve effectiveness
- Allow for better planning
- Be accountable to stakeholders

8

Monitoring
Steps

- *Analysis of information.* After you have gathered the information, make sure you analyse it. Depending on your analytical capacity, the analysis could be done by entering collected information into a computer-based system, or by summarising findings.

- *Report preparation.* The next step then includes preparing a report based on your results. The report should include recommendations for actions to take, based on your results. It is important to write the report in a reader-friendly format, possibly with graphics.

- *Follow up.* Identify ways to share your results with others, and implement the recommendations.

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Participatory monitoring means making sure that the target group of the policies and programmes are themselves participating in the monitoring of actions that affect them. For the purpose of this Toolkit, this means making sure that young people themselves are assisting in assessing how the country's policies and programmes are affecting them, and to what extent meeting their needs.

Gathering
Information

Collecting information is the central element of the monitoring process. It includes analysing existing available information as well as gathering new information though a variety of methods. There is no one single right way to gather your information and it can often be helpful to use several methods. Some methods include:

- Focus group discussions with young people.

A focus group is an informal discussion to obtain opinions from a predetermined but limited group of people who have special knowledge about the target population's problems and needs. In this case, that group is young people.

In order to conduct a focus group, you should have a moderator and an assistant moderator. The moderator and assistant moderator will work together to try to obtain responses from everyone in the group, and make sure that everyone's opinion is respected. The moderator's duties should include setting group guidelines such as time limits, to direct the conversation and keep it flowing smoothly, and to communicate clearly within the group. The assistant moderator should take notes, make sure the tape recorder (if used) is working correctly, arrange all the logistics (location, seating, refreshments etc), and assist the moderator in asking questions of participants.

Ideally, the focus group should have 6 to 10 participants, and last maximum two hours. It is important to make sure that a comfortable location has been chosen, with the participants seated in a circle, to encourage discussion. It is also suggested that a topic guide be developed, for use during the focus group. The topic guide lists issues to be covered during the focus group, and is useful for keeping the discussion focused, and giving some logical sequence to the discussion.

It is helpful if the moderator and assistant moderator have received formal or informal training on moderating skills. If no one in your organisation has, your team may wish to read up on moderating skills before beginning any focus groups.

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Monitoring objectives for the purpose of this Toolkit refer to assessing progress in achieving the goals of WPAY.

The purpose of your monitoring exercises therefore may include to:

- Assess if programme/project activities are being carried out as planned.
- Identify any problems.
- Locate strengths and opportunities.
- Monitor changes in the target population (youth)
- Assess the progress of the activities in reaching their objectives

- Individual interviews with young people.

Personal interviews can also be valuable, to obtain in-depth information from an individual. The person conducting the interview may wish to tape record it, in order to be able to focus more on the person during the interview, and not worry about getting everything written on paper. Always remember to ask permission before tape recording someone.

- Individual interviews with government or civil society policy-makers and programme managers.

In-depth interviews with policy-makers and programme managers from the government and civil society can also be conducted. They can provide insight on how a programme or project is being implemented, its successes and constraints.

- Review of existing documentation

It is important to review existing documentation, in order to avoid duplication of efforts, and to save your organisation's resources. It may be useful to put together a team of people who can collect relevant information from government ministries, NGOs and other organisations. This information can then be reviewed, analysed and summarized. After reviewing existing information, it will be easier to determine what additional information you may wish to find out.

- Field visits to project sites

Conducting a field visit is a good method for finding out first-hand about the impact of a programme or project. During a field visit, the programme manager, and other programme staff, can be informally interviewed. If the project is providing direct services to young people, it will also be helpful to interview them as well.

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Section Three of this Toolkit provides you with key questions for measuring progress in achieving the goals of WPAY.

The key questions can be used to measure both process (how the policy or programme has been implemented) as well as impact (the change which has resulted from the policy or programme).

Using
Case Studies

Case studies can be used to highlight 'good practices' which are happening at the local or national level. These good practices can occur in a programme, project or an organisation. The purpose of drafting good practice case studies is to highlight the achievements that have been made in order that others can learn from the example, and perhaps even replicate parts of it for their context. A good practice thus allows for lessons learned, reflection and analysis of what has been and hasn't worked, and why. As such, case studies are valuable tools!

Case studies can vary in length, depending on the level of detail. Here is a sample outline of a good case study:

- *Organisational information:* Include the organisational profile (the type of organisation it is, its structure and size, when it was established, what its constituency is, and the staff resources etc), the organisational goals and values, and describe the organisation's major areas of activity and achievements.

- *The project/programme/policy model being highlighted:* Include the target population, target area, duration and nature of activities, describe the specific problem to be addressed by the model, and include the specific objectives, intended outputs, and activities.

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

In order to begin to gather information, it is important to think about:

- What information is needed?
- Where can the information be found?
- What methods could be used for collection?
- What information is available already?
- How will the information be analyzed?
- What skills and technical expertise are needed to gather and analyze the information?

The evaluation: why is this model considered a good practice. Consider including the following:

- Responsiveness/relevance: how does the model contribute to overall national efforts being undertaken? How is it in line with WPAY and other international instruments? How does the model assess and reflect the needs of the target group?

- Efficiency: how are resources (financial, human, and local) used in an effective and timely manner? Is the model flexible and able to adapt to the changing conditions? Are other actors (government, NGO, private sector) involved in the planning?

- Innovation: does the model encourage young people to participate? Does it attempt to break away from conventional top-town approaches? Does it use methods and tools available in the national/local contexts?

- Sustainability: how is the organisation able to develop and manage the requisite human resources to sustain its projects and develop new ones? How is the organisation able to mobilise on a continuous basis, social, technical and community support (including all types of in-kind support) for its programmes/projects? What is the local commitment (financial, human, in-kind) for the model? How will the model continue to be effective and relevant in the medium to long-term? How will the model be able to adapt to changing environments? To what extent are there links with other national/local organisations (governmental and NGOs etc)?

- Impact: in what ways has the model made a difference to the quality of life of young people? To what extent has the model increased institutional or personal capacity (knowledge, skills and attributes)? To what extent has the model produced the desired outcomes or reached its objectives?

Conclusion: summarise the main points in one paragraph, describe what factors are necessary for the model to be replicated elsewhere and/or scaled up, as well as lessons learned.

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Criteria for good practices include:

- Ethical soundness: does not break principles of social development work (i.e. equality, distributive justice, tolerance).

- Effectiveness: succeeds in producing the desired outcomes and reaching objectives.

- Relevance: responds to a particular issue/context (include cultural, social and political factors).

- Efficiency: produces desired outcomes/effects with a minimum of resources (i.e. financial, human).

- Innovation: contains unique features that distinguish it from previous work.

- Sustainability: demonstrates an ability to continue being effective/relevant in the medium to long term.

For the purpose of monitoring the WPAY, here are some ideas for developing short case studies. The ideas provided in the form of questions under each cluster should serve only as a guide; you may use these ideas wholly or partially, or you can make up your own.

Idea #1: National mechanisms for youth development

- What sort of budgetary allocations are made for youth development programmes? How does this compare with other social priorities?
- Does a youth policy exist in your country? Is it cross-sectoral?
- Does it have specific, time-bound objectives? What about evaluation mechanisms?
- What type of youth department or youth ministry exists in your country?
- How does it coordinate with other ministries? Is it cross-sectoral?
- Does the youth department/ministry conduct research and data collection on youth-related issues? How are these findings disseminated?
- What types of national coordinating mechanisms exist? How are youth policies integrated with youth programmes?
- What is the involvement and participation of youth and youth organisations in the existing institutions and mechanisms?
- What have been the successes and constraints?

Idea #2: Highlighting a youth organisation

- What makes this particular organisation worthwhile?
- Does this organisation fully represent all youth? Is it gender balanced?
- How does this organisation work with the government and NGOs?
- What types of programmes does this organisation implement?
- What have been the successes and constraints?

Idea #3: Highlighting a youth project

- What makes this particular project worthwhile?
- Does this project take into consideration gender concerns?
- How do youth participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the project?
- How does this project fit in to the overall government or NGO programme?
- What have been the successes and constraints?

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

This toolkit is the outcome of collective efforts by various youth and stakeholder consultations.

A *Writing and Coordination Team* comprising members of TPT-Ghana developed the zero-draft text for the toolkit, with support from selected technical experts.

Over a period of three months, hundreds of young people made written and/or oral contributions to enhance the zero-draft through various channels; online consultations and review workshops. Based on the massive input received, a new draft was developed and re-circulated for another round of review. A team of selected *Peer Reviewers* participated in the final review workshop to validate the final draft version of the toolkit, including content, design, formatting and style.

The project benefited tremendously from the guidance and expertise of a *Technical Readers and Advisory Team* which was set-up to match the youth effort for the development of the toolkit.

This section outlines all the 15 priority areas and their respective actions agreed upon by governments in the WPAY. It then provides possible key questions, using the WPAY text itself as well as other ideas for determining what actions have so far been taken in Ghana towards reaching the goals of WPAY. These are just guidelines and suggestions to help carryout your assessment and while they are quite comprehensive, you may wish to add others, especially if there are specific policies or programmes in your local area that are not covered here.

When undertaking your monitoring exercise and considering these questions, keep in mind the need to encourage greater participation and action, for you and your organisation. Remember, Government is not solely responsible for implementing the WPAY; the task belongs to everyone in society. So, when conducting your monitoring exercises, ask yourself the following questions throughout the process, "What do I think should be done about this?", and "What can I do to make things better?" And then plan to act on your answers!

We have not included "gender equality" and "youth participation" for each question, for example, although these are both areas to consider when monitoring policies and programmes.

It is not expected that you will review each goal in-depth, and you should not feel that you have to answer each question. Rather, it is recommended that you review a few of the priority areas, which are of most concern to you. You may wish to ask yourself the following questions before starting the evaluation:

- Which of the 15 areas do you consider to be a top priority in

21

your district or region, or in Ghana as a whole?

- Which of the areas interest you? In which area do you consider yourself to be knowledgeable?

In addition, when conducting your assessment, you may want to consider the following key questions for each area:

- To which young people is this topic of importance (including considerations such as age, gender, urban/rural, and ethnic background)?

- Is there a national policy document on the topic? If yes, is this policy being implemented? By whom? How?

- Who are the main stakeholders in this field (including national NGOs, international NGOs, government agencies, and businesses)?

- Are young people included in the decision-making processes?

- Is there cooperation between the government and youth organisations in this area?

- What additional actions do you think your country should undertake in this area?

Action 1:

> *Governments agreed to "Improving the level of basic education, skill training and literacy among youth"*

EDUCATION FOR ALL

- What steps has the government taken in promoting education for all young people in Ghana?

- Has the school curriculum been reformed since the WPAY was adopted in 1995? If so, what have been the major changes? What have been the successes and constraints?

- Does the school curriculum promote gender equality? Does it embrace a multi-ethnic society?

- In what ways has the government made a commitment to lifelong education? What about distance education?

- Is non-formal education promoted by the government? Is it recognized by employers?

- Is education at all levels equally accessible for young people regardless of their economic status?

- Have NGOs and youth organisations been active in promoting education for youth? What about in youth-to-youth (peer education) programmes?

- In what ways has the government targeted particular groups (e.g. street children, poor children, youth with disabilities) in education efforts?

- What are the factors that hinder young people from going to or remaining in school?

23

Action 2:
Governments agreed to promoting "Cultural heritage and contemporary patterns of society"

Action 3:
Governments agreed to "Promoting mutual respect and understanding and the ideals of peace, solidarity and tolerance among youth"

PROMOTING CULTURAL HERITAGE, DIVERSITY AND PEACE

- Do programmes exist which educate youth on their own cultural heritage and that of other societies, including minority groups?

- Are there government or NGO exchange programmes and youth camps, which promote cultural diversity and/or cultural heritage? How accessible are these programmes? What about programmes for minority or indigenous youth?

- Are conflict resolution and peace building classes part of the school curriculum? If so, at what levels? Are courses government or NGO managed?

- How does the school curriculum promote cultural diversity? How is peace education taught in schools? Are there government and NGO programmes?

Action 4:
Governments agreed to providing "Vocational and professional training"

ACCESSING VOCATIONAL TRAINING

- What types of vocational and technical training are available to young people in Ghana? Are these government or NGO programmes? What is the job-placement rate for

these programmes? What have been the successes and constraints?

- Are vocational and technical training programmes available for all youth in Ghana? Are they equally accessible to all youth? Do they provide young people with the necessary skills to succeed in the job market? What are constraints to accessing these training programmes?

- Are government services available to assist young people in entering the job market after their education or vocational training?

Action 5:
Governments agreed to "Promoting human rights education"

ADVANCING HUMAN RIGHTS

- Is human rights education taught in schools? What type of curriculum is taught? At what levels?

- Do youth organisations participate in the planning, implementation and reporting procedures linked to human rights education?

Action 6:
Governments agreed to promoting "Training for enterprise programmes"

PROMOTING ENTERPRISE TRAINING

- What types of training programmes exist for individual and cooperative enterprises? Are they managed by governments or NGOs?

- How are young people encouraged as entrepreneurs? What types of support are available? What are the constraints?

Action 7:
Governments agreed to providing "Infrastructure for training youth workers and youth leaders"

ACCESSING TRAINING PROGRAMMES

- What government programmes are available for training youth workers and youth leaders? Are these programmes equally accessible for young women and young men? What have been the successes and constraints?

- What government programmes exist for providing young people with on-the-job training?

- Are there programmes managed by NGOs? What types?

- What types of internship and/or volunteer programmes exist for youth?

- How are young people involved in the development and implementation of programmes?

Action 1:
Governments agreed to promoting "Opportunities for self-employment"

Action 2:
Governments agreed to providing "Employment opportunities for specific groups of young people"

PROMOTING SELF-EMPLOYMENT

- What types of grant schemes are available for youth in Ghana? Are these government or NGO managed? What have been the successes and constraints?

- In what ways does the government promote youth enterprise/employment? What about NGO programmes? How is the business sector involved in such schemes?

- As part of its youth employment efforts, how does the government target young women, young people with disabilities, street children and indigenous youth?

- How are youth organisations and young people themselves involved in the planning and implementation of youth employment programmes?

Action 3:
Governments agreed to providing "Voluntary community services involving youth"

ENCOURAGING VOLUNTARY SERVICE

- What types of voluntary service programmes for youth exist? Are these government or NGO managed? Are these programmes provided as part of national education?

27

- What is the scope of the available voluntary service programmes? Do they include, for example, youth camps, community service projects, environmental protection or inter-generational cooperation programmes?

- How are youth and/or youth organisations involved in the design, implementation or evaluation of such programmes?

- Are there links between programmes in developing and developed countries? Are these programmes government or NGO managed?

- Are there government support measures available for voluntary work initiatives launched by youth organisations?

  Action 4:
  Governments agreed to addressing "Needs created by technological changes"

UTILIZING TECHNICAL INNOVATIONS

- In what ways is the government promoting youth employment opportunities in areas of technological innovation? How are youth trained in this area?

- What types of training programmes are available for youth in high-technology industries? Are there linkages between government and business-sector programmes? What about between training programmes and employment opportunities?

- Are computer applications part of the school curriculum? Are schools connected to the Internet?

Action 1:
Governments agreed to "Making farming more rewarding and life in agricultural areas more attractive"

PROMOTING FARMING

- What types of government incentives and programmes are available for young people in rural areas? What have been the successes and constraints?

- What types of farming programmes (experimental or otherwise) are offered for young people? How are these services delivered and promoted?

- Are cultural events organised by the government or NGOs to promote urban-rural youth linkages? How are young people or youth organisations involved in these activities?

Action 2:
Governments agreed to providing "Skill-training for income-generation by young people"

DEVELOPING YOUTH SKILLS

- What programmes are available for young people related to skills development in agricultural production and marketing? Are these government or NGO programmes?

- In the rural areas, do training programmes exist for youth? How do programmes link with food production and the achievement of food security?

29

- Do programmes pay attention to special groups, including young women, youth retention in rural areas, youth returning to rural areas from the cities, young people with disabilities, displaced persons and street children, indigenous youth, and youth living in areas of resolved conflicts? Are these government or NGO programmes?

Action 3:
Governments agreed to providing "Land grants for young people"

PROVIDING LAND GRANTS

- Are land grants made available by the government to youth and youth organisations? Is technical support or training also provided?

- How are youth organisations involved in these programmes? Do the programmes take appropriate consideration of environmental concerns?

Action 4:
Governments agreed to addressing "Cooperation between urban and rural youth in food production and distribution"

PROMOTING RURAL-URBAN COOPERATION

- In what ways have NGOs organised direct-marketing groups, including production and distribution cooperatives? What have been the successes and constraints of such programmes?

Action 1:
Governments agreed to ensuring "Provision of basic health services"

ENSURING ACCESS TO BASIC HEALTH SERVICES

- Do all young people have access to basic health services? What types of health services are available? Are these government or NGO managed?

- Are the basic health services provided "youth-friendly"? Are young people aware of the available health services? What are the constraints for accessing such services?

- Do young women and men have access to free or cheap basic medication and contraceptives?

Action 2:
Governments agreed to "Development of health education"

PROMOTING HEALTH EDUCATION

- Does school curriculum at the primary and secondary levels include primary health knowledge and practices? Is basic hygiene a part of the curriculum?

- In what ways are young people or youth organisations involved in the development, implementation or evaluation of health education curriculum?

- Are young people taught about "healthy lifestyles", including the legal, social and health consequences of behaviour that poses health risks? At what levels? Are there government and NGO programmes? What are the constraints and successes to having such programmes?

- Are there government or NGO programmes that address taboos in discussing sexual and reproductive health?

  Action 3:
  Governments agreed to "Promotion of health services, including sexual and reproductive health and development of relevant education programmes in those fields"

  Action 4:
  Governments agreed to addressing "HIV infection and AIDS among young people"

PROMOTING HEALTH SERVICES

- What information and services are available to young people to help them understand their sexuality and protect them from unwanted pregnancies, and sexually transmitted diseases? Are these government or NGO programmes?

- Do young people have access to "youth-friendly" information, outside of their families, about their basic sexual and reproductive rights?

- Are there programmes, which educate young men to respect women's self-determination and to share responsibility with women in matters of sexuality and reproduction? Are these government or NGO programmes?

- What types of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health-care services exist for young people? Are they consistent with internationally agreed upon practices?

- In what ways are young people or youth organisations involved in the development, implementation or

evaluation of reproductive health information and services?

Action 5:
Governments agreed to "Promotion of good sanitation and hygiene practices"

Action 6:
Governments agreed to "Prevention of disease and illness among youth resulting from poor health practices"

PREVENTING DISEASE, ILLNESS AND EXPLOITATION

- Do youth health associations exist? Are they supported by governments and/or NGOs? Do they promote good sanitation and hygiene programmes?

- What types of government policies exist for promoting healthy lifestyles for youth, including policies for discouraging drug, tobacco and alcohol abuse? Are there policies that ban the advertisement of tobacco and alcohol? How are young people informed about the adverse effects of drug and alcohol abuse and tobacco addiction?

- What types of programmes exist to train medical, paramedical, educational and youth work personnel in health issues? Are there government-sponsored research studies? How are youth organisations involved in programme and research efforts?

Action 7:
Governments agreed to "Elimination of sexual abuse of young people"

- What types of specific preventive measures exist to protect children, adolescents and youth from neglect, abandonment and all types of exploitation and abuse, such as abduction, rape and incest, pornography, trafficking and acts of paedophilia, as well as from commercial sexual exploitation resulting from

pornography and prostitution? Are there government and NGO policies and programmes?

- Does legislation exist which prohibits female genital mutilation?

Action 8:
Governments agreed to "Combating malnutrition among young people"

- What post-primary-school and out-of-school health programmes exist for youth? Are there government or NGO programmes? Is there an emphasis on healthy eating practices? Do school lunch programmes exist?

Action 1:
Governments agreed to "Integration of environmental education and training into education and training programmes"

PROMOTING THE ENVIRONMENT

- Is environmental education taught in schools? How are teachers trained on this subject matter?

- In what ways are youth organisations involved in gathering environmental data and in environmental action? Are youth activities supported by the government and NGOs?

- Does the government support and use the research of environmental science programmes and other research activities undertaken by youth?

Action 2:
Governments agreed to "Facilitating the international dissemination of information on environmental issues to, and the use of environmentally sound technologies by, youth"

Action 3:
Governments agreed to "Strengthening participation of youth in the protection, preservation and improvement of the environment"

35

Action 4:
Governments agreed to "Enhancing the role of the media as a tool for widespread dissemination of environmental issues to youth"

ENCOURAGING YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN THE ENVIRONMENT

- What types of information materials exist about the environment? Are these produced by the government or NGOs? How are such materials distributed? Are youth or youth organisations involved in the development or dissemination of such information?

- Does the government encourage the use of environmentally sound technologies?

- Do programmes exist which promote youth participation in tree planting, forestry, combating desert creep, waste reduction, recycling, combating climate change and other sound environmental practices?

- How are young people and youth organisations involved in designing and implementing appropriate environmental policies? Are young people involved in the management of programmes?

- In what ways does the government encourage the media and advertising agencies to develop

programmes to ensure widespread dissemination of information on environmental issues?

- How are young people encouraged to participate in decision-making processes with regard to the environment, at the local, national and regional levels? What are the successes and constraints?

Action 1:
Governments agreed to "Participation of youth organisations and youth in demand reduction programmes for young people"

RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

- Do drug demand reduction programmes target all young people, particularly those at risk? Does the content of such programmes respond directly to the interests and concerns of those young people? Are there government and NGO programmes?

- In what ways are drug prevention programmes linked to recreational activities and skills development?

- How are young people and youth organisations involved in designing and implementing education programmes and individual counselling for youth? Is there training provided for youth leaders to give young people these skills?

- Does the government cooperate with NGOs and youth organisations in carrying out demand reduction programmes for illicit drugs, tobacco and alcohol? What are the successes and constraints?

Action 2:
Governments agreed to "Training medical and paramedical students in the rational use of pharmaceuticals containing narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances"

PROVIDING APPROPRIATE TRAINING

- What types of training courses exist which disseminate information material for young medical and paramedical students on the proper handling of drugs and the diagnosis of substance abuse?

Action 3:
Governments agreed to "Treatment and rehabilitation of young people who are drug abusers or drug-dependent and young alcoholics and tobacco users"

Action 4:
Governments agreed to providing "Care for young drug abusers and drug-dependent suspects and offenders in the criminal justice and prison system"

PROVIDING APPROPRIATE TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION SERVICES

- Has research been conducted by the government on drug abuse? If so, has the research been undertaken in cooperation with NGOs and/or youth organisations? What types of programmes exist on drug abuse prevention for children and youth, and rehabilitation and education programmes for former drug and alcohol addicts? Are these government or NGO programmes?

- Do peer group therapy activities exist? Are youth organisations involved in the running of such programmes?

- Do programmes exist for young people suspected or convicted of criminal offences, which include alternative measures, such as regular visits to parole

officers or the fulfilment of a specified number of hours of community service? What are the successes and constraints?

- What types of treatment and rehabilitation services exist for young prisoners who are already drug-dependent? Are there guidelines for national authorities in law enforcement and prison systems in maintaining the necessary controls and initiating these services?

Action 1:
Governments agreed to accord "Priority to preventive measures"

PREVENTING JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

- What types of government policies and programmes exist to prevent juvenile delinquency and youth criminality? Are these programmes in both rural and urban areas?

- How are young people or youth organisations involved in the development, implementation or monitoring of such programmes?

- What programmes exist to provide youth from poor urban settings with access to educational, employment and leisure programmes, particularly during long school holidays? Are these government or NGO managed?

- Are there programmes available for young people who drop out of school or come from broken families? Are these government or NGO managed?

Action 2:
Governments agreed to take measures for "Prevention of violence"

PREVENTING VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR

- What type of information campaigns and educational and training programmes exist to sensitize youth against violence? Are these government or NGO programmes?

41

- Are there programmes available which focus on eradicating contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, and xenophobia?

- Are youth encouraged to become part of youth organisations or other community/social organisations? How does the government support these organisations? What are the successes and constraints?

   Action 3:
   Governments agreed to provide "Rehabilitation services and programmes"

PROVIDING REHABILITATION SERVICES

- What types of youth rehabilitation programmes and services are available for youth with a criminal record? Are these government or NGO programmes? Are youth or youth organisations involved in the planning, implementation or evaluation of such programmes? What are the successes and constraints?

- Do prisons especially for young people exist, or are young people imprisoned together with adult prisoners?

- Do young people who are imprisoned have access to education and vocational training?

- Are the human rights of young people who are imprisoned protected?

Action 1:
Governments agreed to "Leisure-time activities as an integral part of youth policies and programmes"

Action 2:
Governments agreed to "Leisure-time activities as elements of educational programmes"

ENCOURAGING LEISURE-TIME ACTIVITIES FOR YOUTH

- In what ways does the government promote leisure-time activities for youth? How are these activities supported by the government? What about NGO programmes?

- Has the government established public libraries, cultural centres and other cultural facilities in rural and urban areas? How are young people encouraged to be active in the fields of drama, the fine arts, music and other forms of cultural expression? What about NGO involvement?

- In what ways are young people encouraged to participate in tourism, international cultural events, sports and all other activities of special interest to youth?

- Does the government provide funding to educational institutions for the establishment of leisure-time activities? Are these activities integrated into the regular school curriculum?

Action 3:
Governments agreed to address "Leisure-time activities in urban planning and rural development"

43

- Has the government incorporated leisure-time activity programmes and facilities in urban planning? What about rural development programmes?

  Action 4:
  Governments agreed to address "Leisure-time activities and the media"

- How has the government encouraged the media to promote youth understanding and awareness of all aspects of social integration, including tolerance and non-violent behaviour?

Action 1:
Governments agreed that "Actions should be taken to eliminate discrimination against girls and young women"

Action 2:
Governments agreed to ensure "Universal and equal access to and completion of primary education for girls and young women as well as equal access to secondary and higher education"

ENSURING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN

- What government actions have been undertaken to eliminate discrimination against girls and young women? What about NGO activities? What have been the successes and constraints?

- How has the government promoted universal and equal access to, and completion of, primary education for girls and young women as well as equal access to secondary and higher education?

- Are education materials and practices gender balanced? Does the education setting eliminate barriers to the participation of girls and young women, including those that are married/and or pregnant?

Action 3:
Governments agreed that "Discrimination against girls and young women should be eliminated in health and nutrition"

- Has the government removed discriminatory laws and practices against girls and young women in food allocation and nutrition programmes, as well as in access to health services? In what ways? What have been the success and constraints?

Action 4:
Governments agreed that "Girls and young women should be protected from economic and related forms of exploitation"

- How does the government protect girls and young women from economic and related forms of exploitation?

- How does the government promote equal access for young women to all employment opportunities? How is the participation of young women encouraged in the traditionally male-dominated sectors? Does the government have policies or programmes for promoting equal remuneration for equal work? What have been the successes and constraints?

Action 5:
Governments agreed to "Enact and enforce legislation protecting girls and young women from all forms of violence, including female infanticide and prenatal sex selection, genital mutilation, incest, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, child prostitution and child pornography"

- What are the national policies and legislation, which protect girls and young women from all forms of violence, including genital mutilation, incest, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, child prostitution and child pornography? What types of government and NGO prevention programmes and support services are available for girls and young women in these areas?

- How are young people or youth organisations involved in the development, implementation or evaluation of such programmes?

Action 1:
Governments agreed to "Improving access to information in order to enable young people to make better use of their opportunities to participate in decision-making"

Action 2:
Governments agreed to "Developing and/or strengthening opportunities for young people to learn their rights and responsibilities"

Action 3:
Governments agreed to "Encouraging and promoting youth associations through financial, educational and technical support and promotion of their activities"

Action 4:
Governments agreed to "Taking into account the contributions of youth in designing, implementing and evaluating national policies and plans affecting their concerns"

PROMOTING YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION

- In what ways does the government support or promote young people's participation in decision-making? What are the successes and constraints to youth participation?

- Are there NGO programmes or activities, which promote youth participation in decision-making?

- How do young people learn about their rights and responsibilities as citizens? Through in-school or out-of-school activities?

- In what ways does the government promote youth associations? What support is provided? Is support provided by NGOs and private sector as well?

- How are young people or youth organisations involved in designing, implementing and evaluating national policies and plans affecting youth?

- Does a national youth platform (such as a coalition or network of youth organisations) exist? If so, is it recognized by the government? Does it receive financial support from the government?

- Do young people participate in budgeting processes? In what ways are they engaged?

- What opportunities exist for young people to learn good governance practices such as transparency and accountability?

    Action 5:
    Governments agreed to "Encouraging increased national, regional and international cooperation and exchange between youth organisations"

    Action 6:
    Governments agreed to "Strengthening the involvement of young people in international forums, inter alia, by considering the including of youth representatives in their national delegations to the General Assembly"

- How does the government, or NGOs, encourage national, regional and international cooperation and exchange between youth organisations?

- Are young people represented as part of your government delegation at international forums? If so, how? How could young people be better represented in delegations to the General Assembly?

Action 1:
Governments agreed that "We believe that the central challenge we face today is to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all the world's people."

Action 2:
Governments agreed that "Responsibility for managing worldwide economic and social development, as well as threats to international peace and security, must be shared among the nations of the world and should be exercised multilaterally."

SUPPORTING YOUTH IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD

- Are there government policies or programmes that specifically address the effects of globalization for your country? If so, in what areas of focus?

- Has research been conducted on the effects of globalization on Ghanaian youth?

- Has the government or other institutions been effective and strategic in its aid delivery? Has it mobilized its resources for international development? What sort of technical cooperation and sharing of technology is undertaken? Are youth involved?

- Does the government share information and consult with young people on international trade policies?

- Has the government taken any measures to mitigate any negative impacts of globalization on youth development?

Action 3:
Governments agreed that "We resolve therefore to create an environment – at the national and global levels alike–which is conducive to development and to the elimination of poverty."

Action 4:
Governments agreed "To develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work."

- Have young people, youth organisations or other NGOs conducted advocacy campaigns about globalization? If so, what types of campaigns (e.g., social justice)?

51

Action 1:
Governments agreed to "Development of national e-strategies, including the necessary human capacity building, should be encouraged by all countries by 2005, taking into account different national circumstances"

Action 2:
Governments agreed to "In the context of national e-strategies, address the special requirements of older people, persons with disabilities, children, especially marginalized children and other disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, including by appropriate educational administrative and legislative measures to ensure their full inclusion in the Information Society"

Action 3:
Governments agreed to "Encourage the design and production of ICT equipment and services so that everyone has easy and affordable access to them including older people, persons with disabilities, children, especially marginalized children, and other disadvantaged and vulnerable groups"

Action 4:
Governments agreed to "Develop domestic policies to ensure that ICTs are fully integrated in education and training at all levels, including in curriculum development, teacher training, institutional administration and management, and in support of the concept of lifelong learning"
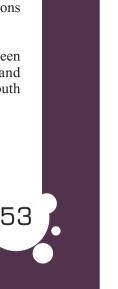
Action 5:
Governments agreed to "Work on removing the gender

52

barriers to ICT education and training and promoting equal training opportunities in ICT-related fields for women and girls"

HARNESSING ICTS FOR THE BENEFIT OF YOUNG PEOPLE

- Are there government policies or programmes that specifically address ICTs and young people? If so, in what areas of focus?

- Has research been conducted on the benefits, and drawbacks, of ICT for youth?

- Are there services or programmes to assist young people in using ICTs to gain employment?

- Are there government programmes that teach ICT-related skills to young people? If so, what types of programmes and training are available? Are there in-school and out-of-school programmes? What about NGO programmes? Is the private sector involved in programmes?

- Is equal access to ICTs part of government policy? What about for vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities?

- Have young people or youth organisations been involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of such programmes? How are youth organisations utilizing ICTs?

Action 1:
Governments agreed to "By 2003, ensure the development and implementation of multi-sectoral national strategies and financing plans for combating HIV/AIDS"

Action 2:
Governments agreed to "By 2003, integrate HIV/AIDS prevention, care, treatment and support and impact mitigation priorities into the mainstream of development planning…"

Action 3:
Governments agreed to "By 2003, establish time-bound national targets to achieve the internationally agreed global prevention goal to reduce by 2005 HIV prevalence among young men and women aged 15 to 24 in the most affected countries by 25 per cent and by 25 per cent globally by 2010…"

Action 4:
Governments agreed to "By 2003, establish national prevention targets, recognizing and addressing factors leading to the spread of the epidemic and increasing people's vulnerability, to reduce HIV incidence for those identifiable groups…"

HIV/AIDS PREVENTION, CARE AND SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

- Does the government have a multisectoral national strategy and financing plan for combating HIV/AIDS? Are young people an explicit part of the plan? Is there high-level

political commitment for this strategy? Is there a monitoring and evaluation component?

- What government policies exist regarding HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support? Do these policies promote the human rights of HIV-positive young people? Were young people and youth organisations, particularly HIV-positive young people, involved in the development of policies?

- What is the range of government programmes and services focused on HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support for young people? Do these programmes include HIV prevention, sexual and reproductive health and life skills education? Do services include reproductive health services, including low-cost or free condoms, voluntary counselling and testing, and diagnosis and treatment of STIs? What have been the constraints and successes?

- Is preventive health education, including HIV/AIDS prevention, a part of school curriculum? At what levels? Are there programmes that specifically target vulnerable, out of school youth? Is peer education used? What about NGO programmes and services? What have been the successes and constraints?

Action 4:
Governments agreed to "By 2005, ensure that at least 90 per cent, and by 2010 at least 95 per cent of young men and women aged 15 to 24 have access to the information, education, including peer education and youth-specific HIV education, and services necessary to develop the life skills required to reduce their vulnerability to HIV infection; in full partnership with

55

youth, parents, families, educators and health-care providers"

Action 5:
Governments agreed to "By 2003, develop and by 2005 implement national policies and strategies to: build and strengthen governmental, family and community capacities to provide a supportive environment for orphans and girls and boys infected and affected by HIV/AIDS including by providing appropriate counselling and psycho-social support; ensuring their enrolment in school and access to shelter, good nutrition, health and social services on an equal basis with other children; to protect orphans and vulnerable children from all forms of abuse, violence, exploitation, discrimination, trafficking and loss of inheritance"

- Are young people provided with information and education about HIV/AIDS? Are these government or NGO programmes? Is this information age-appropriate and relevant for young people? Does the available information include information on sexual behaviour, abstinence, correct and consistent use of condoms and the dangers of drug injection?

- Are there government programmes that provide a supportive environment for orphans and girls and boys infected and affected by HIV/AIDS?

- What types of stigma and discrimination do HIV-positive young people face in Ghana? What steps have been undertaken to combat this?

- Are young people and youth organisations, including HIV-positive young people, involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of HIV/AIDS prevention programmes and care and support services? What have been the constraints and successes?

Action 1:
Governments agreed to "Take all feasible measures to ensure that members of their armed forces who have not attained the age of 18 years do not take a direct part in hostilities"

Action 2:
Government agreed to "Ensure that persons who have not attained the age of 18 years are not compulsorily recruited into their armed forces"

FOCUSING ON YOUTH AND CONFLICT

- Does legislation exist that prohibits the use of child/youth soldiers?

- Are there government programmes that seek to prevent the root causes of conflict? What about NGO programmes? Are young people involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of such programmes?

- Are services available for youth, including HIV prevention, sexual exploitation prevention, special protection measures for girls, and protection for orphans and children separated from their families?

- Are there policies and programmes that focus on long-term investment in education, psychosocial support, vocational training, and other types of support for families and communities?

- Are young people's rights and concerns taken into consideration in all phases of peacemaking and peace building? How are young people and youth organisations involved in such activities?

Action:
Governments agreed to "Strengthening of solidarity through equity and reciprocity between generations"

SUPPORTING INTERGENERATIONAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

- Does the government have any policies or programmes, which address intergenerational relations, for example through fostering solidarity between generations?

- Are young people provided with opportunities to interact with older persons through community, social and/or volunteer programmes? Are these government or NGO managed?

- Are there programmes that address the specific situation of the generation of people who have to care, simultaneously, for their parents, their own children and their grandchildren?

- What types of programmes and services are available to support older persons as caregivers, including those that reinforce the positive role of grandparents in raising grandchildren?

Key Pillars of Youth Involvement: Youth Participation and Empowerment

UNDERSTANDING PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT

Youth participation is a process whereby young people influence, and share control and responsibility over decisions, plans and resources, which affect them. There is a distinction between two forms of participation. Social participation relates to influencing societal organisations and its activities, such as your school, sports club, or work place. Political participation relates to influencing local, regional, national and international politics.

Empowerment is defined as a process of capacity-building needed to partake in society. Youth empowerment means participation in decision-making, but also the participation of young men and women in society, through access to education, employment and health, as well as to resources, such as land or credit. Empowering young people means allowing them the opportunity to make decisions that affect their lives. Young people are not passive, but rather are active agents for development and change!

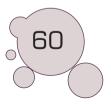Governments, societal organisations and international bodies have committed themselves to the right of youth to participation and empowerment. The rights of young women and men to education, employment and health have been declared in a variety of international instruments and programmes of action, as well as for specific groups of youth, such as urban youth, rural youth, students, young workers and disabled youth.

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Key to youth participation and empowerment is access: young people should be provided with equal access to opportunities (such as education and employment), services (such as health care) and information.

Key to youth participation and empowerment is also equity: all youth should be able to participate.

Involving youth in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluating of youth-related policies, programmes and services makes them more relevant, efficient and effective for their target group – young people!

WHY
PARTICIPATION & EMPOWERMENT

So why is youth participation important? Well, first of all – it is a right! Young people have the right to participate fully in society and to express their opinions about matters related to their lives.

Involving young people in decision-making processes is an important tenet of good governance since young people constitute significant proportions of populations. Apart from building their capacities through participation, young people also get the opportunity to bring their fresh perspectives to bear to improve decision-making.

If youth are encouraged to fully participate in society, they will become more knowledgeable about their rights, and more responsible citizens. Democratic, tolerant and just societies are sustained by citizens who can make educated use of opportunities for participation. Participation therefore also becomes an investment in the nation's future.

DIFFERENT LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

There are different levels of participation. The higher the level of participation, the more control, influence and responsibility young people will have on the outcomes.

There is a difference between ad-hoc and structural participation. Ad-hoc refers to participation in a certain project or conference, while structural participation signifies a more continuous involvement, over a longer period of time. There is also a difference between direct and indirect participation. Direct participation implies direct contact with the decision-making person or body. Indirect participation refers to having one's opinion represented by someone else, for example a youth coalition or youth worker.

Young people can decide themselves on which level, and in what ways, to participate, although the choice will probably be dependent on the

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

A distinction can be made between five levels of youth participation:

Level 1 – Information providing: youth are informed of the policy and activities that have been decided on by adults

Level 2 – Consulting, adult-initiated: adults decide when and on which topics youth are consulted.

Level 3 – Consulting, youth initiated: youth can put subjects forward, but have no decision-making powers.

Level 4 – Shared decision-making: adults and young people share decision-making powers.

Level 5 – Autonomy: young people take initiative and conduct projects themselves.

So why is youth participation important? Well, first of all – it is a right! Young people have the right to participate fully in society and to express their opinions about matters related to their lives.

Involving young people in decision-making processes is an important tenet of good governance since young people constitute significant proportions of populations. Apart from building their capacities through participation, young people also get the opportunity to bring their fresh perspectives to bear to improve decision-making.

If youth are encouraged to fully participate in society, they will become more knowledgeable about their rights, and more responsible citizens. Democratic, tolerant and just societies are sustained by citizens who can make educated use of opportunities for participation. Participation therefore also becomes an investment in the nation's future.

DIFFERENT LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

There are different levels of participation. The higher the level of participation, the more control, influence and responsibility young people will have on the outcomes.

There is a difference between ad-hoc and structural participation. Ad-hoc refers to participation in a certain project or conference, while structural participation signifies a more continuous involvement, over a longer period of time. There is also a difference between direct and indirect participation. Direct participation implies direct contact with the decision-making person or body. Indirect participation refers to having one's opinion represented by someone else, for example a youth coalition or youth worker.

Young people can decide themselves on which level, and in

what ways, to participate, although the choice will probably be dependent on the willingness of the organisation and its representatives to listen to youth. Ideally governments, international organisations and national organisations should support young people in their endeavours to obtain resources for comprehensive youth empowerment programmes. However, cultural differences, unfamiliarity with youth issues, or a lack of understanding can be reasons preventing youth from reaching a high level of participation.

Some keys to successful participation include:

- No participation without education! Be informed; know the topic and the documents that are being discussed.

- Try to understand the culture and "rules of the game". Where and when are decisions made, and who controls the budget?

- Aim to represent the opinion of as many peers as possible. Being part of a local, national or international youth organisation is helpful.

- Make use of the experiences of others who have done the job before you. Besides youth organisations, you may wish to involve other interest groups, such as unions or NGOs.

- Don't set your aims too high. Especially on the international level, where many interests are at stake, you may be disappointed. Remember that it takes professional campaigners years of patience and hard work before they reach results.

Advocacy

WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

Advocacy can have many definitions, as it can take many different shapes and forms. In general, advocacy can be defined as a process of trying to effect change in policies, practices, attitudes, beliefs or actions through influencing people and/or organisations that are in positions of power.
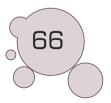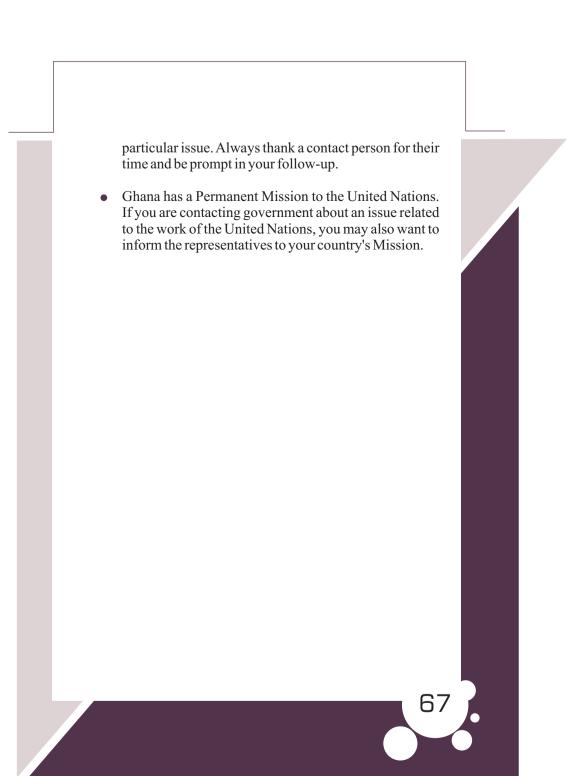
METHODS OF ADVOCACY

Young people often work very hard to advocate their ideas and aspirations to their government. Sometimes this can seem like an uphill battle. Nevertheless, by using parts of this Toolkit, you can learn some interesting information that can be shared with decision makers.

Here are a few pointers to advocating ideas to decision-makers:

- Target your efforts towards the right level of government. Find out which level deals with the issue you are advocating towards. For example, if you need to discuss how your district handles health matters, then talk to people at your district assembly.

- Remember that there is a difference between elected officials and those who work in the civil service. You may want to contact one or both of these government actors to share your views and ideas on youth issues.

- Try all methods of communication; written correspondence, phone calls and face-to-face meetings are all good options.

- Be persistent, but be polite. If a person does not address your enquiries, ask if they know the right person to contact about a

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Advocacy differs from awareness raising in that it is aimed at influential people (as opposed to the general public). You can undertake advocacy for yourself or others. If you are advocating for others, make sure you have their permission and involvement.

particular issue. Always thank a contact person for their time and be prompt in your follow-up.

- Ghana has a Permanent Mission to the United Nations. If you are contacting government about an issue related to the work of the United Nations, you may also want to inform the representatives to your country's Mission.

67

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Your objectives should always be S-M-A-R-T:

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**ttainable
- **R**ealistic
- **T**ime-bound

Advocacy also goes beyond working to influence your government. Here are some other ways that you can advocate for youth issues:

- Phone-in to radio stations

- Distribute information packages to officials and the media

- Protest, with media coverage (perhaps using celebrities)

- Boycott

- Use the legal system

- Join committees or groups

- Train officials

- Write press releases

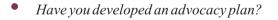- Conduct media interviews

- Talk and network with others

PLANNING YOUR ADVOCACY WORK

- *What issue do you want to address?*

    - Make sure this issue can be resolved through advocacy efforts.

    - Make sure you have a sound analysis, information and/or evidence of the issue, and that you are well informed.

69

- Identify appropriate advocacy strategies.

- *What are the objectives you want to achieve through advocacy?*

    - Make sure you have clear objectives.

    - It is important to know your available resources (financial and human).

    - You may have to prioritize your objectives, due to limited resources.

    - Identify who you will target, based on your objectives.

    - Identify also the potential constraints you may face.

- *What organisations could you partner with?*

    - You may wish to form a coalition with other organisations to realize these advocacy objectives, or utilize existing coalitions and networks.

    - Make sure you have involved the people who are affected by the issue, from the beginning of this process.
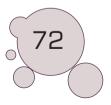
- *Have you developed an advocacy plan?*

    - The plan should include the objectives, targets (persons/institutions), actions to be taken, resources, time frame and expected outcome.

    - Make sure to include how you will monitor your constraints and successes.

71

Different organizations have different names for partnerships; they may be called "alliances" or "external relations".

Partnerships differ from networking in that they tend to be more in-depth, with concrete specific goals.

Partnerships

WHAT ARE PARTNERSHIPS?

Partnerships can be defined as when different people or organisations work together to achieve a common benefit or purpose. The purpose of using partnerships is thus to achieve with others, what could not be done alone.

Key features of partnerships include such aspects as:

- Mutual dependency in sharing risks, responsibilities, resource, competencies and benefits;

- Working together under a shared process of decision-making and joint problem-solving;

- Voluntary partnership formation based on choice, not on regulation and coercion;

- Joining of forces where the sum of the results of the partners working together is greater than the sum of the partners working individually;

- Sharing competencies and resources

WHO TO PARTNER WITH?

There are numerous organisations and groups with which to build partnerships. It will therefore depend upon your objectives and projects. Potential partners include:

- Youth groups and/or organisations
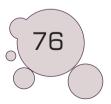
- Non-governmental organisations

- Government departments

- United Nations agencies

- International development organisations

- Academic departments

- Religious leaders

- Lawyers

- Business leaders

- Police

BENEFITS OF PARTNERSHIPS

There are numerous benefits you can receive when working in partnership with others. In general, building partnerships allows you to broaden your scope of work and strengthen its impact. Other benefits include:

- Access to other institutions, people and/or places;

- Fresh, new ideas and perspectives;

- New knowledge and skills;

- Financial support or increased human resources;

- Influence, higher profile or political leverage;

- More effective work: through a wider outreach or response, increased resources, fewer constraints and more efficient and effective programmes.

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

- You could work with the government to change policies and laws or encourage the government to provide community services.

- You could work with the business sector to capitalize on their skills (such as marketing or management) to improve the quality of your projects or to encourage the business community to take on social leadership roles.

- You could work with religious organizations to provide community services or influence social attitudes.

- You could work with the media to raise more awareness on important issues or reach a wider audience.

- You could work with other NGOs to reach vulnerable communities, provide more services, share knowledge and skills, garner more influence, or broaden successful pilot projects.

PLANNING YOUR PARTNERSHIPS

- What are your priorities? It is helpful to revisit what your aims are, and the needs of the communities in which you work. In looking at the issues you work on, what are the existing opportunities and challenges?

- In what areas of work could your organisation benefit from partnership? Identify which particular priority issues, based on the above, you would like to work on, and how working in partnership would provide benefits.

- What are the potential organisations and groups to partner with? Make sure you map out the different organisations and groups working in the same or similar fields. In addition, what are the potential benefits and challenges to working with such organisations?

BUILDING EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION
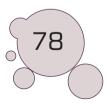
The first step in building your partnership is to get to know the organisation with which you will be working. This includes analysing what is their approach to their work, how the organisation is viewed and views others, and pros and cons of working with them.

Don't forget to monitor how your partnership is going! It is always important to record your successes and lessons learned.

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

The *Africa Youth Day* and *International Youth Day* is a great time to review what has been done in the country to further the World Programme of Action on Youth.

This is a good day to focus on how to further encourage the empowerment and participation of youth in the processes and decisions that affect their lives.

Team up with other government agencies, NGOs, businesses, the media and youth, to plan coordinated and well-publicised events!

Celebrate Annual Youth Days

As part of your organisation's work, you are encouraged to celebrate *Africa Youth Day* and *International Youth Day*. These Days provide an excellent focus around which to review progress at youth development and to organise advocacy or information-related events.

The Africa Union Summit Decision EX.CL 292 endorsed the recommendations to celebrate 1st November of each year as the African Youth Day. The AU urges member countries, youth organisations and civil society to organise activities that reinforce the visibility of African youth, and forge partnerships towards the implementation of policies and programmes related to African youth development issues.

The United Nations General Assembly on 17 December 1999, in its resolution 54/120, endorsed the recommendation made by the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth (Lisbon, 8-12 August 1998) that 12 August should be declared "International Youth Day". The Assembly recommended that public information activities be organised to support the Day as a way to promote better awareness of WPAY. Check with the UN programme on youth (www.un.org/youth) a few months before International Youth Day to find out the theme and how to join in the global celebrations.

You and your organisation should decide how to celebrate these special Days. Below are some suggestions:

- Organise an artistic event or seminar on important youth issues and youth rights with your university's student union or your school's student representative council. Get the school/university administration to support your event.

- Arrange a meeting with your government representative and ask him/her what they've done for youth lately. Draft a press release to publicise your meeting, and try to get coverage from local newspapers.

- Hold public discussions, forums, artistic performances and/or information campaigns in your community, focused on important youth issues, youth rights and trends and ways and means by which youth concerns can be addressed. Get your local government involved.

- Send press releases and other information materials to the media. Ask them to cover important youth issues on the Day. Use the media to get your message across.

- Organise youth volunteer events, to raise money or other items for needy youth.

- Organise essay, photo or painting competitions among youth in your community. Get local businesses to sponsor a prize, and display all the submissions in a local space.

- Use the Internet to communicate with youth and youth organisations in the country, or in other countries. Share ideas and plan coordinated events.

- Check with your local United Nations offices and Ministry of Youth to see what they have planned for the Day. Volunteer to help organise events with them.

Next Steps

Now that you have gathered information on national-level achievements, and gaps, in realising the goals of WPAY, you are encouraged to share this information as a way of consolidating and publicising the outcomes of your work. Ways to do this include:

- Follow-up with government: organize a meeting with your relevant government representatives to discuss the results. Encourage them to make youth a priority area.

- Summarize your findings: as you will probably have gathered a lot of information during your monitoring efforts, it is important to put it in a reader-friendly format, to encourage people to read your results. One or two-page summaries, with key findings, will be useful, for posting on your website, disseminating to other organizations, and providing to the media.

- Share what you know: hold public discussions, forums, and/or information campaigns in your school or community, focused on your findings. Draft a press release to publicise the findings and events, and try to get coverage from local newspapers.

- Develop actions based on what you've found: meet with other local and national youth organizations to discuss your findings. Develop joint actions and activities, based on priority areas, which emerge from the results.

- Follow-up with offices of the UN and other international development organisations: organize a meeting with their representatives to discuss the results. Encourage them to develop priority actions, based on your findings.

Useful Online Resources

1. Growing Together: Youth and the Work of the United Nations:
    http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/growing_together.pdf

2. World Youth Report 2007:
    http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/wyr07_complete.pdf

3. World Youth Report 2005:
    http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/wyr05book.pdf

4. World Youth Report 2003:
    http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/worldyouthreport.pdf

5. Guide to the Implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth:
    http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/wpay_guide.pdf

6. Making Commitments Matter: A Toolkit for young people to evaluate national youth policy:
    http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/toolkit.pdf

7. Navigating International Meetings: A pocketbook guide to effective youth participation:
    http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/intl_meetings_eng.pdf

8. A Brief Guide to Youth Delegates to the United Nations General Assembly:
    http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/ydguidee.pdf

9. Toolkit for Volunteerism - Volunteering the Youth Way (UNDP/UNV):
    www.ng.undp.org/unv/Toolkit-volunteerism-2009.pdf

10. Empowering Youth through National Policies (UNESCO):
    http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001345/134502e.pdf

11. The Participation Rights of Adolescents: A strategic approach (UNICEF):
    http://www.unicef.org/adolescence/files/Participation_Rights_of_Adolescents_Rajani_2001.pdf

12. UNFPA Addressing the Needs and Rights of Young People at the Policy Level:
    http://www.unfpa.org/adolescents/policy.htm

13. Empowering Youth through National Policies: UNESCO's Contribution:
    http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001345/134502e.pdf

14. Empowering Young Women to Lead Change, a UNFPA Training Manual:
    http://www.unfpa.org/upload/lib_pub_file/628_filename_empowering-young-women_eng.pdf

15. Case for Investing in Young People as part of a National Poverty Reduction Strategy (UNFPA):
    http://www.unfpa.org/upload/lib_pub_file/424_filename_Investing.pdf

The project *Tackling Poverty Together* (TPT) was initiated to convince stakeholders of the importance of working with youth to achieve poverty reduction. Started in 2005 by the National Council for Swedish Youth Organisation (LSU) and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the project is operational in seven countries namely Ghana, Tanzania, Kenya, Zambia, Liberia, Uganda, and Malawi. TPT is intended to highlight and strengthen young people's role in development policies in general and poverty reduction strategies in particular. Youth organisations in participating countries are taking actions in order to increase young people's participation in poverty reduction processes. Through the development and implementation of action plans the TPT country teams are gaining hands-on experience in advocacy for greater inclusion in decision-making processes. As a result, young people have achieved greater recognition and involvement in the national processes of poverty reduction. In Ghana, the TPT team is hosted at the Youth Empowerment Synergy (YES-Ghana) and comprises of a growing network of youth groups across the country, and a steering committee comprising representatives of five member organisations.

The publication of this resource coincides with the International Year of Youth which is being celebrated from 12 August 2010 to 11 August 2011 and everyone has a role to play! In December 2009, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 64/134 proclaiming the Year, signifying the importance the international community places on integrating youth-related issues into global, regional, and national development agendas. Under the theme "Dialogue and Mutual Understanding", the Year aims to promote the ideals of peace, respect for human rights and solidarity across generations, cultures, religions and civilizations. The world is facing many, often overlapping, crises including financial, security, environmental and other socio-economic challenges hindering the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals. Investing in and partnering with youth is key to addressing these challenges in a sustainable manner. For more information on the International Year of Youth, please visit: http://social.un.org/youthyear