



Youth Mainstreaming in Development Planning: Transforming Young Lives

Short Guide



The Commonwealth

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Printed and published by the Commonwealth Secretariat.

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Youth Mainstreaming in Development Planning: Transforming Young Lives

This **Short Guide** is a summary of *Youth Mainstreaming in Development Planning: Transforming Young Lives*. This summary version is intended to support policy makers with decisions around youth mainstreaming policy, resourcing and financing.

The full handbook supports implementers engage in dialogue and reach consensus around the more detailed work of formulating and implementing youth mainstreaming strategies. It is available on the Commonwealth Secretariat website.

1. Why Youth Mainstreaming?

Youth mainstreaming is a critical part of pursuing a vision for an egalitarian world. It helps embed young people's aspirations into development planning and ensure equality between youth and adults. In its best form, it connects democracy initiatives to equitable development outcomes for young people and communities. It is a political commitment of Commonwealth member states as reaffirmed through the years in high-level dialogue, including at consecutive Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meetings in 2008 and 2013, and the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in 2009.

Young people constitute one quarter of the world's population, and one third of the population in developing nations.¹ They have led drives for equality and justice through youth social movements throughout the world. They have been at the forefront of political action as in the Middle East and Africa in the recent past, and in the recent anti-corruption movement in India.² On the part of decision-makers, there is an increasing recognition of the importance of young people's place in development, and increasing efforts to bring young people to the table in development planning.³

Yet, in the global north, young people today are reported to be poorer at every stage of their life than their parents.⁴ In the global south, while abject poverty has decreased, the dividends of economic growth have not reached poor young people whose actual numbers are increasing.⁵ In employment, for example, young people, especially young women, are globally the most affected by high unemployment rates, with youth unemployment rates nearly three times higher than those for adults.⁶

Young people are also disadvantaged in terms of access to housing,⁷ credit and finance,⁸ and are differentially impacted by health, justice, migration and other mechanisms and processes by their specific generational location as youth.⁹

There are also disparities of outcomes for different *cohorts* of young people. Outcomes for youth are intersected by their experiences and realities, as influenced by identities of class, sex, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, geographical location, disability and so on.

For example, despite important gains in education among young women, three out of five illiterate young persons are female, with some countries showing female literacy rates as low as 15 per cent as opposed to male literacy rates of 35 per cent.¹⁰ Globally, in 2010, 56.3 per cent of young males participated in the labour force, against 40.8 per cent of young females. Where young women do participate in the labour market, they generally confront greater challenges in accessing jobs, i.e. they face higher unemployment compared to their male counterparts. When employed, they are also more likely to be in traditionally female occupations and unstable, part-time and lower-paid jobs.¹¹

Despite these observations, most development programmes have yet to fully explore solutions for the differential impacts policies can have on different groups, including diverse youth groups, resulting in greater fallouts from the development process and cycles of deepening inequalities.

Reducing social inequalities is also one of the core aspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals. Recent research indicating the extent of this inequity (62 individuals have the same wealth as 3.6 billion people¹²) and evidence of the failure of dominant economic paradigms to deliver for the most marginalised,¹³ all indicate a need to look not just at economic growth, but at distributional equality¹⁴ of financial wealth and other resources. For young people, there are different causes and manifestations that lead to this inequality, a subject the Commonwealth's youth mainstreaming guidance addresses.

2. What is Youth Mainstreaming?

Ensuring equity and justice for young people in global and national planning (as of any other group side-lined in policy-making) is critical, and realises a fundamental human right. This is an important ethical and moral imperative, but it is also a political priority considering the explicit articulation of national and global equality for all, including **for all ages**, in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Youth mainstreaming is a transformative process that is inclusive and consciously proactive, placing the capabilities and rights of young men and women alongside those of other marginalised community members in development planning. It is transformative because it radically improves young people’s wellbeing and rights by translating co-created visions into youth-centric policies and programmes.

Mainstreaming is based on a guiding vision of all social groups benefiting equally from the fruits of development, and participating in that development in accordance with their full human potential.

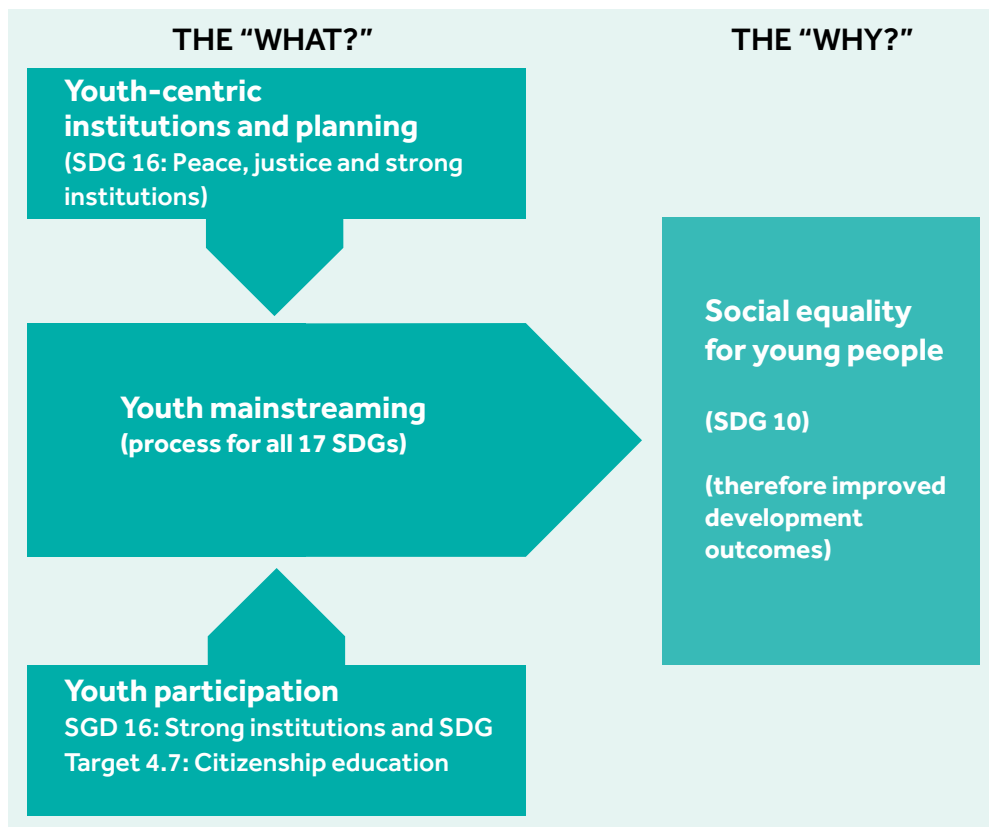
Youth mainstreaming can be defined as:

*Strategies for intergenerational equity and justice that enable young people’s capabilities, participation and human rights to be an integral dimension of the analysis, design, implementation and monitoring & evaluation of policies and programmes in intersectoral planning across all social, political and economic spheres. It enables young people and adults to benefit equally from, and contribute equally to, development outcomes.*¹⁵

Youth mainstreaming, then, is a *strategy* to achieve the *goal* of equality. **Therefore, mainstreaming is not an end in itself; social equality is.** It links democracy initiatives to achieving equitable development for youth.

We can illustrate youth mainstreaming in the following manner. Figure 1 is aligned to critical goals in the SDGs that help us articulate youth mainstreaming.

Figure 1 The Youth Mainstreaming Arrow



It is important to keep in mind the end-goal of social equality for youth (**the 'why?'**) as we review and reform our institutions for youth mainstreaming (**the 'what?'**).

Creating equal opportunities for young people does not mean that they need the 'same' inputs as adults or other generational groups, but that they need *specific* inputs (for equity and justice) relevant to their unique and evolving stage in life, that enable them, including marginalised youth subgroups/ youth age groups, to achieve equal social, political and economic status with adults. Measures for equity result in social equality for all, including youth.

Indeed, the youth mainstreaming endeavour of equality is a key way in which young people express their vision for a better world; the DFID–CSO document *Youth Voices on a Post-2015 World*, which informed SDG processes, articulated equality and freedom as the first principle ranked in order of importance. According to the report, 'The focus on equality and freedom highlights the current issue of widening inequality, which young people see as having a significantly negative impact on development'.¹⁶ Equality for youth, and age-based discrimination, is particularly noted in the document.

3. Why "Youth" as a Category?

From a historical perspective, 'youth' began obtaining prominence as a specific social category more than 400 years ago in the West (more recently in the global South), with the emergence of the printing press, the proliferation of ideas and the need for literacy. The education of certain age groups, particularly children and young people, therefore became a priority.¹⁷ The increasingly fast-paced urbanisation and industrialisation of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the widening gap between adults and children/youth, brought the notion of 'youth' even more to the fore.¹⁸

In political terms, on the one hand, young people became active as **agents of social change** as seen through civil rights and peace movements, student unions, environmental activism and so on. On the other, they were **controlled as a group**, as seen through policies to limit and circumscribe youth agency in the context of young people's social and political resistance.

We often look at young people through three different lenses:¹⁹

1. **An age category:** This is a common, yet inadequate definition of youth. The complexity of defining youth through age is seen in the way age limits are set in different contexts. In the UN, the youth age range is 15 to 24; in the Commonwealth, it is 15 to 29. Youth age ranges across countries vary from a minimum of 14 to a maximum of 35, or above. Some countries also recognise that social and economic factors that determine qualities of a 'youth phase' may mean some flexibility in extending age limits at the lower or higher end in addressing youth needs and interests.²⁰ An exclusive focus on age categories has also been problematised for its tendency to ignore inequalities youth face because of class, gender and other forms of marginality.²¹
2. **A transitional stage: The specific transitional aspects of the journey from childhood to youth** in terms of developmental stages, first impressions, sexual maturation, entry into secondary/higher education and employment, and other specific generational experiences. Young people, as *youth*, have different development priorities from children,

adults or older citizens, and these priorities need to be addressed.

3. **A social construct:** Where young people are seen as 'a critical indicator of the state of a nation, of its politics, economy, and social and cultural life'.²² Young people, particularly since the 1960s, became **symbols of hope**, but also **symbols of resistance** around the world. Social constructs also ascribe subjective qualities to 'youth'. Negatively, as rebellious, disobedient etc. (even though young people may not see themselves that way), or more positively, as idealistic and courageous by virtue of their relative independence from established and formal institutional interests.

Young people's specific generational location is qualified throughout the publication as follows:

1. **Younger youth groups**, for example adolescents, as opposed to older youth groups, are, *in general*, more vulnerable in all contexts.²³
2. Young people face **greater combined forms of inequality** when their age-specific experiences, which can in themselves be a source of marginality, are multiplied by their experiences based on their sex, race, class, economic, social, gender, caste, ability/disability, social stability/instability etc. (intersectionality).
3. Young people's marginality must be considered in relation to the marginality of **other groups** such as women, children, older persons, racial and religious minorities, sexual minorities, those living with disabilities, and so on. Youth mainstreaming is therefore part of broader strategies for non-discrimination and equality for all.

In terms of policy and planning, it is the most marginalised youth, particularly younger youth groups, *i.e. those facing the greatest social, political, economic or geographical marginalisation*,²⁴ who are the least buffered by the impacts of social inequities, and non-responsive economic, political and social policies. It is their *collective voices and concerns that are the most relevant* in defining policy priorities for all, as well as in youth mainstreaming.²⁵ Equally, positive policy outcomes for marginalised groups in general also have positive outcomes for all youth, and vice versa, which implies solidarity among such groups.

4. Foundations for Youth Mainstreaming: The Commonwealth Charter and UN Human Rights Conventions

The Commonwealth's concept of youth mainstreaming is underpinned by rights-based principles. The Commonwealth Charter, which defines the work of the Commonwealth, reinforces the core Commonwealth values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. It has an explicit asset-based view of young people and recognises 'the positive and active role and contributions of young people in promoting development, peace, democracy and in protecting and promoting other Commonwealth values, such as tolerance and understanding, including respect for other cultures'.²⁶

Commonwealth values reflect the values of international human rights conventions such as the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which explicitly articulates *children* as a cohort that is marginalised by virtue of being children, capturing the interests and rights of young people under 18.

A rights-based approach perceives young people as rights holders and the state and all institutions as duty-bearers. This approach acknowledges citizens, including children and young people, as agents of change and partners in the development process – as articulated in articles defining their right to participation (Articles 18–21 of the UDHR, and Articles 12–15 and Article 16 of the UNCRC), which include articles on the right to information and self-determination.

5. Youth Empowerment and Development

Youth empowerment has three key dimensions:

- **Social empowerment** – where young people have a sense of autonomy and self-confidence
- **Economic empowerment** – where young people have control over owning and managing economic and other related resources, including being employed
- **Political empowerment** – where young people can formally voice opinions and influence social, economic and political processes

Fulfilling aspects of **all three** dimensions are important in achieving holistic empowerment for young people.

Youth empowerment is defined in the Commonwealth as:

Enhancing the status of young people, empowering them to build on their competencies and capabilities for life. It will enable them to contribute to, and benefit from, a politically stable, economically viable, and legally supportive environment, ensuring their full participation as active citizens in their countries.²⁷

This definition highlights the importance of youth empowerment strategies in enhancing young people's capabilities, but also highlights the need for economic, social, legal and political enablers that contribute to this empowerment, including, importantly, **through duty-bearers working with young people (with diverse capabilities and emerging power) in shaping these enablers and outcomes** for equality and justice.

Table 1 Four policy/attitudinal approaches to youth

Approach	Description
Deficit approach	A deficit lens posits youth as a 'problem' and focuses on the 'correction' of these problems, such as drug abuse, crime, illiteracy and so on. This is still a predominant approach in planning for youth. It neglects examining the failure of structures that serve young people and focuses on young people's 'failures'. It also does not acknowledge young people's own agency as problem-solvers and creators of positive social change.
Youth for development approach (Instrumentalist)	This approach is often seen as 'instrumentalist'. It sees young people as 'instruments' for broader national development and often fails to perceive the centrality of a young person's own need for self-empowerment and building connectedness. When it does look at a young people's needs, it often prioritises issues of economic empowerment and employment at the expense of their broader social and political empowerment.
Equity and welfare approach	An equity and welfare approach focuses on basic human needs and the social and economic welfare of young people. It may look at aspects of equity and inequity for young people, such as youth poverty, the need for social safety nets etc. Where young people are proactive partners in shaping basic needs, it will also be asset based.
Asset-based / empowerment approach (rights based)	This approach focuses on young people as assets in transforming their own circumstances and, through this, working for a larger good. It is rights based in prioritising young people's agency in defining and shaping social, political and economic agendas, including ensuring equality for youth. While the equity and welfare of young people are central to an asset-based approach, young people are active agents in shaping this. This is the approach that informs this publication.

Policy/attitudinal approaches

There are diverse policy/attitudinal approaches to youth empowerment and development. The challenge, while acknowledging this diversity, is to establish a common rights-based vision for youth mainstreaming, and to uphold commitments to youth-centric planning throughout policy and programme processes. Table 1 shows some predominant policy approaches. Some of these support achieving empowerment and equality for youth, while others work against this.

Young people's developmental and safeguarding rights

Young people's rights overlap with the rights of all, as will be the focus throughout this publication. However, their **developmental rights** and **rights to protection and care (safeguarding)**, different in degree from younger children's developmental and safeguarding rights, are still pertinent for young people, particularly younger youth. This is because of their evolving and growing capabilities, both physically and mentally, and evolving independence and autonomy.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) refers specifically to the Right to survival and development (Article 6) and right to a standard of living adequate for the child's (read 'young person's') physical, mental, moral and social development (Article 27 UNCRC). It also refers to the Right to protection and care (UNCRC Article 3).

Youth mainstreamed approaches would ensure that these rights are met in planning for young people. The Handbook provides examples for the above.

6. Inter-Generational Equity

Just as gender mainstreaming was built around a lobby for equal male-female relations, youth mainstreaming advocacy is built around equitable intergenerational relationships and the fostering of mutual respect between adults, young people and other age cohorts.

Intergenerational equity suggests addressing the multiple ways in which young people can be discriminated against by virtue of their age in both the private and public domains. Non-discrimination policies often clearly prohibit discrimination based on age, and the SDGs unequivocally call for an end to age-based discrimination.

Some cultures and contexts will have clearly positive dispositions towards youth. In terms of institutions, attitudinal factors will affect provision (service delivery) and outcomes for young people. Yet, manifestations of discrimination are evident in many domains. These may be explicit discrimination, or implicit discrimination – where a practice, policy or programme does not consider a specific factor affecting youth.

1. **Society** – Young people may be marginalised in communities in specific ways by virtue of attitudes towards them, labelling and stereotyping as being irresponsible, lazy, rebellious, 'angry', and so on.
2. **Family settings** – Parental authority may undermine young people's concerns and interests. For example, in the public sphere, parental consent laws may affect a young person's ability to access healthcare and health-related information. Ensuring young people's rights to services has been written into law in some countries.
3. **Educational institutions** – Imbalances of power between students and education authorities are often reflected through limitations placed on student organisation, freedom of expression on learning/teaching and educational governance, both in schools and universities. Access to education can also be undermined by laws and policies that do not encourage affordable education. Positive legal provisions may dictate that young people have a formal place in educational governance and access to education as a right.
4. **Work places** – Junior staff at institutions may be marginalised in decision-making due to age. As entrants to employment, they may in fact have difficulties entering the work force itself, despite possessing skills. In an era where young people are increasingly employed in informal economies, contracts that do not stipulate minimum work hours ('zero-hour' contracts) and extended probation periods affect young people's economic security further.
5. **Public institutions** – Young people may be discriminated against as receivers of services and benefits in public institutions, where a lack of responsive design of services for youth result in inadequate delivery. For example, moves taken in one country to withdraw housing benefits from youth aged 18–21 as a means of reducing welfare spending (the assumption being they can live with their parents), is an indication of how young people are sometimes the first to lose out in cuts to public expenditure. On a positive note, these challenges are often explicitly addressed through laws. For example, in prison systems in some countries young people aged 18–25 are given better protection and care than adults, although not to the same extent as children (aged under 18). They may be housed separately from adults in prisons, in recognition of their specific developmental stage as youth.
6. **Party-political domains** – Young people, while being an age cohort who actively contribute to the life of a community and nation in more informal ways, are less well represented in formal structures such as local government and parliament. In some countries, eligibility to enter politics is at age 25, and political leadership positions are rarely held by those below 35. This considerably affects ways in which young people's interests in all the above settings receive formal political mandates. From a voter perspective, some countries are pushing for the voting age to be moved down to 16 instead of 18, to ensure very young people's stakes in party politics.

Such social norms that affect youth are multiplied by their identities of class, caste, gender, disability and so on.

7. Youth Interests are the Interests of Society

Advocating for young people's interests means that we firmly situate youth rights and youth interests²⁸ in democratic governance frameworks and their components, including broader participatory structures. Otherwise, we would merely be trying to right a wrong within the existing paradigms of power.

The development frameworks we advocate for need to identify non-discrimination, not just for young people but for everyone, and need to ensure gender equality and be free from class, racial, ethnic, sexual, disability, caste and other biases. This involves challenging the current climate of global restructuring, and challenging the erosion of rights entitlements that have already been fought for and won.²⁹

Similarly, continuing inequality for youth means entrenching broader poverty, debilitating social and economic growth, and creating social conflict, all of which work against reaching the Sustainable Development Goals.

There are clear long-term benefits that go beyond the benefits for young people in working towards equality for them. Given the above observation then, youth mainstreaming is important because it is the right thing to do, but also because it can:

- **catalyse long-term change for everyone** – as sound development outcomes for young people benefit society as a whole across generations;
- **create efficiency and growth** – as responsive planning and consultation enable efficient resource allocation and create value for money;
- **reduce poverty** – as overall development outcomes lead to the reduction of poverty;³⁰ and
- **enhance social cohesion**,³¹ as a content youth cohort creates collaborative, positive relations with communities and the nation.

The link between equitable programming and institutional efficiency has been recorded across sectors where research capacities have existed to create robust evidence, as is outlined in the full Handbook.

8. The SDGs and Youth Mainstreaming

One of the main reference points for the Commonwealth guidance on youth mainstreaming are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in 2015, particularly their articulation of the primacy of social equality in Goal 10: Reducing Inequality, which is of direct relevance to what we are trying to achieve through youth mainstreaming.

Before narrowing down on the relevance of the SDGs to youth mainstreaming, it is important to remember that the goals make specific reference to youth in several targets. These are shown in Box 1.

However, our position is that the approach to every target of all 17 goals will have a specific, age-related, impact on youth. Our analysis will be based on an understanding that all SDGs are interconnected and indivisible, and that each SDG has an implication for young people in the way policy and programme decisions are made.

Consultations with youth leading up to the formulation of the SDGs highlighted their vision for a world where equality and non-discrimination are the norms. Equality for youth and society was the most important principle identified by young people in the DFiD–CSO document *Youth Voices*

on a Post-2015 World.³³ Moreover, youth between the ages of 16 and 30 formed 58 per cent of the millions who voted on themes affecting their lives in *We the People: Celebrating 7 Million Voices*³⁴, thus significantly influencing the results that placed education, healthcare, jobs and responsive government as the four key development priorities.

*Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*³⁵ recognises the interlinkages between different dimensions of inequality. Mainstreaming marginalised groups, including youth, particularly marginalised youth, then becomes a critical pre-condition for reaching the goals, because of the SDG aspiration to 'leave no one behind', and because of the principle of universality and of reaching 'the furthest behind first'.³⁶ The SDGs also help us move beyond addressing the symptoms of poverty to ensuring participatory governance to achieve targets.

The 2030 Agenda also explicitly recognises the role of young men and women as agents of change, and their critical role as those who 'pass on the torch' to future generations in line with the SDGs' main theme of sustainable development.

Box 1 SDGs with specific references to youth

The SDGs that are generally seen as most pertinent to young people's empowerment and development fall into two categories;

- **Those that refer to age disaggregation or age groups:** Eight goals refer to age disaggregation or age groups in the goal, targets or indicators. These are Goals 1 (poverty), 3 (health), 5 (gender equality), 8 (decent work), 10 (inequality), 11 (sustainable cities), 16 (peaceful, just and inclusive societies) and 17 (partnership).
- **Those that specifically mention young people:** There are explicit references to youth, young men and women, adolescents, girls and women aged 20–24 in the targets or indicators of nine goals. These are Goals 1 (poverty), 2 (hunger), 3 (health), 4 (education), 5 (gender equality), 6 (clean water and sanitation), 8 (decent work), 13 (climate action) and 16 (peaceful, just and inclusive societies).

This is covered in detail in the Youth Development Index.³²

However, young people's aspirations often move beyond the SDGs, e.g., for education or fulfilling employment. Indeed, in the Commonwealth's youth mainstreaming work, we integrate additional transformational paradigms of development that are not explicitly stated in the SDGs and targets.

Equality (the outcome of mainstreaming)

The end-goal of youth mainstreaming is obtaining social equality for youth in relation to adults, as defined in the YM definition above. The SDGs made a landmark conceptual turn – from a narrower lens of poverty alleviation in the MDGs to one that addresses the distribution of wealth and development outcomes, as indicated in Goal 10: Reducing Inequality Within and Among Countries. Equitable outcomes for all is specifically mentioned in Target 10.2, which calls to 'Empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all' including for all ages. This focus on the generational imperative is significant.

The goal refers both to income equality and equality of development outcomes through health, education, justice and so on, for all people. Target 10.3 says 'Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard' to achieve equality. Targets also call for the striving for 'fiscal, wage and social protection policies' that contribute to social equality within and among nations. The commitment of the SDGs to 'leave no one behind' also highlights the interconnectedness of all SDGs to components of inequality (see Table 2, the Equality Matrix for Youth).

All national development outcomes reported against the attainment of the SDGs will, therefore, be assessed for reaching the equality goal as much as growth goals.

Youth-centric institutions and planning (process 1 for youth mainstreaming)

Accountable, transparent and inclusive institutions and planning processes play a key role in facilitating youth-centric planning, and therefore contribute to youth mainstreaming. The SDGs clearly recognise this role of institutions, best articulated in Goal 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. Targets 16.6 (effective, accountable and transparent institutions), 16.7 (responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making), 16.10 (public access to information and fundamental freedoms)³⁷ and 16b (non-discriminatory laws and policies) are of particular importance. This institutional strengthening needs to be reflected in all legislative and policy processes and sectors in the implementation of all 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Youth participation (process 2 for mainstreaming)

Youth participation is the second critical process element for youth mainstreaming.

SDG Target 16.7 (responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making) has implications for the participation of all, and by inference youth, in decision-making that affects their life and society.

SDG Target 4.7 of Target 4 Quality Education reflects institutional roles in catalysing young people's social, political and economic empowerment and, therefore, their citizenship role, by supporting the creation of 'knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development', in this case, for young people. This educative role is central to young people's ability to participate in the life of society.

The Equality Matrix for Youth: Expanding SDG 10 targets

What is this social equality we are trying to achieve for youth? How do we express it in quantitative and qualitative ways? How do we integrate a youth lens to policy and planning processes that may not otherwise incorporate this lens? This discussion becomes important so that we constantly remember **to what end** we are transforming our institutions.

In **Table 2, the Equality Matrix for Youth**, we:

- a. **Examine the most relevant targets of SDG 10: Reducing Inequality** as a goal that **best expresses** what we are trying to achieve through youth mainstreaming across all goals.
- b. **Examine the broad range of variables** the goal addresses beyond traditional measures of income equality. It includes social, political and economic inclusion, fiscal and wage, social protection equality and a range of other determiners of social equality which are integral to youth empowerment.
- c. **Align SDG 10 targets to the other 16 SDGs** to demonstrate the comprehensive way in which the targets help us articulate social, political and economic equality for youth.
- d. **Examine the greater benefits** to governments and other stakeholders of youth mainstreamed approaches to reaching development and social cohesion targets,
- e. **Consider key implications for youth mainstreaming** for each Goal 10 target in a broader sense.
- f. Highlight the centrality of **partnerships** for reaching all SDGs.
- g. Encourage discussion around the **linkages of the SDGs and human rights frameworks**.

Goal 16 and institutions for youth

Goal 16 provides a framework for strengthening youth mainstreaming through institutional processes across all 17 SDGs. Table 3 illustrates the implications for youth mainstreaming for the most relevant targets.

Table 2: The Equality Matrix for Youth
(SDG 10: Reduce Inequality, its targets and its relationship to other SDGs)

Equality goal targets + related SDGs	Benefits of youth mainstreaming	Some implications for youth mainstreaming ³
10.1: By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average:		
a. Faster income growth for the poorest [also for youth] 1: No Poverty, 2: Zero Hunger, 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, 7: Affordable and Clean Energy, 12: Responsible Consumption and Production.	1: Helps to efficiently reach poverty reduction goals by addressing specific needs of youth groups 2: Creates efficiency and reduces burden on social welfare programmes 3: Demonstrates practiced state commitments to social equality 4: Reduces youth discontent and disillusionment and therefore creates greater collaboration and social cohesion	Are the concerns and rights of young people in the bottom 40 per cent integrated into planning for income growth? Are these poorest youth groups able to influence policy? How advanced is life-cycle poverty analysis etc. that enables the analysis of intergenerational poverty so as to meet the interests of young people in the bottom 40 per cent?
10.2: By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status. Target broken down:		
a. Social inclusion [including for youth] 3: Good Health and Wellbeing, 4: Quality Education, 5: Gender Equality, 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities.	1: Helps greater access of young people to public services 2: Helps make public services more relevant and responsive to all service receivers, including youth, and therefore more efficient, both financially and socially 3: Builds trust of youth in government and greater collaborative engagement 4: Creates a healthy, educated population 5: Reduces youth discontent and disillusionment and therefore creates greater collaboration and social cohesion	How is young people's social inclusion factored into planning for health, education, gender and the creation of cities and communities? Are young people, and young service users, more specifically, able to influence decisions in these places, particularly the most marginalised young people? Are they able to obtain affordable, accessible services with dignity and safety/confidentiality? Are young women's voices heard and respected within these spaces; are their concerns considered? Are young people able to influence the planning of cities and communities so that their needs are addressed in urban and community planning?
b. Economic inclusion [including for youth] 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure.	1: Higher levels of youth employment and better working conditions irrespective of age 2: Builds trust of youth in government and greater collaborative engagement 3: Reduced youth discontent and disillusionment and therefore greater social cohesion 4: Enhances investments and wealth	Are young people's location in transition from education to employment, their role in beginning new families etc. factored into employment policies? Are young people able to participate as equals in trade unions, professional bodies and other bodies representing the interests of working people? Is industry, innovation and infrastructure focusing on young people's interests, including acknowledging young people's role in innovation?
c. Political inclusion [including for youth] 13: Climate Action, 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.	1: Greater meaningful youth participation in governance and electoral politics creates more relevant, responsive and efficient programmes for young people and for all 2: Potential financial and human resource savings due to focused, relevant programming 3: Governments demonstrate practised commitments to participatory decision-making and collaborative planning that help reach targets in Goal 16	Do young people have formal mechanisms within which to participate in decision-making in all development institutions and political institutions? Are young people adequately represented in party politics to represent youth and other interests and transform party political cultures? Where this is not the case, are affirmative action laws in place?
17: Partnerships in all sectors for youth development/empowerment, youth data and budgets, youth participation, youth safeguarding.		

Equality goal targets + related SDGs	Benefits of youth mainstreaming	Some implications for youth mainstreaming ³⁴
<p>10. 3: Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard:</p>	<p>17: Partnerships in all sectors for youth development/empowerment, youth data and budgets, youth participation, youth safeguarding.</p>	
<p>a. Equal opportunity/equality of outcome (including for youth) Goal 5: Gender Equality.</p>	<p>1: Equal development outcomes for youth benefits all of society 2: Enables young people to be equal partners in social development 3: Builds a strong, cohesive society</p>	<p>Do social inclusion practices in 10.2 above result in equal opportunity and reduced inequality of outcomes for youth in all spheres, including education, healthcare, housing, justice, urban planning and so on? How is this measured?</p>
<p>b. Non-discriminatory laws, policies and practices (including for youth) 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.</p>	<p>1: Justice system supports reaching Goal 10, including for youth ensuring equal justice for all 2: Executive commitments to equality and justice supports equality measures for youth and leads to social equality 3: Governments demonstrate transparency and accountability, thus building bridges and trust with youth 3: Provides foundational support for reaching equality</p>	<p>Are state institutions and all stakeholders accountable to young people? Is there sufficient assessment of laws, policies and practices for discrimination against young people, and sufficient movement towards creating enabling legislation, policy and practice for young people, with the participation of young people in all sectors and institutional settings? Which laws, policies and practices explicitly discriminate against youth? Is there adequate voice and influence around changing these?</p>
<p>10.4: Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality:</p>	<p>10.4: Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality:</p>	
<p>a. Fiscal policies (that favour youth) 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.</p>	<p>1: Contributes to greater transparency and accountability of financial institutions to youth 2: A youth lens helps direct investments resulting from good fiscal policy efficiently and effectively where it is most required for young people</p>	<p>Are there adequate measures in place to ensure fair fiscal policies and their transparent implementation? Are there progressive taxation regimes, whose returns are used to support programmes for equity, including for young people? Are the absence of equitable fiscal policies and lack of fiscal transparency affecting investment in young people in specific ways? If so, how? How are transnational capital flows regulated to ensure equity and justice?</p>
<p>b. Wage policies (that support youth) 1: No Poverty, 5: Gender Equality, 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.</p>	<p>1: Provides decent employment opportunities for youth 2: A more content and productive youth workforce 3: Greater national productivity</p>	<p>Are wage policies fair to young people? If not, what is being done? How are young people involved in consultative processes that help create fair wage policies for all? Are young women specifically affected by unfair wage policies? How does this influence them?</p>
<p>c. Social protection policies (including for youth) 1: No Poverty, 3: Good health and Wellbeing, 4: Quality Education, 5: Gender Equality, 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.</p>	<p>1: Reduces cyclical intergenerational poverty 2: Ensures equitable distribution of services and lowers social conflicts 3: Increases trust in government 4: Creates a content, collaborative youth population</p>	<p>Are social protection policies adequate, and are they adequately funded? Does the lack of funding for social protection affect young people in specific ways? Are young people actively involved, through formal structures, in influencing fair and equitable distribution of social protection benefits, as well as in dialogue to enhance investment in social protection? How are specific groups of young people such as women, ethnic and sexual minorities, young people living with disabilities, and so on, affected by social protection policies, or lack thereof?</p>
<p>A similar youth mainstreaming lens can be applied to: 10.6 Voice of developing countries in decisions of economic and financial institutions; 10.7 Migration and mobility; 10a: Differential treatment for developing countries; and 10b: Official development assistance and financial flows to states with the greatest needs, all of which requires the incorporation of youth rights and will indeed benefit from it. Similarly, the 11 official UN indicators ascribed to Goal 10 can be measured for young people as well. (see: United Nations, Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, SDG 10 available at: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg10).³⁹</p>		

Table 3. Goal 16 and youth mainstreaming

Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (youth mainstreaming process)	
Focus here: Accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	
Selected targets	Implications for youth mainstreaming in all 17 goals
16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels	Are there institutional policy guarantees for accountability and transparency to youth? Are institutions accountable to young people in responding to their aspirations and rights? Are there mechanisms in place to ensure transparency and communication with young people?
16.7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels	Does policy require public and youth consultations in decision-making? Are representative groups of young people involved in institutional decision-making at all levels? Are they able to influence decisions?
16.10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements	Are there constitutional and structural guarantees that ensure public access to information for youth in youth-friendly formats? Do young people have access to public information, including on access to public services, in youth-friendly forms? Are their fundamental freedoms to express opinions and participate in public life safeguarded?
16.b: Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development	Are laws and policies in place to ensure intergenerational equality with a specific focus on intergenerational equality for marginalised youth groups?

9. The Youth Mainstreaming Enablers Framework

Outcomes for young people's wellbeing and rights are determined by enablers at several levels. Youth mainstreaming, in other words, does not occur in a vacuum, but within societal, institutional, policy and legal contexts that are relevant internationally and nationally. The commitments to structural transformation and partnerships for change addressed in Agenda 2030⁴⁰ need critical analysis of this big picture, along with pragmatic action.

Figure 3 (hereafter called 'the Enablers Framework') looks at some key enablers for youth mainstreaming. It helps us approach youth mainstreaming holistically in the context of societal (cultural norms), structural (formal/institutional) and organisational contexts. This discussion will help policy-makers situate youth mainstreaming in their respective contexts, including designing realistic plans for YM. This is elaborated on in Box 2.

In terms of our 'control' of the factors indicated in Figure 3, we would have greater control over organisational enablers than structural enablers. However, where structural enablers do not exist, or are not optimal, we can identify areas for long-term

research and advocacy to influence donors and international banks, international conventions and legislation, and so on.

This indicates that YM is gradual and ever-changing, and can build on strengths across time; it can in fact change face during different social, political and economic cycles of a nation/the world. YM, in other words, never 'works itself out of a job'.

The full Handbook discusses each of the elements of the Enablers Framework in more depth.

Box 2 Societal, Structural and Organisational Enablers for YM

Societal factors: Social norms influence our engagement with youth, including all subgroups. What is their status in society? Are they seen as equal partners in the private and public domains?

Structural (macro) factors: Global to subnational social and economic policy systems/enablers influence organisational ability to implement youth mainstreaming effectively. This includes the way in which aspirational goals set by human rights conventions are translated (or not) into policy and programmes, or the broader way in which government and governance, including legislation and donor policy, are organised globally, nationally and locally.

Structural (meso) factors: This involves the more specific pre-planning political and investment commitments to youth mainstreaming, in terms of the direction of political will and public/donor spending towards youth mainstreaming, and a strong and facilitative youth sector.

Organisational factors: Youth-friendly, democratic organisational structures and processes are critical for effective youth mainstreaming. This enabler refers to these characteristics.

Figure 3 The youth mainstreaming Enablers Framework



10. The Role of the Youth Sector

The youth sector comprises the multiple players that focus on youth equality and empowerment as their main institutional focus. The sector's role is central in advocating for youth mainstreaming, and providing technical support to all sectors. The more the sector forms a unified and collaborative identity among all players within the sector, and articulates a co-ordinated vision and strategy among its players, the stronger its influence on other sectors. The Youth Sector may comprise the following:

Government ministry/department for youth at the national and local levels

Generally, the state policy arm for youth.

Government youth service implementing bodies

These implement youth ministry/department policies for youth services and other related matters, including collaboration with other sectors.

Youth-led organisations

Often independent and sometimes served by umbrella bodies, youth-led organisations deliver youth programmes and advocacy driven strongly by youth interests.

Youth movements, including students' unions

These differ from youth-led organisations in being relatively more independent of institutional affiliations and more informal in structure. In education contexts, such bodies could be student unions. They often tend to be issue-focused.

Youth-serving non-governmental and voluntary bodies

These deliver youth programmes.

Youth studies and youth-work studies delivery departments in universities, colleges and training bodies

These deliver training and education for youth empowerment and youth work.

Youth research institutes

Such bodies may co-ordinate with the youth ministry and other youth sector bodies for research relating to youth development and empowerment.

Youth workers' associations and other professional bodies in the youth sector

These are the guardians of quality and integrity in the youth sector, including youth work. They often regulate youth work practice and youth sector management.

The youth sector must be the champion of youth empowerment practice and ensure that youth empowerment paradigms are integrated into the work of all sectors. It is predominantly, but certainly not exclusively, in the youth sector that expertise in these paradigms will prevail, given the training provided by youth work and youth studies programmes across the world.⁴¹

A detailed discussion of the functions of the youth sector and the role of youth work in youth mainstreaming is available in the full Handbook.

11. Transformational Youth Participation

Institutionalised youth participation in driving youth empowerment and development is not an option, but a necessity, for responsive policy-making. It is an important means to transformative youth mainstreaming practices.

Youth participation is enshrined in human rights instruments, such as through Articles 12–15 of the UNCRC and Articles 18–21 of the UDHR. In the SDGs, participation is best articulated within Goal 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, through Targets 16.7 (responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making) and 16.10 (public access to information and fundamental freedoms) Youth participation is also recognised in the World Plan of Action for Youth (WPAY).

In general, youth participation spans three broad dimensions of change: 1) enhancing young people's confidence and self-esteem through the process of participation, 2) changing power dynamics between young people and adults and, eventually, 3) impacting on policies and services.⁴² These dimensions apply to multiple domains, ranging from personal domains such as family and friendship groups to public domains such as schools, universities, work places and public institutions. We focus here on enhancing young people's engagement with the public domains of policy and planning in all sectors and national planning spaces. This could be through party political participation, through youth social movements or engagement in public policy-making spaces directly, as partners in planning.

Youth participation in decisions that affect their lives is the right of young people *irrespective of contributions to a larger good*; the positive personal and collective developmental benefits of participation should never be under-estimated and should be supported unconditionally, particularly at the local level. However, if young people's interests are to be meaningfully integrated into development planning, their ability to influence policy in a climate of powerful contending interests (some such interests working against youth empowerment),

should be an important focus. In fact, this is a key responsibility of broad, representative youth networks and councils.

For the end-goal of youth mainstreaming (i.e. equitable outcomes of development for young people) to be achieved, it is imperative that young people's participation eventually results in their ability to:

- influence equitable social relations within policy spaces in the social, political and economic spheres;
- influence equitable policy formulation; and
- influence processes of effective policy implementation to ensure this equity, including ensuring the allocation of budgets and transparent expenditure.

Building capacity for participation⁴³

Capacity building for participation involves **building the capacity of young people** for informed participation, and **building the capacity of institutions** to be able to attitudinally and structurally integrate youth participation into their structures. The factors indicated in Box 3 supports the enhancement of youth participation capacity.

(Full implications for implementing youth participation structures including discussions around *which* young people need to participate, and reporting the impact of youth participation are set out in the full Handbook)

Box 3 Enhancing youth participation capacity

1. **Information provision and youth-led information creation:** Informed participation is not possible without access to relevant and reliable information (UNCRC Article 17, UDHR Article 19, SDG Target 16.10). This, of course, includes supporting young people to create their own information and knowledge through youth-led research processes, which is an often-overlooked component of information and knowledge creation (**Chapters 9, 17, 22**).
2. **Skills, confidence and influence:** Participation is essentially an interplay of power – that between adults and youth. The more marginalised the youth groups, the greater the power distance. Therefore, ensuring that marginalised groups are adequately capacitated to participate in policy domains is a fundamental role of a functioning democracy. Skills for evidence gathering and advocacy often need to be advanced to contend with different interests that are brought to the table, including the confidence to engage in the formal spaces where many young people feel uncomfortable. Issues of language and translation are also critical factors to consider in enabling the participation of the most marginalised.
3. **Organisational capacity:** How do institutions reflect on their own capacity to support youth participation and enhance such capacity where required, including building attitudes, knowledge and skills, building safe spaces for participation, and implementing facilitative **participation mechanisms** (see AYAC story above and **the Commonwealth's Youth Participation Practice Standards⁴⁴ - Annexure 3**).
4. **Managing 'positive disruptions':** Genuine youth participation also means potential positive disruptions to adult–youth power relations and the questioning of received wisdom around development planning. Organisational capacities should be enhanced to respond to these 'disruptions' in constructive ways, whereby the best interest of young people⁴⁵ are at the core of decision-making.

12. Stakeholder Engagement

The need for the acknowledgement of, and collaboration between, state and civil society/extra-governmental actors is a prerequisite of successful youth mainstreaming. No one party can do this alone.

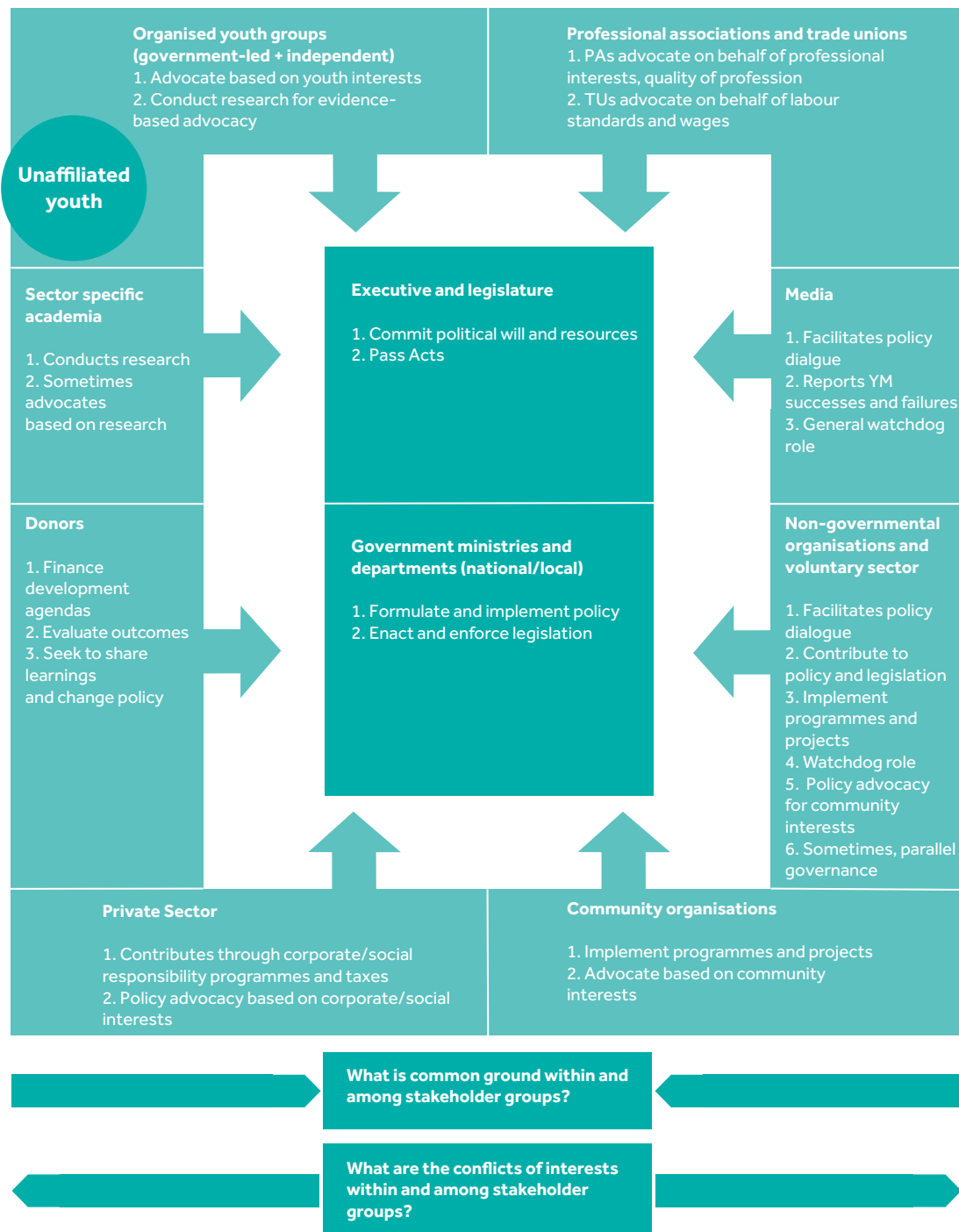
Collaboration is critical because a) government roles are increasingly complemented by non-governmental and private sector players, and

technical knowledge is dispersed, and b) this helps accountability across stakeholders, particularly accountability to youth stakeholders.

Conflicting interests among stakeholders also needs to be assessed and productively engaged with, as indicated in Figure 3 below.

For a fuller discussion of stakeholder engagement, please see the full Handbook.

Figure 3 Stakeholder groups, functions and interests⁴⁶



13. An Evidence Base

Evidence tells us what works, and what does not work, for young people and society. It is the bedrock of objective planning.

For development research perspectives to legitimately represent young people's interests,

- All research needs to take on a youth lens in terms of highlighting the implications for youth of the relevant research subject.
- Young people must be involved as partners in the development research process.⁴⁷ This involves young people partnering and/or leading the identification of research topics as relevant to the sector, and leading the design, implementation, data interpretation and report writing of the research.

Youth-led research or co-led research can have a formidable influence on research outputs by virtue of the lived experiences young people bring into research. Part of the value, but also a positive challenge, of youth-led research is also that findings and recommendation have a great likelihood of challenging orthodox knowledge and assumptions about research, and putting forth transformational recommendations for change. This in turn requires readiness on the part of stakeholders to rethink and reconfigure development planning.

These processes require either in-house research capacity or strong links with collaborative research institutes, including youth research institutes.

The full Handbook provides case studies and elaborations on youth-led and co-led research.

Data disaggregation helps provide young people with visibility in planning

Assessing differential impacts of development for youth (pre-YM) and assessing outcomes for youth (post-YM) requires systematic efforts to disaggregate data for youth and to harmonise methods of disaggregation across data sources, so that young people are made quantitatively visible in planning.

There are several forms of data that can inform the design of youth mainstreaming initiatives and help evaluate the impact of youth mainstreaming (these are elaborated in the full Handbook).

1. data to measure youth cohort involvement in a sector in relation to other cohorts;
2. data to measure access for youth to resources, including for subgroups (youth age subgroups and other social categories) (comparative outputs for youth); and
3. data to measure equality and equity for youth, including for subgroups (youth age subgroups and other social categories) in relation to other cohorts (comparative outcomes for youth). (the Commonwealth's Youth Development Index helps do this).

As the Youth Inclusive indicators document points out, quoting the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, Target 17.18, states have committed to improve measurements to ensure that data are disaggregated 'by income, gender, **age**, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts'. It also points out how some existing measures overlook children and young people, and highlights the importance of harmonising disaggregation across data sources, which has specific implications for multisectoral approaches to youth development.⁴⁸

In data disaggregation, it is also important to ensure that youth data is disaggregated for different youth age groups and for socially, politically, economically and geographically vulnerable groups, given the context to ensure not just that there is equality for youth, but equality for all youth groups irrespective of difference. This will also harmonise planning with the SDG agenda of 'leaving no one behind'.

14. Implications for Planning

How does all of the above translate into our actual planning processes? Youth mainstreaming 'connects the dots' between legislation and policy, finance and political commitment, organisations and programmes within the context of a comprehensive sociodemographic lens in all planning. Youth mainstreaming is not random youth initiatives, but integrated, co-ordinated planning. It intentionally incorporates youth capacities and rights in analysis, planning, implementation and the measurement of outcomes at all levels of the development process.

What we are looking for as results, then, is changes in resource distribution of all kinds (human and natural resources, financial and political power) in ways that better serve both youth and non-youth populations. As discussed in Part 1, the work of youth mainstreaming manifests itself as improved access to education, public health, improved incomes, improved civic and political participation, and so on.

To achieve this, several youth mainstreaming (YM) considerations and expertise requirements have to be factored in (Table 4) and a youth lens should be integrated at all levels and spaces of planning, so that they ensure equity and justice for young people (Figure 4). This harmonisation ensures co-shared youth–adult guarantees of accountability of the process to youth.

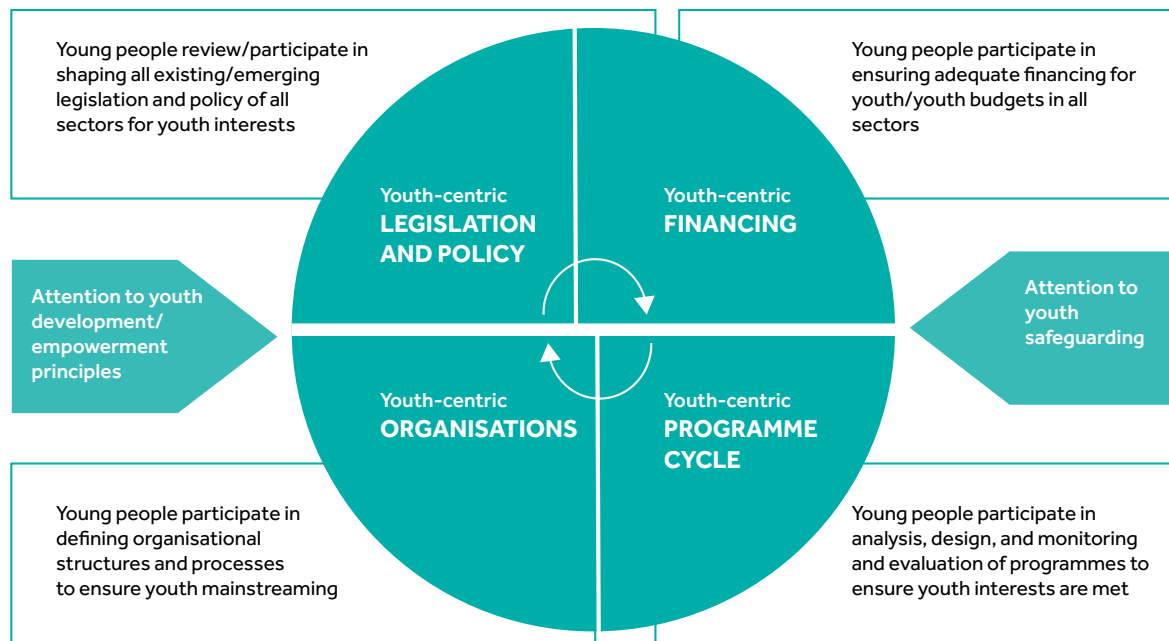
YM policy, tools and accountability mechanisms (designed and implemented with young people) need to be in place to ensure that this collaborative planning occurs. Further details and examples are provided in the full Handbook.

This cycle aligns cross-sectoral policy, financing, programming and connected planning, and goes beyond youth programmes and projects within sectoral silos to holistic, cross-sectoral planning.

Table 4 Youth mainstreaming planning considerations and principal expertise

YM considerations	Cross-sectoral expertise
A full comprehension of the implications for youth in planning, including their developmental rights .	Youth empowerment/ psychosocial Youth development/ empowerment specialisation
Systematic and meaningful youth participation structures for decisions across the programme cycle, including incorporating the skills and expertise of the youth sector in building in youth empowerment strategies.	Participation and democracy Youth development specialisation Youth participation expertise Expertise in democracy Initiatives
Ensuring an evidence base and data disaggregation to measure a. youth cohort involvement, b. outputs and c. outcomes for youth, including for youth age and social subgroups and including global harmonisation of data disaggregation.	Data Census and data specialisation Quantitative and qualitative research specialisation Expertise of young researchers' collectives
Integrating youth safeguarding within the planning process and in programmes where young people are safe and secure within participation and programme implementation processes.	Safeguarding Child and youth safeguarding specialisation
Ensuring financing and budgets for youth at the global, national and subnational levels.	Finance Youth budgeting expertise Youth-centric financing and planning specialisation

Figure 4 Integrating youth mainstreaming into development planning



Youth mainstreaming spaces

How does a process/strategy approach translate to real-life planning? **Figure 5** provides the different spaces in the scenario of all-of-government youth mainstreaming. This diagram helps us 'connect the dots' in planning in the state sector (working collaboratively with all other players, private, non-governmental and voluntary associations etc. [=stakeholders]). This is a useful tool to understand the integration of YM mechanisms into national development plans for each component part and level:

- **Horizontal linkages** of all sectors to harmonise YM across sectors, with the finance and planning sectors, and the youth sector
- **Vertical linkages** in aligning planning at all levels (global, national, subnational) to endorsed global/national/local human rights and development frameworks to enhance accountability to young people
- **Mechanisms/processes** in place to facilitate youth mainstreaming

National mechanisms and accountability

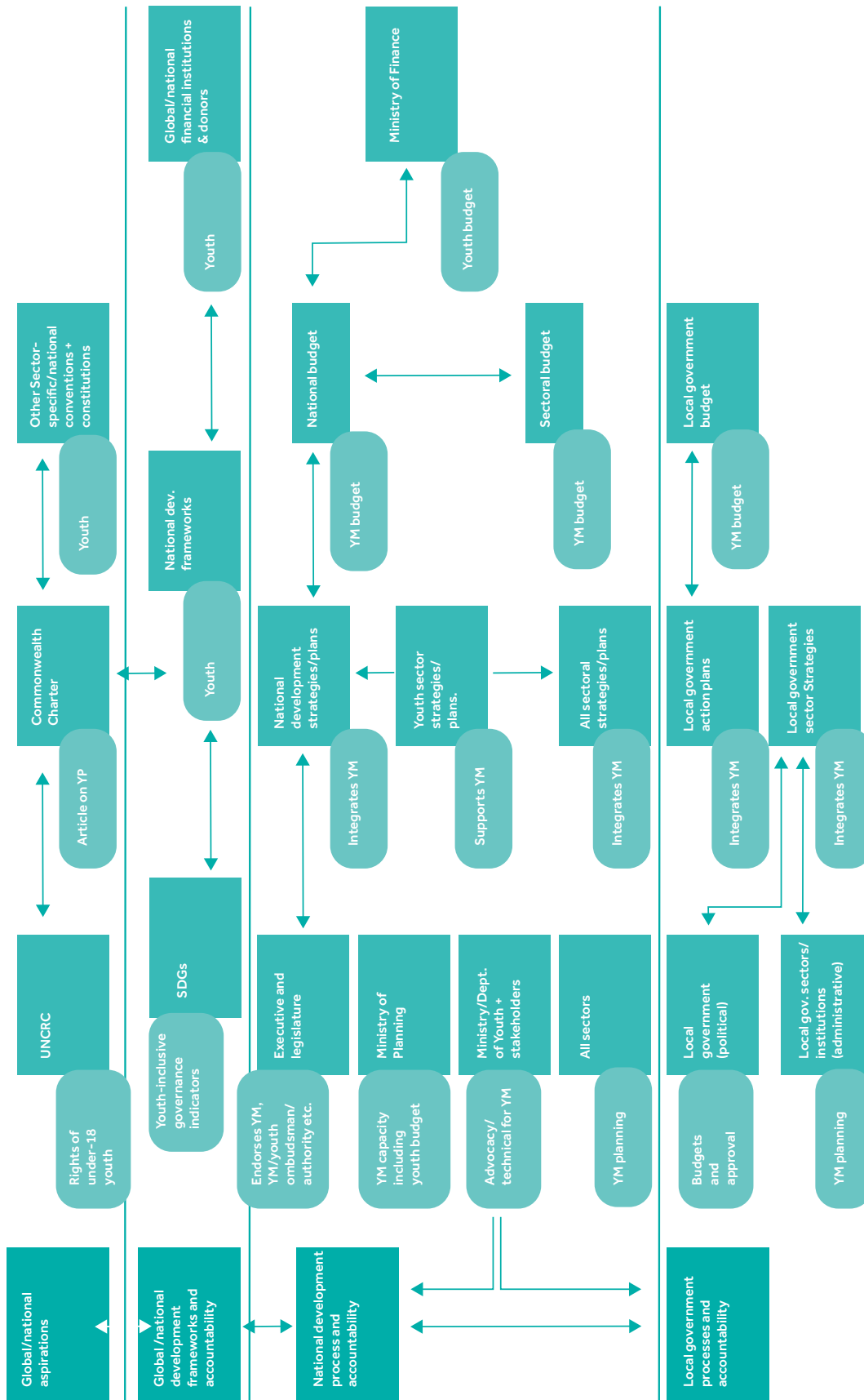
National mechanisms and accountability, detailed out in the full Handbook, would include:

- the executive and the legislature's commitments to youth mainstreaming in terms of legislation and policy;
- youth priorities in administrative bodies – in programmes and planning, and in youth budgeting;
- the youth sector, including all its stakeholders, in functioning as the nodal point in advocating for, and providing technical support to, youth mainstreaming; and
- an independent accountability mechanism that ensures the faithfulness of YM implementation to YM policy.

Levels of youth mainstreaming

We acknowledge four levels at which youth mainstreaming can focus. These are a) Whole-of-government at national/subnational levels, b) Sectoral level (single/multiple), c) Institutional level. And d) project level.

Figure 5 Youth mainstreaming spaces



Equality for youth can only be reached through systemic, co-ordinated efforts at all four levels. However, there is nothing to preclude sectoral, institutional or project youth mainstreaming where national mechanisms are absent, and indeed these approaches can catalyse broad-based change informed by local experience (**Figure 6**).

The process of youth mainstreaming as outlined in Figure 7 is discussed in detail in the full Handbook.

A structure proposed for implementing all-of-government youth mainstreaming is discussed in the full Handbook based on Figure 8 that enables communication across all levels.

Figure 6 Governance levels and cross-pollination in youth mainstreaming

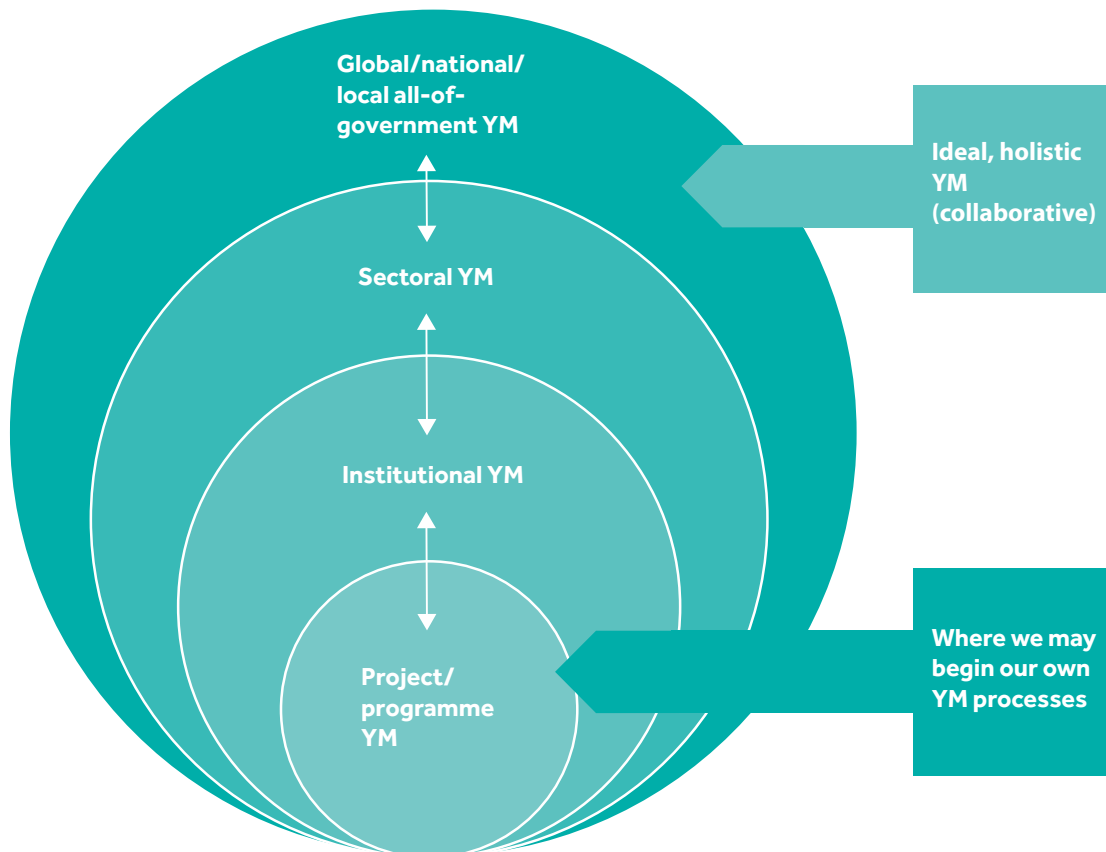


Figure 7 The youth mainstreaming process

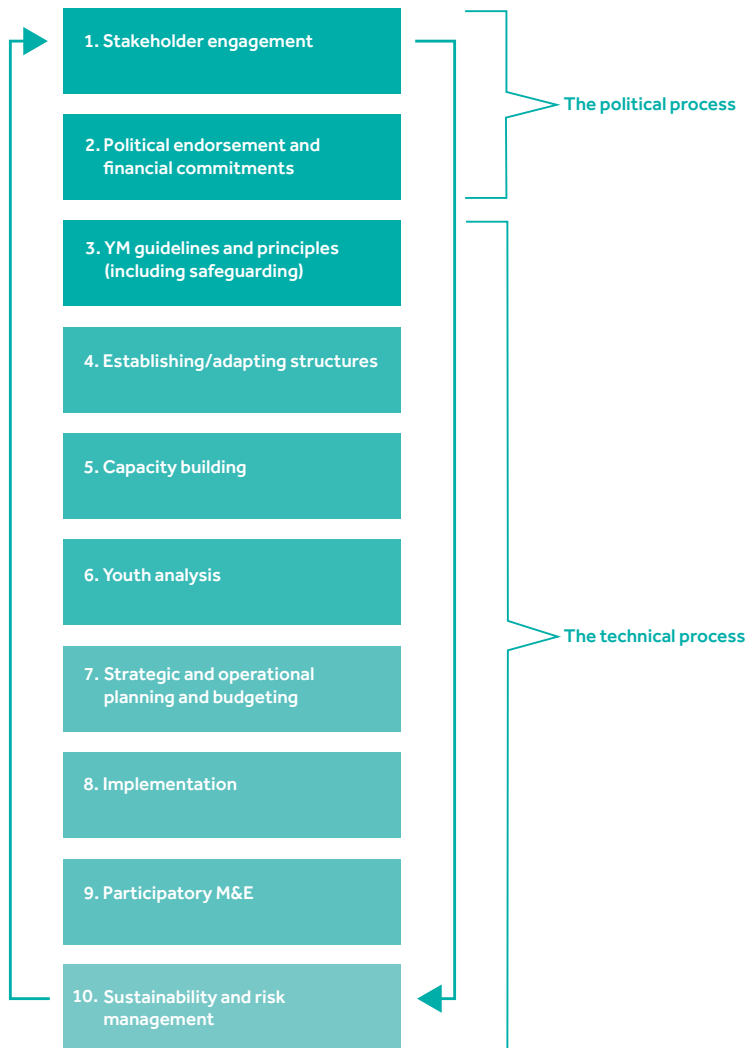
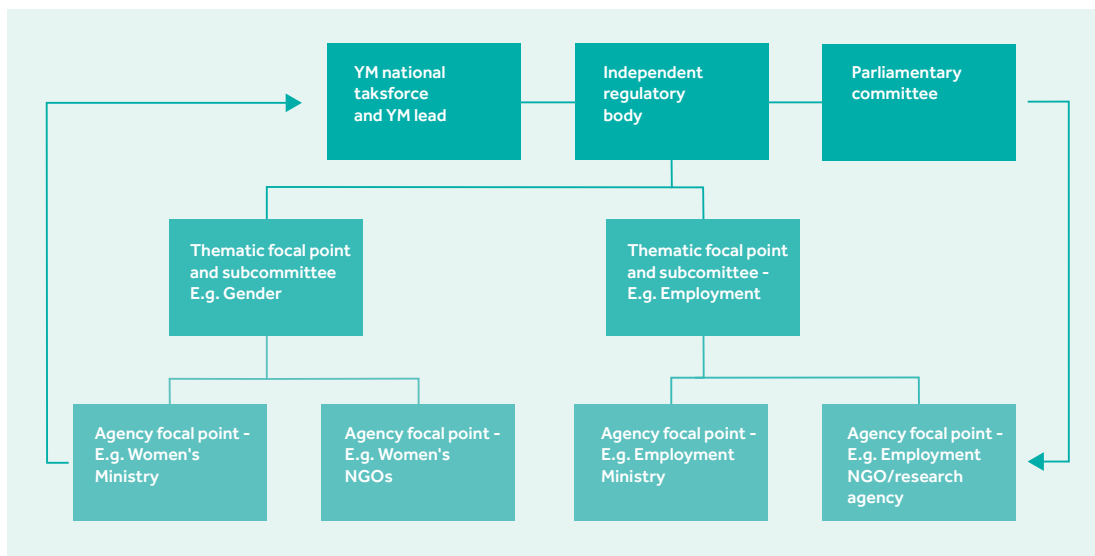


Figure 8 Proposed structure for youth mainstreaming



15. Long-term, Strategic Financing

To ensure strategic, long-term financing for youth mainstreaming, YM strategies must be integrated into financing for development (FFD) strategies. While contemporary contexts require a broad range of players to support integrated financing, the prime principle in all financing endeavours needs to be that all processes ensure equity and justice for all young people, particularly the furthest behind first.

A positive sign in recent history is the recognition, for the first time, of young people as a specific social category for financial investment in the resolutions of the Financing for Development Conference held in Addis Ababa in 2015. The resolution acknowledged that investing in children and youth is "critical to achieving inclusive, equitable and sustainable development for present and future generations"⁴⁹.

For donors to be convinced that holistic youth mainstreaming is a strategy that both benefits youth and benefits reaching the Sustainable Development Goals, the youth sector and all sectors need to provide credible evidence of the relevance of a holistic approach to integrating youth capacities, participation and interests into global, national and subnational planning. In turn, donor support in integrating youth mainstreaming as a key funding priority is also important.

16. Notes on the Full Handbook

The full Handbook, catering predominantly to planners and implementers, takes readers through the translation of principles and concepts to practice including fleshing out principles in youth mainstreaming, proposing practical structures to implement and monitor YM and setting out a guided process to undertaking the 12 steps in Figure 8. The Handbook also provides preliminary feasibility assessment tools and detailed situational and policy/institutional/programme analysis tools to support ensuring the inclusion of young people's rights and capabilities in national, sub-national, sectoral and institutional planning. It also contains case studies outlining youth mainstreaming initiatives in Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth countries.

17. Concluding Observations: Towards Practical, Principled Youth Mainstreaming

Youth mainstreaming is a society and sector-wide approach to ensuring social equality for youth, measured by gains in young people's social status, access to education, healthcare, and other services and resources. YM is not activities as ends in themselves, but fully-assessed, co-ordinated and principled processes informed by positive, egalitarian social norms. Youth mainstreaming will be a success where there are solid partnerships among sectors and continuing dialogue with society on policy and planning for and with youth.

It is now time to bring youth mainstreaming into the spotlight, especially in the context of achieving and surpassing the SDGs.

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Endnotes

1. The 2016 Global Youth Developed Index (Commonwealth Secretariat 2017) highlights that three-quarters of the world's 1.8 billion young people aged 15–29 live in countries where youth development is categorised as 'low' or 'medium' – 'YDI Quick Facts', page 2.
2. Patel et al. 2013, 2.
3. Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, 2016.
4. See, for example, Crawford R et al 2015 and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2014, available at: <https://www.oecd.org/social/OECD2014-Income-Inequality-Update.pdf>. Accessed February 2017.
5. World Bank (2016). "While poverty in Africa has declined, the number of poor has increased." <http://www.worldbank.org/en/region/afr/publication/poverty-rising-africa-poverty-report>. Accessed April 22 2017.
6. International Labour Organization (ILO) (2015) 'World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2015'.
7. See, for example, Clapham D et al 2012. *Housing Options for Young People 2020*, available at: https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/young-people-housing-options-full_0.pdf (accessed April 2017).
8. See, for example, Clapham et al. 2012. Also United Nations Capital Development Fund and Mastercard Foundation (nd).
9. Part 3, full case studies, in the full Handbook elaborates on this.
10. Commonwealth Secretariat 2016b, 'Fast Facts', 3.
11. United Nations 2011, 1.
12. Oxfam 2016, 2.
13. Ostry et al. 2016.
14. Ibid, 41: 'The evidence of the economic damage from inequality suggests that policymakers should be more open to redistribution than they are. Of course, apart from redistribution, policies could be designed to mitigate some of the impacts in advance – for instance, through increased spending on education and training, which expands equality of opportunity'.
15. The foundation of this definition is the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) definition for gender mainstreaming, as appearing in ECOSOC 1997/2. It has been revised to highlight key factors the youth sector perceives as important in youth mainstreaming.
16. DFiD-CSO Youth Working Group 2015, 8.
17. 'The social category was first formulated with the idea of nation-states, science, and religious freedom' (Patel et al. 2013, 3).
18. See, for example, Tebbutt (2016) for a historical study of youth in the British context.
19. Commonwealth Youth Programme 2007, 'Module 2: Young People and Society', 44–54.

20. Module 2 of the Commonwealth Diploma (CYP 2007b) mentions an example from the then-Malawian Youth Policy, 44.
21. Ibid.
22. De Boek and Honwana 2005.
23. Particularly in contexts where the higher age limit for youth is often 30 and above.
24. See Commonwealth Secretariat 2014, which provides tools for marginality mapping for young people around these five domains.
25. This is explicitly recognised in UN 2015b, 3 – 'reaching the furthest behind first'.
26. Commonwealth Secretariat 2013a, 7.
27. Commonwealth Youth Programme and Institute for Economics and Peace, 2013. 18.
28. 'Youth interests' should always be locally identified. Having said this, the My World Survey has received more than 5 million 16-30-year-old votes internationally. This age group identified the following as their top youth issues/ interests affecting their lives; they want: a better education; healthcare, better jobs; and an honest and responsive government, available at: <http://data.myworld2015.org/>. Accessed Nov 2016.
29. Rai 2003, 25.
30. Moore 2005: 'Not only can poverty experienced in youth have implications across the life course of the young person, it can hinder the capacity of a young person to bounce back from deprivation suffered in childhood, and affect the long-term life changes of any dependents, including and especially the young person's own children' (page 21).
31. ODI 2009, 7.
32. Commonwealth Secretariat 2016a, 17.
33. See Why Youth Mainstreaming?
34. United Nations, 2015c.
35. United Nations, 2015b.
36. United Nations, 2015a, 1 and 3.
37. Plan et al. 2016 addresses youth-inclusive indicators for Targets 16.6, 16.7 and 16.10.
38. These example implications involve multiple dimensions of social change, as reflected by youth aspirations that may go beyond those implied by the SDG indicators for these targets.
39. United Nations, 2015c.
40. United Nations 2015d.
41. The Commonwealth Diploma in Youth Development Work and the upcoming University of West Indies Degree in Youth Development, which form part of the Commonwealth Degree Consortium on Youth Work, are examples.
42. Crowley 2014a.

43. The Sustainable Governance Index indicator on 'citizen participatory competence' is instrumental in assessing this.
44. Commonwealth Youth Programme/UNICEF 2005 a and b.
45. The best interest principle is at the core of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and is a critical concept for planning with and for all young people, not just those below 18.
46. This helps an analysis of stakeholder groups at the national/subnational, sectoral and other levels, as relevant to your planning context.
47. Development research, as opposed to academic research, focuses on evidence to inform development policy and practice, and is often more participatory than academic research.
48. Plan et al. 2016, 7. The elaboration says: 'Disaggregation by age should move towards greater consistency between data sources (e.g. standardisation of 5- or 10-year age brackets), and reporting of results within each source should be consistent (e.g. avoid combining or splitting age brackets, such as 1–18, 19–35, 36–65, 65+).
49. UN General Assembly 2015, 5.

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