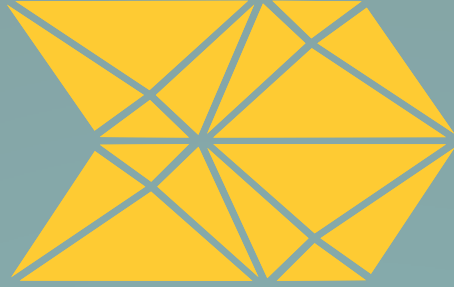


# Promoting Youth Participation and Empowerment

A Guideline for Practitioners



Federal Ministry  
for Economic Cooperation  
and Development



**Published by the**  
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices  
Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 36 + 40  
53113 Bonn, Germany  
T +49 228 44 60 0      F +49 228 44 60 17 66  
info@giz.de  
www.giz.de

EPIC – Economic and Social Participation of Vulnerable Displaced  
Persons and Local Population in the South Caucasus GIZ Georgia  
42, Rustaveli Ave. / 31a, Griboedov St. 0108 Tbilisi  
T +49 123 456 789      F +49 123 456 789  
Friederike.Rochowanski@giz.de  
www.giz.de/en/worldwide/79734.html

As at  
October 2020

Printed by Ltd "Vectori" (victory.ge)

...

### Design

Ufuk Bal, International Youth Expert, Poland  
Joanna Kamuda, Graphic Designer, Poland

### Text

Nato Antia  
Tako Chabukiani  
Joerg Le Blanc  
Pavle Tvaliashvili

### Editing

Sophio Bujashvili

### Photo credits

© GIZ/Tako Robakidze  
pages: 1, 4, 6, 8, 10, 13, 14-15, 16-17, 18, 20, 22, 24-25, 30-31, 34-35, 36-37,  
38-39, 42-43, 44-45, 46, 53, 56.  
© images Freepik.com  
pages: 28-29, 33, 41

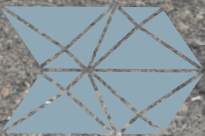
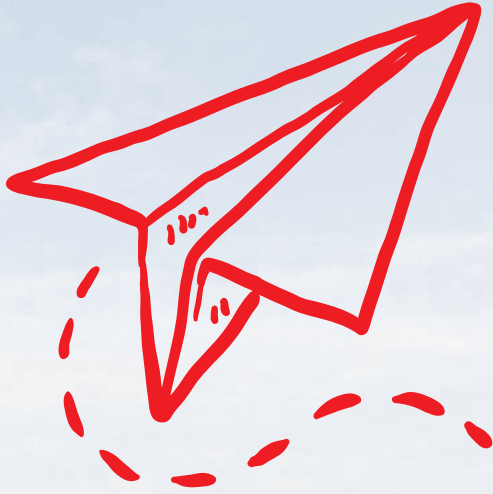
GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation  
and Development (BMZ)

# Table of Content



<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	<b>05</b>
<u>THE STRUCTURE OF THE GUIDELINE</u>	<b>07</b>
<u>PART 1</u>	<b>09</b>
<u>OBJECTIVE OF PROMOTING SOCIAL PARTICIPATION</u>	<b>11</b>
<u>APPROACH FOR PROMOTING YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT</u>	<b>13</b>
<u>PART 2</u>	<b>23</b>
<u>GRASSROOTS PERSPECTIVE</u>	<b>25</b>
<u>SPACE FOR MEETING - AVAILABLE INFRASTRUCTURE</u>	<b>31</b>
<u>STAKEHOLDERS AND AUTHORITIES</u>	<b>35</b>
<u>SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING MEASURES TO EMPOWER YOUTH</u>	<b>39</b>
<u>ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT</u>	<b>43</b>
<u>CHECKLIST</u>	<b>47</b>



# Introduction

**T**he guideline's recommendations cover diverse topics, ranging from reaching out and actively involving participants, designing and implementing trainings and supporting the sustainability of grassroots initiatives. Despite the guideline's specific focus on youth, all recommendations and approaches offer relevant tips and tricks for working with the community at large, as well as planning and implementing social participation projects.

The guideline is a product of professionals sharing their reflections, practiced approaches and tools on a voluntary basis to guide the practitioners in their further work.

The development of the Guideline was supported by the Georgian Adult Education Network (GAEN), DVV International Georgia, Education and Management Team (EMT), Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and the program Economic and Social Participation of Vulnerable Displaced Persons and Local Population in the South Caucasus - EPIC. EPIC is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Government.

**Welcome to “Promoting Youth Participation and Empowerment: A Guideline for Practitioners”.**

**The guideline aims at giving practical advice to practitioners on how to design and implement interventions in favor of youth participation and empowerment.**

**Y**outh participation and empowerment is key for reaching community development objectives. To develop their full strength and to positively contribute to a state's and society's development, participation and empowerment must generate a real impact: youth need to see and feel that they can truly contribute to the decision - making through their participation and activity. Through active participation, young people are empowered to play a vital role in their own development as well as in that of their communities.

At the same time, older generations need to fully accept youth as equal partners for developing their community. Promoting youth participation and youth activity needs to focus on changing the mindset of individuals of all generations.

Youth need to become active and use existing chances while older generations should offer new spaces for participation and expression as well as to listen to and involve youth in decision-making. Therefore, projects for youth participation and empowerment are well advised to support the personal development of youth and to help them become independent and active citizens who can express their needs and wishes and actively contribute to social development.

**R**ecognizing youth's key role in social development, the EPIC program together with its partners, set on to develop the present guideline that aims at supporting practitioners in their endeavor of promoting youth empowerment. The basic assumption of the guideline is that the method of promoting youth engagement might be more relevant than the specific content of youth programs. In its core, the guideline proposes to involve and enable youth at every step of any youth project to truly encourage youth participants.

**B**y involving youth and providing spaces for (guided) self-responsible organization, youth participants can gain experience and develop relevant skills. Such an approach promotes personal development, increases participants' self-esteem and the youth's confidence in their own capabilities – and, thus, contributes to youth empowerment.

The approach presented in this document focuses on promoting empowerment and participation particularly of vulnerable youth who are dealing with disadvantaged conditions who are more exposed to risks than their peers and have reduced opportunities for social inclusion.

## WORK FOR YOUTH AS BENEFICIARIES

## ENGAGE WITH YOUTH AS PARTNERS

## SUPPORT YOUTH AS LEADERS



<sup>1</sup> See UN "Youth Participation in Development Guide"  
<https://social.un.org/youthyear/docs/policy%20guide.pdf>

The guideline is a practical resource and provides an overview on 5 main aspects that are relevant for successful planning and implementation of youth participation and empowerment projects.

# The Structure of the Guideline



**E**ach chapter describes the general approach to a specific topic, and gives recommendations and practical tips and tricks for working with youth. Helpful questions are identified for each approach to support practitioners to evaluate existing strategies, identify gaps and weaknesses and develop an appropriate action plan. A checklist helps the reader and practitioners to easily adapt the elements described in the general approach to the own reality and thus to design the particular approach needed for implementing activities on the ground.

These practical tools – the list of helpful questions and the checklist – are available electronically and can be re-used each time practitioners start a new project for youth empowerment or need to evaluate the current strategy. Practitioners will find useful tools for planning their strategies and activities at the end of each chapter as well as examples for a better understanding of the general approach.

## Part 1:

Describes in detail the objective of promoting social participation. Here the reader can find more information on the benefits of social participation as well as on key criteria for deriving them;

It outlines a common methodological approach that guides all further described activities for youth empowerment. Involving youth, giving them responsibility and supporting youth with guidance and training are key elements of the approach.



### DESCRIBE

## Part 2:

Focuses on five key aspects for promoting youth empowerment namely:

- Grassroots perspective;
- Space for meeting – available infrastructure;
- Engagement of (local) stakeholders and authorities;
- Skills development and training measures;
- Organizational development.



### HELPFUL QUESTIONS

This part aims at providing an easy to understand overview of the key aspect and a description of a practical approach to it.

It is important to highlight that the present guideline does not offer an "one-fits-all" blueprint but offers guidance in developing feasible and adjusted approaches for youth participation and empowerment initiatives.

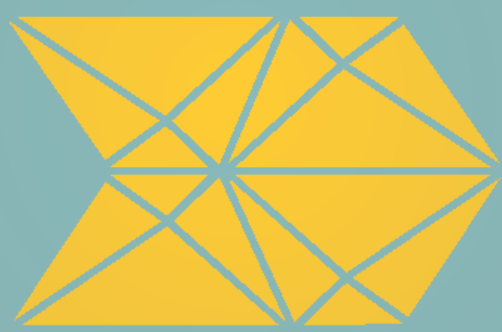


### CHECKLIST

Practitioners, therefore, are well advised to always critically reflect on the specific approach in the design stage. The practical tools help practitioners to easily adapt the elements described in the general approach to their own reality and thus to design the particular method needed for implementing activities on the ground.

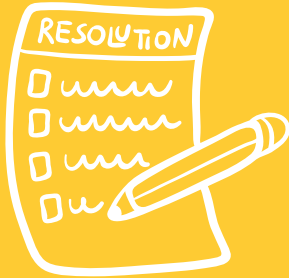
Following up on impacts and using the outcomes for future activities are suggested to consider





# Part 1





# Objective of promoting social participation

In modern society youth is often perceived as a problematic group, especially due to a higher share in violence and crime rates. Additionally, elders and authorities often perceive youth as not trustworthy and not "serious". Consequently, youth is often excluded from decision-making processes controlled by elders and authorities, as they are not seen as "equals".

Youth as future leaders are the biggest investment for the development of a country. Full and effective participation of young people in society and decision-making is crucial for a successful implementation of youth-oriented programs as young people are part of the solution to the difficulties they face. In societies with a high percentage of young population, there exists a "demographic dividend". This is a window of opportunity for development, as more young (working age population) persons exist<sup>2</sup>.

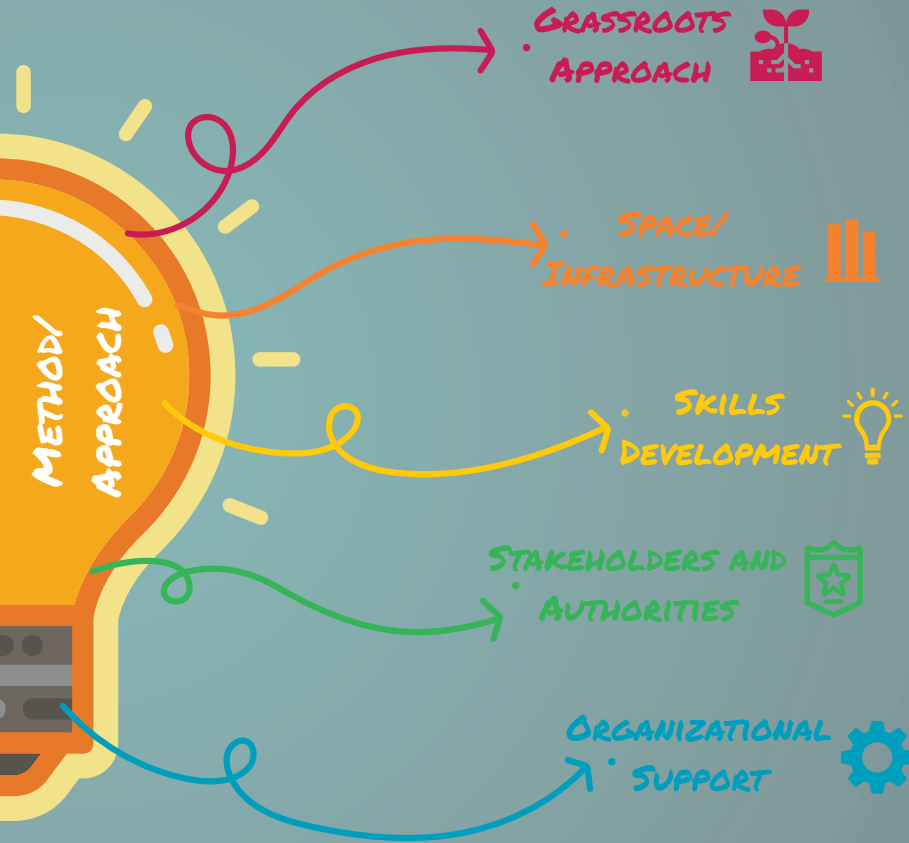
To make the best use of the generational dividend youth have to be promoted, involved and opportunities for participation (economic, social, and political) have to be offered. If this window of opportunity is not used, the development opportunity will be lost and a high risk of protracted under-development appears.



*THIS GUIDELINE GIVES PRACTICAL ADVICE TO YOUTH OR COMMUNITY WORKERS ON HOW TO SUPPORT LOCAL GRASSROOTS INITIATIVES, PROMOTE SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND GENERATE MORE ACTIVE COMMUNITIES.*

<sup>2</sup> See United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), "Demographic Dividend", <https://www.unfpa.org/demographic-dividend>, last accessed 31.10.2019

The key approaches for youth empowerment discussed in the guideline are the following:



Increased participation of individuals in community affairs allows to give visibility to the diversity that exists within the community. Evidencing diversity, needs and interests of the community helps to improve local decision making, as decision makers can more easily take it into account when it comes to designing strategies and activities for community development. Widespread interest in participating in community affairs also increases and diversifies local offers and activities to participate in. A more active and lively community is key for increasing the quality of life within the community.

One of the benefits of activating social participation in community affairs is helping vulnerable and excluded persons:

- Overcoming their (personal and collective) isolation and contributing to a more inclusive community;
- Strengthening their self-esteem and motivating them to be an active part of the local community; all key factors for also becoming economically active;
- Overcoming the “stagnation” that especially many internally displaced persons (IDP) face and enable them to shape their own future as well as the one of the community.

Through the support of local grassroots initiatives that are interest-based and only dependent on the engagement of community members, vulnerable persons and community can be motivated to act. Supporting local grassroots initiatives allows:

- Making people take responsibility for own and common interest;
- Intrinsically motivating people to promote a positive change in their life and of the community.

Inclusion, however, exceeds participation by far and can only be reached on a long term and through persistent support.

# Approach for promoting youth participation and empowerment

## What does this mean?


**W**hen promoting social participation and inclusion of vulnerable persons and communities, the approach and method you choose is often more relevant than the specific activities you propose. It is not only the type of activity but “how” the activity is designed that determines the level of (possible) participation and empowerment. If correctly promoted, participation can improve through a broad array of activities in almost any field.

While choosing an approach, it is important to reflect how inclusive the approach is while working with different young people. Many organizations focus their work on one or more vulnerable groups of young people.

Inclusive and equal youth work means working toward an ethos of inclusion, diversity and equality that is cognizant of the range of young people who fit into these groups or life circumstances. Inclusive youth work is only partly about who you work with – it is predominantly about how you work with young people to build a society where discrimination is challenged, where equality is real and diversity is fully embraced and celebrated<sup>3</sup>.

Pay special attention if the programs you implement apply holistically to all young people, regardless of gender or ethnicity. Take into account the gender perspective while designing the approach, as well as accessibility of activities and spaces to ensure equal participation of young people with disabilities.

<sup>3</sup> 8 Steps to Inclusive Youth Work, Toolkit for Youth Sector, National Youth Council of Ireland, 2016



**RECOGNIZE THAT  
YOUNG PEOPLE AS THE  
RECIPIENTS  
OF THE PROGRAMS OR  
ACTIVITIES ARE THE  
SUBJECTS OF THEIR OWN  
RIGHTS AND PAY SPECIAL  
ATTENTION TO GIVE DUE  
CONSIDERATION TO YOUNG  
PEOPLE'S VIEWS.**

## Why does the approach matter?

**T**he method is important to assure that we reach our aim – namely, the active participation, empowerment and enabling of persons to become active on their own behalf.

Although there does not exist an exclusive method or approach to this end, it is key to focus on empowering participants, creating ownership for the activity and enabling them to take responsibility and organize, lead and implement initiatives according to their own interest. Promoting empowerment, actively involving local participants and handing over the responsibility for the organization and implementation of the activities have to be the underlying aim of every step you take to support community based initiatives. A rights-based approach is acknowledging that young people are rights-holders, and that those in positions of responsibility (including state and non-state actors) have a duty to recognize and enable these rights, through a broad array of activities in almost any field.

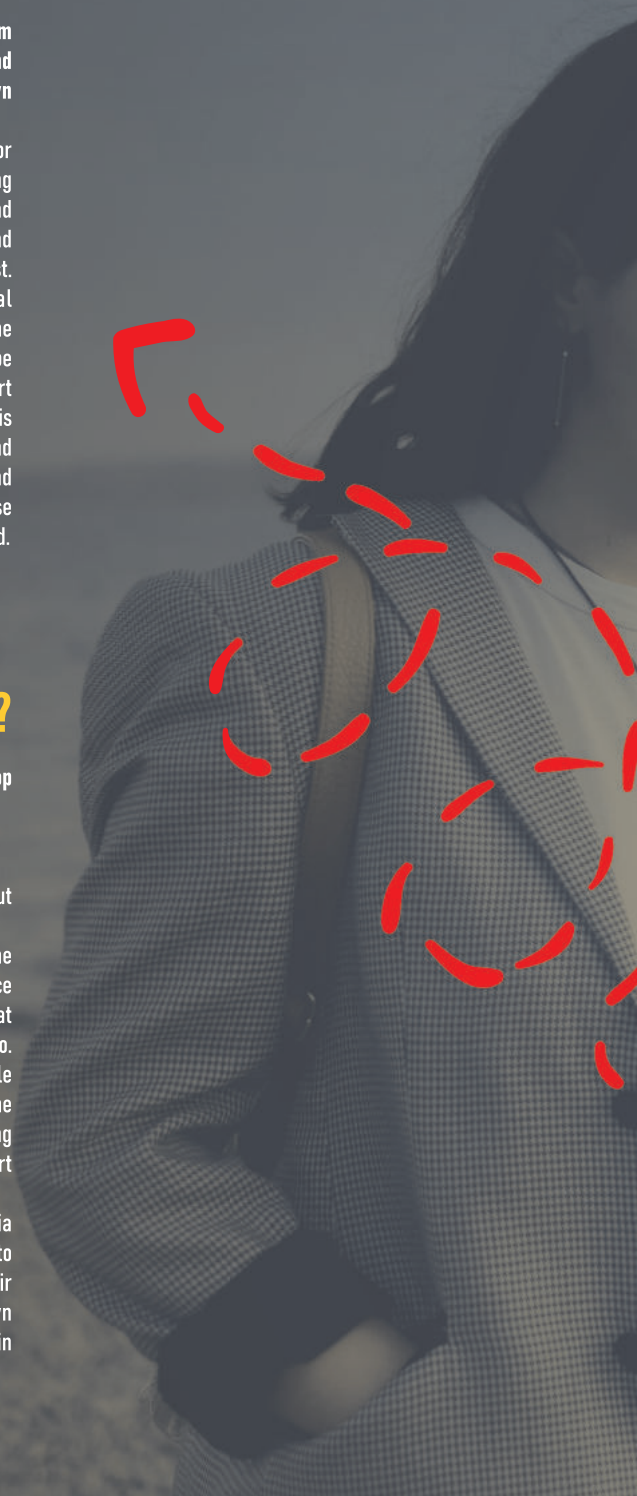
## How to get there?

**F**ind out what motivates locals and help them to develop activities in their field of interest.

Invest time and efforts into personal relationships to find out what people are really interested in.

Building good relationships with the youth and the community at large that are based on trust and confidence help to find out what persons are really interested in; what they expect; what they can and what they cannot do. Working with young people from marginalized or vulnerable groups may need more engagement and flexibility. Some young people will require more time to build trusting relationships with you and require more intensive support and attention to keep them involved.

To build personal relationships with the mentioned criteria is key to invest sufficient time to be present on the ground; to approach people actively; and to listen to people taking their opinions and concerns into account. Maintaining your own motivation – even when faced with set-backs – is key in such a long-term approach.





## BE AWARE

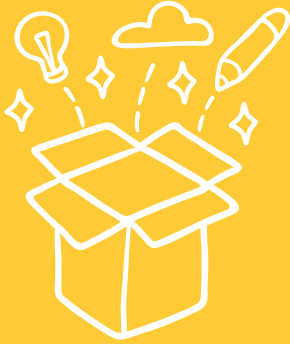
PEOPLE ARE OFTEN MORE MOTIVATED TO DO SOMETHING THEY ARE GENUINELY INTERESTED IN THAN ACTING ON THEIR "OBJECTIVE" NEEDS. A STRUCTURAL IMPROVEMENT IN BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE, EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND BETTER LIVING CONDITIONS IS HARD TO ACHIEVE THROUGH INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY AND IS OFTEN SEEN AS A STATE RESPONSIBILITY. INNER MOTIVATION DEVELOPS EASIER AROUND ACTIVITIES THAT ARE OF OWN PERSONAL INTEREST AND WITHIN REACH.

PROMOTING SOCIAL PARTICIPATION OF YOUNG PERSONS DOES NOT MEAN TO SET UP ACTIVITIES FOR THE YOUTH – BUT TO HELP YOUTH INITIATIVES TO ACT ON THEIR OWN BEHALF. ENABLING COMMUNITY BASED INITIATIVES TO CARRY OUT THEIR ACTIVITIES IS THE MAIN AIM – NOT THE DELIVERY OF ANY SPECIFIC TASK OR ACTIVITY.



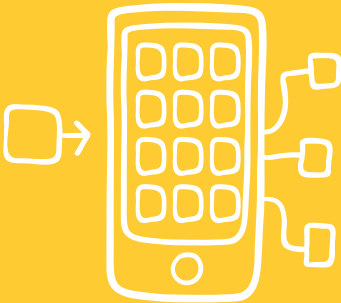


# Include – Improve – Empower



**A**ctively include participants in activities and hand over responsibility;

E.g. offer space for taking responsibility, distribute tasks, ask for feedback and give space for shaping decisions. Participants need to feel that the activity is under their control.



**I**mprove community based initiatives by supporting the community members. It is key to back-up community based initiatives, support them and connect with other actors that might offer relevant inputs.

E.g. help to set up the needed minimal organizational structure that allows the initiative to become sustainable and develop activities over a long period of time. Offer additional support through trainings, peer exchanges and inputs from professionals to allow gaining needed insights, obtaining knowledge and techniques that are of relevance for their activity.



**E**mpowering persons and community based initiatives to act on their own behalf. “Empowering” requires to help persons and community based initiatives to strengthen and develop relevant (life-) skills that allow them to become fully self-reliant.

E.g. trainings, exchanges, peer-to-peer workshops and relevant (thematic) inputs help a person to develop needed skills.

# Focus on promoting changes in persons

**T**he approach you choose should intrinsically motivate persons to become active or in other words, generate an inner motivation and disposition to be active – for both own and common interests.

**E.g. guide the participants to identify the fields of common interest. Bear in mind that the bigger the target group the more diverse the interests will be. Offer activities covering the interests of the participants.**



**P**romoting changes in persons should focus on enabling them to act on their own behalf as well as motivate them to do so.

**E.g. teach the participant how and where to look for resources for gaining skills essential for planning and implementation of different activities and techniques that are of relevance for their activity.**

**P**ersons should become interested and able to take over responsibility and to lead the activities and initiatives by themselves

**E.g. help the participants to use the skills they acquired to lead processes; give them initial guidance on how to distribute tasks among the team members to achieve the goals they set for themselves.**

**O**ffering "rewards" helps to attract persons and generate activities that are of interest for locals. Rewards may include:

- Offering participation in exchanges (peer-to-peer exchanges; exchanges with other initiatives; exchanges with experts);
- Offering participation in trainings;

**E.g. share with participants information about training opportunities through networking with other organizations working on skills development; offer online training courses.**

- Promoting community events that are open to participation and presentation of initiatives.

If you want to offer material rewards, in-kind grants<sup>4</sup> are a good choice. In-kind grants improve the implementation conditions of the project and keep the efforts focused on its initial aim. When giving material incentives, it is advisable to avoid that these offer personal benefit that might enter in conflict with the original project aim, such as creating strong hierarchies or excluding participants by limiting participation.

<sup>4</sup> In-kind gifts are contributions of goods or services, other than cash grants. Examples of in-kind gifts include: Goods, like computers, software, furniture, and office equipment, for use by your organization or for special event auctions; Services, like meeting space,

**W**hen working with vulnerable population, especially with IDPs, keep in mind that the persons you want to reach might have suffered traumas and might have experienced severe rejection and exclusion.

Therefore, activities should consider and deal with:



Feelings and experiences of exclusion



Having grown up in, living in or having suffered violence



Low levels of self-esteem

photocopy and mail services, and administrative/financial support; Expertise, like legal, tax, or business advice; marketing and website development; and strategic planning; Cash equivalents, like stocks, bonds, and mutual funds.



## ! BEAR IN MIND

YOUNG PEOPLE YOU ARE WORKING WITH MAY BE GOING THROUGH SOMETHING IN THEIR LIVES. OBSERVE CAREFULLY AND SEARCH FOR SUPPORT FROM ORGANIZATIONS OFFERING PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSISTANCE OR ADDRESS LOCAL AUTHORITIES (LOCAL MUNICIPALITY; POLICE) TO TAKE RESPECTIVE MEASURES.



THE APPROACH THAT YOU DEVELOP AND USE FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH IS KEY FOR PROMOTING THE YOUTH'S EMPOWERMENT AND OWNERSHIP OF THE PROCESSES THEY PARTICIPATE IN. "ENABLING" YOUTH, OR IN OTHER WORDS, HELPING THE YOUTH TO FIND OWN WAYS OF "HOW TO DO THINGS" IS IN THE CENTER OF THIS APPROACH AND SHOULD BE CONSIDERED IN EACH AND EVERY STEP.

# How to involve youth and hand over responsibility?

**Y**outh workers<sup>5</sup> from NGO's or community groups are responsible for teaching, developing skills and generating interest in youth to participate in various community projects and volunteer activities.

Events usually attract and motivate youth to participate. Without proper guidance, however, motivation easily disappears. It is recommended to offer options, selected together with youth and support youth in setting and achieving the aims.

You can offer teaser activities to attract young community members, and especially those who are less motivated and normally do not participate in activities. Communicate with

them and find out what are the main obstacle for being more active. Try to address their needs and consider their vision when designing activities. When reaching out to non-active youths you might need to consider approaching informal youth leaders and activists as a resource or to avoid the resistance.

Youth often lack experience, skills and readiness to take responsibility on independent work. They do not have enough experience and clear vision what to expect and how to reach these expectations. Therefore, youth workers have to invest a lot of time and effort at the beginning of the process. Over time, however, they can progressively involve youth and hand over responsibility, thus, decreasing their own input and responsibility for making activities run.

**W**orkload (responsibility) is slowly changing. Youth worker should have maximum responsibilities at the beginning and should share it with youth over time. Initially, youth workers are in charge for the planning and design of the activities as well as for identifying financial support. Youth participants are involved in the implementation process but their initial role is still limited. Gradually youth should take over more responsibility.

At some point, the workload and responsibility of youth workers and youth becomes equilibrated. From that moment on, youth workers turn into "observers" while youth participants take the responsibility for initiating and implementing their activities, including community events.

In the transitional period the activities such as assigning small tasks to young participants, planning activities together, observing how they independently organize events and activities will facilitate takeover of the responsibility.

Some young participants might have previous experience gained in other projects. This might change the initial distribution of the workload at the beginning of the process as these youngsters might be motivated and experienced enough to take more responsibility right from the start. The exact set up and possible distribution of responsibility, however, depends on the personal characteristic, previous experience and the context on the ground.

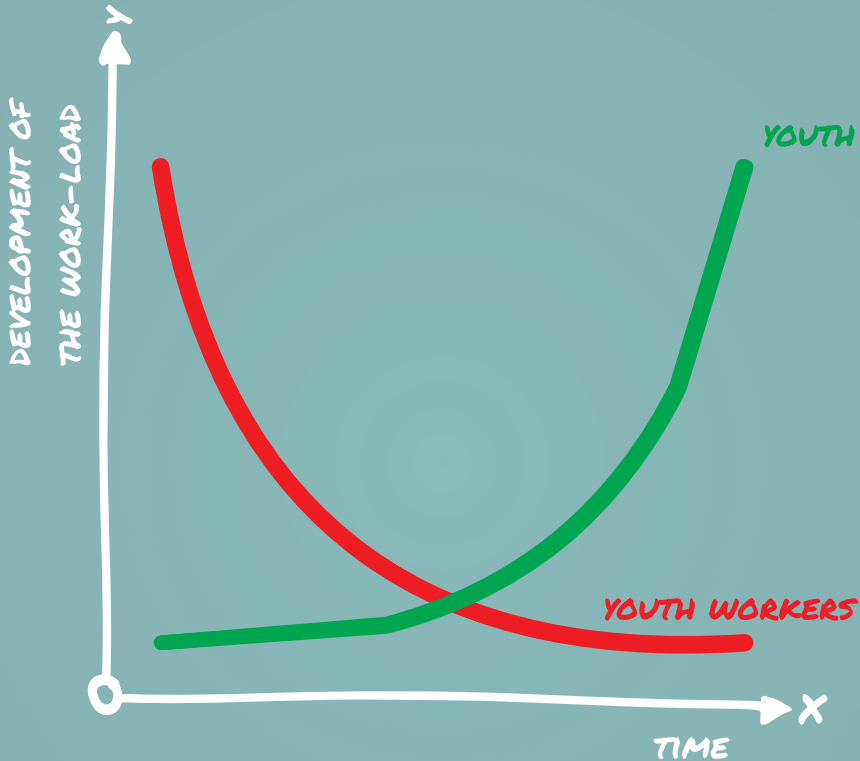
In the transition period of handing over the liability, youth workers and young participants might have equal workload and responsibilities for quite a long time.

<sup>5</sup> Youth workers are responsible for planning, organizing and overseeing community programs designed to redress inequalities and facilitate the personal, social and emotional development of young people between the ages of 11-25.

Source: <https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/jobdescriptions/279611-youth-worker-job-descriptin>



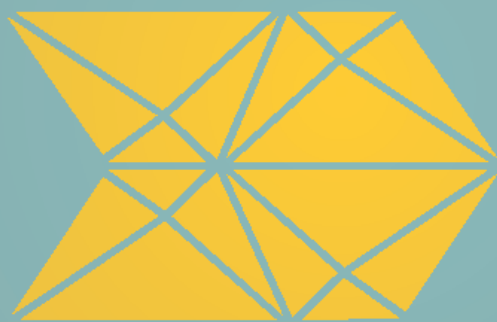
THE FOLLOWING DIAGRAM DEPICTS THE TYPICAL DEVELOPMENT OF WORKLOAD OF YOUTH AND YOUTH WORKERS. X AXIS INDICATES TIME AND Y AXIS INDICATES THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORK-LOAD OF YOUTH WORKERS (RED LINE) AND YOUTH (GREEN LINE).



#### EXAMPLE:

YOUTH FROM JVARI COMMUNITY DECIDED TO IDENTIFY THE COMMUNITY PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES, CONDUCTED INFORMAL SURVEY AND DEVELOPED IDEAS BASED ON THE RESULTS. YOUTH WORKER GUIDED THEM IN ELABORATING THE IDEAS INTO COMMUNITY INITIATIVES AND CHALLENGES. ONE OF THE IDEAS WAS ORGANIZING PLANTING AND CLEANING ACTIVITY AND YOUTH





## Part 2







# Key Aspects for Promoting Youth Empowerment



## Grassroots perspective

**W**hy does the grassroots matter? The main idea of supporting social participation is to help community members speak about existing problems and challenges, plan activities for overcoming difficulties and implement those activities by themselves. The community members know best what challenges exist in their micro society, thus they should be actors to identify and prioritize their needs. Furthermore, this approach would enhance feeling of ownership and motivation. Additionally, social participation projects strengthen community members to deal with challenges, advocate and lobby their needs and to achieve results independently. This strategy supports development and growth of needed skills and competences of the active community members and grassroots organizations.

**W**hat does this mean? When you aim to support social participation, a bottom-up approach is the most efficient and suitable strategy, which means that initiatives and activities should be initiated, identified and implemented by community members rather than suggested by organizations, authorities or institutions.

# How to get there?

In order to achieve indicated results, goals need to be carefully identified

## FOCUS ON INTEREST RATHER THAN ON NEEDS

**N**eeds are broader and address major problems such as limited access to public services (e.g.: watering system, or renovation of main roads). Achieving goals of this type could be more challenging and require more resources.

Interests are more specific: they have impact on local level and community members' everyday life. When you want to support community initiatives it is recommended to focus on interests of community members. It could raise motivation and self-esteem of participants as the results will be tangible in near future. This would train their skills and lead to independent activism simultaneously.

**Examples of activities can be:** Holding a workshop to identify interests; creating space for sport or relaxation (such as parks etc.); creating clubs for various hobbies (football, dance, chess etc.)

## ATTRACT NON ACTIVE PERSONS

**W**hen discussing social participation think about the whole community not only those who usually participate in all events. Therefore, community projects and/or activities should be oriented on attracting non-active community members. On the one hand, this will support strengthening and enabling community and it will reduce risk of neglecting needs of non-active community members, or exclusion and marginalization of them on the other<sup>6</sup>.

**Examples of activities can be:** Talking with non-active persons personally and suggesting participation; informing about existing opportunities; planning one-time event according to interests of passive community youngsters (book festival, sport activities, theater, etc.); trying to involve their friends as well, it could support their participation and feeling of "safety", etc.

## TEASER ACTIVITIES AND SHOWING OPPORTUNITIES GENERATES INTERESTS

**P**lan and implement "teaser" activities which open the horizon for participants to see the new possibilities they might not have considered before. The teaser activities could support engagement of community members. Identify areas of interests of non-active community members.

Create inclusive space and reach out to target groups. It could be sport competitions, fairs, cultural events. This could support their engagement and also would inform them about existing opportunities.

**Examples of activities can be:** festivals; sport or cultural events (in singing, dancing etc.); intellectual games (quizzes and competitions, photography, theater) etc. When organizing competences make sure that fun and fair play outweigh pure competition.

## USE POSITIVE ROLE MODELS...

**U**se positive role models, motivational activities and speeches for involving them in social activities. Identify role models, successful community members and involve them in activities. It could be anyone who has trust of locals (doctor, celebrity from the region etc.)

Engagement of local authorities in your campaign can be efficient. Involving those people usually motivates community members who look up to them and have more trust in the process.

**Examples of activities can be:** public meetings and discussion rounds; free consultations; concerts with participation.

<sup>6</sup> See International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) "Creating Opportunities for Rural Youth. 2019 Youth Report", 2019

## CONTACT PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE

Identify places and spaces where community members are usually gathering e.g.: school, tea houses, parks, free Wi-Fi public zones etc. You can ask locals about these places and use so called snowball method. When you reach out to some people they can support you to identify and involve other community members and places where they can be found.

**Examples of activities can be:** Planning presentation at school which will be conducted by peers; offering wide range of activities so that it could address several interests; preparing flyers and planning promo activities; going to the community members personally and talking with them; informing about exciting resources and asking them about their needs.

## PLAN FUN ACTIVITIES FOR AWARENESS RAISING

Plan fun and attractive activities that includes awareness raising. Try to think out of the box and involve awareness raising activities in different games, quizzes, etc. People will be more motivated for participating in this kind of events and spending their spare time for having fun. Using fun activities is key to attract non-active persons and, thus, it is a good starting point during mobilization campaigns.

**Examples of activities can be:** awareness raising by games; quiz questions which include entertainment parts and information about targeted topics.





The following questions will help you to efficiently plan an activity:

## Helpful questions

1. LIST THE PLACES AND SPACES IN YOUR COMMUNITY WHERE TARGET COMMUNITY MEMBERS ARE USUALLY GATHERING.
2. WHO CAN BE THE PERSONS WHO WILL HELP US COMMUNICATE WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND FIND NEW SPACES?
3. DO YOU HAVE A LIST OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS OR PARTICIPANTS? WHO ARE THEY?
4. DO YOU HAVE SPECIFICATIONS OF PARTICIPANTS?
5. WHAT KIND OF ACTIVITIES DO YOU PLAN TOGETHER WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY? PLEASE DESCRIBE THEM.
6. DO YOU HAVE A COMMUNICATION PLAN TO INFORM STAKEHOLDERS AND BENEFICIARIES? PLEASE DESCRIBE IT.
7. DO YOU HAVE A PRESENTATION AND MATERIALS (E.G. BROCHURES, LEAFLETS, SLIDES, MOVIES ETC.) READY? WHAT DO THESE PRESENTATION AND MATERIALS INCLUDE?
8. IS THIS MATERIAL APPROPRIATE FOR THE AUDIENCE YOU ARE PLANNING TO PRESENT IT TO?
9. WHAT KIND OF AWARENESS RAISING ACTIVITIES HAVE YOU PREPARED? ARE THE PARTICIPANTS READY TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE TYPES OF ACTIVITIES?
10. WHAT DO YOU NEED TO IMPLEMENT AWARENESS RAISING ACTIVITIES? E.G. SPACE, TABLE, POWER PLUG, BEAMER, FLIPCHARTS, MARKERS, ETC.
11. WHO ARE THE LEADERS OR TRAINERS, WHO WILL LEAD AWARENESS RAISING ACTIVITIES? WHAT KIND OF EXPERIENCE DO THEY HAVE?
12. WHICH TOOLS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SUCCESS WILL YOU USE FOR ASSESSING YOUR WORK WITH YOUTH?





## Space for meeting - available infrastructure

**W**hat does this mean? To generate an active community and to sustain it on the long term it is essential to create a space for gathering, discussing initiatives and planning activities. Setting up community initiatives require having access to a physical and/or virtual space.

**W**hy does the space and infrastructure matter? In order to promote youth participation and to enable youth to plan activities you need to identify existing and potential places where they could gather. Establishing a space for meeting and developing activities will make participation more attractive and sustainable. Any kind of event and activity needs this resource. Think about various possibilities, spaces could be physical and virtual as well. However, you should consider special needs and roles of participants.

# How to get there?

## IDENTIFY PHYSICAL OR VIRTUAL SPACE FOR MEETING

**T**he first step should be identifying existing meeting spaces or creating them for organizing and planning activities. The space can be physical or virtual. You can use both options at the same time according to target groups and their opportunities. List places where community members meet already. Identify as well those spaces that could be used for a common meeting space. You can think about available buildings or flats, or schoolrooms which are not used or are free for specific hours or days. You can ask local authorities to support you in this process. Involve community members in the process of identifying spaces. They know their environment better and could have some relevant ideas. You can also use spaces of local organizations. They might be interested in contribution and give you opportunity to use their rooms for several days or hours per week.

Physical spaces should be chosen considering accessibility for community members.

**Bear in mind that the space you identify or create needs to be accessible for all youth groups in terms of location, timing, gender, culture etc. The location should be safe and convenient in terms of access. Spaces should be comfortable for community members.**

Virtual space could be used in communities where most of the members have access to internet and have devices.

**Examples of activities can be:** planning a public meeting with local youth and listing possibilities: local organizations (Private, NGOs; Governmental organizations), check the safety and availability, make action plan considering legal issues, support implementation process and include local youth in the process. Using available building and "renovating" them (consider the safety of the building); classroom of a local school; spaces of NGO or local municipality buildings; assess whether the way to the space is safe and count on illumination for the evenings and nights; assess whether girls and young women will feel safe going there and attending meetings in this space; adjust the time schedule of activities if needed. Creating a social media group as a virtual space.

## GUARANTEE OPEN AND FREE ACCESS TO THE SPACE

**W**hen you find the space for the community you should guarantee accessibility: If it is located in organization's building make sure that there will be a responsible person who will grant access to the premises. The space should be free of charge and open for each young participant independent of their gender, special needs or sub-group.

**Examples of activities can be:** Identifying responsible person who will have keys and is easily approachable. Informing community members about that, leave a sticker on the door indicating contact info of the responsible person.

## OFFER BASIC EQUIPMENT

**S**pace should include basic equipment: chairs, table, light etc. It is not essential to have computers or other devices, however, space should be organized in the way that enables community members discuss, plan and create needed materials for implementing activities. You can involve community members in identifying needed equipment, they might bring used materials that they do not use anymore as long as it still in a good enough shape. This could also work positively to develop ownership.





The following questions will help you to efficiently plan an activity:

## Helpful questions

1. WHAT TYPE OF SPACE DO YOU NEED TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIVITIES PLANNED WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY?

2. IS THE SPACE PHYSICAL OR VIRTUAL?

3. WHERE IS THE SPACE LOCATED (ROOM IN A COMMUNITY CENTER, LIBRARY, OPEN STADIUM, "BIRJA" - A PLACE WHERE YOUNGSTERS GATHER, DISCO SPACE...)

4. DO YOU HAVE ACCESS TO A PHYSICAL AND/ OR VIRTUAL SPACE TO MEET, PLAN AND DESIGN ANY COMMON ACTIVITY?

5. IS THE PLACE ACCESSIBLE FOR EACH MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY?

6. WHO IS THE KEY-KEEPER? WHO IS RESPONSIBLE TO GRANT FREE ACCESS TO THE VIRTUAL SPACE?

7. DO COMMUNITY MEMBERS KNOW WHO HAS A KEY/GRANTS ACCESS?

8. HOW WILL BE COMMUNITY MEMBERS INFORMED ABOUT KEY KEEPER/PROCEDURES TO JOIN THE VIRTUAL SPACE?

9. IS REGISTRATION REQUIRED TO USE THE SPACE?

DO YOU HAVE A GUIDELINE ON HOW TO SET UP SCHEDULE OR REGISTER FORM (ELECTRONIC CALENDAR, TIMESHEET ETC...)





## Stakeholders and authorities

**W**hat does this mean? Promoting youth participation requires reaching out to and involving as many youth from the community as possible. Local stakeholders and authorities may be key entities to enable or hinder the participation of youth on the local level, as they often have a strong influence on the local public opinion and often have control over the relevant resources to support youth initiatives or access to opportunities. Therefore, it is important to identify the key stakeholders and involve them in the process.

**W**hy does the stakeholders and authorities matter? Engagement of stakeholders, representatives of local governmental authorities can contribute to a smooth and participatory implementation of youth projects. They may assist in providing resources to facilitate processes, and thus, they can support in achieving results. Engagement of stakeholders and authorities have a significant role in developing cooperation and achieving sustainable results. Do not forget to reach out to local governmental institutions. Many initiatives might need their support or at least their agreement. Therefore, initiatives should partner with local authorities and stakeholders when it comes to setting up community activities.

# How to get there?

## AWARENESS RAISING AND ACCEPTANCE

**I**dentify and involve all stakeholders according to your activity or initiative. Plan activities in order to raise awareness of stakeholders about planned initiatives. Make sure to approach local stakeholders in the efficient way to raise their interests. The first step could be information meetings and gradually you can involve them in implementation process. Stakeholders can support in informing community members about existing opportunities and can be useful for their engagement.

**Examples of activities can be:** Visiting or inviting stakeholders and building positive relationship; identifying their interests and using it in further activities.

- Use the support (logistic and material) of stakeholders and authorities.
- Highlight possible opportunities for stakeholders, such as gaining visibility or building trust among the community.

## COLLECTION OF INFORMATION

**G**ather information about existing infrastructure and logistics. Some stakeholders might have opportunity to supply with some materials. It could be for a single event but it could also have permanent usage. Identify what can be used for achieving objectives and make a plan for using existing resources in order to meet your goals. This may reduce costs and raise feeling of ownership.

**Examples of activities can be:** planning a meeting with community member and brainstorming all the opportunities which could be used.

## INFORMING AND INVOLVING LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS

**P**lan some activities to provide local governmental structures with information about planned activities. Support their engagement and identify areas where they can contribute. Engage them in discussions.

**Examples of activities can be:** arranging a meeting to inform about planned activities and the positive impact it could have. Preparing list of needs (resources, participation, cooperation etc.) which could be supported by them.

**BE COOPERATIVE,  
NOT DEMANDING!**



## ENSURE ENGAGEMENT OF ALL COMMUNITY SUB-GROUPS

Identify sub-groups for your community member (considering age, gender etc.) and plan activities which could be supportive for informing and engagement. Think about vulnerable groups and concentrate on the activities which could be interesting for them.

Examples of activities can be: Identification of all sub-groups and making a list of their possible interests and activities they can join; planning actions for outreaching; involving their friends - this could raise chance of their participation.

## INVOLVING POSITIVE ROLE MODELS

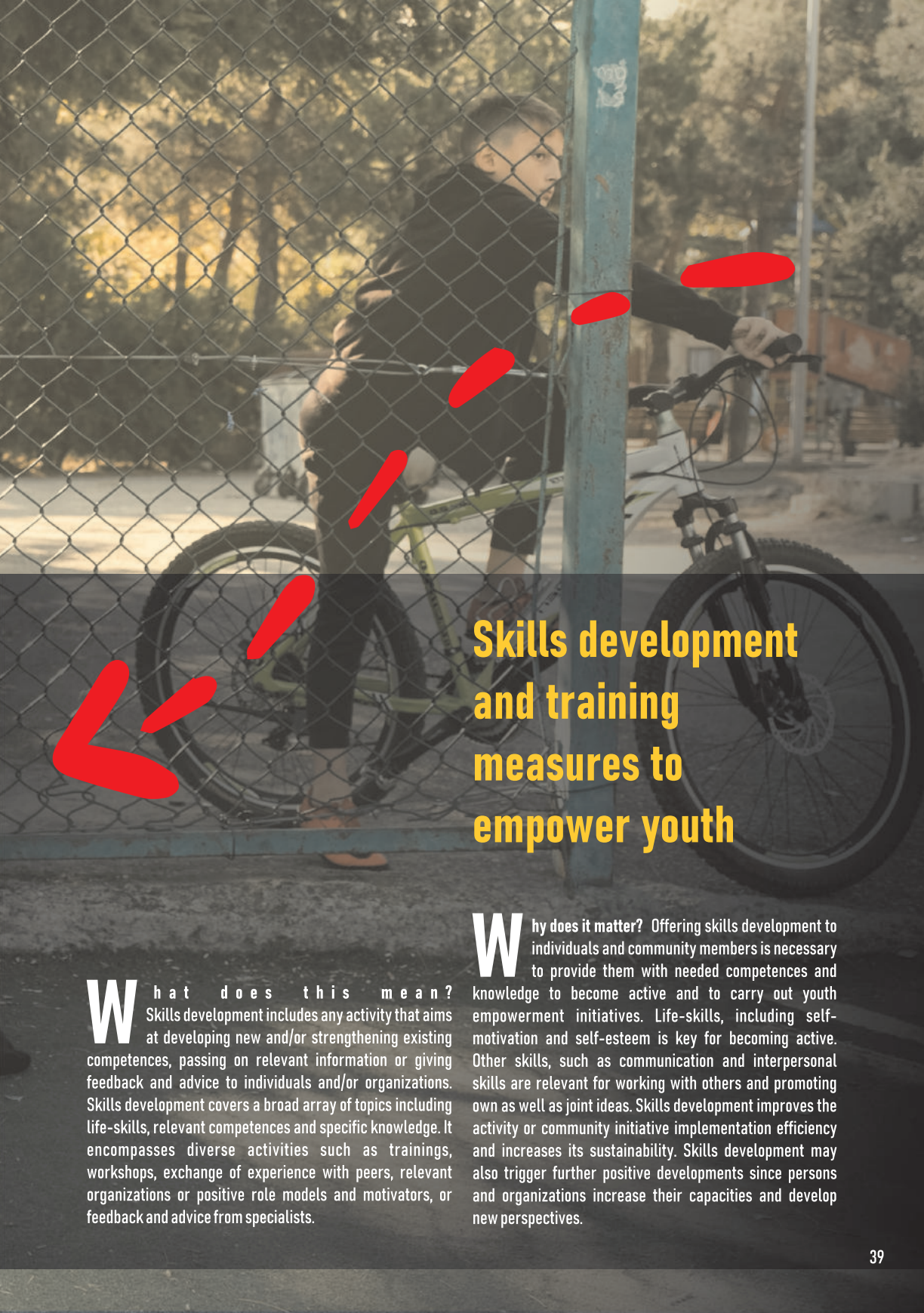
Identify who are positive role models for local youth. Ensure engagement of successful citizens e.g.: doctor, teacher, any person who is respectful for the local youth. It could support the engagement of wide range of young people of the community.

## Helpful questions

The following questions will help you to efficiently plan an activity:

1. WHO ARE LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS?  
LIST THEM
2. WHO ARE AUTHORITIES OR INFLUENTIAL PERSONS FOR THE COMMUNITY MEMBERS?
3. ARE THEY READY TO CONTRIBUTE?
4. HOW CAN THEY CONTRIBUTE?
5. HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT THEY ARE RESPECTABLE?
6. WHAT CAN YOU OFFER?  
WHAT OPPORTUNITIES ARE THERE FOR STAKEHOLDER?
7. WHICH TOOLS WILL YOU USE TO DEAL WITH OBJECTION BY AUTHORITIES?





## Skills development and training measures to empower youth

**W**hat does this mean? Skills development includes any activity that aims at developing new and/or strengthening existing competences, passing on relevant information or giving feedback and advice to individuals and/or organizations. Skills development covers a broad array of topics including life-skills, relevant competences and specific knowledge. It encompasses diverse activities such as trainings, workshops, exchange of experience with peers, relevant organizations or positive role models and motivators, or feedback and advice from specialists.

**W**hy does it matter? Offering skills development to individuals and community members is necessary to provide them with needed competences and knowledge to become active and to carry out youth empowerment initiatives. Life-skills, including self-motivation and self-esteem is key for becoming active. Other skills, such as communication and interpersonal skills are relevant for working with others and promoting own as well as joint ideas. Skills development improves the activity or community initiative implementation efficiency and increases its sustainability. Skills development may also trigger further positive developments since persons and organizations increase their capacities and develop new perspectives.

# How to get there?

## OFFER TRAININGS

**T**raining is the most common way to increase the competences of participants. Giving input and feedback to relevant topics and activities is just another way of helping persons and organizations to improve, learn or explore new approaches and increase their capacities. Offer trainings to strengthen relevant life-skills, such as communication skills, self-motivation and self-esteem or taking up responsibility. These types of life-skills or transferable skills enable persons to become active and to participate in social affairs.

**Examples of activities can be:** organizing trainings for the youth; searching for organizations offering relevant trainings for skills development; searching and offering online-training opportunities for the participants.

## EXCHANGES AND MEETINGS WITH PEERS

**L**earning from others who have a similar background and face similar challenges and opportunities create an excellent space for skills development. Peers (persons and organizations) often can offer relevant experience by giving practical advice and sharing their approaches to common challenges. Exchanges can also bring together persons and experiences from different parts of the country or from the region. This opens the own perspective and increases motivation.

**Examples of activities can be:** organize meetings with peers from other communities or regions; create a thematic social media group for the participants to share their experiences.

## PROFESSIONALS AS A SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE

**T**ry to establish contacts with relevant professionals and ask for their support. They can give insights into professional fields and help out with practical advice.

**Examples of activities can be:** organize meetings with professionals to share their experience and give practical advice to the youth.





The following questions will help you to efficiently plan an activity:

## Helpful questions

1. WHO ARE THE MOST RELEVANT INDIVIDUALS AND/ OR ORGANIZATIONS FOR DELIVERING TRAININGS IN THE IDENTIFIED FIELD?  
LIST THEM
2. WHICH TOOLS WILL YOU USE TO IDENTIFY YOUNGSTERS OR ORGANIZATIONS WHO NEED TRAINING/DEVELOPMENT?
3. WHAT ARE THE FIELDS THE YOUNG PARTICIPANTS NEED TRAININGS IN?
4. WHICH TRAININGS DO YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS NEED?
5. WHICH RESOURCES ARE NEEDED FOR DELIVERING THE TRAININGS?
6. WHO CAN SUPPORT THIS TRAINING WITH RESOURCES?
7. WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE TRAINING?
8. WHICH TOOLS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION WILL YOU USE TO ASSESS TRAINING AND RESULTS?





## Organizational support

**W**hy does it matter? Even the most grassroots initiatives will need a minimal level of internal organization to become active as well as to maintain regular activities and to reach their objectives. Organizational support is the key for providing grassroots initiatives with minimal (organizational) structures needed to carry out the (regular) activities and to achieve the aim. Initiatives can work as informal networks, semi-formal clubs and associations or formal NGO to name just a few options. Organizational support helps initiatives to carry out the activities they are interested in – it is about helping them to reach their aims.

It has to be highlighted that organizational support does not mean pushing grassroots initiatives to “formalize” but to find an internal setting that allows them to exist and be active on the long run. While some organizations might want to create a legal entity (e.g. an NGO) to give their joint activity a stronger structure, other initiatives might prefer acting in a loose manner. Which level of organizational development an initiative pursues largely depends on the aim as well as on the surrounding political and legal framework.

Organizational support is a process of finding a common structure for acting. Participants have to define roles and responsibilities in this process. This empowers participants, strengthens their skills (e.g. they have to plan and discuss) and creates a joint responsibility in regards to common initiative.

**W**hat does this mean? Organizational support includes guidance and advice that help local initiatives to set up sustainable and regular activities. Organizational support ranges from defining the aim of the initiative and constructing a common “identity” up to supporting initiatives in setting up for

# How to get there?

In order to achieve indicated results, goals need to be carefully identified

## HELP THE YOUNG PERSONS TO DEFINE ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

**T**he first step for giving initiatives more sustainability is to make sure the key activities are delivered. Making household arrangements and distributing roles and tasks can significantly help to create an organized atmosphere.

**Examples of activities can be:** informing participants about next meetings; defining and organizing the meeting venue or place; defining roles and responsibilities for informing participants or collecting the key of the meeting place help the initiative to become active. Dividing roles and responsibilities by vote or on a voluntary basis – the roles can be permanent and long term or change frequently. **It is important that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.**

## BUILD TRUST

**Y**outh workers who work with young participants need to gain their trust in the first place. Only if young people see that the youth workers are motivated themselves they will be open for further advice.

**Examples of activities can be:** organizing specific exercises to build trust; following an action plan for different activities elaborated together with young participants.




1. ARE THERE COMMITTED PERSONS (MOTIVATED PEER EDUCATORS, FUTURE TRAINERS, FUTURE MANAGERS, LEADERS, ETC.) IN THE YOUTH GROUP? WHO ARE THEY? WHY DO YOU THINK THAT THEY HAVE GOOD BASIC TRAITS...
2. DOES THE YOUTH GROUP HAVE A CLEAR AIM OR MISSION?
3. WHAT IS THE MISSION OF YOUTH GROUP?
4. IS THE MISSION STATEMENT PUBLICLY AVAILABLE (FOR EXAMPLE ON FACEBOOK PAGE OR IN BROCHURES)?
5. DOES THE YOUTH GROUP HAVE A LONG AND A SHORT TERM STRATEGIES?
6. DOES THE YOUTH GROUP HAVE AN ACTION PLAN?
7. DOES THE YOUTH GROUP HAVE A STATUTE AND A CLEARLY STRUCTURED TEAM?
8. DOES THE YOUTH GROUP HAVE LIST OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS AND PARTICIPANTS?
9. ARE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES CLEARLY DIVIDED AMONG THE MEMBERS?

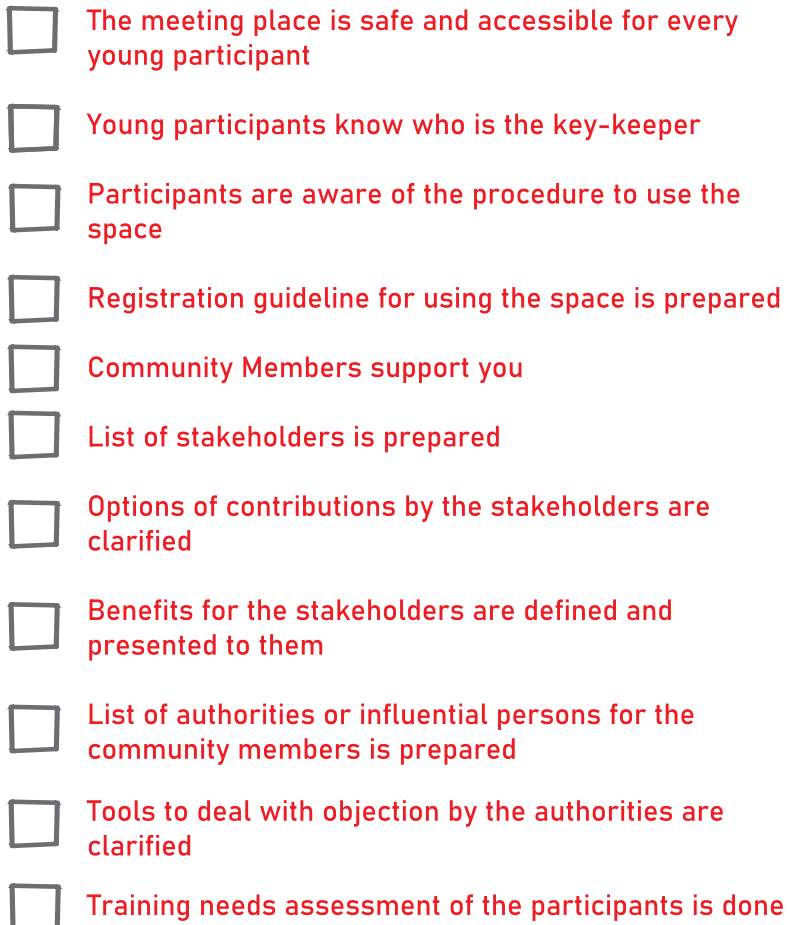


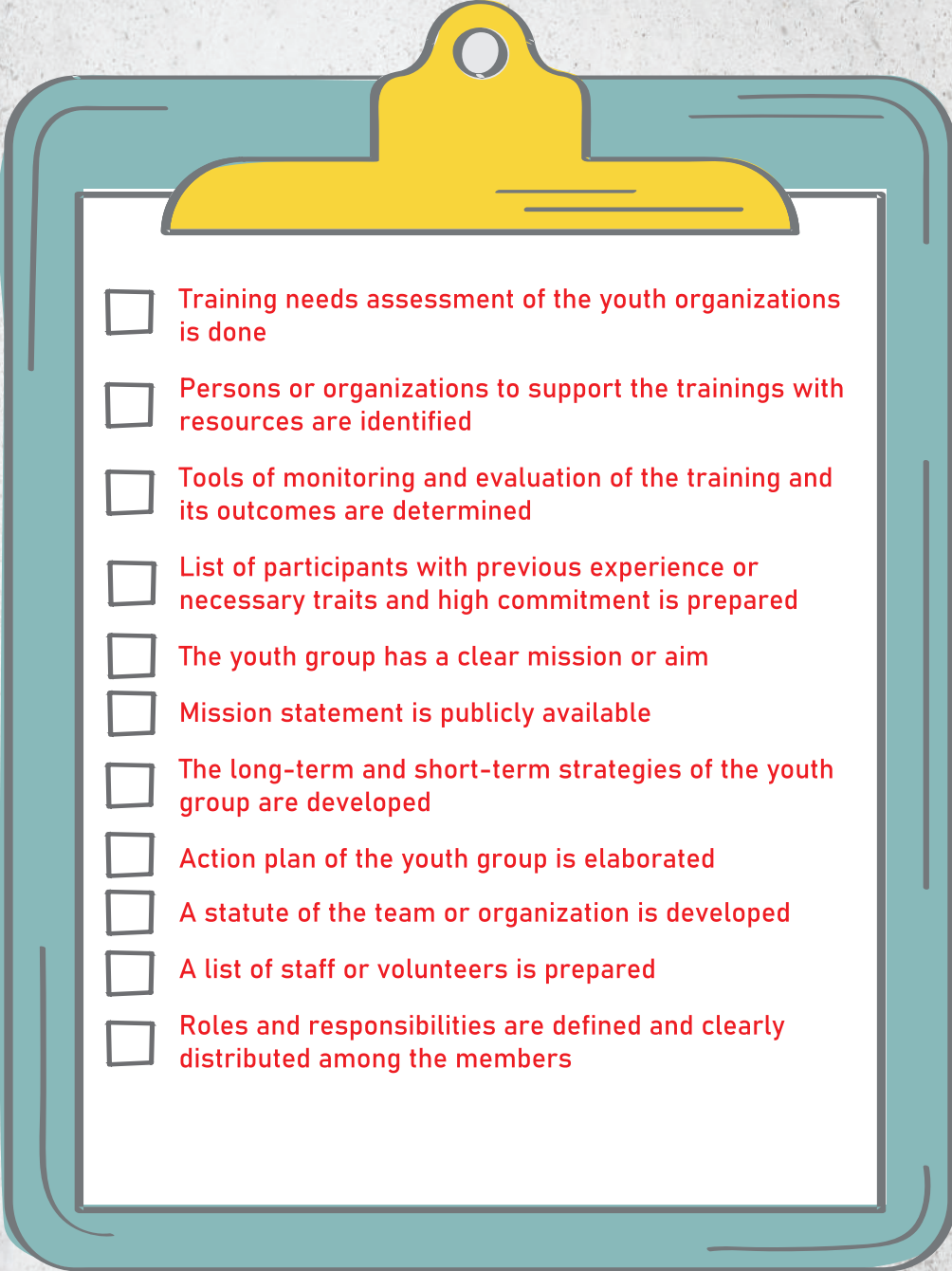
# Checklist



- 
- Gathering places of the target community members are determined
  - List of participants or community members is prepared
  - Do you have specifications of participants?
  - Plan of activities for the community is elaborated
  - Communication plan is developed
  - Communication plan with parents is developed
  - Community members are ready to take part in awareness raising activities
  - Materials for the awareness raising activity are prepared
  - Trainers to lead the awareness raising activities confirmed their engagement
  - Tools for monitoring and evaluation of the work with youth are clarified.
  - Evaluation plan is prepared
  - A meeting place is available



- 
- The meeting place is safe and accessible for every young participant
  - Young participants know who is the key-keeper
  - Participants are aware of the procedure to use the space
  - Registration guideline for using the space is prepared
  - Community Members support you
  - List of stakeholders is prepared
  - Options of contributions by the stakeholders are clarified
  - Benefits for the stakeholders are defined and presented to them
  - List of authorities or influential persons for the community members is prepared
  - Tools to deal with objection by the authorities are clarified
  - Training needs assessment of the participants is done

- 
- Training needs assessment of the youth organizations is done
  - Persons or organizations to support the trainings with resources are identified
  - Tools of monitoring and evaluation of the training and its outcomes are determined
  - List of participants with previous experience or necessary traits and high commitment is prepared
  - The youth group has a clear mission or aim
  - Mission statement is publicly available
  - The long-term and short-term strategies of the youth group are developed
  - Action plan of the youth group is elaborated
  - A statute of the team or organization is developed
  - A list of staff or volunteers is prepared
  - Roles and responsibilities are defined and clearly distributed among the members



# Success Story

**N**anuka is 24 years old, holds a Master Degree in Education Administration and is currently working for NNLE "Child, Family, Community" organization. The goal of the organization is to promote adaptation and socialization of people with disabilities in society. Nanuka is also assisting the Civic Development Youth Center Project in Pankisi where she implements an Entrepreneurial Empowerment Program with the financial support of USAID and leads activities in the **Tetrtskaro Youth Center**.

Nanuka started to become active for the community 7 years ago when she was in the 12th grade. By then she learned about an affordable English course at the Koda Community Education Center and joined it.

Nanuka and her classmates, living in a village neighboring Koda, decided to visit the center and Nanuka learned about a youth program which planned various activities for local youth. She approached the youth program coordinator and expressed her desire to participate in the activities.

Nanuka could only afford attending English classes for three months but she never missed a single youth activity. The activities offered at the Center gave her the opportunity to develop new skills and abilities. Joining the youth group helped her to find "herself", as she puts it.

By then, Nanuka was a very shy young woman, but the more she engaged in the activities, the more confident she became. "I realized that I could become a good citizen, friend and professional and it all just depended on my determination", Nanuka recalls.

It was a bit difficult to travel from her village to Koda as there was no public transport and her friends always joked about her for attending a center so far away. But she made it her routine to go to the center every Saturday. She still thinks that this was one of the best decisions she has ever made.

Koda Community Education Center was the start of Nanuka's professional and personal development. It was at the Koda Center where she met an American volunteer and applied her English she had learned for the very first time. This moment was crucial - she overcame her fear and communicated in English.

Besides attending various activities at the youth club, she also participated in cognitive and entertainment activities that were offered. Among other activities, Nanuka worked intensively on environmental issues while attending a training at the Center.

**N**anuka took the next step when she met a project manager of the Women's Association of IGP Consortium at an event of the Koda Center. They stayed in contact and soon afterwards Nanuka began volunteering at the Consortium. For Nanuka this meant to leave the boundaries of the Koda Center and to obtain new experiences.

As a volunteer, she organized intellectual games and women meetings in the village of Nikozi nearby Gori and she conducted activities with the children of Gldani Orphanage in Tbilisi. At this time, she was still at school.

Even when she started her University studies, she never stopped supporting civic organizations. She joined the Non-Governmental Organization "Helping Hand" - first as a volunteer, then as an intern and finally she became the coordinator of volunteers who was responsible for selecting volunteers for projects. By then, she became a trainer herself. Among other projects, she was involved in a program called "Volunteer of Georgia" that involved young people from all regions of Georgia. "Each day I believed more, that this is a job that gives me pleasure and allows me to grow and develop", says Nanuka. "Nowadays, a lot of organizations value my experience in this field", she explains.

Joining the European Voluntary Service and working with African and Syrian refugees as well as with children and women in Italy has been a key experience that marked Nanuka's further development. When she returned to Georgia after one year in Italy, she did so with new horizons, experiences and goals.

Already during her studies, Nanuka targeted something bigger - something that exceeded her village and the local needs. Since 2012, she wanted to establish an own non-governmental organization. But back then, she was not prepared for carrying on the project and lacked both the knowledge and experience needed to realize this idea.

**F**inally, in 2016 Nanuka's dream came true. Together with three other young women, Nanuka established the Tetrtskaro Youth Center with the aim to promote youth development and strengthen civil society. Since then, the organization has grown and counts on an office, runs several projects, and has own resources and a team - but it has not been easy to achieve this.

An initial challenge was to find a space for Center. Nanuka and her partners approached the municipality on this matter. After a long and tense negotiation process the Center was allocated a building from the municipality - initially for a two-years period. However, the building was in bad conditions and major renovation works were needed. With the help and enthusiasm of young people from the village, renovation works started and within a short time, the main part of the run-down building turned into a space for gathering and conducting activities for the community. Nowadays, only a few rooms still require further renovation work and the center can run its activities.

At the same time, the Center successfully participated in grants competitions. Already in the first year of its establishment, the Center received grants from the Caucasus Institute, the Women's Fund and the Center for Strategic Research and Development - three major civil society organizations operating in Georgia. Moreover, the Center participated in various volunteer activities.

Today, Nanuka and her team run different clubs, such as an Ecological Club, a Women's Club, a Hiking Club or a Reading Club. They also help other grassroots organizations to mobilize young people and offer their space for events.

„We have big plans and a lot of work to do - but I am sure we manage it all. Purpose, hard work and unity are the most important elements for success and our team definitely has all three of them”, says Nanuka.





