

# **Guide to Basic Administrative Skills**

For Youth Shadow Local Councils



# Table of Contents

04	Introduction
06	Management of Meetings and Sessions
12	Participatory Needs Assessment
18	Activity Planning and Management
25	Decision Making and Problem Solving
36	Leadership in Youth Shadow Local Councils
40	Building Effective Teams
50	Report Preparation and Writing

## Introduction

Running informal bodies, such as the Youth Shadow Local Councils, requires from the involved individuals mastery of a few basic skills in teamwork and collective action. This guide highlights a number of those basic skills that are considered necessary for the organization of activities of these councils, their relationships to each other and to the surrounding environment.

Practical skills have the advantage of enhancing young people's ability to deliver results from their voluntary action within the highest standards of efficiency, especially in terms of quality, timing, team spirit and concreted efforts, to turn an idea into a realizable project. For these reasons, the guide prioritizes seven basic skills:

- The first skill is *the management of Youth Council's meetings and session* as these provide for the main space for collective action, the coordination of efforts, and the distribution of tasks, and resource management among the members of the Youth Shadow Local Council.
- *Participatory needs assessment* is also one of the most important practical skills because it is used as an essential means to identify the needs and interests of the different groups and incorporate their views in Youth Shadow Local Council's decisions and in the design of its activities.
- The third and fourth skills of *planning and decision-making* are closely linked because any successful action relies primarily on the completion of all planning elements. Plans are often based on specific life-simulating models prior to their execution on the ground aided by taking appropriate decisions. Therefore, this guide pays special attention to unlocking the most important criteria and steps of decision-making.
- Furthermore, the guide elaborates on other skills necessary for the proper functioning of Youth Shadow Local Councils, most importantly *leadership skills*, so it explains the elements, conditions and tasks necessary for the successful leadership to undertake, all within the framework of achieving balance between leadership responsibilities

and spirit of collective action. *Building of successful teams* is also another important focus area in this guide which presents the basic requirements for successful teams including: conditions for creation and stages of team development, as well as the fair distribution tasks and responsibilities among team members, so as to ensure consistency and integration action among all members of the team.

- Finally, and to ensure progress, accountability and integrity, the guide also focus on the *technical report writing skills* because report preparation is an important methods for self-monitoring, evaluation and documentation of work. The guide addresses this issue in some detail and explains the most important rules and steps in reporting. Moreover, some examples of reports, such as activity report, are also provided so as to facilitate the process of reporting.

# Management of Meetings and Sessions

Youth Shadow Local Councils hold regular meetings on two levels: at the Elected Council level and at the General Assembly and/or various committees.

The meeting can serve as an effective way for exchange of information, decision-making, planning, and monitoring, evaluation and problem solving among other functions.

## 1. What is a meeting?

A meeting is a coming together of two or more persons for the purpose of achieving a common goal through verbal interaction such as the exchange of information or reaching an agreement.

It is possible to hold meetings face to face or through modern telecommunication methods such as over the phone or through video conference.

## 2. The Importance of Meetings

**Meetings are among the most important means of communication used in Youth Shadow Local Council, which aim to achieve the following objectives:**

- Transfer and exchange information between the Youth Council members and other parties.
- Answer the various questions members or other parties may have on the Youth Council and its work.
- Resolve an issue facing the Youth Council, the youth or the community.
- Contribute to the collective decision-making with regard to issues pertaining to the Youth Council or community.
- Promote a certain idea or project serving the community, the youth group, etc.
- Plan, monitor and evaluate the implementation of activities and the achievement of objectives.

### 3. Stages of Holding a Meeting:

To achieve its purposes, it is important for the meeting to be prepared well in advance and managed properly in addition to the follow it with the implementation its results.

#### 3.1 Good Planning and Preparation

The key to the success of any meeting is mostly found in the proper planning and preparation, **therefore the following questions must be answered:**

##### **You have to answer these questions before the meeting**

- Why shall I ask for a meeting to be held?
- What is it that I want to achieve from this meeting?
- What is the information that is going to be exchanged?
- What are the decisions that shall be taken in this meeting?
- Who will attend this meeting that I will be in need for their support?

#### **1. Meeting Agenda:**

One of the most important steps to holding a successful meeting is the preparation and distribution of the meeting agenda three days prior to the proposed date in order to:

- clarify the reasons for holding this meeting;
- share its agenda with participants and help them think about, and plan their contributions and ensure their active participation in the meeting; and
- provide them with the chance to propose amendments to the agenda.

To achieve these purposes, the meeting agenda must contain the following information:

### Contents of the Meeting Agenda

- Title: e.g. evaluation meeting, planning meeting, etc.
- Purpose: e.g. evaluation of voluntary activities carried out by members of the Youth Local Council.
- Expected date
- Time
- Place
- Names of participants and invitees: e.g. Youth Council members, representative of the municipality, etc.
- Major topics for discussion: e.g.
  - Acceptance of new members to Youth Council
  - Evaluation of “our cleaner, more beautiful village” campaign”

**Within this framework, we must take into consideration a number of standards:**

- 1. Define the objective:** the objective must be clear and specific (e.g. arrive at an agreement on, for example, how Youth Council members should allocate their time and distribute the tasks amongst them, etc.?).
- 2. Specify individual participants:** who would be invited to participate in the meeting (for example Youth Council members, young volunteers, volunteers’ supervisors, donors, etc.)
- 3. Means for holding the meeting:** How would the Council members organize the meeting? What are the means to be used in order to assist in the success of the meeting and arrival at the specified objectives (such as video conferencing, group discussion, hosting guest speakers, etc.)
- 4. Select appropriate time and place:** The selected place must be familiar and easily accessible to the Council Members where they feel comfortable. The selected place must be of area sufficient to hold the expected number of participants, and must be equipped with the essential needs (such as microphones, LDCs, etc.). It is also important to select a time for the meeting that is appropriate to all participants.

- 5. Confirmation of attendance:** In case the planned meeting is a regular meeting or a new one, the organizers must contact every participant in person about 3-7 days before the meeting date. This communication to confirm attendance can be done by a phone call or by sending an email to the invitees' personal accounts or through sending an SMS to every CM invited to the meeting.
- 6. Ensure availability of all needs:** It is important to determine all needs in advance (such as stationary, hospitality, audiovisuals, etc. for example, organizer should ask themselves if lunch is necessary to provide in case the meeting tool a long time than expected. Who should bring the food? What is the appropriate time to do so?

## **2. Managing Meetings**

Meeting management is a necessary process for successful meetings in order to allow for the discussion of the items listed on the meeting agenda. To achieve the meeting's goals and arrive at the expected outcomes, it is necessary to distribute the roles and responsibility in advance.

## Assigning Key Meeting Roles

**Facilitator:** Each meeting must have a facilitator whose role is to assist the other organizers in the preparation for the meeting and to ensure discussion of the prepared meeting agenda in coordination with the other Youth Council Members (usually the Council's Head or the Treasurer).

**Organizers:** Prior to holding the meeting, many tasks and preparations are usually made to help increase the effectiveness of the meeting. It is therefore necessary to choose a member or a group of members who will be tasked with ensuring all preparation and requirements of the meeting are taken care of (in case the meeting is a general one).

**Minute-taker:** Usually a Council member or the Secretary is chosen as the minute-taker in regular or periodic meetings who is responsible for documenting in writing the proceedings and decisions taken during the meeting because it is necessary to follow-up with the implementation of these decisions and their outcomes. This means that minute taking is a good method for documenting the process and provides a good reference for the outcome of the meeting, when needed.

**Presenters:** One or more Council members may submit more than one report or topic, as determined in the major themes and topics suggested for discussion. For example, if a committee is assigned to carry out a need assessment of youth in a specific area, the committee members will present the findings and results arrived at in this assessment before the participants in the meeting.

**Time-Keeper:** This individual is required to control the time of the meeting and remind participants when discussion should end on a certain topic or theme, in accordance with the prepared agenda.

**3. Follow-up with meeting outcomes implementation:** It is important that a person is assigned to follow the outcomes of the meeting. Most effective meetings produce decisions and outcomes that should be followed up through the distribution of tasks and responsibilities between

the participants in the meeting in order to allow for the implementation and realization in real life. Therefore, meetings are considered useless if their outcomes are not followed up properly to ensure implementation and success.

**Sample Meeting Minutes**

Day: ..... Date: .....  
Venue: ..... Time: .....

**Participants:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- Etc.

**Absentees:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- Etc.

**Meeting Agenda:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- Etc.

**Themes:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- Etc.

**Outcomes:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- Etc.

**Recommendations:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- Etc.

# Participatory Needs Assessment

In their work, Youth Shadow Local councils maintain a double focus: on the youth sector and on the community both of which are considered the basis for the processes conducted by the councils including: needs analysis and identification, priority setting, and selection of intervention mechanism that can contribute effectively to responding to the aspirations of both parties.

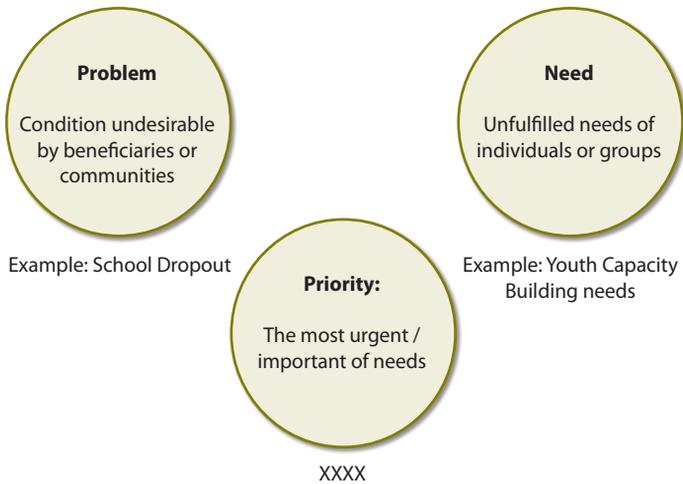
To this end, the Youth Councils develop their action plans in a participatory manner which allows stakeholders the opportunity to study their needs and translate them into various intervention that leads to the achievement of the set objectives (including but not limited to projects, initiatives, empowerment programs, and lobbying and advocacy campaigns)

Bygone is the era when official or unofficial parties alone used to identify the needs of a sector, or the entire community or society, without allowing the later any active engagement in the process.

## 1. What is needs assessment?

Needs assessment is a process of gathering information on a community's main problems and priority needs that must be addressed in the future and with participation of entities relevant to these issues.

The process of need Assessment is based on:



## 2. Importance of participatory needs assessment

Participatory needs assessment can contribute to the achievement of the following:

- Determine and identify the real problems.
- Identify needs from the viewpoint of the participating group.
- Identify and develop from the perspective of the participating group.
- Develop realistic plans since they are developed with the participation of concerned individuals
- Carry out realistic, successful activities and initiatives that reflect the needs of beneficiaries.
- Ensure that the participating individuals do not oppose the plans or activities under implementation.

## 3. Methods and Tools of Needs Assessment

Youth Shadow Local Council members can use the following instruments for the collection of information on needs:

1. Rely on direct observation.

2. Refer to previous studies and published information
3. Conduct a field survey (using a questionnaire or an opinion poll)
4. Hold focus groups (6-12 people/group)
5. Hold interviews
6. Organize a public or a town hall meeting
7. Organize a workshop
8. Conduct a case study.

On this basis, the template below explains the process for holding a need assessment workshop.

### **Phase 1: Identification of Problems and Priorities**

- Hold a meeting for the members of Youth Council members, and emphasize the meeting's agenda and its importance in the development of the Council's future plan of action.
- Ask each participant to write 5 problems or community needs (each one separately on A4 page) which s/he thinks are representing real problems requiring intervention from the Youth Shadow Local Council
- Emphasize brainstorming/the freedom of thought (because it is important to write down the ideas first without considering if they could be implemented or not).
- Collect and mix the papers together.

### **Phase 2:classification of needs and problems**

- Divide participants into small groups and supply each group with an equal number of papers.
- Ask each group to re-classify the problems and needs after their discussion.
- Each group selects the most important three problems of needs.
- Each group presents their selection of problems and needs. If there is 4 groups, each with 3 needs, the result will be (12) problems/needs.
- The participants present and discuss all problems and make sure that they don't include repetitive ideas.
- The participants vote of these ideas and select four problems/needs to be addressed in the future.
- In case the problems/needs were general and/or unclear to us and we are not sure of their importance to the target group, we start with devising a plan for needs assessment with the participation of the target group we desire to work with.

## **4. Criteria for selecting needs assessment tools**

The process of selecting need assessment tools by members of Youth Shadow Local Councils is dependent on a variety of criteria that inevitably limit our ability to choose, based on the following:

- The nature of the subject to be studied or to determine its needs.
- Type of information required.
- Time available to council members.
- Cost of applying the method or tools
- Resources available at the Youth Shadow Local Councils (material and human)
- Ability to apply or implement the tools
- Expertise of those who will work on the needs assessment and identify the needs.

### **Select the tool after study and consideration.....**

It is necessary to emphasize that, if needed; more than one method or tool can be used to identify the needs at the same time. For example, in case the members of youth council decided to study the needs of their volunteers, the council can use previous studies on the issue and hold focus groups with volunteers. It is also possible to conduct individual interviews with persons or officials in the voluntary work sector in order to collect the needed information and incorporate all needs in one needs assessment report.

### **I have an idea!!! Let's vote on the needs**

In case many needs emerged during the needs assessment meetings, you can ask the participants to vote on these needs through ranking these needs and voting for the top three. In this manner, the group can identify the priority or urgent needs among many competing needs

## **5. Sample Agenda for a Needs Assessment Workshop**

Place:

Time:

Participants:

Target Group:

Themes for discussion:

1. Brainstorming on the most important need in the target area and for the target group.
2. Linking outcomes of brainstorming to the Council's objectives and priorities.
3. Discussing the main needs and the Council's ability to respond to the problem and implement the identified solutions.
4. Summarizing the most important needs
5. Reaching agreement or consensus on the main need that can be addressed.

**Logistical requirement for the Needs Assessment Workshop:**

1. A Flip Chart
2. Pens & markers
3. A meeting hall and a comfortable seating plan.

**Invitees to the needs assessment workshop:**

1. A number of members of the target group(s).
2. Individuals knowledgeable in the area and its needs.
3. Representatives from civil society institutions.
4. Representatives from the municipality/local council.

**Management /facilitation:**

The facilitator must have the following skills:

1. The ability to manage discussion and dialogue.
2. The ability to raise questions that invoke group thinking and discussion.
3. Familiar with the needs of the target group in general.
4. Non-partisan and respectful of all opinions.
5. The ability to work with the youth.

**6. Expected Outcomes of Needs Assessment**

1. Define the need(s) of the target groups.
2. Convert the need(s) to objectives.
3. Devise a project to contribute to the realization of these objectives.
4. Develop an operational plan for implementing this project.

# Activity Planning and Management

Youth Councils function in accordance with objectives that direct the scope of their activities. To undertake their work effectively and efficiently, participatory planning emerges as an important issue that should allow for the development of community initiatives led by the council within the framework of their quarterly or annual plans. The sections below answer important questions such as: What is planning? How do we plan? Who is responsible for planning process? What are the expected outcomes of planning?

## **Think.... How many times are buildings constructed?**

Do you know that buildings are constructed three times at least? The first time a building is constructed is made in the minds of its planners. The second time it is built on paper (drawings) while the third time the building is constructed on the ground. For example, before building a housing project, it remains an idea and a mental image, then the architects draw the constructions plans and engineering drawings that clarify the process of construction, its phases and details of implementation, taking into account the type of soil and rocks in the project lot. Afterwards, the engineers and contractors start the actual construction.

## **1. The Concept of Planning**

Planning is an organized process that aims at predicting the future and selecting the best alternatives for the realization of specific objectives.

## **2. The importance of planning prior to implementation of activities**

The dependence of Youth Shadow Local Councils on the rigorous and prior planning for their various activities and initiatives before implementation can have the following impacts:

- Contributes to the implementation of distinctive and selective activities and initiatives.
- Assists in the determination of the implementation process, steps and procedures.
- Facilitates the implementation process and clarifies the required tasks and responsibilities for the council members.
- Helps in the achievement of objectives in an already clarified and specified manner.
- Guarantees the participation of all youth council members in the planning and decision-making processes.
- Helps in the prevention of errors, mistakes, and many other problems during implementation.

### 3. Few Important questions on planning



#### 1. Where are we now?

This question denotes the process of conducting a contextual analysis of the current situation, and the identification of the needs and the required resources. This is a descriptive and a diagnostic process through which we can identify and understand our reality, simply by answering a number of questions:

- Where are we from the local community? What is our role as young people?
- What do we want from this Council to achieve?
- What are our capacities and our strengths and weaknesses?

#### 2. Where do we want to go?

This represents the future or the image of ourselves that we would like to see in the next phase through:

- Defining our long and short-term objectives.
- Defining our overall directions
- Defining the principles and values that we seek to consolidate or change.

### 3. How do we get there?

We reach out our objectives through developing an implementation plan that contains programs and projects that respond to the needs of the community in general, and the target group in particular.

### 4. How do we go about the planning process?

In many cases, the planning process for Youth Councils' activities and programs require many preparations necessary to ensure the successful completion of planning sessions and the preparation of clear and implementable. The most important steps are:

<p><b>Formation of the Planning Team</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is very important to plan collectively and with the participation of all members of the Youth Shadow Local Council.</li> <li>• It is also preferable to invite the active members of the Youth Council who actually do the work.</li> <li>• It is also a good idea to invite members familiar with Council's affairs since the invitation of a volunteer for the first time, without briefing him/her on the details of planning session prior to its actual meeting may bring the discussion back square one.</li> <li>• It is also important not to invite more than 20 members to each Planning session because the participation of a large number of people may hinder the planning process and allows things to get out of hand.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Invitation to the planning meeting(s)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is important to inform the participating members in a reasonable amount of time before the start of the planning session in addition to attaching its planned agenda.</li> <li>• Try to use more than one method to invite participants and confirm a permanent date for the meeting already agreed upon by participants.</li> <li>• Confirm attendance one day prior to the set date and ensure that all participating members have received the invitation and meeting agenda.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Undertaking all preparation required for holding the meeting.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree in advance on who among the participants will manage the meeting (i.e. the Facilitator) who should possess meeting management skills<sup>1</sup>.</li> <li>• Prepare a quiet and relaxing atmosphere at the meeting place in order to encourage member attendees to participate in the planning session.</li> <li>• It is useful to bring a flip chart or drawing board and place it at the front of the room so all participants can see the plan while it is being developed and written.</li> <li>• Prepare all requirements for a successful meeting such as previous reports, provisional plans, pens, markers, stationary, hospitality, etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opening of the planning session</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The facilitator must come to the meeting place before all other participants and earlier than the set time.</li> <li>• The facilitator must ensure the readiness of the planning venue and the availability of all the needs.</li> <li>• Open the planning session on time.</li> <li>• Remind participants that the discussion should not go beyond the discussion themes set in the meeting agenda</li> <li>• Ask one of the participants to help in writing down the members' ideas on the board in front of everyone and avoid repetition of the same ideas during the discussions.</li> <li>• Ask another participant to take the minutes of the meeting and its proceedings in order to make necessary information available when needed.</li> <li>• Encourage members to participate in the discussion and express their ideas because ideas are of utmost importance to planning.</li> <li>• There are different ways for leading a planning session and encourage participations form attendees such as:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brainstorming</li> <li>• Stimulating questions</li> <li>• Working groups and discussion of groups' presentations.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The facilitator summarizes the discussion at the end of the meeting, affirms the developed ideas and the final form of the plan.</li> <li>• Finally, participants can set a date for another planning meeting in the future.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Following up with the post-planning sessions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare a report on the previous planning session deliver it to participating members during the next session.</li> <li>• And through sending the report to their emails</li> <li>• Reformulate the plan and provide the participating members with copies in order to approve and adopt it in its final version</li> <li>• Commence the implementation of what has been agreed upon through the operationalization of the prepared plan, in addition to following up closely with the implementation.</li> </ul>

1 See Guide for the Management of Meetings and Sessions

**Innovative ideas in support of planning process and disseminating the planning outcomes**

- The collectively designed plan should be displayed in an appropriate place for all members of the youth council to see. This can disseminate the plan to all members and other parties to ensure their knowledge of the current events and their commitment to the implementation of the responsibilities assigned to them during the operationalization of the plan.
- Design a notice board where each member writes his / her activities during the week so everyone knows what is happening, the types of activities to be implemented and who are responsible for their implementation.
- Devise and agree on a system that guarantees the commitment of all members to attending, and continue to attend, the planning sessions because their absence means that the discussion goes back to square one. (for example, some members of the group can agree on rules for penalties and discipline to guarantee the commitment of all. For instance, a member who is absent from more than two planning sessions should be dismissed)
- Design a box of ideas and suggestion and place that in the Youth Local Council office in order to encourage members to submit innovative and creative ideas that could be discussed and benefited from during the next planning sessions.

## 5. Planning Templates and Forms

### 1. Annual plan

The annual plan is the general framework for the programs and initiatives that are developed in response to two main questions (where are we now? And where do we want to go? The annual operational plan is the bridge to move from the current reality to another one within the framework of the defined objectives and a time schedule).

Youth Shadow Local Council in: .....													
Objective: .....													
Duration: 12 months													
Target group: Youth aged 14-24 years													
Outcomes and results													
Phase	Schedule (month)												
	Activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Phase 1: ...	Activity No 1: ...												
	Activity No 2: ...												
	Activity No 3: ...												
Phase 2: ...	Activity 1: ...												

## 2. Preparation of an action plan

The action plan is a detailed implementation plan that defines the main steps and tasks that will be taken in order to identify the objectives of the initiative/activity and the desired outcomes. The following form can be used in the preparation of this detailed plan.

### Activity Implementation Plan Form

Youth Shadow Local Council in .....

No.	Activity	Target group	Tasks & needs	Responsibility	budget	Number of attendees	Activity Duration	Time	Place	Expected date	Monitoring & evaluation methods
1											

There are noticeable differences between the first and second plan especially in terms of the amount of details provided. The annual plan presents general information on the proposed activities while the action plan or the activity implementation plan is limited to a shorter time frame

or activity. For example the activity plan may be limited to three months and contains more specific and elaborate details.

**Expected Outcomes of Planning:**

1. Clearly identify objectives and goals.
2. Ability to measure outcome and facilitate evaluation.
3. Ability to continuously update or modify the plan.
4. Facilitate the process of realization of objectives and goals.
5. Save time and efforts on part of the team.
6. Benefit from and build upon of all available resources.

# Decision Making and Problem Solving

In the course of their work, Youth Shadow Local Councils face many issues that require taking decisions, as well as various challenge, problems and constraints that demand to be dealt with and resolved before the moving forward. Such circumstances require the application of participatory approached both in problem solving and/or in the process of making and taking decisions, which provide an opportunity to develop collective rather than individual decisions and orientation.

## 1. What is a decision or resolution?

A decision is a course of action chosen by the one who makes the decision because it is considered the most appropriate available means to achieve the objective(s) desired for resolving the issue that pre-occupies him/her

### Exercise:

Today you have become a responsible member of the Youth Shadow Local Council in your area. You are asked to make several important decisions, so discuss with your partner and fellow youth council member the concept of decision-making and write down this concept?

.....

.....

.....

## 2. Styles of Decision-Making

- 1. No response:** in this case the group decides not to make a decision. In itself this is considered a decision taken by the group.

For example: When an enthusiastic member of the group makes a certain proposal, but the group meets this suggestion with indifference and lack of attention or discussion, the proposal dies as if it was not mentioned at all. Frustrated, the member who has his proposal ignored may withdraw or hinder other decisions could be made later.

2. **Authority decision or decision by one person:** in this case, one member of the group takes the decision, but if this person needs the support or cooperation of other members, s/he often finds him/herself alone in the implementation of this decision.
3. **Immediate approval:** In this case a member makes a proposal and other people instantly support the suggestion (for example by “great idea”, “WOW”, “beautiful”, etc.) so that the issue is resolved and the groups adopt the decision without further discussion or challenging it in fear of dissent among the group. If this scenario is repeated often, this pattern of decision-making becomes the dominant method hardly noticeable at the time of making the decision but causes annoyance later for the other members.
4. **An influential group decision:** in this case, a particular group takes the decision because they have already agreed among themselves on the decision in advance. The group often succeeds in passing their resolutions but fails in promoting cooperation and true partnership between the group members.
5. **A minority decision:** In this case, members with strong and influential personalities inadvertently impose themselves on the other members.

For example: the Council Head may suggest a proposal which is then supported by individual members who have influence on the other members in terms of attendance, performance and voting. After the decision is made, others start asking why the group failed to interact with the other members.

6. **A majority decision by voting:** this method is used with large groups and is considered one of the most effective methods in decision making. But it has some shortcomings especially in terms of minority's commitment and loyalty who are not satisfied with the decision made. The unsatisfied Minority group often feels that its views were not treated as legitimate or not taken into account.
7. **All- silent decision:** this case occurs in groups that do not feel safe and free to put forward their views on the decision. However, it is possible to use this mechanism positively in case that freedom and full confidence are present between all members of the group.

- 8. Decisions by consensus and agreement:** in this case, the group listens to the views, reservations and concerns of all members in a positive environment that guarantees respect, dialogue and cooperation among all members of the group. It is possible to combine several proposals that reflect the concerns of all members although decision-making in this way takes a longer time, but implementation is faster and produces more successful results. **It is expected that** Youth Shadow Local Councils adopt this method in taking their decisions by consensus and agreement between their members who work as a team.

**Exercise:**

As a member of the Youth Shadow Local Council, which styles of decision-making do you prefer? Why? In groups of four, participants discuss and write down the styles youth believe are appropriate to the work of your Youth Shadow Local Council. Participants should also explain the reasons for this selection?

.....

.....

.....

**3. Importance and risks of Decision making:**

Decisions usually vary in difficulty (hard vs. easy decisions), importance and scope (large vs. small decisions), and appropriateness (right vs. wrong decisions). All are decisions even with the variety in their level and complexity. They constitute a pattern of relationships between council members where each member has some influence. It is amazing sometimes to see how people react to proposal to work on an issue or vote on a particular decision (such as loud opposition, approval, rejection, admiration, cynicism, lack of respect for the proposal but pretending otherwise) especially when the decision-making is imminent between the group members. This shows that decision making can be difficult in a group and it can also freeze or hinder the group's work and prevent reaching an agreement at the very moment that the issue must be resolved. In such cases, the group resorts to voting in order to settle the issue or end the dialogue by taking a decision. Alternatively, the group agrees to appoint a committee to pursue the matter and make a decision, which often results in decisions that are not convincing to all members.

The difficulties in group decision-making revolve around the following factors:

Area of difficulty	Suggestions and mechanism for address the difficulty
<p><b>Unclear objective:</b> Lack of clarity in the objectives or goals from taking a certain decision impedes the arrival at any decision amongst the members of the same team.</p>	<p>We have to define our goals and objectives clearly and explicitly before taking the decision. Setting specific objectives facilitates the process of decision making</p>
<p><b>Fear from results:</b> Potential results form an impending group decision can lead to divisions and disagreements among some group members. (an example of fear could be: "would my father be upset with me if he knew I work with you on a campaign to end adolescents marriages because he is the one who married off my sisters at 16 years old")</p>	<p>Explicit admission of concern of outcomes or results may help the team to address these issues and positively influences the decision to be made.</p>
<p><b>Competing or conflicting loyalties:</b> Belonging to more than one group or team at the same time often leads the team members to divide their loyalties at the time of decision making.</p>	<p>The members who fit this case should clarify their positions in order to avoid creating conflict amongst the team, or a feeling of non-commitment, and help them reach a solution together. (for example a member can say: "I would like to help in working on these issues but I don't have enough time since I am a Tawjihi student this year")</p>
<p><b>Conflict between members:</b> It is normal for personal differences to emerge between group members, which in turn invoke feelings of discontent and lack of affection that materialize most often as a hindrance during important times such as decision making.</p>	<p>It is important to build trust between the members of the group and to address and resolve each conflict to ensure the positive environment for the entire team.</p>
<p><b>Unannounced intentions:</b> Such as when a team member seeks to convince the other members with a certain issue and push them towards taking a decision in which s/he has an interest without informing the other team members.</p>	<p>Honesty in group interaction is the basis for successful decision taking. On the contrary, hiding intentions will negatively affect the individuals even when the decision is taken in their favor.</p>

<p><b>Shortage of information:</b> Insufficient information hinders the process of making the required decisions and creates a state of confusion among the members. For example: the Council Head calls for a meeting and taking a certain decision without providing all the information that helps the members take the right decision which eventually prevents or impedes the arrival at the an agreement or consensus on this decision.</p>	<p>We have to build our decisions on clear and specific information. For this reason we have to search professionally and scientifically for information relevant to the content of the decision and assign the appropriate person to do so.</p>
<p><b>Leadership problems:</b> It is possible for a team leader (Council Head) to impede decision making if s/ he does not encourage the members to freely express their ideas and opinions. In case the leader does not know the most important methods used in decision making, it will definitely complicate or hinder the process of decision making.</p>	<p>It is important that no one monopolizes the decision making. Dialogue and discussion between the group members, and the assignment of the responsibilities to the qualified person, will contribute greatly to the success of the decision.</p>

### Here are some factors that help us in decision-making:

- A clear objective
- Clear understanding between the team on identifying of whom among the members will bear the responsibilities for the decisions.
- Using various aids and methods to help put forward new ideas.
- Effective and stimulating leadership that provides the Youth Shadow Local Council members to contribute and innovate.
- Commitment of the Council Head to continuously involve all council members in the decisions and resolutions intended to be taken.
- Prior agreement between all council members on the most appropriate mechanism to adopt in decision-making for all members (e.g. consensus, voting, secret ballot ... etc).

**4. The methods that contribute significantly to increase creativity and effectiveness in decision- making and problem-solving within the team,** which the team leader must take into account:

1. The teams' commitment to attend the meetings and sessions: All team members should show interest in attending all meetings, especially the important ones in which decisions will be taken. All team members have to adhere to these meetings and decisions in terms of follow up responsibilities and tasks assigned to the team members.
2. Maintain the number of team members: Youth Shadow Local Council does not exceed 15 members. This number will help us make decisions effectively, in full participation, and at specific, convenient time for all.
3. Advance announcement of the meeting: you should select the subject for discussion in advance of the meeting. It is also possible to e-mail a summary of the ideas or issues you wish to discuss with the team prior to the meeting and ask them to think about the topics and prepare ideas and possible solutions for discussion in the upcoming meeting.
4. Collect the opinions of all Members: It is very important to listen to the views and ideas of all members without evaluation and judgment.
5. Encourage the team members to discuss the idea collectively within the group and not solely with the person who proposed the idea: it is essential to address and consider the merits of the proposed idea by the team as a whole yet without the insisting to direct their questions, or even praise to the person making the suggestion.
6. Provide constructive and positive criticism: they will be many negative comments expressed during decision-making and problem-solving meetings. Try to reformulate such criticism in a positive way. For example, "We have tried this before, but did not work" can be put as "and the new thing in this idea is..... because it was missing in the idea in the past and this is why it did not work. This encourages us now to try once again. What do you think?"
7. Request positive feedback from all members: When negative comments increase, draw a table of two columns, and label the first "for" and the second "against". Then ask each member has offered negative comments to record his objection under the column "against", and another comment under the column "for". This method limits the use of stimulation methods, expands the thinking horizons, and encourages members to seek solutions, not problems.
8. As a team leader of the Youth Shadow Local Council, you should act as an example for all members by not insisting on or defending your ideas: When your idea is criticized, you may become defensive out of instinct for self-protection, so let others carry the burden of this defense. Remind the team that the idea is a theme for discussion by the

team. If they do not understand your intention from your proposition, clarify your destination without getting defensive. Undoubtedly the team will understand your idea and mirror your behavior which means that you have actually become a role model for them.

## 5. The Importance of Making Decisions by Consensus

Decisions made by consensus are always superior to individual decisions taken by the most prominent members of the team alone, although the team needs more time and patience to arrive at such a decision.

### Why?

Because the team, by virtue of this mechanism, can generate a greater number of choices and evaluate them realistically. Usually, there is a sincere and deeper commitment on the part of team members towards the implementation of consensus decisions for as long as their opinions were heard, discussed and studied. Even after they leave the meeting they are still convinced that the decisions they made are the best that can be reached, and they are now part of it.

In addition to allow sufficient time for making a good and appropriate decision, it is important to be patient. There are four steps that contribute significantly to reaching a unanimous decision that the team leader shall follow:

1. Encourage all team members to have a full opportunity to express their opinion: It is very important to create an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among all members to express their concerns without the silencing them and imposing your opinions on them as the team leader because you do not agree on what is being proposed. Only in a positive environment that members freely express their views and guarantee the likelihood of reaching the agreement. Such encouragement leads the team and creates the feeling of its importance in taking initiative and responsibility to influence the lives of its members, their communities and environment in order to attain a happier and respectful life that guarantees their right to a decent living.
2. Emphasize the positive attributes in the team: always reinforce the strengths of the team, motivate them to continue working effectively,

and remind them of the successes you achieved earlier in working as a team.

3. Discuss the negative aspects raised by some: it is important to discuss members' concerns and obstacles they consider possible to face during the implementation of a certain decision and do not overlook them and make them feel that such concerns are unreasonable. Many team members appreciate the opportunity to express their concerns and reservations, thus they start thinking positively which leads them to offer suggestions on how to resolve problems.
4. Continue to summarize the points of agreement: focus on the team's interaction towards the unanimity of opinion by constantly summarizing the points agreed upon by all members, until you reach a point where it seems that all problems and differences have dissipated. Then the team starts to see the results of their cooperation that led them to consensus.
5. Hold effective meetings: the team achieves much of its work during meetings, so it is important for the meeting to be held with as much effectiveness and efficiency. As possible. A date should be set for the meeting which all members adhere to, and meeting must begin with a clear introduction on problem, topic, or goal. Do not start the discussion unless the meeting subject and what is required to be achieved are clear to all participants.
6. It is important for the team leader to distribute information, if any, or present it orally to team members participating in the meeting. The team leader should involve team members in the leadership since s/he is the first among equal members, taking into account the importance of making use of available human resources.
7. During the meetings, it is important to give all team members the opportunity to express their opinion in a manner agreed upon by the team (an agreed upon contract), where the contract emphasizes respect for all (see the four steps for reaching a unanimous decision).
8. Decisions are taken unanimously after the team studies the possible consequences that the decision may have on all team members who may be affected by it as well as on its potential impact on the Youth Council's functions and objectives. Consultations that take place between the team must be dealt with as a group topic without attacking the person who suggested the idea. Team members should be tolerant and allow the expression of all feelings of anger or joy, as long as no offence is intended. Team members also have to deal

with conflicts, if any, by allowing the angry ones to express their views and help them resolve the problem. Everyone agrees on the agreed – upon solution when they feel part of it.

However, in case the meeting's time ends and the team does not want to stay late or follow the discussion until they achieve the goal about which it is agreed to take a decision, the team members set a new date to continue the discussions actively and effectively. In the event that agreement is reached on a particular decision without the presence of all team members, the decision is considered temporary until the decision is presented to the team in its entirety and ensure the agreement of all members that guarantees the full commitment of all to all.

## 6. Factors Leading to Taking Wrong Decisions:

1. Lack of or incomplete information.
2. Lack of clarity or specification of objectives.
3. Shortage of time available to identify other alternatives.

### **If the Team encounters a problem in taking the decision, the team leader must follow the following steps:**

- Identify and express the problem in clear statements with specific concepts to make sure that all team members understand the problem.
- Analyze the problem through the identification of its manifestations and causes. This is useful for the team members in identifying the point of view of each member of the scope of the problem.
- Present resolution alternatives including the consideration of various possible solutions.
- Measure the pros and cons of each solution and discuss implementation procedures that must be taken in detail with the team members.
- Distribute work related to the implementation of the adopted resolution between the team members and appoint a rapporteur to follow up implementation and execution dates as well.
- Agree on an evaluation mechanism, taking into account that evaluation is an ongoing process that occurs in tandem with the various stages of problem solving and accompanies implementation during and after the completion of this process.

In community work, our stepping stone has always been based on of a learning philosophy based on the common quest for finding solutions to problems. We aim at give “a voice to the voiceless”. Therefore it is important that people participate positively in the identification of problems and together search for solutions to adopt. In the case of Youth Shadow Local Councils, it is important to pay address all aspects of the problem during our direct interaction between council members and the community for the purpose of solving a common problem in the community. The many facets a problem can have stem from:

- Prevalent social values and beliefs pertaining to the problem.
- The basic needs (economic situation) of the problem.
- Decision-making and control with regard to the problem.

For example, the Youth Local Council can classify the information on all topics under study by using the analysis grid below.

Grid of Main Topic			
Topic	Economic reasons for the Problem	Decision taking and control	Social beliefs and values relevant to the problem
Youth Unemployment			
Hygiene and Sanitation			
Adolescents' Marriage			
Etc.			

### **What is the benefit of this method in information classification?**

It is important to use this method because it promotes the awareness and understanding of team members themselves (members of the Youth Shadow Local Council), so they can discover that problems are interrelated, and that the economic status affects the values of individuals or the fact that politics affects the economy and so on so forth...

This method of analysis helps the team see problems and deal with them not as isolated and separate phenomena, but rather see the interdependence and overlap between them. This analysis is driven by the same logic underlying basing plans and activities of the Youth Council

on free and real development, rather than being based on the desire to dominate and control the people through what is being delivered by these activities and projects.

It is important for the Youth Council members to be aware of projects provided to them because it is also important to analyze these projects in abovementioned way to make sure of their benefits. This entails that it is very important for the Youth Council to undertake ongoing evaluation of the team's work and decisions in order to identify and benefit from the lessons learned through the process.

# Leadership in Youth Shadow Local Councils

Youth Shadow Local Councils can plan a leading role in the youth sector and the local communities, along with other organizations in the community, in order to represent and express youth aspirations and translate them into programs and projects able to contribute to community development and even change.

That the importance of the leadership role of Youth Shadow Local Council rests in mobilizing the male and female youth towards achieving the goals that we aspire to.

But when can you be a leader in a group?

## **1. If I own leadership potential.**

Or

## **2. If I sharpen my leadership skills and dedicated enough time during my work with the group in order to master the following:**

- Notice what is happening inside the team.
- Fully realize its major needs and how to address them in accordance with the needs of each case in a variety of situations.
- Respect and understand the feelings of the group I participate in its work.
- Adhere to the values of love and humility with the team.
- Listen to the team's opinion and evaluation of my actions as a leader within the team.
- Allow the team to evaluate my behavior and adjust the negative ones in order to strengthen positive interaction with the group.
- Enlist the help of those who possess the information and skills required to build on whatever skills I have in order to strengthen my skills in leading the group.

### 3. Participatory Leadership

Leadership in Youth Shadow Local Councils is based on the concept of participation rather than individual action; a concept that constitute a principle and a value governing relations between members. However, this would not preclude the emergence of a male or female leader capable of leading and guiding others towards the achievement of the vision and objectives of the Youth Council, on the basis of what can they may have of characteristic enjoy and the roles they take.

<b>Tasks of Successful Leader of Youth Shadow Local Councils</b>	<b>What the Leader of the Youth Shadow Local Council do to ensure cooperation and positive spirits at the Council member</b>
Incentive and initiative: encourage the Council members to take initiatives and propose suggestions for topics and issues they see as important for their local communities	Encouragement: I appreciate the team work (Local Council members), I build on their suggestions and I respect all opinions. I believe in the skills and experience they own. "The value of every person is what he does best"
Knowledge: it is important to check the information that you, as a leader, have and you must also check their sources. You must also check for the availability of the resources of the group (Youth Council), and whether or not they are sufficient or you need additional resources.	Finding spaces for change: the work of youth council members is not limited to those who are always active. It is important to involve everyone in the discussions, even the quite members.
Maintain effective communication and dialogue between the team members.	Define challenges: it is important to share with the group the challenges that it may face or impedes the implementation of the reached decisions.
Ability to direct the youth council members towards the objective and focus the work on the achievement of required tasks.	Contract or agreement: it is important for the group to agree on a mechanism for dialogue and discussion among themselves such as avoiding side conversations and interrupting others' speech.
Trust in the team and their abilities to cooperate in the achievement of tasks.	Understanding and addressing individuals need: what makes them happy? What makes them bored? What could create harmony between the team members? What could create a conflict inside the team?

<p>Ability to summarize what was agreed upon: one of the basic tasks of the leader of the Youth Council is the formulation of issues, projects and draft plans to present to the team for the purpose of their discussion and approval in a participatory manner.</p>	<p>Evaluation: which means two important things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluating the work progress of council members in a certain task.</li> <li>• Evaluating the relationships between Council members as a group.</li> </ul>
<p>Ability to organize work: it is important that the leader be a role model for the group, through his/her attending to organizational matters in person, such as respect of appointment.</p>	<p>Ongoing dialogue, discussion, cooperation and interaction to ensure the achievement of desired objectives.</p>

**It should be noted that the above is required of all male and female team members, on the basis that each and every one of them is a leader.**

### **How can the elected youth group lead the youth in their community towards positive change?**

Before attempting to target any group and change their social conditions, we, as Youth Council members, should make sure of:

- Our conviction and faith in the community issues on which we work.
- Our work stems from the people needs and interests first because they are our partners in the process of change that we aspire to.
- To achieve change, we must work with young people rather than on their behalf.
- Possess critical awareness.

### **What are the issues that can lead to real changes?**

- Issues of interest to young people in our community: It is important to identify issues and topics of interest to people that they talk about in a manner that raises hope and anxiety and even fear and anger.
- Pressing topics and issues of interest to youth in their community that can be worked upon in order to mobilize the potentials of the target group in the community.
- Issues that may help people develop their critical awareness: Of the most important issues that Youth Council members may work upon is respecting other people's ideas and encourage them to openly

criticize and object to what they have taken for granted in their lives so that they can help create a better situation.

- Engage all youth interested in making a difference in their community rather than limit our work to a specific social group.
- Issues that enhance coordination and create linkages with other groups at the national level in order to ensure sustainability and continuity of what we do.

# Building Effective Teams

Youth Shadow Local Council members should work within a team and as one unit. However, this is not easy to achieve given the nature of tasks and responsibilities youth council members are expected to undertake during the council's official term and within the framework of its functions. Working as one team requires not only consensus and harmony between all council members but also giving their best efforts in order to realize the common results agreed upon by all.

## 1. Who is the Youth Shadow Local Council Team?

This team consists of a small group of individuals who possess complementary skills and collaborate together in a sense of unity, solidarity and collective responsibility to achieve a common goal or carry out a common action.

The formation process of youth shadow local councils is aimed at improving the performance effectiveness of the team members through joint work, solid relationships with each other, and strong role and responsibilities of the team leader towards the team.

## 2. Causes Demanding Teamwork Spirit:

- Achieving goals and objectives effectively and with integration.
- Taking advantage of the capabilities and talents of each team member.
- Enriching the team's life since it enables exchange of experience among the members.
- Solving problems more effectively.
- Addressing challenges and obstacles during the implementation of tasks.
- Ensuring mutual moral support between team members.
- Improving effective communication between team members.
- Developing a collective sense of responsibility towards the intended objectives.
- Achieving a sense of mutual pride and accomplishment which strengthens the cohesion of the Youth Council.

### 3. Importance of Teamwork Approach

The importance of teamwork lies in the benefits it creates for each member. Moreover, it impacts the entire Youth Local Council as a body or framework within which young people come together for the following reasons.

- Cooperation and mutual support between team members because they identify with the team to ensure that it remains successful and brilliant.
- Distribution of work among the team limits the individual competition and action.
- Sense of collective responsibility when problems may occur without blaming one another or the evade responsibility.
- Participation of the team in defining solutions and taking consensus decisions. In turn, this invokes among the team members the feeling of belonging and commitment to define solutions and implement decisions successfully.
- Working as a team enhances a strong sense of commitment towards the team and desire not to let it down.
- The team's attention to quality and accuracy, because the members are part the whole, so that the team appears in the best image possible.
- Strengthening of human relations between members of the team.

### 4. How do team members effectively achieve the objectives of the Youth Shadow Local Council?

- Team members trust the potentials of each member of the Council.
- Group members offer sincere support and assistance to each member in the team's progress towards its objectives.
- The team assigns a real role for all team members and gives them the right to voice and meaningful participation.
- Team members come together in addressing the challenges and obstacles facing the team.
- All members of the Youth Council tasks are committed to the responsibilities and functions entrusted to them.

## 5. Characteristics of Work between Team Members

- A common goal which achievement is the highest priority for the team member.
- Existence of a unified vision.
- Codependency, reliability and reciprocity between team members.
- Simplicity and flexibility of structure.
- Presence of clear relationships for the purpose of realizing common goals.
- Participation of team members in decision-making process.
- Definition of roles assigned to the Council head and members.
- Sense of belonging and commitment.
- Open information available and accessible to all members.
- Complementarity of individual objectives and group objectives.
- Partnership based on shared values and principles in order to regulate the team's conduct and actions during the execution of the task.
- Acceptance of and respect for the team.
- Belief in the potential of each team member.
- The team's conviction of team work and collective action are the basis for success and innovation.

## 6. Advantages of Teamwork for Individual Members

Some of the advantages that individual members learn while working in team:

- Organizational advantages: structural coherence, effort coordination, and clear understanding of the Youth Council's objectives.
- Professional advantages: a common identity, exchange of experiences, information, ideas and innovations.
- Practical advantages: the acquisition of new knowledge and skills, growth, progress and success.
- Psychological advantages: Feeling of belonging, loyalty, appreciation, accomplishment and self-realization.
- Social advantages: deep relationships between individuals, mutual respect, and enjoyment of shared social and recreational activities.

## 7. Conditions for the Formation of Teams

- Conviction, consent and willingness of team members.
- A strong reason for forming the team.
- The relationship between the team members is mutual co-dependence.
- Equal worth and importance for all members in the team.
- Members' understanding of their own roles and those of others.
- Sincere desire on part of the team leader and members for the success of team's tasks.
- Existence of trust, respect and connection between team members.
- Desire of all team members for cooperation.
- The ability to tolerate others and accept different points of view.

## 8. How to Form a Team?

Now, after a group of individuals won the Youth Shadow Local Council elections, the group will start thinking about work and will adopt the mechanism of teamwork a corner stone in its approach to planning and implementation. So the group will first start thinking about the following:

- Determine the assignment or task that the team member should undertake, through reference to the objectives and functions of the Youth Shadow Local Council.
- Prepare a list of team members based on capacities and tasks.
- Distribute the work between the team members in an integrated, complementary and well-coordinated manner.
- Define the time frame for the assignment, including implementation phases and the latest date for its completion.
- Specify the human and material resources need for the team, and develop a work plan.
- Hold regular meeting for following up with, monitor and evaluate work progress.

## 9. Characteristics of Effective and Ineffective Teams

### Information

Effective Team	Ineffective Team
Flows freely from top to bottom and vice versa with great levels of transparency between the members of the same team.	Primarily flows from top down and with horizontal lines free of team participation
All team members contribute to it	Information is blocked or banned from the team members.
Clear and explicit	Incomplete, blurred and unclear messages

### Members Relationships

Effective Team	Ineffective Team
Trust	Suspicion and division
Respect	Interests on the basis of need and desire
Cooperation	Competition
Support	Lack of support

### Disagreement

Effective Team	Ineffective Team
Considered natural and beneficial	Undesired
Revolves around topics not members	Destructive, revolves around personal characteristics and motives.

### Work Environment (Execution of Tasks)

Effective Team	Ineffective Team
Clear	Fragmented
Not based on threat	Based on fear and threats
Non-competition	Prevailed by Caution
Already based on participation	Divided into closed groups

## Decision-Making

Effective Team	Ineffective Team
By consensus	By Imposition or force
Makes good use of information and its sources	Emphasis on influence
All team members adhere to the implementation of the decisions	Clinging to views; confusion and discord among team members

## Innovation

Effective Team	Ineffective Team
Multiple choices	Controlled by power centers only
Oriented towards finding solutions	Freezing of solutions

## Leadership

Effective Team	Ineffective Team
Participation by all team members	Hidden
Depends on competency	Given to specified individuals
Depends on contributions of the team as a whole	Controlled by mutual benefits laws

## Incentives

Effective Team	Ineffective Team
Adherence to the team-defined objectives	Work in accordance to forced objectives
Satisfying the needs for belonging	Neglect of objectives
Provides greater opportunities for achievement through the team	Acknowledgement of individual achievement without taking the team considerations into account.

## Rewards

Effective Team	Ineffective Team
Based on the acknowledgement and appreciation of all team members	Based on subjective evaluations and unclear foundations, often lacks objectivity.

## 10. Phases of Building Real Teams

During the process of team building, the members will go through four phases in order to have the chance for the formation of a real team that aims at realizing the main objective they agreed upon.

### 1. Formation Phase: (my identity as an individual in the team / my role as an individual in the team)

<b>Phase Description</b>	The first step in the conversation from individualism to collective action; from an individual to a member; from working solely to becoming interactive with others; from being independent to a participant. This is a testing phase where the individual discovers the appropriate relationships with team members as well as the psycho-social environment of the team.
<b>Members' feelings during the phase</b>	Mixed feeling dominates this phase. The member feels a sense of joy from his/her membership in the group, optimism, belief in one's ability to succeed, expectation of possible results, pride of own choice, anxiety and fear of failure, uncertainty towards the task and the rest of the team, and longing to become actual member of the team.
<b>Members' Behavior during the phase</b>	In this phase, the members' behavior shows a mixture of civility, courtesy and formality with others, in addition to trying to understand the required task and identify ways for implementation and achievement. The member also attempts to identify the accepted vs. rejected behavior, search for sources of information, identify potential problems and ways to address them, and express complaints of anticipated difficulties, whether real or fictitious, in addition to some distress, dissatisfaction, hesitancy and reluctance.
<b>Mechanism for assisting the team through the phase</b>	To support individuals in this phase, orientation and smooth introduction can be adopted in addition to provision of information to clarify the team's mission and objectives, the tasks required from team members, the criteria for success and acceptable vs. non-acceptable behavior, train members on task performance with focus on the skills they lack and need.

### 2. Conflict Phase

<b>Phase Description</b>	This is the most difficult phase in team building, because each member searches for his/her own place and status. Objectives seem difficult or unattainable- members run out of patience so they argue, rebel, oppose and resist- conflict arises between member so some may leave the team- the team may get stuck at this stage and does realize any achievement
--------------------------	--

<b>Members' feelings during the phase</b>	In this phase, the members may feel conflicting views and opinions, resistance, rejection, confusion, and inability to think properly but the team members may feel comfortable when there is a slight hope of success.
<b>Members' Behaviors during the phase</b>	In this phase, the members show a behavior characterized by argument, debating, challenging, competition, conflict, use of psychological defense mechanisms such as projection, justification, withdrawal, attack and daydreaming. Members may start questioning the goals and tasks, and some may tend to lose their temper and self-control and strongly defend their personal point of view.
<b>Mechanism for assisting the team through the phase</b>	The team can be helped at this stage by clarification and provision of information and incentives and affirmation of their abilities to perform the tasks. In addition, examples can be offered to clarify similar tasks and functions and how they were accomplished, as well as using conflict resolution tools such as reconciliation, compromise, avoidance, adaptation, cooperation and participation.

### 3. Laying the Foundations Phase

<b>Phase Description</b>	At this stage, the members start to accept one another and the roles each will undertake and that of the team as a whole. This phase is characterized by an easing of the conflict and the start of cooperation which grows gradually. It is an intermediate stage leading up to the next stage. Also at this stage, rules are developed for relationships and interaction between the team members, so that the goal becomes the connection or the unwritten contract that unites them.
<b>Members' feelings during the phase</b>	The individual feelings at this stage are geared towards the acceptance of one's membership in the team and the common goal, in addition to feelings of psychological comfort that allows for conflict resolution, commitment and strong well for cooperation and participation.
<b>Members' Behaviors during the phase</b>	The members' behavior at this stage is geared towards working to settle disputes and exchange information in addition to increased openness and expression of feelings. Social and personal relations and relaxed and fun.
<b>Mechanism for assisting the team through the phase</b>	The team can be helped through encourage the members for participation, development of self-commitment and sense of responsibility. Also the team can benefit from provision of necessary information and ensuring the clarity of goals and objective in addition to the starting on the preparation of work plans and schedules and provision of necessary training.

#### 4. Performance Phase

<b>Phase Description</b>	In this phase, the team becomes more cohesive, supportive of its members and understanding of the differences between them. Here the members begin to assume their roles and engage in relations of cooperation and interdependence. The members also identify with their role and recognize others' roles and expectations, and understand both the strengths and weaknesses in his/herself and the others. The team members think of in delivery methods to increase effectiveness, and the leader assumes his/her role as a guide, coach and mentor, and help members to evaluate their performance.
<b>Members' feelings during the phase</b>	There is a sense of satisfaction across the team because the progress and results start to show. Trust in others prevails in the team since the issues have settled and members have known one another. Self-confidence increases and the desire to fulfill the required role in order to feel the sense of accomplishment and self-realization.
<b>Members' Behaviors during the phase</b>	The behavior of the team members is distinguished by collaboration, ability to anticipate problems and desire to avoid and/or resolve them, and taking risks in order to realize the objective and immersion in the team.
<b>Mechanism for assisting the team through the phase</b>	The team can be helped through guidance, training, encouragement and support.

### 11. Elements Affecting Team-Building and Level of Effectiveness

- **Technical element:** This means the type of tasks to be performed, their level of difficulty, available information, the different methods to achieve them, and the potential human and material resources for accomplishing these tasks.
- **Human element:** This is represented in the Youth Shadw Local Council's team leader and members.
- **Environmental element:** This is in represented by the regulatory and social environment.

It is very important for the members of the Youth Shadow Local Council to identify and analyze the three elements while working on the plan for and implementation of their programs and activities in their communities to make sure of the available resources, both physical and human, and the effectiveness of their actions.

## **12. Roles of the Team Leader (leader of the Youth Shadow Local Council) and the members of the Youth Shadow Local Council team:**

<b>Role of Team Leader (Leader of the Youth Shadow Local Council)</b>	<b>Roles of the members of Youth Shadow Local Council Member</b>
Ensures coordination, integration and interaction between the members of the team	Cooperation and effective participation in planning, implementation, follow-up, monitoring and evaluation
Facilitates the team work through ensuring the availability of necessary requirements	
Continuously maintains the effective communication between the team members	
Mobilizes and activates the team	
Cooperates with the team members in the implementation of achievement requirements of a certain action	
Constantly motivates the team to work in positive spirits	
Comes up with creative ideas and implementation methods that respond to the needs of the local community in which the Local Youth Council intend to work in	
Involves the team in decision making	
Constantly evaluates his/her and the team's performance with the team members	

Here, it is worth emphasizing that the team leader is not necessarily to be the Head of the Youth Local Council. Any of the Council members can assume a leading role regardless of their titles or positions in the Council.

# Report Preparation and Writing

Youth Shadow Local Councils prepare reports to document their meetings, events and activities they implement. Moreover, reports are used a reference to consult in the future whenever necessary, whether for preparation of annual reports, or for the follow up with the implementation of decisions, or for information exchange and dissemination to the General Assembly members and other institutions.

## 1. Definition of Reports

A report is a written presentation of data, information and facts on a particular topic or problem made in an analytical, structured and simplified manner, in addition to the inclusion of findings, results, suggestions and recommendations.

## 2. Types of Reports

- **Needs assessment report:** A report type that identifies the problems and special needs of the social groups that the Youth Shadow Local Council may wish to work with/for.
- **Activity implementation report:** A report prepared specifically on a certain activity that has been carried out, such as training courses, campaigns, voluntary activities, workshops or any activities that have been implemented by the Youth Council.
- **Performance evaluation report:** Such reports assess the level of performance and efficiency during the evaluation period. For example, some reports document the evaluation and the performance of the Youth Shadow Local Council as a whole in terms of competency and efficiency in implementation. This type of reports normally identifies problems encountered during implementation, lessons learned, and recommendations on the basis of which the Council will benefit from past mistakes and to improve the implementation process.

### 3. Importance of Reports

- Present the results of research or study a particular topic or a solution of a specific problem for the benefit or its readers.
- Used as a communication tool between Council members that will facilitate their work.
- Assist in decision-making through provision of information.
- Used as a tool for monitoring and evaluating the performance of Council members
- Assist in the development of objective and implementable plans through consulting previous reports on the Council's past accomplishments and recommendations.
- Follow-up with activities and performance of team members.
- Help in identifying the extent of achievement of the set objective and the nature of problems encountered during implementation (inclusive of the analysis of their causes and ways to avoid recurrence in the future).
- Considered as a means for recording and documentation of the Council's activity during a specific time period (inclusive of an analysis of results and achievements made)
- Provides an evaluation of the actual level of performance and constraints encountered by the Youth Local Councils.

### 4. Principles and rules that must be observed in report writing

- Identify the aim of this report (Progress Report – Report of achievements - a report on the problem and suggestions for solutions ... etc.)
- Identify the report's audience (i.e. readers): How they think? What do they want from the report? What are their vocational and professional levels? How well they are familiar or knowledgeable of the subject matter? This helps in the use of appropriate language and presentation in the report.
- The report should include clear indicators and significance confirming with the report subject matter (for example if the report was on the implementation of Youth Council activities, the narrative can be supported by success rates and percentages as well as by previous outcomes).

- Use direct and necessary vocabulary as well as simple and easy to understand statements and sentences. Stay away from using a rhetoric writing style and emotional statements. Also pay special attention to the reports language on terms of spell check and using correct grammar and punctuation (particularly the dots and commas)
- In terms of presentation, it is preferable to directly address the topic without unnecessary introductions, highlight the main ideas, and avoid repetition of statements.
- Finally, edit the draft report and pay special attention to formatting, organization and sequencing so that the presentable report reflects on the level of the Youth Council and its members. Also remember to include in the report other supportive methods such as photos, copies of media coverage, etc.(always Keep in mind that reports are rarely read but browsed very quickly!).

## 5. Phases and Steps of Report Writing

- Collection and organization of information.
- Specification of the main ideas.
- Writing the first draft of the report
- Re-writing the first draft.
- Formatting of the report.
- Editing and revision.

## 6. Tens Tips for Effective Reports

The report should:

- Be complete, precise and honest report.
- Be simple and brief as possible.
- Be objective, not controlled by your personal judgments, desires and opinions.
- Have a beginning, middle and ending.
- Have logical order and sequence and with clear division and numbering of sections
- Be written in clear and direct language.
- Be submitted in the (appropriate) time it is required to be submitted.
- Use charts and diagrams whenever possible.

- Have an executive summary representative of the report data.
- Free from errors, typos, and misspelling.

## 7. Standard Report Structure

Standard Report Structure	
<b>Beginning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cover Page</li> <li>• Page of Contents</li> <li>• Executive Summary of the Report</li> <li>• Introduction</li> </ul>
<b>Body</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of Information, Data and Facts</li> <li>• Tables</li> <li>• Charts and Diagrams</li> <li>• Study and Analysis</li> </ul>
<b>Ending</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Findings and Results</li> <li>• Recommendations</li> <li>• Annexes</li> </ul>

## 8. Implemented Activities Report Form

<b>Activity Coordinator:</b>	
<b>Activity title:</b>	
<b>Place:</b>	
<b>Time:</b>	

### Beneficiaries:

<b>Number of beneficiaries</b>		Male:		Female:	
<b>Beneficiaries' background</b> (Ages, where they come from, etc.)					
<b>Partner Institutions in this activity</b> (if any, and specify the type of services provided)					

**Summary of the activity** (a brief explanation in no more than 10 lines)

--

**Details of Implementation:**

<b>Activity Objective:</b>	
<b>Activity Phases:</b>	
<b>Details:</b>	
<b>Outcomes / Results</b>	
<b>Photo Documentation</b>	
<b>Links to news reports</b>	



