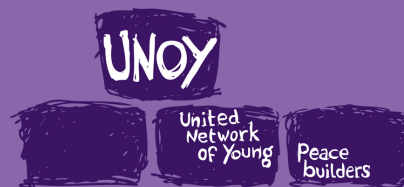


# Meaningful Youth Engagement checklist



# what is meaningful youth engagement?



As we notice a general tendency to over-request youth participation without adequate benefits, the question ‘what is meaningful youth engagement?’ has taken on a new colour. It is becoming the norm to call for youth to participate, but the process for engaging them has lost some of its meaning along the way.

Inclusivity, preparation, protection, and follow-up are crucial ingredients for meaningful youth participation, and require appropriate time and resources that should not be borne by the youth themselves. Holding non-youth stakeholders—including Member States, institutions, and multilateral organisations—accountable to the commitments they made towards the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions 2250, 2419, and 2535 is crucial in the process of achieving meaningful and real participation for youth. We are also looking to our allies in youth, peace and security (YPS)—including international NGOs, donors, and other non-youth actors—to show support for the meaningful engagement of youth in all its diversity.

## goal

This practical checklist provides questions to keep in mind when engaging with youth. It is by no means exhaustive, but a great starting point to improve partnerships with young people and the quality of contributions, while reflecting on existing power dynamics. We hope to support our non-youth partners and YPS allies in fostering meaningful engagement with young people in speaking engagements, decision-making, and overall programming. **The underlying objective is for young people to be treated as equal partners by their non-youth counterparts** in the peacebuilding and human rights fields, through active and meaningful inclusion throughout the entire duration of an engagement.

## objectives

1. **Selection of youth speakers is more transparent and inclusive**, and speaking opportunities are accessible to all young peacebuilders.
2. **Create an enabling environment for young participants** so that everyone can make the most of the opportunities available.
3. **Remove technical and financial barriers** that stand in the way of youth participation.
4. **Shift responsibility for protection** from the participating young people to event/programme organisers and institutional actors.
5. **Opportunities** that engage young people **are sustainable and impactful** for them and their communities.



stage



questions to ask yourselves

**lead-up**

**preparation**



- Are young people able to provide meaningful input to the content of the activity?
- Are the issues being addressed in this event relevant to the concerns, needs, and aspirations of young people?
- Are young people informed in advance that their participation is confirmed, so that they have appropriate time to prepare?
- Has the opportunity been disseminated in a timely and transparent manner?
- Are young people treated as equals in this engagement?

**implementation**



- Have we provided sufficient, accessible, and non-discriminatory information to ensure meaningful participation of youth? (e.g. concept note using youth-friendly language)
- Have we provided adequate time, resources, and support to ensure young people are prepared and have the confidence to make meaningful contributions?

**engagement**



- Are young people able to bring a youth lens to the event?
- Are young people able to speak to their experiences freely without censorship?
- Is the engagement accessible for other young people to watch, stream, attend, and participate?
- Does the engagement foster intergenerational dialogue, trust building between youth and non-youth actors, respect, and equal partnerships?

**follow-up**



- Do we facilitate sustainable networking opportunities for young people following a (high-level) engagement?
- Have we established a process for addressing and incorporating feedback from young people on how their engagement can be improved?



## stage



## questions to ask yourselves

### a c c e s s

#### protection



- Has the young person been informed about potential negative outcomes following their engagement in an event or initiative? Has their decision to participate been made with a high degree of awareness?
- Is there a personalised protection protocol (preventive and reactive) in place when young speakers participate in high-level public engagements?
- How can we ensure young people are protected from reprisal?
- Is there a designated contact person (who speaks the language of the young person) in case of reprisal who can assist the young person?

#### inclusion



- How are we ensuring that representation of youth with different gender identities, socio-economic backgrounds, disabilities, ethnicities, religious affiliations, LGBTQI+ community, nationalities or lack thereof, or other minority groups (i.e. refugees, internally displaced people) is present?
- Will translators and/or interpreters be available to ensure that all youth voices can be heard?
- How are we going to ensure representation from all youth groups including under 25?

#### funding



- How are we going to cover accessibility (interpretation and internet access) costs incurred by young people to ensure their participation in online opportunities?
- Is there a budget line reserved for the participation of young people travelling to the event or to a site to access high speed internet?