

HOW TO CREATE A YOUTH CIVIL SOCIETY NETWORK IN YOUR AREA

The **Youth Collective** is a network of youth civil society organisations from around the world. As well as connecting globally, our strength is in connections at a national and local level. You can use this directory of organisations to convene a local network of youth organisations, to support, share skills and experience, jointly advocate and undertake projects together.

THE BENEFITS OF A LOCAL YOUTH NETWORK



Uganda and Sierra Leone recently convened networks of youth organisations and have been able to jointly:

- **Share learning and best practices** to promote youth leadership in development;
- **Provide expertise** to government, development partners and other stakeholders on youth leadership in the development sector, including facilitating the inclusion of young peoples' voices in these discussions;
- **Advocate for policymaking** that directly addresses young people's concerns;
- Give and receive a variety of **capacity strengthening trainings**;
- **Support one another** in the youth civil society space.

HOW TO CONVENE THE YOUTH COLLECTIVE IN YOUR AREA

If you want to explore the power of youth partnerships in your context, you can:



1 Visit youth-collective.org, and use the country filter to see the organisations that are signed up in your country.



2 You might want to search by organisation topic or size to further specify the group.



3 Contact the organisations using their email address or Facebook provided in their listing. Contact them well in advance of your meeting, and try sending a reminder 2 days before.



4 If you know of other youth organisations outside of the Youth Collective, invite them too!



5 Thinking of what works best in your context, assess what meeting format suits the participants e.g. offline, online, etc.

At the first meeting, you might want to:

- Spend some time getting to know each other, introducing yourselves and your organisations.
- Introduce the objectives of the group and get feedback from other organisations.
- Identify what everyone hopes to get out of the group, to help build a sense of ownership about the network.
- Brainstorm some initial steps and ways of working:
 - The structure of the group, roles and responsibilities;
 - Agenda items to discuss;
 - Capacity or interest to give trainings to the group;
 - Joint campaigns the group could support.
- Allow some informal time for networking.
- Confirm when you plan to meet again and how often.

After the first meeting, you might want to:

- Send a follow up email to share the discussions and actions agreed.
- You can choose to have rotational chairship of the convenings so as to promote sustainability, devolved leadership and inclusion of all members.
- Encourage anyone to sign up to join youth-collective.org so they can receive funding opportunities and news relevant to youth civil society.
- You can also make use of a platform where members can interact frequently and keep in touch, such as Signal, WhatsApp or Facebook. This helps to keep members connected and informed.

If you're looking to set up a meeting of the Youth Collective in your area, we would love to hear from you! We can offer support where you need it, for example help you access the organisations on the website, how to identify an issue for discussion, providing you with access to Zoom, etc. We would love to hear feedback from the organisations you've met with. Contact us at youthcollective@restlessdevelopment.org