Meaningful and inclusive youth participation:
strengthening inclusivity

A planning tool for RHRN country coalitions

Rutgers — For sexual and reproductive health and rights

RIGHT HERE RIGHT NOW

Table of Contents

Meaningful and inclusive youth participation, and how to use this tool

'The perspective of youth that comes from different spaces and groups, gives it a different vision of what we want as youth.'

(Young women, RHRN1 – Honduras country coalition)

Why Meaningful and Inclusive Youth Participation?

Youth participation is a fundamental right, recognized in article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Youth participation in SRHR policies and programmes gained increased attention since the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in 1994. Meaningful Youth Participation (MYP) has contributed positively to SRHR programme outcomes, having a positive effect on young people and supporting social change.

For Rutgers, MYP means engaging young people structurally in all levels and all phases of the programme and all levels of decision making. The organization has many years of experience of implementing MYP in its programmes. MYP was central in the Unite For Body Rights (UFBR) and Access Services and Knowledge programmes (ASK) (2011-2015) and subsequently in Right Here Right Now1 (RHRN1) and Get Up Speak Out (GUSO) (2016-2020). The GUSO programme succeeded in strengthening youth leadership

and measuring and mainstreaming MYP; RHRN1 contributed to increasing young people's voice, responsibilities and decision-making power in SRHR advocacy.

Seeking to ensure rights-based principles of equality, non-discrimination, participation, inclusion and accountability, RHRN1 expanded its focus from MYP to MYIP - Meaningful and *Inclusive* Youth Participation. MIYP entails securing the right to participation for all young people, including marginalized communities who often face the most barriers to SRHR. This principle is also central to the 'leave no one behind[1]' promise of the 2030 Agenda. Moreover, for advocacy programmes in particular, inclusive youth participation is essential to the legitimacy of the advocacy agenda and messages. Just as young people are better able than adults to identify their own needs, marginalized youth are

better able to articulate their particular SRHR needs and to propose ways to address them than more privileged youth not facing the same barriers.

The experiences of RHRN1 demonstrate that an exclusive focus on age is insufficient for the promotion of MIYP, since opportunities for young people are influenced by various intersecting factors, including gender, SOGIESC, ethnic background, residence and disability, among others. Being inclusive to all segments of youth, especially marginalized groups, and creating equal opportunities for them to participate meaningfully in SRHR programmes requires

targeted approaches and investment. For this reason, the operationalization of meaningful and inclusive youth participation received explicit attention in RHRN2 (2021-2025). MIYP is clearly reflected in the programme's Theory of Change (TOC): strengthened civil society for young people's SRHR and gender justice - where young people are at the forefront of the movement and CSOs are inclusive and united - has been prioritized as a Long-Term Objective (LTO) in RHRN2. This LTO is considered both a foundation for the achievement of the other LTOs as well as a goal in itself. This tool is designed to support country partners in operationalizing this objective in their own Theories of Change.

[1] https://unsdg.un.org/2030-agenda/universal-values/leave-no-one-behind

Equal partnerships: redistributing power

In order to strengthen inclusivity and build equal partnerships between young people and adults, and between more and less privileged groups of youth, it is important that all parties involved are aware of existing power dynamics and are committed to changing them. In order to build equal relations with young people from marginalized communities, those holding the power (e.g. established, adult-led organizations and privileged groups of adults and youth) need to be prepared to use their power to advance the position of less powerful young people (e.g. by supporting them to access decision-making spaces), and ultimately to give away some of their power (e.g. by enabling them to access these stakeholders and spaces autonomously). For the RHRN2 country coalitions this entails strengthening the voices of young people from marginalized communities, and sharing opportunities, responsibilities and decision-making power with them.

About this tool

This planning tool aims to support country partners, and everyone else involved in the RHRN2 country programmes, in the (annual) planning cycle of country programmes. The tool seeks to support the development of inclusive country programmes and can also be used as a reference to strengthen other programmes where MIYP is a strategy. It builds on important learnings on inclusive youth participation and inclusive SRHR advocacy from RHRN1[2], but also includes learnings from other Rutgers programmes. During the

development of the tool, input was provided by a sounding board group consisting of six (6) young experts from Bangladesh, Burundi, Ethiopia, Nepal and Uganda, each of them representing one or more marginalized communities[3]. The tool has also been subject to a feedback round with several experts in Rutgers and RHRN2 partners[4]. Although the programme considers *meaningful and inclusive youth participation* as one integrated core value, the tool zooms in specifically on the element of inclusivity. Various relevant tools and resources exist that support the promotion of meaningful youth participation, such as CHOICE's flower of participation and CHOICE's Youth-Adult Partnership Toolkit. This tool aims to support partners to have a more inclusive approach to MYP and YAP and seeks to complement existing tools by providing an inclusivity lens to the concept of meaningful youth participation and youth-adult partnership. The tool ties in well with other tools for human-rights based SRHR programmes that are used in the RHRN2 partnership, such as Rutgers' toolkit 'Adopting a gender transformative approach in sexual and reproductive health and rights, and gender-based violence programmes'.

This planning tool for inclusive youth participation concentrates on six important key elements of the planning cycle:

1. Assessing readiness for inclusive youth participation
2. Conducting a comprehensive context analysis
3. Building the foundations for equal, inclusive partnership
4. Defining goals and strategies for building inclusive CSOs and country coalitions
5. Defining strategies to increase access to SRHR information and amplify voices of marginalized youth in the public debate and in policy and decision making
6. The development of a capacity-exchange plan for inclusive youth participation

Each of these six elements requires adequate budget. The programme needs to earmark sufficient funds for assessing partners' readiness for inclusive youth participation, and to allow partners to conduct a comprehensive context analysis and build the foundations for equal, inclusive partnerships.

Moreover, in their annual plans, partners need to safeguard adequate budget for the implementation of their strategies to strengthen inclusivity in their organizations and in the country coalition, as well as for their strategies to increase access to SRHR information and amplify voices of marginalized youth in public debate and in policy and decision making, including the required capacity development.

How to use the sections

Section	What?	When to use it?	Link with other sections?
❶	Assessing readiness	Scoping phase/inception phase (and before including new partners). To be implemented prior to the other sections.	The results will be used when implementing sections 3 and 4
❷	Including an inclusivity lens in country context analyses	Inception phase review annually when developing work plans. To be implemented prior to sections 3, 4, 5 and 6.	The results will be used when implementing sections 4 and 5
❸	Building the foundations for inclusive participation and equal partnership	Inception phase review annually when developing work plans. Can be implemented prior to, or simultaneously with sections 4, 5 and 6	Groundwork for the implementation of the strategies to be developed in sections 5 and 6
❹	Defining goals and strategies for building inclusive CSOs and country coalitions	Inception phase and annually during work plan development. To be implemented after sections 1 and 2.	Builds on the results of sections 1 and 2
❺	Defining strategies to increase access to SRHR information and amplify voices of marginalized youth in the public debate and in policy and decision making	Inception phase and annually during work plan development. To be implemented after sections 1 and 2.	Builds on the results of sections 1 and 2
❻	Developing a capacity exchange plan	Inception phase and annually during work plan development. To be implemented after all other sections.	Follows the results of section 4 and 5

Relevant tools & resources on meaningful youth participation, equal partnership, and inclusivity

You may wish to review and research these topics further. These resources support and complement the approach recommended here:

TOOLS:
» CHOICE's flower of participation:
   https://www.youthdoit.org/themes/meaningful-youth-participation/flower-of-participation/
» CHOICE's Youth-Adult partnership toolkit:
   https://www.youthdoit.org/capacity-strengthening-tools/youth-adult-partnerships/
» Choice and Dance4Life's MIYP organizational self-analyses module in Academy:
   https://my.dance4life.com/academy/meaningful-and-inclusive-youth-participation/
» Dance4Life's YAP toolkit:
   Empowering Youth Voices – Right Here Right Now (rutgers. international)
» Meaningful Youth Participation at Rutgers: Where are we now and where do we want to go?
   Young People | Rutgers
» Rutgers' toolkit: 'Adopting a gender transformative approach in sexual and reproductive health and rights, and gender-based violence programmes:
   Gender Transformative Approach Resources | Rutgers
» Rutgers' Essential Packages Manual, chapter on Meaningful Youth Participation:
   Essential Packages Manual | Rutgers

RESEARCH REPORTS:
» Meaningful and Inclusive Youth Participation in SRHR advocacy platforms. Case studies of Nepal and Honduras. Operational Research Right Here Right Now1, by Zaïre van Arkel Consultancy for Rutgers.
» Including SOGIE in SRHR partnerships and advocacy agendas Operational Research Right Here Right Now1, by Zaïre van Arkel Consultancy for Rutgers.

1.

Assessing readiness

Readiness for inclusive youth participation and equal partnership

Strengthening inclusive youth participation and building equal partnership implies that existing power dynamics in the CSO landscape need to be modified. This requires explicit commitment of all organizations involved, especially of those who hold most power (e.g. established organizations and groups of people that are not being marginalized based on physical or social characteristics). A readiness assessment can help to explore this in an early stage of the partnership.

Although assessing readiness is most relevant for mainstream organizations, it can also be relevant for organizations that are led by marginalized communities. For example, an LGBT+ organization might not automatically be inclusive to young LGBT+ with disabilities, and a women's organization might not necessarily be inclusive to girls in rural areas or trans women.

Organization readiness checklist

The following checklist can be used to assess the readiness of organizations to become more inclusive and engage in equal partnerships with young people from marginalized communities. The checklist is not exhaustive and can be supplemented if desired. Where relevant, the checklist can also be used to complement existing MYP readiness assessment tools. Responses should always be based on evidence, which can be cited in the final part.

print   **fill in**

	Yes	Partly	No	Comments
1 Is the organization committed to the rights of all young people, including girls, young LGBT+ people, young people with disabilities, rural youth/ young people living in remote areas, young people belonging to minority groups based on ethnicity/caste/indigenous background, young sex workers, young people living with HIV and other marginalized youth, to control their own bodies and their sexuality without any form of discrimination, coercion, or violence?				
2 Are the SRHR of each of the aforementioned communities inherent to the organization's mission?				
3 Does the organization believe in the necessity of working with young people from aforementioned communities for the sake of the organization's legitimacy?				
4 Is the organization committed to establishing equal partnerships with young people from aforementioned communities which implies sharing of opportunities and decision making?				
5 Does the organization believe that young people from aforementioned communities have the ability to participate meaningfully in the organization/its work?				

	Yes	Partly	No	Comments
6 Does the organization believe that young people from aforementioned communities have the ability to perform the same roles and bear the same responsibilities as adults?				
7 Is the organization committed to addressing challenges and barriers that obstruct participation of, and equal partnership with young people from aforementioned communities?				
8 Is the organization willing to invest time, human resources, and budget to strengthen the participation of young people from aforementioned communities?				
Capacity				
9 Is the organization and its programmes/services/activities accessible for girls, young LGBT+ people, young people with disabilities, rural youth/young people living in remote areas, young people belonging to minority groups based on ethnicity/caste/indigenous background, young sex workers, young people living with HIV and/or other marginalized groups of young people? Please specify and list the concerned groups in the comment section.				Which groups of YP?
10 Does the organization make explicit efforts to reach young people from aforementioned communities? Please specify how and list the concerned groups in the comment section.				Which groups of YP? How?

	Yes	Partly	No	Comments
11 Do young people from aforementioned communities participate in the organization? Please specify how and list the concerned groups in the comment section.				How? (e.g. as peer educators, youth advocates, member/staff of the organization, SRHR youth champion etc.) Which groups of YP?

If the answer to question 11 was 'yes', please continue with question 12. If the answer was 'no', please continue with question 13.

	Strong	Mediocre	Limited	Comments
12 Please assess the participation of the concerned group(s) of youth (selected under question 11) according to the following elements of CHOICE's flower of participation:				
a) Freedom of choice (extent to which they can/could decide whether to participate or not)				
b) Information (extent to which they have/had access to comprehensive information about the programme/activity, their role, and their possibilities within the programme/activity)				
c) Voice (the extent to which they can/could voice their views and opinions and extent to which this is/was taken into account)				
d) Responsibilities (the extent to which they have/had the opportunity to act independently within the programme, activity, or group)				
e) Decision-making power (the extent to which they can/could make decisions about (parts of) the programme, activity, or group)				

	Strong	Mediocre	Limited	Comments
13 Please assess the organization's literacy with respect to the following groups (e.g. understanding their specific SRHR needs, relevant language & terminology and relevant legal framework):				How? (e.g. as peer educators, youth advocates, member/staff of the organization, SRHR youth champion etc.) Which groups of YP?
a) Young people (in general)				
b) Girls/young women				
c) (young) LGBT+ people				
d) (young) people with disabilities				
e) (young) people living in rural and/ or remote areas				
f) (young) people belonging to minority groups (based on ethnicity/caste/indigenous background)				
g) (young) sex workers				
h) (young) people living with HIV				
i) Other:				

14 Select the items (types of evidence), if any, that explicitly demonstrate the organization's inclusiveness towards marginalized communities. Please check the boxes of the relevant items.

Check	Item/type of evidence	Explanation
	Constitution	
	Strategic plan/activity plan	
	Relevant policies	
	SOP	

Check	Item/type of evidence	Explanation
	Governance, board composition	
	Organizational structures/staff positions	
	Accountability mechanisms	
	Consultation mechanisms	
	Budget allocations	
	Safety & security system	
	PMEL system	
	Methodologies/tools	
	Research/evidence generated by the organization	
	Other:	

Implementing the readiness assessment

It is important to assess the readiness of organizations as early as possible in the programme. Ideally, readiness will be assessed during partner selection since it might not be realistic to promote inclusivity in CSOs that show very little readiness. This can be implemented as a self-assessment by partner organizations, but preferably managed and coordinated at programme/ coalition level to ensure consistency in application and to prevent bias. It is important that organizations provide documents that support their statements and demonstrate their commitment to inclusivity (question 14). In order to ensure a multi-sided perspective, it is recommended that for each partner organization the board, management, staff and, if relevant, volunteers, participate in the readiness assessment.

The readiness assessment does not involve rigid scoring criteria. However, the part 'motivation and values' (questions 1-8) of the readiness checklist is considered critical for evaluating the feasibility of MIYP. The questions cover important requirements for inclusive youth participation and equal partnership, and negative responses in this section could be concerning. For organizations with negative scores (no) in this section, more internal dialogue about the willingness within the organization to work with marginalized youth as equal partners is advisable, and participation in the programme might need to be reconsidered. If their participation is decided on after all, and for organizations with multiple mixed scores ('mediocre') in this section, a solid plan for strengthening commitment and awareness in their organization will be particularly important. This can be incorporated in the activities partners will develop in section 3.

Scores in part 2, 'capacity' (questions 9-13), provide important information about the respective starting points of organizations (establishment of a baseline). The more negative scores in this section (questions responded with 'limited'), the more work the organization needs to do to strengthen MIYP in their institution. The results can help inform the development of tailored strategies in section 4.

2.

Applying an inclusivity lens in country context analyses

Understanding privileges and marginalization

The position of young people in society is strongly influenced by prevailing social norms that shape their socio-cultural identities within their respective country context. Gender, SOGIESC, ethnic background, residence and multiple other social categories, and in particular their intersection, can bring privileges or on the other hand cause marginalization. As a result of these social constructs, opportunities are not equal for all young people. This is generally experienced at multiple levels. They may start at the private/home situation (e.g. much/little access to SRHR information; many/few opportunities to participate in events and organizations), continue at the level of organizations and movements (e.g. being represented or not, having much/little voice) up to national policy and decision making (e.g. having access to decision-making spaces or not; having much/little political power).

The experiences of RHRN1 demonstrate that in order to strengthen the participation of young people in all their diversity, it is crucial for organizations and country coalitions to have a proper understanding of marginalization and power dynamics within their country context. This tool suggests five steps partners can take to gain more insights into power and add an inclusivity lens to their context analysis. It is of vital importance that this is a participatory exercise which includes young people from the respective marginalized communities. If the country coalition does not (yet) reflect the diversity that exists among young people, partners should organize targeted consultations for this purpose.
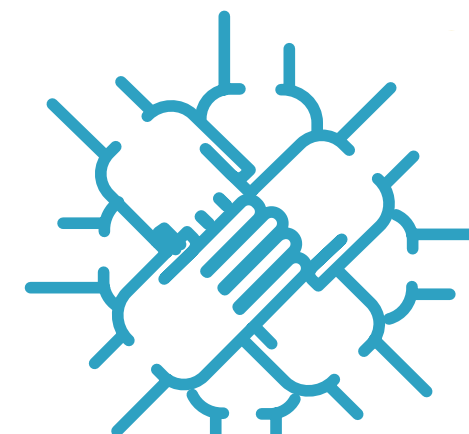
Step 1

Recognizing marginalized groups and understanding power and marginalization in the country context

To understand marginalization, it is important to have insights into how power works. Power is usually described as the degree of control one has. Power is dynamic and relational. Power dynamics describe how power affects a relationship between people and hence comprises a wide range of patterns of interaction. When people are socially excluded and denied power by other, dominant groups in society, they are subject to marginalization. Power dynamics and marginalization are sustained and perpetuated by beliefs, norms, values and attitudes. For CSOs that want to work inclusively it is important to unpack these. In short, it is important that partners **distinguish the respective marginalized communities in their country, assess how different types of marginalization intersect to multiply disadvantage; describe prevailing power dynamics in relation to these groups; and assess dominant beliefs, values and attitudes in society that sustain this.**

Step 2

Assessing the impacts on access to SRHR information and participation in the public debate and decision making

For RHRN2 country partners it is particularly important to assess **how the identified power dynamics, beliefs, values and attitudes (step 1) affect the access of marginalized youth to SRHR information and their participation in the public debate and policy and decision making.** By this means they can **distil the main barriers that young people from the respective marginalized communities experience in these domains.** The operational research in RHRN1 identified a variety of such obstacles, such as being denied access to decision-making spaces, not being taken seriously by stakeholders, not being able to engage meaningfully in dialogues with decision makers due to lack of access to relevant information, framing (e.g. of impoliteness or being too emotional when expressing an opinion) etc.

Step 3

Unpacking power and power dynamics in CSOs and country coalitions

Prevailing power dynamics and related beliefs and values, as discussed in step 1, also influence patterns of interactions within CSOs and movements as they are often internalized by people. When a young woman disagreeing and arguing with an adult man is considered offensive in a given society, this norm will most likely also affect interactions between adult men and young women in an organization. For the girls concerned, these norms and experiences may have also made them hesitant to speak out and affected their confidence and capacity to do so. This may apply more strongly for an indigenous girl or a girl belonging to an ethnic minority group, for instance, because of the intersection of their social identities as girl and member of an ethnic minority group.

Dominant power relations in society are sometimes also anchored in the structures of CSOs. Examples include so called 'youth' organizations in which adults take all the decisions, or rural women organizations with boards composed of urban women from elite groups. But also, more subtle power dynamics in organizations can cause inequality, for instance when - despite the organization's diverse composition - the voices of certain groups count in reality differently to others (like the voice of an indigenous person not being taken as seriously as the voice of a white male), or opportunities are in practice not equal for all. It is important for partners to be aware of the power dynamics in their own organization. Power dynamics may also influence how CSOs relate and interact with each other and can result, for instance, in (informal) authority for some organizations and a level of dependence for others. Hence, in order to strengthen inclusivity and equal partnership, it is important that partners are also aware of the power dynamics within their own organization, the country coalition and wider movement. As long as these power dynamics are not recognized, efforts to promote inclusivity and equal partnership will most likely fail.

First of all, it is important for organizations and partnerships to **assess whether the organization/partnership/movement is an adequate reflection of the diversity that exist in the population (or instead dominated by privileged groups), and to what extent they are accountable to marginalized groups.** In order to further unpack internal power dynamics, it is important to assess **the impacts of dominant beliefs, values and attitudes** as identified in step 1 **within the organization/partnership/movement, and identify dominant patterns of interaction in the organization/partnership/movement in respect of members of the marginalized communities.**

A possible tool for assessing power within the country coalition, or any other partnership between CSOs, is 'The Power Awareness Tool', published by The Spindle, the innovation platform of Partos[5]. Although this tool can provide useful insights in power relations between partners, it does not pay explicit attention to the wider context in which these relations exists and to the values and norms that sustain them.

Step 4

Deducing the main barriers to meaningful participation of marginalized youth in CSOs and SRHR partnerships

As a result of their marginalization in society as well as in the CSO landscape, young people from marginalized communities may experience various obstacles to participate meaningfully in a programme or organization and engage in equal partnerships with others. The last step of the proposed comprehensive context analysis is to **distil the main barriers to meaningful participation in CSOs and partnerships faced by young people from marginalized communities.** The box below represents a number of examples of obstacles that marginalized communities may face. The listing does not pretend to be exhaustive and should be compiled by each respective country coalition (see key questions at the end of this section).

Examples of barriers for participation in CSOs and SRHR partnerships

» Being a volunteer can be a privilege that not all young people have. For economically deprived youth **financial needs and working conditions** can challenge voluntary participation in CSOs and activities. In RHRN1 this came forward as a factor hampering the participation of young sex workers and other groups of economically deprived youth. Similarly, other **responsibilities** (social, educational etc.) **and conflicting schedules** can hamper participation.

» For youth living in remote areas, their **residence** and sometimes **limited access to electricity, internet, other utilities and infrastructure** can hamper their participation in partnerships and programmes. They may also have less access to information, which can lead to knowledge gaps and lack of confidence.

» Also, **VISA restrictions, and financial and travel barriers** can restrict the meaningful participation of marginalized communities (e.g. young people, LGBT+ people, unmarried women etc.) in SRHR programmes. It can hamper in particular their participation in regional and international advocacy activities.

[5] https://thespindle.org/publication/the-power-awareness-tool/

Examples of barriers for participation in CSOs and SRHR partnerships

» For segments of youth, e.g. indigenous youth, youth from ethnic minority groups or deaf young people, **language and communication** can be a factor that hampers participation. Also other segments of youth may also be excluded by language and communication styles used by privileged groups

» For marginalized youth, in particularly criminalized youth, participation and visibility can jeopardize their **safety and security**. They may experience (risk of) denial of registration, prohibition of activities or strict government control, intimidation and harassment by the police and security forces, arrest and jail, including by 'abuse' of other laws, as well as threat and violence in society. Participation can come at a high price for the physical and mental wellbeing of the concerned youth. In RHRN1, safety & security came forward as an important barrier experienced by young LGBT+ and young sex workers in some of the countries.

» As a result of dominant values and threats in the external environment, organizations and individuals may experience **fear to be associated with marginalized groups**, their organizations and agenda. This fear and resulting behaviour of privileged groups can be a serious barrier for marginalized youth to participate and engage in equal partnership.

» As a result of stigma and discrimination in society, marginalized youth may also experience (subtle and more hidden forms of) **stigma and discrimination in CSOs** or the wider SRHR or youth movement, which can be a serious barrier to their meaningful participation.

» Power dynamics and internalized social norms can hamper the participation of marginalized youth in multiple ways. As a result, they may have **less voice, responsibility and decision-making power** than others in organizations and programmes they participate in, and be subject to **tokenism**. Even if they formally do have voice, in reality power dynamics may mean their voice is considered differently from others. The operational research study on MIYP in RHRN1 provides multiple examples of how power dynamics may hamper voice, responsibility and decision-making power of marginalized groups.

» **Bureaucratic procedures** in organizations can also sustain power inequality and be a barrier for marginalized groups to participate and engage in equal partnership.

Step 5

Identifying supporting factors for inclusive participation and equal partnership within the coalition

Just like potential barriers, it is as important to be aware of positive factors in the context, coalition and individual CSOs that may help promote equality and meaningful participation of young people from marginalized communities. Institutionalization of young people through their own organizations, for instance, proved an important supporting factor for equal partnership in RHRN1. Groups of young people that are organized and have existed for a longer time, will more easily participate meaningfully and establish equal partnerships with others than young people that do not (yet) have their own organizations or movement. One organization or network might be more inclusive than others and have a longer history of working inclusively. The experiences of this organization can be used to strengthen inclusivity in other CSOs. Within organizations, the availability of anti-discrimination or inclusion policies, participatory processes or accountability mechanisms, among others, can all support inclusive youth participation. This can be uncovered by the readiness assessment and expanded here.

Using the results of the context analysis

The assessment of marginalization, power dynamics and supporting factors provides important information for partners to build on in the formulation of their strategies. Step 1 provides important knowledge to consider throughout the development of the annual plan, while the information gained in step 2 is specifically relevant for the development of targeted strategies to increase access to SRHR information and amplify voices of marginalized youth in the public debate and in policy and decision making (see section 5 of this tool). Steps 3, 4 and 5 provide important information for the development of targeted strategies to strengthen inclusivity in CSOs and the country coalitions (see section 4).

In summary: key questions to be addressed in the context analysis

The questions in the box below can help partners to add an inclusivity lens into their country context analysis. If desired, they can also be addressed separately to complement an existing context analysis.

Step 1

Marginalization in the country context

» Which segments of young people are marginalized in the country context?

» How do different types of marginalization intersect to multiply disadvantage?

» What are the beliefs, values and attitudes that underly and sustain this?

Step 2

Impacts on access to SRHR information, and participation in the public debate and policy and decision making

» What are the main barriers to access to SRHR information for young people from the identified marginalized communities?

» What are the main barriers to participate in the public debate for these young people?

» What are the main barriers to participate in policy and decision-making processes and spaces for these young people?

Step 3

Power dynamics in CSOs and the country coalition

» To what extent are the identified marginalized communities represented in the organization, coalition, and movement, including in their governance?

» To what extent are the organizations and coalition accountable towards the identified marginalized communities?

» Which power dynamics exist in the organization? Pay specific attention to members of the identified marginalized communities.

» Which power dynamics exist in the country coalition and wider movement? Pay specific attention to the organizations led by marginalized communities.

» Which dominant values, beliefs and attitudes sustain the identified power dynamics among CSOs?

Step 4

Main barriers to meaningful participation in the CSO landscape for young people from marginalized communities

» Which main barriers obstruct the meaningful participation of young people from marginalized communities in the organizations, coalition and movement?

Step 5

Supporting factors for inclusive participation and equal partnership

» Which main factors could support the promotion of meaningful participation of young people from marginalized communities in the organizations and coalition?

Relevant tools and resources on analysing power

» The Power Awareness Tool', published by The Spindle, the innovation platform of Partos:
https://thespindle.org/publication/the-power-awareness-tool/

» The power flower:
http://intergroupresources.com/rc/RESOURCE%20CENTER/OWEN'S%20CATEGORIZATION%20OF%20RC/5%20-%20Primers%20&%20additional%20resources/5f-%20Power/dynamics%20of%20power.pdf

TO UNDERSTAND POWER AND SOCIAL NORMS IN RELATION TO SRHR AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE:

» Rutgers' toolkit: 'Adopting a gender transformative approach in sexual and reproductive health and rights, and gender-based violence programmes' Module 1 Introduction to a GTA
https://www.rutgers.international/sites/rutgersorg/files/PDF/web_Rutgers%20GTA%20manual-module1-16.9.18.pdf

3.

Building the foundations for inclusive participation and equal partnership

Getting to know each other

RHRN1 put forward a number of important elements that can help build inclusive and equal partnerships. Explicit investment in these foundations from the start of the programme can help to smooth collaboration and enhance the effectiveness of the partnership. It is key for the groups involved to learn about each other, including each other's key values and priorities. This starts with knowing oneself, in particular how dominant power dynamics and values influence individual beliefs and behaviour. Getting to know each other results in exploring the added value that each party brings and the benefits of the collaboration to meeting the programme's objectives.

Learning about each other's values and priorities

The experiences of RHRN1 show that dominant perceptions and values in a country are often also present within individuals in CSOs and the movement, as they are so deeply rooted and sometimes expressed in unconscious behaviour. Moreover, operational research on the collaboration between LGBT+ groups and other CSOs in RHRN1 showed that it is incorrect to assume that organizations and people working on SRHR automatically understand and are naturally supportive of the programme's core values, especially in sensitive issues such as SOGIESC. Neither can it be assumed that different groups of people automatically feel comfortable working with each other.
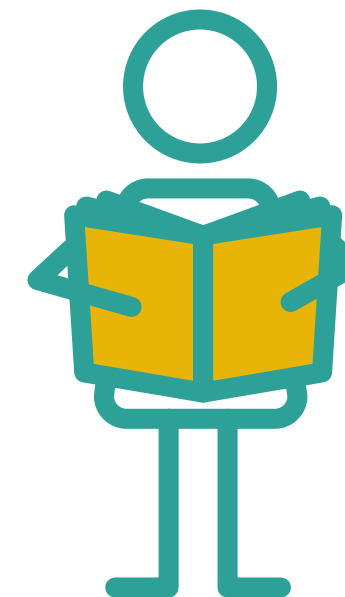
First of all, this reemphasizes the importance of assessing the readiness of organizations for inclusivity (see section 1). When values carried by CSOs and individuals truly conflict with each other, a partnership should be reconsidered since conflicting values are difficult to overcome and seriously decrease the feasibility of equal partnership and meaningful participation.

However, more subtle differences in values may exist, for instance when individuals involved in the coalition struggle to unify programme values with their own upbringing. This can be the result of limited understanding, ignorance or fear. Differences and subtle frictions in values have been one of the main challenges for SOGIESC inclusion by country coalitions in RHRN1, in particular for those operating in restrictive and unsafe contexts.

Closely linked to the above, prejudices and misperceptions about the other can hamper equal partnership and inclusive participation. Operational research on MIYP revealed for instance that widespread perceptions about youth in Nepal, such as young people being too emotional to participate on equal terms in formal decision making and lacking long-term perspective, also influenced young peoples' participation and the way their voices were considered by adults in the coalition. The experiences of RHRN1 confirm that these challenges can often be overcome, inter alia through VCAT and repeated exposure and exchange.

VCAT

Value Clarification and Attitude Transformation (VCAT) sessions have proven to be helpful in building inclusive organizations and coalitions, yet mostly when embedded in a larger strategy. On their own, VCAT sessions can contribute to new insights and changed ideas of individuals, but don't guarantee sustainable change in values and attitudes and certainly not that organizations incorporate them. Hence, VCAT sessions can be coordinated at the level of the country coalition but need to be organized within the respective organizations. They also need to be embedded in a longer-term strategy to ensure sustainability of the VCAT process in the organization.

The VCAT sessions can definitely be country-led, as CSOs and groups within the coalition are often in the best position to provide VCAT sessions to each other. When certain groups of marginalized youth are not (yet) represented in the country coalition, it is wise to call on their expertise and partner with their respective organizations in the VCAT process.

One should be aware that for CSOs operating in restrictive contexts, transformation of values and attitudes can be an extensive process that can be unpredictable and erratic, further highlighting the need for VCAT strategies to be long term and responsive to developments in the country context.

Exposure and exchange

Frequent exposure and exchange between people from diverse communities is an important strategy to increase understanding of each other's values and support for each other's priorities and agendas. Exchange on personal level can be extremely effective for individuals to get rid of fear and transform personal values and attitudes. Besides regular exchange during joint meetings and activities, exposure to diverse segments of young people can also be encouraged, e.g. through the organization of learning visits, by participation in each other's events and by social and team building activities. To build the foundations for inclusive youth participation and equal partnership it is recommended that organizations purposely plan and budget for such activities and incorporate them in their annual plans.

Self-reflection about internalized behaviour

Usually, existing power relations in society are constantly confirmed in people's behaviour and consequently internalized by both privileged and marginalized groups. Going from theory (understanding and supporting inclusive youth participation) to practice (actively ensuring young people from marginalized communities are enabled to meaningfully participate) can be very difficult, and internal power dynamics can often greatly influence this. Operational research in RHRN1 gives many insights in the complexity of breaking this cycle, but it also shows how explicit efforts can be effective to address internalized behaviour. Awareness raising, training and repeated dialogue about adult-centred attitudes and behaviour was a key element in the strategy of the RHRN coalition in Honduras. It effectively encouraged self-reflection about power dynamics among adults and young people and contributed to shifts in behaviour. It is recommended that coalition partners implement interventions to encourage self-reflection about internalized behaviour in privileged and marginalized groups which hampers inclusive participation and equal partnership. It is important to plan and budget for these activities and ensure that it is practised on a regular base.

Rutgers' GTA toolkit also contains some relevant and practical exercises for self-reflection partners can use to reflect about power dynamics and social norms and attitudes, e.g. the Power Walk activity in module 1 (page 45).

Examples of supportive attitudes for promoting

inclusive youth participation and engaging in equal partnership with young people from marginalized communities, adapted from IPPF's YCA toolkit:

» Willingness and motivation to work with young people from marginalized communities
» Commitment to working in partnership with young people from marginalized communities from an equal perspective
» Willingness to learn from young people from marginalized communities
» Willingness to challenge individual opinions, norms and feelings related to the sexuality of young people, to different backgrounds (ethnic, geographical, religious etc.) and diverse sexual orientations and gender identities
» Awareness that one's own experiences, attitudes and behaviour influence the way you interact with young people from marginalized communities

» Commitment to combatting discrimination and/or stigmatization of marginalized communities
» Confidence in your ability to defend/promote your interactions with young people from marginalized communities with other members of your family, community or profession
» Understanding and respect for the many different perspectives relating to sexual choices, behaviour, and expressions
» Willingness to explore and address personal/professional deficits in your interaction with marginalized young people from an equal position
» Willingness to ask for help/accept advice from young people from marginalized communities

Examples of questions for self-reflection, adapted from IPPF's YCA toolkit:

For privileged groups

» Am I aware of my own power and behaviour?
» Am I aware of situations where others perceive me as intimidating, are fearful that they may be judged, or may not dare to approach me?
» What are my needs in terms of power and control?
» Am I aware of my motivation for seeking an equal partnership with marginalized young people?
» How would I characterize the power dynamic in my interaction with marginalized young people? (Dominant/aggressive/accommodating/encouraging and empowering/detached?)
» Can I identify and practise well-balanced power relations with young, marginalized people?

For marginalized groups

» Am I aware of the impact of my own experiences on the way I interact with privileged groups?
» How would I characterize the power dynamic in my interaction with privileged groups?
» Do I feel pressurized by privileged (young) people and how does this affect my behaviour?
» Do I take more responsibilities in order to prove myself capable?

Benefits of partnership, examples from RHRN1

In Nepal, collaboration with a rural youth organization not only helped advocacy organizations based in the capital to access a previously missing segment of young people, it also provided the organizations with the opportunity to engage in multi-level advocacy (i.e. simultaneously at provincial and national level).

In the Honduran coalition, young people from remote areas, ethnic minority groups, LGBT+ and other youth benefitted from the extensive experience of senior feminists to build their advocacy skills. In their turn, these senior activists not only learnt about the contemporary realities of different segments of young people, they equally benefited from their social media and campaigning skills to reach out to a much larger public.

In a country coalition in Africa, a group of SRHR organizations that fulfilled a role as technical advisors to the government regarding CSE, benefitted greatly from their collaboration with an LGBT+ organization. Besides providing evidence, the LGBT organization advised the organizations on how to demystify SOGIESC within the CSE conversation, equipping them with relevant arguments. LGBT+ organizations in their turn, benefitted from a group of mainstream SRHR and women's organizations articulating the needs of young LGBT+ people in spaces that were not accessible to LGBT+ organizations, and in situations where it was not considered effective or safe for them to speak out themselves.

Identifying the benefits of participation and partnership

Inclusion of young people in all their diversity is fundamental to the programme's legitimacy, which is also reflected in the programme's TOC. It is important that everyone is aware of and agrees on this, and that this spirit is nurtured throughout programme implementation. Besides the importance of MIYP to the programme's legitimacy, MIYP and partnership can bring many other mutual benefits. Diverse organizations and groups can be of great benefit to each other, e.g. with their specific constituencies, areas of expertise and skills.

It is important that partners identify and agree on these specific benefits in an early stage. When developing a joint agenda or a common strategy, partners can build on what each of them has to offer. Agreement on these mutual benefits helps partners to determine their respective roles and responsibilities in the partnership. Mapping the mutual benefits of collaborating is important in any partnership, but more so in collaborations between privileged and marginalized groups where power dynamics will need to be transformed for an equal partnership. Commitment to equal partnership and inclusive youth participation can easily decline when organizations don't see or experience clear benefits from the partnership, or feel that their added value is not (sufficiently) recognized or utilized.

In summary: key questions to address in the planning cycle

Partners can use the following set of questions to start building the foundations for inclusive youth participation and equal partnership when developing their plans. The overview includes a number of key questions which can be expanded or adapted if desired. It will result in a number of interventions which should be included in the budget and annual plan.

The questions can be addressed in a workshop setting, partner meeting or other type of joint activity. When the country coalition does not include representation of the different segments of marginalized youth, their participation in this process must be safeguarded in another way.

What	Key questions for partners	Source/ evidence to use	When
VCAT strategy	» Which VCAT sessions are considered important to learn more about the identified marginalized groups, and to develop attitudes that are necessary to strengthen their participation and equal partnership? » Which community-led organizations/groups can provide the sessions? » How will the VCAT sessions be organized? (Separately for/in each interested organization? jointly? Etc.) **For each respective partner to address:** » How will the sustainability of the VCAT process within the organization be ensured?	Context analysis (section 3), readiness assessment (section 2), dialogue	Inception phase of the country programme. Consider annually (before/during development of annual plan) if revisions are needed.
Exposure and exchange	» Which activities will partners organize and undertake to encourage exposure and exchange with organizations/networks led by (other) marginalized groups?	Dialogue	Annually, before/during development of annual plan
Identifying mutual benefits	» What do partners perceive the main benefits of the collaboration with each of the other organizations/groups? » What do partners see as their added value to the partnership/benefits for the others in the partnership to collaborate with them?	Dialogue	Inception phase of the country programme, and when engaging in a collaboration with new groups during implementation

Resources and other relevant tools

FOR RELEVANT VALUE CLARIFICATION AND SELF-REFLECTION EXERCISES SEE:

» Rutgers' toolkit: 'Adopting a gender transformative approach in sexual and reproductive health and rights, and gender-based violence programmes':
https://www.rutgers.international/sites/rutgersorg/files/PDF/web_Rutgers%20GTA%20manual-module1-16.9.18.pdf

» IPPF's YCA toolkit, module 1:
https://www.ippfen.org/sites/ippfen/files/YCA%20toolkit_module1_EN.pdf

TO EXPLORE IDENTITY AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION IN ORDER TO ADDRESS DISCRIMINATION AND DEVELOP ADVOCACY LOOK AT:

» LILO (looking In, Looking out) methods:
https://positivevibes.org/what-we-do/lilo/

4.

Defining goals and strategies for building inclusive CSOs and country coalitions

Creating clear goal orientation

Creating clear goal orientation together is key to any partnership. Setting goals and defining priorities can help country partners to be focused on their efforts to build inclusive CSOs and an inclusive coalition and measure their progress over time.
Country partners can set objectives for inclusive youth participation and equal partnership with young people from marginalized communities under LTO4 of the programme's TOC. This section provides guidance for the development of this type of objectives and interventions. Section 5 discusses the strategic planning for promotion of inclusive youth participation and equal partnership within the other three LTOs.

It is important that partners are clear on what exactly they want to achieve regarding inclusivity within the programming period. For CSOs and coalitions that are very homogenous, and constituencies that do not reflect the actual composition of the youth population, it is important to set goals to strengthen diversity as well. Country partners can increase diversity in their organizations and constituencies and strengthen meaningful participation of marginalized youth collectively and individually. This way goals can be formulated both at the level of the individual organization as well as of the country coalition or wider movement. The development of goals and strategies is by definition a participatory process which involves young people from marginalized communities. As for any objective, it is important that partners also develop a set of indicators to monitor progress.

For the objectives to be realistic, it is important that partners build on their context analysis (section 2). For conservative societies with a CSO landscape that is not (yet) very diverse and shows little inclusivity towards marginalized communities, it is not realistic to set the same objectives as for CSOs in more progressive contexts. In such contexts, VCAT, exposure and exchange and self-reflection to build the foundations for inclusivity might require most attention, while in other contexts CSOs will be able to move further and take next steps sooner.

Managing and mitigating barriers

Programmes seeking to promote the meaningful participation of all young people need to take into account the different barriers marginalized groups of young people may face when trying to participate in SRHR programmes and partnerships. In many cases barriers can be mitigated, but they are sometimes beyond the programme's sphere of influence. Nonetheless, it is important to be aware of them, and to strategize how they will be managed.

Enhancing the participation of marginalized youth entails more than simply providing them with a seat in an organization or coalition. It means supporting them to overcome the various barriers that hamper their meaningful participation. This

Partners should be clear on what they want to achieve within the programme period (objectives), and which steps they will take to realize this, to:
» **Increase diversity** (representation of the different segments of marginalized youth) in their own organization/country coalition/movement
» **Enhance the meaningfulness of the participation** of young people from marginalized communities in their own organization/country coalition/movement.

It is recommended that they set objectives for their own organization and for the coalition.

requires measures to transform power dynamics in the organization/country coalition as well as measures to tackle other barriers to participation in CSOs and SRHR partnerships experienced by groups of young people as a result of their marginalization. A comprehensive context analysis provides insights into these barriers (see section 3) and is therefore an important information source for the development of targeted strategies.

Considering the complex nature of organizations and coalitions, sustainable change will require measures in various elements of the organization/coalition, including:

» **The structures** of the organization/coalition/ movement, e.g. governance, board composition, staff positions, operational structures, accountability mechanisms

» **Strategies, policies and procedures** of the organization/coalition/movement, e.g. constitution, SOPs, inclusion policy, safety and security policy, communication strategy, methodologies

» **The culture** of the organization/coalition/ movement; section 4 discussed the importance of VCAT, exposure and exchange, but additional measures may be needed to bring about the necessary 'cultural' change

To ensure that the desired organizational change is addressed in a holistic way, existing models from organizational science can also provide guidance, such as McKinsey's 7S framework which differentiates between hard elements of organizations (i.e. strategy, structure and systems), and soft elements (shared values, skills, style and staff).

Key questions for partners:

» Which of the identified external barriers to participation and equal partnership faced by marginalized young people can be mitigated?

» What will country partners do to mitigate these barriers? (actions, measures etc.)

» Which of the identified external barriers cannot be mitigated but will be managed?

» How will country partners manage these barriers?

Strengthening the quality of participation: CHOICE's flower of Meaningful Youth Participation

An important theoretical framework for promoting meaningful participation of young people is CHOICE's flower of participation. CHOICE's flower distinguishes five (5) core elements that must be in place for participation to be considered meaningful:

» Freedom of choice
» Information
» Voice
» Responsibility
» Decision-making power

This MYP model can be used to strengthen meaningful participation of young people from marginalized communities, but does not in itself incorporate an inclusivity lens. When the flower is used in a generic way, the specific measures necessary to promote meaningful participation of marginalized groups can be forgotten. So, when using the model to strengthen meaningful and inclusive youth participation, organizations and coalitions should explicitly state how each element can be strengthened and secured for each of the most marginalized communities in their country context, resulting in a tailored set of measures.

The readiness assessment (section 1) provides a rough baseline of the quality of participation of young people from marginalized communities in the partner organizations.

Freedom of choice

CHOICE defines freedom of choice as the extent to which a person can decide if they participate in a programme/activity/group or not. For young people from marginalized communities, freedom of choice can be hampered by specific barriers related to their marginalization. The case study of RHRN Honduras showed for instance that freedom of choice of young sex workers to participate in the programme was hampered by safety and security concerns but also by financial barriers (e.g. their need to prioritize sex work over programme activities). Similar barriers exist for other young people living in poverty that do not have a paid position in a CSO and struggle to make ends meet. The experiences of RHRN Honduras show that voluntary participation in an organization or programme is a privilege that not everyone has.

Furthermore, marginalized youth may also have different priorities to privileged youth. If there is not enough room for this diversity in priorities during the development of country programmes, marginalized youth might feel pressured to conform to the agenda of privileged groups. This can also affect freedom of choice.

Key question for partners:
what measures will the organization and country coalition take to increase freedom of choice for young people from marginalized communities?

Information

By information CHOICE refers to the extent to which people have access to comprehensive information about the objectives, different elements and timeline of the programme, activity or group, and their role within it, as well as information about the different possibilities/opportunities that people have within the programme/activity/group.

Different groups of young people may have different information needs to achieve a clear and equal understanding of the programme, to make informed decisions about their participation and to participate meaningfully. This can be due to an unequal access to information which they generally experience in the country context. They may also have different needs regarding how the information is shared with them (language, jargon, methodology etc.). Therefore, organizations need to explore the information needs of marginalized youth and appropriate ways to share it in order for the youth concerned to get a comprehensive understanding of the programme, organization or partnership. Use of uniform information packages and methodologies for young people may exclude large segments of youth, providing only privileged groups of youth the opportunity to participate meaningfully. Ensuring proper access to comprehensive information for marginalized youth to ensure they understand the programme is a fundamental step in modifying power dynamics and creating equal opportunities for young people to participate meaningfully.

Key question for partners:
What measures will the organization and country coalitions take to ensure access to comprehensive information about the programme/organization/coalition for young people from marginalized communities?

Voice

CHOICE defines voice as the extent to which one can voice their views and opinions, and the extent to which other people listen to and respect these views and opinions and integrate them into the programme, activity, or group. One way to strengthen the extent to which marginalized youth can voice their views and opinions is by consciously securing opportunities for these young people to participate in relevant structures, spaces and events, both internally and externally. However, creating opportunities for young people from marginalized communities to voice their ideas is often easier than ensuring that their voices are actually considered and responded to.

The way voices of individuals are considered is strongly influenced by prevailing norms related to social-cultural identities of people within a country context. In RHRN1 this came forward as one of the most challenging elements of meaningful youth participation and equal youth-adult partnership. Operational research in RHRN1 revealed that young men in the country coalition felt heard more often compared to young women, and that the voices of young people from remote areas were sometimes considered differently from the voices of urban youth. Strategies aiming to strengthen the voice of marginalized youth therefore need to consider and address obstructive power dynamics, including internalized behaviour in both privileged and marginalized groups.

Finally, building of trust is crucial in strengthening the voices of marginalized youth, i.e. for marginalized youth to have the necessary confidence to express their views and to feel secure that their voices are truly listened to, and for privileged groups to have confidence in the expertise and qualities of marginalized youth and hence be responsive to their voices. For guidance on building trust, also see CHOICE's Youth-Adult Partnership Toolkit which identifies important trust builders and trust breakers.

Strengthening diverse youth voices, an example from RHRN1:

In RHRN1, lack of trust was an important barrier to equal partnership between adults and young people in the Honduran coalition. By investing in organizing youth, creating safe spaces (i.e. the establishment of a youth network and secretariat), capacity strengthening and encouraging reflection about power dynamics and internalized behaviour among both youth and adults, the coalition was successful in strengthening the voices of diverse young people in the partnership. Young people with different backgrounds were trained as and became spokespersons in advocacy campaigns of RHRN Honduras. The increase in voice of diverse young people indicated a shift in power dynamics between youth and adults within the country coalition.

Key question for partners: What measures will the organization and country coalition take to strengthen the voice of young people from marginalized communities in the organization and coalition?

Responsibility

Responsibility is defined as the extent to which people have the opportunity to act independently within the programme, activity or group that they participate in. In RHRN1, a successful transformation was made from youth being perceived and treated as beneficiaries mostly, to youth as implementers and decision makers. The creation of leadership roles for young people in the partnership (e.g. in advocacy activities, thematic working groups and governance structures) was a key strategy in strengthening the element of responsibility. For the promotion of inclusive youth participation, it is important to ensure marginalized youth have leadership positions and opportunities to act independently in programme activities, CSOs and coalitions.

Prevailing power dynamics and fear of losing power among privileged groups can seriously obstruct responsibility for marginalized groups in CSOs and partnerships. Sometimes organizations and individuals try to maintain their conventional roles or preserve their position by maintaining bureaucratic processes and procedures in their institution and work practice, or by retaining a gatekeeper role instead of using their power to create opportunities for marginalized groups to act independently. Traditional power relations are sometimes perpetuated by privileged groups being 'protective' towards marginalized communities, depriving them of responsibility.

At the same time, for marginalized groups, responsibilities can come with disproportionate pressure resulting from other's prejudices or lack of confidence in their capacities. As a consequence, they may feel pressure to prove themselves right, or they may take more responsibility than actually given to them in order to demonstrate that they do have the capacity for that. All this can put them at risk of becoming overworked. Partners should take measures to prevent this, not only by securing a strong CS strategy, but also by ensuring proper mechanisms for critical internal evaluation. It requires awareness and acceptance among all parties involved that with responsibility comes the risk of failure/mistakes which can sometimes be prevented, and other times provide important lessons.

Key question for partners:
What measures will the organization and country coalitions take to strengthen responsibility for young people from marginalized communities in the organization and coalition?

Decision-making power

CHOICE describes decision-making power as the extent to which a person can make decisions about (parts of) the programme, activity, or group that they are participating in. It may require a serious transformation of power dynamics, so delivering decision-making power to marginalized groups can be extremely challenging, as privileged groups may be fearful and resistant to sharing power. This requires measures that target the governance and operational structures of organizations and the coalition, but also building of trust and the creation of a safe and enabling environment.

Key question for partners:
What measures will the organization and country coalition take to strengthen decision-making power for young people from marginalized communities in the organization and coalition?

Resources and other relevant tools

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CHOICE'S FLOWER OF PARTICIPATION:
» CHOICE's flower of participation: https://www.youthdoit.org/themes/meaningful-youth-participation/flower-of-participation/

FOR GUIDANCE ON BUILDING TRUST AND GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MAKING YAP WORK:
» CHOICE's Youth-Adult partnership toolkit: https://www.youthdoit.org/capacity-strengthening-tools/youth-adult-partnerships/

5.

Defining strategies to increase access to SRHR information and amplify voices of marginalized youth

Mainstreaming SRHR needs and priorities of marginalized groups

Building inclusive CSOs and country coalitions (section 4) is a fundamental step to improving access of marginalized youth to SRHR information and eliminating their exclusion from the public debate on young people's SRHR and in policy and decision making. As a necessary next step, partners will need to ensure that inclusivity is mainstreamed in the pathways for LTO1 (SRHR empowerment of young people), LTO2 (positive norms and values in society) and LTO3 (human rights-based policies and laws).

This means partners should apply an inclusivity lens when defining the objectives and strategies for LTO 1, 2 and 3. For each objective they set, partners will need to assess and ensure that it responds to the SRHR needs and priorities of marginalized youth. For instance, do objectives and strategies for the promotion of CSE consider SOGIESC? Or does the advocacy agenda for safe abortion respond to the specific needs of LBQ women?

Furthermore, in the development of strategies, partners should consciously build in inclusivity. For instance, to ensure that an advocacy product, such as a CSE policy brief or a shadow report on young people's SRHR adequately addresses needs positions of young people from marginalized communities, partners need to plan targeted activities, such as consultations among diverse segments of youth. Likewise, for the development of public campaigns, partners need to ensure the language and images used are inclusive of marginalized youth. And when planning for SRHR empowerment, partners need to reflect critically on what measures are needed to ensure marginalized communities are effectively reached. For instance, for SRHR training, partners need strategies that anticipate how they ensure that the methodologies and language are appropriate for different groups of youth, and that the curriculum responds to their respective needs and realities.

To ensure objectives and strategies are inclusive, meaningful participation of young people from marginalized communities in the development process is critical. Moreover, the experiences from RHRN1 show that it can be very challenging for organizations to be consistent in applying an inclusivity lens, especially when it is new to them. Partnership with marginalized groups can help to overcome this challenge, for instance by creating a structure for regular consultation, or by appointing people in the organization to a watchdog role for the mainstreaming of inclusivity. Finally, the development of indicators for inclusivity can help to encourage and monitor the application of an inclusivity lens in the LTOs.

Inclusive evidence generation and consultations

The comprehensive context analysis (section 3) is an important information source for partners when formulating their objectives and strategies. However, evidence-based programming requires more data collection and analysis. It requires up-to-date knowledge of key SRHR facts, most pressing SRHR needs and the social and cultural determinants of sexuality and sexual behaviour for the different youth populations. Marginalized groups live in different circumstances and have different needs to privileged groups. Therefore, achieving evidence-based programming requires consistent evidence generation among diverse segments of youth. Inclusive consultations are an important means for this.

Some partners may already have inclusive consultation mechanisms in place, while others will need to strengthen this. Organizations can use the country coalition to reach segments of youth beyond their traditional constituency, by linking up with each other, in particular with community-led organizations.

Inclusive youth consultations, an example from RHRN1

The diverse composition of the coalition in Honduras facilitated consultations among diverse communities. In the preparations for the anti-discrimination law, diverse voices were considered through consultations with young people from the respective constituencies of the member organizations, including LGBT+, women, rural groups, and organizations led by ethnic minority groups. Partners collected information among their constituencies about their respective experiences with human rights violations and their particular needs in respect of the law. The information was collected during different partners' events, through surveys and workshops. Based on this evidence, a bill was drafted.

Developing targeted strategies to advance the position of marginalized youth

Besides mainstreaming the SRHR needs and priorities of marginalized communities in programme objectives and strategies, targeted objectives and strategies are also needed to tackle the specific barriers marginalized youth experience in their access to SRHR information, public debate and decision making. These barriers have been identified as part of the comprehensive context analysis (section 3).

Broadly, two approaches can be used to support marginalized youth to tackle such barriers:

» **Strengthening marginalized youth and their organizations,** including facilitating groups, organizations and networks of marginalized youth, providing capacity strengthening (e.g. to strengthen their advocacy skills, support their organizational development) and other measures to strengthen the joint capacity of marginalized youth and increase opportunity for them to act autonomously.

» **Using the power of privileged groups** to promote inclusion and tackle barriers that hamper access and participation of marginalized youth **through strategic collaboration**. For this, partners need to agree how the more powerful individuals and groups in the coalition will use their power in favour of the less powerful.

These questions can include how powerful individuals and established organizations will

» broker space for, and increase access of marginalized youth to policy and decision makers and decision-making spaces

» broker space for and increase access of marginalized youth to key stakeholders in the public debate, such as media houses

» help to amplify the voice of marginalized youth in these spaces/in the interaction with these stakeholders (for instance, by meeting with them jointly, expressing their support for the demands of marginalized groups, inviting them to provide CS/sensitization sessions etc.)

» increase access to/share important strategic and political information with marginalized youth (for instance, strategic information they gain in formal working group/ commissions they have a seat in)

» support marginalized youth by articulating their SRHR issues and priorities on their behalf, and when and where they will do this. This can be a relevant strategy when marginalized communities face serious stigma and discrimination and are denied access to certain spaces, or in situations where it is not safe for them to articulate their issues themselves. This strategy should only be applied at the request of marginalized communities as their own participation and agency should always be prioritized where possible. Moreover, explicit commitment to relevant values as well as adequate literacy in respect of the issue is a precondition to this strategy.

This kind of strategic collaboration requires early agreement on roles and responsibilities among all parties involved. This is an unavoidably participatory process. Through dialogue, partners should identify and agree in which situations and on what matters this type of collaboration is considered strategic. Furthermore, it is recommended to expect and allow different roles for organizations and individuals with already strongly supportive values, to organizations that still experience fear or hesitance and where more investment in building the foundations for inclusive participation and equal partnership is required first. The readiness assessment (section 1) provides important information about this.

Dealing with sensitive issues in the development of objectives and strategies

Inclusive objectives and strategies will sometimes touch on issues that are very sensitive within the country context and might evoke resistance or even involve safety and security risks. The experiences of RHRN1 teach us that CSOs may weaken the formulation of their objectives because of strategic and security considerations.

For example, the coalitions in a few Asian countries decided to use the local word for transgender people in their LTOs and strategies rather than refer to LGBT+ people in general, because it is socially more accepted. Despite their intention to be inclusive to the full LGBT+ community under that more accepted terminology, in reality LGB people were largely left out as the coalitions lacked relevant strategies to ensure the inclusion of these communities.

Partners can avoid this by differentiating between internal and external language for their objectives and strategies regarding sensitive issues. Internally (within the organizations and coalition), it is important to use very clear and precise language in order to ensure an adequate, common understanding of objectives and targeted strategies, while wording for external audiences can be adapted to be safer and more strategic (e.g. use of culturally sensitive language, terminology derived from local language etc.) This kind of agreement can be captured in a communication strategy.

Resources and other relevant tools

» Dance4Life toolkit for meaningful youth consultations.
  Toolkit: Making each voice count – Right Here Right Now (rutgers.international)
» IPPF & Rutgers' toolkit: 'Explore. Toolkit for involving young people as researchers in sexual and reproductive health programmes':
 https://www.rutgers.international/our-products/tools/explore

6.

Developing a capacity exchange plan

The importance of a solid capacity exchange plan for inclusive youth participation and equal partnership

All partners will need to acquire new knowledge and skills in order to implement their strategies for building inclusive organizations and an inclusive coalition (section 4) and increase access to SRHR information and amplify voices of marginalized youth in the public debate and in policy and decision making (section 5). For instance, to advocate for the SRHR of all young people, organizations need to have proper arguments that debunk bias and discrimination against marginalized groups. Likewise, for young people from marginalized communities that are generally excluded from formal decision-making spaces, engaging in these spaces requires knowledge about the spaces and relevant advocacy skills. Specific capacity needs will differ from organization to organization, so partners will need to develop tailor-made plans.

Although the VCAT strategies and other activities discussed in section 4 of this tool also contribute to partners' capacity for MIYP, they have been addressed separately to emphasize that they are preconditions for all organizations to implement MIYP. Mutual understanding and basic knowledge about the other (e.g. through clarity on mutual
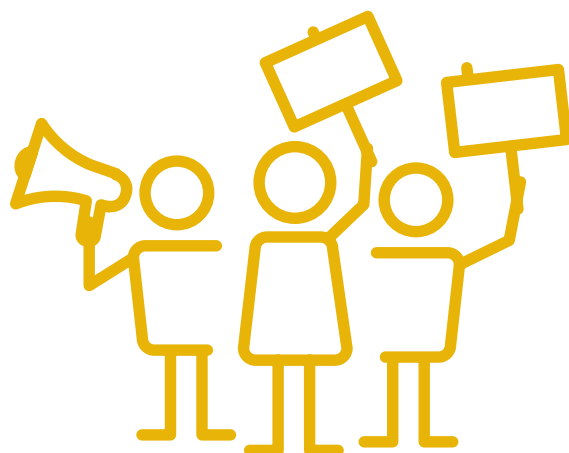
values, development of supportive attitudes, mutual agreement on the benefits of collaboration) is considered fundamental to any partnership between youth from marginalized communities and more privileged youth and adults, regardless of their individual objectives and ambitions. This section, on the other hand, addresses additional and targeted capacity strengthening for the implementation of the strategies developed in section 4 and 5.
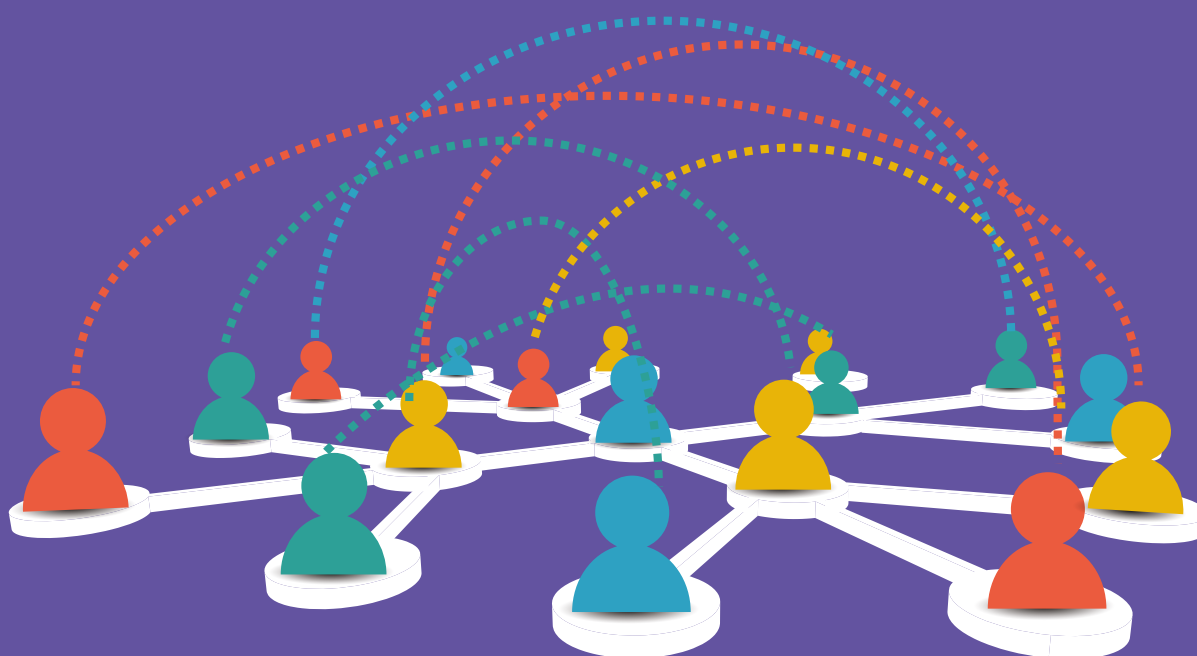
Identifying capacity needs

As part of the development of their annual work plans, partners will define what capacity strengthening they need to be able to effectively implement each of the four pathways. This includes identifying capacity needs that emerge from their strategies for promoting inclusivity. Basically, it concerns the following two questions:
» What capacity strengthening does each partner organization need to properly implement their strategies for creating inclusive CSOs and an inclusive coalition as addressed in section 4 (to set up an accountability mechanism, to increase the organization's literacy regarding the respective communities, to develop an inclusive communication strategy, to strengthen their safety and security system etc.)?
» What capacity strengthening does each part-

ner organization need to properly implement their strategies for increasing access of marginalized youth to SRHR information and amplify their voices in the public debate and in policy and decision making as addressed in section 5 (knowledge of relevant advocacy spaces, diplomatic skills, knowledge and skills to develop inclusive advocacy products, skills to deal with opposition etc.)?

It is particularly important to create sufficient opportunity for young people from marginalized communities to identify their specific capacity strengthening needs and build relevant capacity. Because of their systematic exclusion, they may need more capacity strengthening to participate meaningfully in organizations, partnerships and programme activities. Inclusive participation means avoiding throwing people into situations for which they are insufficiently prepared.

Capacity exchange strategy

As part of their plan, partners will need to formulate how they will organize capacity strengthening. This includes identifying relevant expertise within the country coalition, other (community-led) groups and experts in the country, and the global consortium, and planning and budgeting for the exchanges.

Capacity exchange is a very powerful tool to modify power dynamics between privileged and marginalized groups and promote equity. It can help to strengthen collaboration and partnership. In RHRN1, an active role for adults in strengthening advocacy knowledge and skills among young people helped adults to see young people's potential and effectively increased their confidence in, and support for young people's participation in SRHR advocacy, which strengthened youth-adult partnership. Also, for this reason it is recommended to organize the exchanges as much as possible within the country coalition and other groups the coalition partners plan to partner with under the programme.

Organizations and groups led by marginalized communities can play a key role in building the necessary capacity for inclusive participation and equal partnership among other CSOs. Likewise, more established and experienced organizations and seniors can play a key role in building capacity of younger organizations and junior activists. It is important to sufficiently recognize, budget for and benefit from such roles.
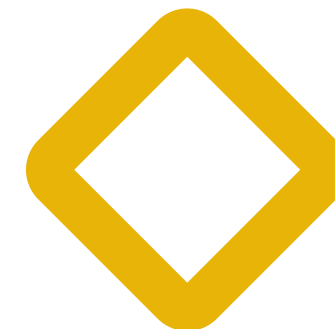
Finally, it is important that partners plan how they will ensure the sustainability of capacity strengthening within their organization, e.g. how it will be embedded in the organization and transferred to others. It is important that the capacity exchange strategies target organizations and communities and not individuals.

References

Rutgers/ Dance4Life:

» Meaningful and Inclusive Youth Participation in SRHR advocacy platforms. Case studies of Nepal and Honduras. Operational Research Right Here Right Now1, by Zaïre van Arkel Consultancy.
» Including SOGIE in SRHR partnerships and advocacy agendas Operational Research Right Here Right Now1, by Zaïre van Arkel Consultancy.
» Meaningful Youth Participation at Rutgers: Where are we now and where do we want to go? Young People | Rutgers
» Rutgers' toolkit: 'Adopting a gender transformative approach in sexual and reproductive health and rights, and gender-based violence programmes'. Module 1; introduction to a gender transformative approach https://www.rutgers.international/sites/rutgersorg/files/PDF/web_Rutgers%20GTA%20manual-module1-16.9.18.pdf
» Rutgers' Essential Packages Manual, chapter on Meaningful Youth Participation: Essential Packages Manual | Rutgers
» Dance4Life's YAP toolkit: Empowering Youth Voices – Right Here Right Now (rutgers.international)
» Dance4Life toolkit for meaningful youth consultations. Toolkit: Making each voice count – Right Here Right Now (rutgers.international)
» IPPF & Rutgers' toolkit: 'Explore. Toolkit for involving young people as researchers in sexual and reproductive health programmes': https://www.rutgers.international/our-products/tools/explore

References

CHOICE:

» CHOICE's flower of participation:
   https://www.youthdoit.org/themes/meaningful-youth-participation/flower-of-participation/
» CHOICE's Youth-Adult partnership toolkit:
   https://www.youthdoit.org/capacity-strengthening-tools/youth-adult-partnerships/
» Choice and Dance4Life's MIYP organizational self-analyses module in Academy:
   https://my.dance4life.com/academy/meaningful-and-inclusive-youth-participation/

External/ other:

» IPPFs YCA toolkit, module 1:
   https://www.ippfen.org/sites/ippfen/files/YCA%20toolkit_module1_EN.pdf
» 'The Power Awareness Tool', published by The Spindle, the innovation platform of Partos:
   https://thespindle.org/publication/the-power-awareness-tool/
» The power flower:
   http://intergroupresources.com/rc/RESOURCE%20CENTER/OWEN'S%20CATEGORIZATION%20OF%20RC/5%20-%20Primers%20&%20additional%20resources/5f-%20Power/dynamics%20of%20power.pdf)
» LILO (Looking In, Looking Out) methods: https://positivevibes.org/what-we-do/lilo/
» McKinsey's 7S framework