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الشبكة العالمية لوكالات التعليم في حالات الطوارئ

Engaging Youth-Led and Youth-Serving Organizations in Disaster Relief Efforts

A guide for international agencies involved in
emergency response and recovery

May 2013

Introduction

This guidance document was written by Natalie Breazeale (consultant for the INEE Adolescent and Youth Task Team) under supervision and guidance of Nicolas Servas (Programme Coordinator, Refugee Education Trust; Education Cluster Coordinator, Finn Church Aid) in collaboration with youth advisers from the International Committee of the Red Cross (Sylvie Girard and Nicole Martins-Maag) International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (Karl Zarhuber and Roberta Zuchegna), World Organization of the Scout Movement (Srinath Tirumale Venugopal) and Young Men's Christian Association (Romulo Dantas). Dominique Bénard, Josh Chaffin, Catherine Gladwell, Jane Lowicki-Zucca, Amy Rhoades, Anna Seeger, Margaret Sinclair and Carl Triplehorn further contributed to the conceptualisation and review of this document.

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The INEE Adolescent and Youth Task Team

The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) is an open global network of representatives from NGOs, UN agencies, donor agencies, governments, academic institutions, schools and affected populations working together to ensure all persons the right to quality and safe education in emergencies and post-crisis recovery. The INEE Adolescent and Youth Task Team (AYTT) is composed of representatives from UN agencies, international and national NGOs: practitioners, researchers and policy makers who work collaboratively on technical tasks to ensure a coordinated, expanded and evidence-based response to the educational rights, needs and aspirations of adolescents and youth affected by crisis.

Introduction

Purpose and rationale

There are many examples of young men and women in youth-led and youth-serving networks who, immediately following a disaster, have volunteered their services to help rebuild their communities. Following the 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquake/Tsunami, youth sought out and joined with UNICEF to offer psychosocial support to their peers and community members, assist with damage assessments, and help rebuild damaged schools and community buildings. Following the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, young scouts took the initiative to contribute to response efforts; they rescued those trapped under rubble, set up tents for survivors¹ and distributed necessary supplies to the displaced.² Young volunteers also assisted with the relocation of families, helped educate people on cholera prevention and conducted recreational activities for younger children in camps.

To support and encourage youth participation in emergency response efforts, this document provides concrete guidelines for engaging with youth and youth movements in crisis contexts by identifying approaches that have effectively included young people as actors in programming. This document primarily focuses on ways in which relief agencies can effectively engage with established networks such as youth sections of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, YMCA, Scouts and Guides associations. However, it is important to emphasize that most youth are not part of such networks and still manage to make valuable contributions in relief and recovery efforts. Thus, relief agencies should strive to develop an approach that assesses all local youth initiatives, collaborating with both individual, spontaneous efforts as well as established networks.

Structure and Scope

This document is divided into three sections: 1) Rationale for engaging youth in emergency response and recovery; 2) Examples of youth-led and youth-serving organizations and how they involve youth in emergencies; and 3) Recommendations for effectively involving youth in emergency response and recovery.

The following questions regarding youth participation in programming throughout all stages of emergency response, relief and reconstruction efforts are addressed:

1. Why involve youth in relief efforts?
2. Which youth-led and youth serving organizations are working in emergency contexts and which of their activities have proven most successful?
3. What are good practices for engaging young people in emergency contexts?

¹ ShelterBox, 2010, *ShelterBox and Scouts work side by side in Haiti*, <http://www.youngshelterbox.org/news.php?ID=20>

² Cable News Network (CNN), 2010, *Scout takes comfort in Haiti relief work*, http://articles.cnn.com/2010-02-01/world/haiti.girl.scout_1_scout-troop-haiti-earthquake?_s=PM:WORLD

Defining Youth

The United Nations, for statistical purposes, defines 'youth' as persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. Yet, the exact age at which youth are considered to be 'old enough' to assume certain roles and responsibilities varies significantly across cultures based on factors such as marriage, educational achievements, and the ability to sustain oneself and one's family. Young people of all ages have and continue to make valuable contributions in response and recovery efforts with their individual experiences, knowledge, and skills; however, for the purposes of this guidance document, we will be presenting ways in which relief agencies can best engage with young males and females, ages 15-29 years, who can take on leadership roles in emergency response while also providing linkages with their younger peers.

Part One: Rationale for Engaging Youth in Emergency Response and Recovery

Youth: The Inherent Risks

Young people's transition into adulthood is a challenging period characterized by new responsibilities, freedoms, and important choices regarding identity and values. Even in seemingly stable societies, this experimental stage in a young person's life frequently involves risky behaviours and impulsive decisions that can have devastating consequences; traffic accidents, suicide and arms-related violence (often drug and/or alcohol-related)³ are the leading causes of death among young males across the globe, while HIV/AIDS and early pregnancy cause the most deaths in young females.⁴ Additionally, this formative period is the pivotal time when experiences of poverty, inequity, and violence are passed on to the next generation.

Youth in Crisis Contexts

In crisis situations, youth are especially impacted by the risks and instantaneous burden of adult responsibilities that often accompany natural or man-made disasters. Mass displacement, separation or loss of parents, and the breakdown in community infrastructures leave this group especially vulnerable to forced recruitment into fighting forces, gender-based violence, and trafficking for exploitative labour or commercial sex. Lost educational and economic opportunities that often plague disaster-affected communities can also exacerbate poverty and force youth into risky income generating activities such as prostitution, begging, and illicit-drug activities in order to survive.

Crisis Situations: An opportunity for Empowering Youth

Despite the risks and vulnerabilities young people face, especially in disaster situations, it would be short-sighted to view youth simply as victims or passive beneficiaries of assistance. While some may seek social and economic advancement by alternative, extra-legal means, youth are most often looking for respectable ways to improve their social standing and secure their financial well-being. If provided with moral, financial, and technical support, youth can make important contributions to social cohesion, reconstruction, and the maintenance of peace. Crisis situations can actually prove to open up new spaces for young people to contribute in ways that are meaningful and empowering. Though rarely acknowledged or recorded, young men and women

³ George C. Patton et al., "Global patterns of mortality in young people: a systematic analysis of population health data," *The Lancet* 374 (12 September 2009), pp. 881-892.

⁴ United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), 2004, *State of World Population*, <http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2004/english/ch9/page5.htm>

have social and cultural resources for adaptation⁵ and have exhibited tremendous courage, resilience, and leadership skills in disaster situations. Examples of youth involvement in natural disasters and crisis situations such as the 2004 tsunami,^{6, 7, 8} the 2007 cyclone in Bangladesh,⁹ the 2007 post-election violence in Kenya,¹⁰ the 2008 floods in Algeria,¹¹ the 2008 cyclone in Haiti,¹² and the 2012 typhoon in the Philippines¹³ demonstrate how youth have made valuable contributions to their families and communities in crisis situations. Young men and women courageously rescued family and community members, helped trace missing family members, delivered food and shelter, assisted with first aid and clean-up efforts and initiated fundraising and recovery efforts.

Not involving children [and youth] ignores their capacities. It also undermines them by sending the message to the adult community and decision makers that it is okay to exclude children from decision making, information, consultation and contributing... (UNICEF, 2007)

After the 2004 tsunami, children [and youth] made significant and concrete contributions to the relief efforts... yet, despite such effort in the early stages of the emergency response, children [and youth] found themselves soon sidelined when troops and international aid agencies arrived and took control of the relief work. (UNICEF, 2007)

Overcoming Barriers to Youth Participation

Although most humanitarian aid agencies recognize the importance of youth participation, few manage to implement such an approach. In large-scale disaster situations, adult decision-makers rarely consult or engage youth in a systematic and meaningful way and many organizations maintain the belief that participatory processes involving youth require too much time to plan and implement. Youth engagement activities are usually assumed to be the responsibility of youth-serving organizations, are usually treated as separate programs, and rarely build on the existing knowledge and capacities of disaster-affected youth. Cultural beliefs, social prejudices, and fears or misperceptions among community members can produce additional barriers for integrating youth participation into relief efforts, especially if aid agencies did not already have a presence in the affected communities.

Engaging Youth and Enhancing Aid Delivery

While creating opportunities for meaningful youth engagement does require effort and resources, the benefits are invaluable. Consulting

young people in the initial stages of disaster relief interventions can help organizations identify and address risks specifically affecting disaster-affected youth and reach vulnerable youth groups that might otherwise be excluded from programming. Even in the absence of crisis situations, engaging youth in programming that provides guidance, support, and life-saving information can offer

⁵ Jesse Newman, "Protection through Participation: Young People Affected by Forced Migration and Political Crisis," *Refugee Studies Centre Working Paper 20* (March 2005) Refugee Studies Centre, Oxford, 2005.

⁶ United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2005, *Voices of Hope: Adolescents and the Tsunami*, UNICEF, New York.

⁷ United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2007, *The Participation of Children and Young People in Emergencies: A guide for relief agencies, based largely on the experiences in the Asian tsunami response*, UNICEF, Bangkok.

⁸ Plan International, 2004, *Children and the Tsunami: Engaging with children in disaster response, recovery and risk reduction: Learning from children's participation in the tsunami response*, Plan International, Bangkok.

⁹ World Scout Bureau Inc., 2007, *Scouts provide assistance to cyclone survivors*, http://www.scout.org/en/information_events/news/2007/scouts_provide_assistance_to_cyclone_survivors

¹⁰ ShelterBox, 2008, http://www.shelterbox.org/deployment_details.php?id=85

¹¹ World Scout Bureau Inc., 2008, *Algerian Scouts excel at disaster preparedness*, http://www.scout.org/en/information_events/news/2008/algerian_scouts_excel_at_disaster_preparedness and *Algerian Muslim Scouts facing the Earthquake*, http://www.scout.org/en/about_scouting/partners/marrakech/emergency_relief/algerian_muslim_scouts_facing_the_earthquake

¹² World Scout Bureau Inc., 2008, *Scouts of Haiti provide community service following cyclone destruction*, http://scout.org/en/node_64/node_199/environment/news/scouts_of_haiti_provide_community_service_following_cyclone_destruction

¹³ World Scout Bureau Inc., 2012, *Filipino Scouts join ShelterBox supporting typhoon survivors*, http://www.scout.org/en/around_the_world/asia_pacific/information_events/news/filipino_scouts_join_shelterbox_supporting_typhoon_survivors

protection, curtail destructive patterns, and potentially reverse devastating inter-generational cycles. In crisis situations, including youth in relief efforts can provide an outlet for youth and mitigate the devastating impacts of the disaster while simultaneously providing opportunities for personal development and empowerment. Additionally, youth, often more familiar with newer technologies, can utilize social media and mobile devices to mobilize their peers, disseminate important information, and trace missing community members when a disaster strikes.¹⁴

The prospect of harmonizing relief efforts with the eventual process of development can seem daunting for agencies responding to disasters. Yet, the way in which these agencies engage with youth in emergency contexts could have a direct impact on how effectively youth are able to integrate into and impact the reconstruction process of their communities or nations.

Part Two. Youth Networks in Action

Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Scouts and Guides associations, and the YMCA/YWCA are established movements that foster personal development and participation in society. In fact, it is often these community-based organizations that are best positioned to attract young volunteers, rather than foreign NGOs or high-level coordination mechanisms. Below are examples of how these networks are effectively partnering with youth in recovery and reconstruction activities—providing opportunities for youth to gain valuable life and leadership skills while making a significant difference in their communities.

Youth volunteers of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Around the world, 187 Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies support public authorities in their countries as independent auxiliaries to the government in the humanitarian field.¹⁵ Their local branches ensure the knowledge and expertise, access to communities, and infrastructure necessary to get the right kind of help where it's needed, fast. National Society volunteers are often the first on the scene when a disaster strikes and remain active within affected communities long after everyone else has come and gone. In total, Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies have 13.1 million active volunteers, of which around 50 per cent are youth, who offer their services in disaster preparedness, response and recovery; health promotion, treatment and social services; the promotion of a non-violent, peaceful and inclusive society and other activities. The efficiency, reputation and expansive reach of the Red Cross and Red Crescent make it a safe and reliable resource for young people to engage with when a disaster strikes. Young people are trained and encouraged to lead and participate in volunteer activities, as well as in the governance and management of their National Societies.

¹⁴ United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), 2012, *Mobilizing Youth Volunteers in the Philippines through Social Media*, <http://www.unfpa.org/public/cache/offonce/home/news/pid/10250;jsessionid=782986813658A9CCA273595559829407.jahia01>

¹⁵ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), <http://www.ifrc.org/en/who-we-are/the-movement/national-societies/>



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Red Cross Youth response after the earthquake in Italy in 2009

Young volunteers of the Italian Red Cross played a crucial role as part of emergency response teams, addressing the psychosocial impacts that affected survivors of the earthquake. Using clown-therapy, volunteers encouraged young children to express their feelings through games, smiles, and laughter. Volunteers used similar techniques with women, disabled individuals, and the elderly. These peer-to-peer and inter-generational approaches were very positively received by the affected population.

Tunisia: Improving lives of migrant populations¹⁶

In Tunisia, young Red Crescent volunteers have been working to improve the lives of migrant populations on their way to Europe. The volunteers took action to improve the way in which their communities behave towards migrant communities - promoting the need for tolerance, mutual understanding, and social inclusion. By integrating the migration topic into their regional programming, they were able to convey important messages to their peers and community members to change perceptions and improve treatment of migrants.

Scout Movement (Boy Scouts and Girl Guides Associations)

The Scout Movement was founded in 1907. The Mission of Scouting is to assist young people in developing a value system that will cultivate their capacity to become self-reliant, responsible, committed individuals who can make positive contributions to their societies. The World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) has National Scout Organizations present in over 200 countries and territories. Local groups of Scouts create volunteer opportunities for young people, allowing them to have a voice and play a part in the decisions and activities that directly affect their lives and those in their communities.¹⁷

Amahoro Amani Project in the Great Lakes region¹⁸

In 1999, the National Scout Organizations of Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Rwanda decided to address the various barriers that led to and resulted from the genocide in Rwanda, the civil war in Burundi, and the war in the DRC. The Scouts integrated a peace education programme into their existing youth programme. The programme focused on developing critical thinking, analytical skills and cultivating a culture of collaboration, diversity, and peaceful cohabitation. The activities included mediator and leadership seminars on non-violence techniques, the development of youth-led Peace Clubs led by 600 community mediators, house-building projects targeting groups displaced by the wars, and a sub-regional peace camp to spread and promote peace in the area. The project has reached more than 8,800 girls and women, and 12,800 boys and men. A new phase was launched in December 2011 to strengthen the capacity of the community mediators and peace clubs established during the first phase.

¹⁶ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), 2010, *Guidelines for National Societies to organize local youth actions and celebrate the International Year of Youth*.

¹⁷ World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM), http://scout.org/about_scouting

¹⁸ World Scout Bureau Inc., 2003, *Scout Sub-Regional Peace Education Programme in the Great Lakes Region of Africa*, <http://www.scout.org/en/content/download/2440/25443/file/pp2greatlak%E2%80%93e.pdf>

*Haitian Scouts: Working for youth in Haiti*¹⁹

The National Scout Organization of Haiti (ANSH) is the largest youth organization of the country and one of the strongest in the Caribbean and Latin America. After the initial earthquake on January 12, 2010, ANSH immediately mobilized to assist with funerals, victim identification, food distribution, establishing first aid centres and helping with the relocation of families. The ANSH initiated a five-year plan reconstruction project, based on the expressed needs of the Haitian youth, with the objective to actively involve them in the reconstruction and development of their country.

Pakistan floods: rehabilitation of schools in Balochistan

In Pakistan the Jaffarabad district of Balochistan has been facing devastating floods since 2010 with some areas affected for three years in a row. In this district, 513 schools out of a total of 1,089 were damaged by the 2012 floods. After the floods, the Balochistan Scouts Association mobilised its members to set up 114 Temporary Learning Centres and refurbish 43 schools with high dropout rates. In addition to supervising school renovations and cleaning water points, young leaders conducted health and hygiene practice sessions, reactivated and trained Parent Teacher Management Committees and Children Clubs to actively involve them in the maintenance of clean school environments and to ensure that children wash their hands.



© Balochistan Scouts Association

The YMCA

The YMCA, founded in 1844 in London, England, is a worldwide community service organization which comprises more than 700,000 volunteers and aims to promote lasting personal and social change.²⁰ The YMCA reaches more 58 million people in 119 countries and offers programmes, services, and initiatives based on the specific needs of each community and focusing on youth development, employment, healthy living, and social responsibility. One of the defining characteristics of the YMCA is that it has an established and permanent presence in communities affected by disasters; the organization participates in emergency response efforts in accordance with the needs of communities but with a focus on longer-term strategies. Engaging youth as equal partners is at the core of the organization and youth take an active role in all stages of emergency planning and implementation. Youth also play a major role in mobilising volunteers and communicating the needs of disaster-affected communities.

Chile: Rebuilding the lives of earthquake victims

In the immediate aftermath of the 2010 earthquake, YMCA volunteers acted quickly to provide food, clothes, and medicine to victims. Young volunteers helped set up public dining areas for children and young people and established recreational workshops to help hundreds of boys and girls to cope with trauma. Trainings were also provided to around 300 disaster-affected individuals to help them acquire income-generating skills.

¹⁹ World Scout Bureau Inc., 2010, *International Scout Aid for Haiti: First Report to Donors*, http://scout.org/en/information_events/library/fund_mobilisation/international_scout_aid_for_haiti

²⁰ Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), 2012, *The YMCA Blue Book*, http://www.ymca.int/uploads/media/The_YMCA_Blue_Book_02.pdf

Japan: Providing hope for farmers in and devastated communities²¹

In March 2011, Eastern Japan was hit with an earthquake and deadly tsunamis that devastated the farming community of Yamamoto Town. YMCA volunteers came from all over the nation to help farmers remove debris and rebuild greenhouses. In the city of Sendai, the local YMCA was turned into an evacuation centre where volunteers, also affected by the disasters, worked tirelessly to provide food and care for the local people. In Miyako, YMCA volunteers, trained in first aid and survival techniques, were able to start relief work immediately without electricity or a fresh water supply.

Spontaneous Youth Groups

In addition to the well-established youth organizations such as those detailed here, it should also be noted that smaller, local youth-led initiatives have had a positive impact on their communities following emergencies. Their presence in underserved regions, knowledge of local cultures and norms can all help implement projects successfully. In post-earthquake Haiti for example, local youth groups established sport activities in community programs and assisted with rubble clearance. In South Sudan, youth have mobilized into local associations for peace-building, and in Afghanistan, graduates of Kabul university have joined together to create networking and employment generating opportunities for younger youth. Although rarely documented, these smaller initiatives have the potential to contribute to broader youth-led engagement with disaster-affected communities.

Part Three: Good Practices for Meaningful Youth Engagement

SUPPORTING YOUTH PARTICIPATION AT ALL STAGES OF PROGRAMMING

Humanitarian actors must start to consider young people as resourceful contributors and commit fully to incorporating meaningful youth participation into their programmatic and organizational approach. Young people, individually and collectively, are spontaneously taking action in disaster events to assist in response and recovery efforts. The extent to which their efforts are effectively channelled depends on the steps taken by aid agencies. These can include:

Initial and on-going assessments of youth needs

- Conduct initial and follow-up context analyses to establish the needs of youth and tailoring interventions to address those needs,²²
- Carry out separate consultations with youth can also help inform planning and implementation processes with important insights on local concerns facing young people.

Provide skills training for youth

- Empower youth to effectively respond to a disaster situation through improved access to information before and after an emergency so that they are informed on what agencies are doing in their communities and understand what resources are available;

²¹ The National Council of the YMCAs of Japan, 2012, *Light of Hope for the Future*, <http://www.ymca.int/?1162>

²² Some good examples of assessments and tools include:

- UNICEF, 2002, *A Brave New Generation: Youth in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Findings and Recommendations*, http://www.unicef.org/serbia/A_Brave_New_Generation%281%29.pdf
- UNFPA, 2008, *Youth Participation Guide: Assessment, Planning and Implementation*, http://www.unfpa.org/webdav/site/global/shared/documents/publications/2008/youth_participation.pdf
- Save the Children, 2011, *Toolkit for Creating a Step Change in Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation*, <http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/node/4732>

- Train disaster-affected youth on life-saving skills, first aid, health and hygiene promotion and disease prevention;²³
- Equip youth who provide first aid, health and hygiene training, delivery of services and goods with the proper resources and technical support to ensure that they are adequately equipped and protected.

Support organizational infrastructure

- Engage youth networks in preparedness planning and simulation exercises and provide materials or classes on potential hazards and survival strategies before a disaster strikes;
- Help to provide the necessary technical support including funding to compensate volunteers, training in project management, accounting, resource mobilization and advocacy.

Provide Safe Spaces

- Young people need a place where they can safely interact with their peers and adult role models, receive and exchange information.²⁴ These safe spaces do not always need to be 'created' and are often well-established through local schools and youth-led and youth-serving organizations.

FOSTERING YOUTH-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

As local customs and cultural norms in many contexts often stigmatize youth as being incapable, 'too young' to take on leadership roles, or even potential trouble makers, it is important for aid agencies to first understand local norms and adult perceptions²⁵ regarding young people's 'role' in society. Where disaster has permanently or temporarily separated young people from their families, aid agencies can take concrete measures to help them build constructive relationships with adults in their communities:

Address fears around youth engagement

- Encourage acceptance and ownership of programming for youth / youth involvement by imparting necessary information and sensitizing government agencies, local organizations, parents and older community members;
- Raising awareness and promoting dialogue among staff and local stakeholders can help dispel community misperceptions, fears, or prejudices around the needs and competencies of young people.²⁶

²³ The Scout Movement endorsed a global strategy on disaster preparedness and emergency response, and training takes place regularly at the regional and national levels so that young scouts are able to intervene in case of earthquake and other disasters: http://www.scout.org/en/information_events/news/2011/step_up_for_disaster_risk_reduction
 - http://www.scout.org/en/about_scouting/partners/marrakech/emergency_relief
 - http://www.scout.org/en/around_the_world/asia_pacific/information_events/news/2009/indonesia_hosts_the_first_apr_disaster_management_workshop
 - http://www.scout.org/en/around_the_world/africa/information_events/news/2007/the_africa_regional_office_aro_vows_to_save_life
 - <http://shelterbox.org/news.php?id=914>

²⁴ Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children (WRC), 2005, *Youth Speak Out: New Voices on Protection and Participation of Young People Affected by Armed Conflict*, WRC, New York.

²⁵ Save the Children, 2005, *Children's Feedback Committees in Zimbabwe: An experiment in Humanitarian accountability*, Save the Children, Harare. Societies with deeply engrained hierarchical social structures can even perceive youth participation as a threat to parental or adult control.

²⁶ For activities and materials to help agencies expose and diminish these stereotypes and create awareness of contributions young people have to offer, see Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), 2008, *Get Youth on Board! A toolkit for Stakeholder Collaboration and Youth Promotion and Family Health*, GTZ, Eschborn International/Advocates for Youth (FHI), 2005, *Youth Participation Guide: Assessment, Planning, and Implementation*, FHI, Arlington.

Cultivate positive adult-youth partnerships

- Recruit young people through schools and community groups and canvass support from teachers, school administrators and local leaders to both engage youth and train them in skills that will benefit the whole community;
- Create mentorship and community-based programmes with adult supervision to provide youth with positive role models and a safe environment.

Ensure inclusiveness and conflict-sensitivity

- Establish criteria for inclusiveness and cooperate with organizations that are willing to involve different identity groups such as young females, out-of-school youth, disabled youth, and members of ethnic and religious minorities in response efforts;
- Include young people in efforts to identify and bring their more marginalized peers into preparedness and recovery efforts.²⁷

Partner with and promote youth-led and youth-serving organizations

- Maintain an updated list of contacts and partners with community networks such as local religious and school groups, Scouts and Guides associations, Red Cross national societies and the YMCA who are well established and can serve as trusted points of contact to mobilize youth and community members during emergency response;²⁸
- In crisis-affected areas located far away from large population centres where the organizations are based, logistics must be considered as youth may lack relevant language skills or the means by which to access resources. In this case, field-based youth programmes should be linked at an early stage with well-established national organizations and gradual transfer of the youth activities to them.

²⁷ In Save the Children, 2005, *Children's Feedback Committees in Zimbabwe: An experiment in Humanitarian Accountability*, youth feedback committees revealed negative impacts of program interventions and abusive situations which adult participants had previously concealed due to biases, personal or political interests, fears, or misconceptions.

²⁸ United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2007, *The Participation of Children and Young People in Emergencies: A guide for relief agencies, based largely on the experiences in the Asian tsunami response*.

Recommendations for effectively involving youth-led and youth-serving organizations in emergency response and recovery efforts







Do	
	1. Engage youth and youth organizations in assessment of needs and programme planning. Seek input from young volunteers and staff of youth-led and youth-serving organizations to adapt programmes to the local needs, culture, and issues that are perceived as relevant by young people.
	2. Involve a wide range of young volunteers , not only those involved or recommended by the leadership. Take care to involve youth from different identity groups in a way that helps to overcome barriers, mitigate tensions and conflict, and build social cohesion.
	3. Provide youth with training and skills development to maximize their participation in programming, in their own organizations, and society in general.
	4. Clarify issues of volunteering and compensation from the beginning of the partnership. State what young people can gain from their involvement , help them to understand the role of civil society in supporting people in times of need, and compensate youth/organizations financially when engaged in medium to long-term projects.
	5. Ensure compliance with national and international laws when involving youth in emergency response activities, ensuring they have the required training prior to participation and are not involved in any forms of hazardous work (ILO Conventions No. 138 and 182, and Recommendation No. 146). ²⁹
	6. Think thoroughly about the impact you want to achieve through the partnership and set clear goals for both parties. Be frank about your own goals and request youth-led and youth-serving organizations to express their goals clearly.
	7. Establish coordination and evaluation mechanisms (weekly/monthly meetings, work plan; including roles and responsibilities, who will participate in the programme/partnership, how will problems be discussed and solved, etc.) to avoid misunderstandings and maintain regular dialogue with staff and volunteers.
	8. Develop long-term partnerships by reaching a written agreement with your partner (Letter of Intent, Memorandum of Understanding) and getting support from the highest level of the organization.
	9. Strengthen programming of local youth associations by proposing to adapt and include emergency preparedness and response components to complement their programs and address root causes of the crisis.
	10. Build capacity of youth associations ³⁰ and support the creation/development of structures which will stay in country following the departure of international NGOs/agencies.

²⁹ A complete list of International Labour Organizations Conventions and Recommendations on work and employment of people under 18 can be found on the following web page:

<http://www.ilo.org/ipecc/facts/ILOconventionsonchildlabour/lang--en/index.htm>. In disaster response work there are numerous chemicals, toxins and insecure environments that can be damaging to the physical development of adolescents and youth, organizations need to be cognizant about the type of work in which young people are engaged.

³⁰ Especially in the areas of project management, narrative and financial reporting, encouraging documentation and monitoring for smaller youth-led organizations who don't tend to do this.

Do not

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|--|---|
|  | 1. Put youth or beneficiaries at risk while they participate in relief efforts, e.g. debris removal, reconstruction, distributions in dangerous or highly populated areas etc. Carefully analyse youth organizations' capacity to deliver activities and the risks involved in youth's participation, then provide them with adequate training and support. |
|  | 2. Duplicate youth-serving systems. Conduct assessment of youth and youth-serving organizations and what activities they may already have done. |
|  | 3. Involve youth in short-term projects without informing/training them on root causes of the crisis. Likewise, youth should not only contribute to relief activities (distribution of kits, etc.) but also to advocacy , so as to disseminate life-saving messages and give a meaning to their involvement. |
|  | 4. Consider youth as a cheap labour force to be used for short-term projects and treat youth associations as just promoters and implementers of your project. Provide youth associations and young people with a sense of ownership and belonging to the decision-making process by involving them in program development, monitoring, and evaluation. |
|  | 5. Take away human resources from local youth associations (volunteers or staff). Try as much as possible not to soak up the best resources from your partner. |
|  | 6. Prevent or dissuade youth from attending from their educational endeavours. Work to ensure that youth engagement, and any residual financial compensation, does not hinder their educational endeavours. While money could help youth continue their education, if given the choice, some youth might miss class or educational opportunities if financial compensation is provided for relief work. |

Guidance Documents and Literature Reviewed

Aidsnet - The Danish Network on AIDS and Development, 2007, *Youth on Track: Manual for training of young people in work with open youth work*, Aidsnet, Copenhagen, [http://www.saayc.co.za/Docs/Youth_on_Track_FINAL\[1\].pdf](http://www.saayc.co.za/Docs/Youth_on_Track_FINAL[1].pdf)

Commonwealth Secretariat, 2006, *Youth Participation Toolkits*, Commonwealth Secretariat, London, http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Document/154211/162033/youth_participation_toolkits/
This toolkit outlines the importance of youth participation and its inherent challenges and provides tools and exercises that promote meaningful youth engagement throughout all stages of a project cycle. The toolkit includes a set of four guides promoting youth participation in decision making and offers a comprehensive framework designed to be applicable in various social and cultural contexts.

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), 2008, *Get Youth on Board! A toolkit for Stakeholder Collaboration and Youth Promotion*, GTZ, Eschborn, <http://www2.gtz.de/dokumente/bib-2010/gtz2010-0056en-youth-toolkit.pdf>

A toolkit for stakeholder collaboration (non-governmental and governmental) for the joint implementation of youth services and activities on the “meso” level (town councils, provincial administrations).

Family Health International/Advocates for Youth (FHI), 2005, *Youth Participation Guide: Assessment, Planning, and Implementation*, FHI, Arlington, http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/storage/advfy/documents/youth_participation_guide/acknw0110enyt.pdf

Although specifically targeting reproductive health and HIV/AIDS programming, the Youth Participation Guide offers user-friendly tools to aid in the assessment and expansion of youth participation that can be applied to all areas of programming. The guide also includes an easy-to-follow ‘Youth-Adult Partnership Training Curriculum’, complete with sample agendas, participatory exercises, and evaluation questionnaires, that aims to promote the attitude and skills needed by youth *and* adults to foster effective communication and working relationships.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), 2010, *Guidelines for National Societies to organize youth actions and celebrate the International Year of Youth*, IFRC, Geneva, <https://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/youth/201500-IYY-guidelines-EN.pdf>

A brief, practical guide on ways to promote understanding of the importance and benefits of youth participation in all aspects of society.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), 2011, *The Value of Volunteers: Imagine how many needs would go unanswered without volunteers*, IFRC, Geneva, <http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/volunteers/IFRC-Value%20of%20Volunteers%20Report-EN-LR.pdf>

A survey and report that provides credible evidence regarding the economic and social value that Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers (made up largely of youth) offer to their local and international communities.

Newman Jesse, “*Protection through Participation: Young People Affected by Forced Migration and Political Crisis*”, Refugee Studies Centre Working Paper 20 (March 2005), Refugee Studies Centre, Oxford, 2005, http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/publications/working-papers-folder_contents/RSCworkingpaper20.pdf

Plan International, 2004, *Children and the Tsunami: Engaging with children in disaster response, recovery and risk reduction: Learning from children’s participation in the tsunami response*, Plan International, Bangkok, <https://plan-international.org/files/global/publications/emergencies/childrentsunami.pdf>

A study that offers examples and perspectives of young people on what participation means and demonstrates that the active engagement of young people can mitigate the impact of disasters and contribute to a more informed and effective response.

Save the Children, 2005, *Children's Feedback Committees in Zimbabwe: An experiment in Humanitarian accountability*, Save the Children, Harare,

http://www.sarpn.org/documents/d0001151/P1270-Children_Feedback_Zimbabwe_Jan2005.pdf

This publication records a project implemented by Save the Children to create a mechanism to involve young people in gathering and contributing feedback regarding the agency's food aid intervention in Zimbabwe. The document reflects on the successes and challenges of the process and demonstrates how organizations can avoid missing valuable information in planning and evaluation processes by consulting with young people.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2004, *Participatory Action Research (PAR) Guide: Promoting the participation, learning and action of young people*, UNICEF, Kingston,

http://www.unicef.org/jamaica/PAR_GUIDE.pdf

This guide provides participatory activities that organizations can use to incorporate young people into research and problem-solving activities. The PAR Guide aims to empower youth by giving them the tools they need to take action toward solving the problems that directly affect them and their communities.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2005, *Voices of Hope: Adolescents and the tsunami*, UNICEF, New York, http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Tsunami_newbackcover.pdf

This report demonstrates how young people responded to the 2004 tsunami, providing detailed accounts of how young people assisted their peers and communities. UNICEF provides lessons learned regarding youth participation in crisis situations and offers good practices for future emergency response efforts.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2007, *The Participation of Children and Young People in Emergencies: A guide for relief agencies, based largely on experiences in the Asian tsunami response*, UNICEF, Bangkok,

http://www.unicef.org/eapro/the_participation_of_children_and_young_people_in_emergencies.pdf

This guide shows examples of how young people have made important contributions in emergency response efforts and offers guidance on what relief agencies can do to harness the capacities and contributions of disaster-affected youth.

Wessells Mike, *What are we learning about protecting children in the community? - An inter-agency review of the evidence on community-based child protection mechanisms in humanitarian and development settings*, Save the Children, London, 2009,

http://forcedmigration.columbia.edu/faculty/documents/WhatWeAreLearningAboutProtectingChildrenintheCommunity_FullReport.pdf

Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children (WRC), 2005, *Youth Speak Out: New Voices on the Protection and Participation of Young People Affected by Armed Conflict*, WRC, New York, http://womensrefugeecommission.org/component/docman/doc_download/59-youth-speak-out-new-voices-on-the-protection-and-participation-of-young-people-affected-by-armed-youth-speak-out-new-voices-on-the-protection-and-participation-of-young-people-affected-by-armed

This report lays out the results of a series of action-oriented, field-based studies -designed and led by adolescent research teams- that were conducted to find out what problems conflict-affected youth believed to be the most pressing and their views on possible solutions to those problems. The research identifies practical steps that decision-makers at all levels can take to improve the lives of young people.

World Organization of the Scout Movement, 2005, *Toolbox Programme Handouts: Youth Involvement, Youth Empowerment*,
http://www.scout.org/fr/information_events/library/youth_involvement/youth_involvement_youth_empowerment

The Youth Involvement Toolbox is the second book of the series "Toolbox Handouts". It provides practical guidelines to Unit Leaders, Programme Developers and Trainers on the ways to develop youth involvement in decision-making at the level of the Scout unit, at institutional level within Scouting and finally at the level of society.