
CHECKLIST

FOR YOUTH INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION

Globally The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children have the right to be heard on issues affecting them and locally The Zambian Government has given due priority to youth development and empowerment and underscores the importance of youth participation and involvement in National Development. (National Youth Policy, 2015).

In order to actualize the National Youth Policy, the Government has come up with seven thematic areas and one of these is the Strategy on youth and governance which highlights amongst others to; Enhance the capacity of youth civil society (youth organizations, NGOs and associations) to effectively participate in decision-making and programme implementation and to promote civic engagement and political participation of youth at local and national level and advocate for an affirmative action for youth representation in decision-making. (National youth policy analysis, 2015). Furthermore there are activities which have been highlighted under this strategy and of particular interest is the activity on Youth leadership program which is to be implemented to enhance youth participation in decision-making processes.

The following checklist will therefore highlight the processes that can be used to achieve young people inclusion and participation in decision making starting at the local level, as well as to enhance dialogue between civil servants and young people. A case study of Lusaka City Council will be used showcasing the formation of the Junior Council.

The checklist has been produced under the umbrella of the **"LuMa Youth for Change"** project, as part of the municipal partnership between Lusaka and the City of Malmö, and for Lusaka City Council the formation of the Junior Council will be showcased as a case study.

1. Define The Aim/Goal and Come Up with Objectives to Achieve the Goal

As a project team it is important to define the scope of your goals and create a road map. The goal is youth inclusion and participation but remember to set boundaries within what is achievable at a local level and also with the available resources, it is good to be ambitious but begin with small steps.

2. Identify The Target Youth Groups

In Zambia a youth is defined as one who is between the ages of 15 -35, therefore this encompasses youths who are in high school, tertiary education and youths in the community. Therefore, depending on your objectives you can identify the youths you want to work with.

For the LUMA project, Lusaka chose to work with youths in the age bracket of 15 – 18 and these are the youths in high school and for the purposes of the Zambian education system these are youths from grade 8 – grade 12. Also ensure that you are gender sensitive to cater for equal representation for both male and female.

"A tip here is to identify structures where the young people belong for e.g. schools, colleges/universities, community structures or civil society groups for youths."

3. Identify Stakeholders with similar objectives

There are usually some civil society groups, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) who may have similar objectives for youth inclusion/climate change issues therefore take time to identify such groups and engage them to see if you can work together to achieve your objectives. Usually these provide a good technical resource as well as financial support. This should be done at the inception of the project as partners want to be part of the program from the beginning.

Lusaka City Council had identified WWF and Plan International who had similar objective to be part of the process for Youth inclusion.

4. Set Up Meeting with The Young People

You want to get the young people's views and opinions on youth inclusion and participation in local governance therefore arrange a meeting. This meeting should be in a safe space where the young people are comfortable and they can freely express their opinions.

In the meetings provide a leading role ask the necessary questions but do not dominate, allow the young people to own the meeting by allowing them to talk freely. Take note of all opinions expressed and do not be judgmental.

If you have a large group in one meeting you can break the children in smaller groups in order to allow for effective participation.

If you are working with young people in schools remember to plan your meetings in consideration with the school calendar and in consultation with the schools. In some cases, Consent forms from the school may need to be obtained.

5. Set Up Meetings with Local Politicians

You want the local politicians to buy into your goal for youth inclusion therefore set up a meeting to get their views and opinions on youth inclusion. Remember you don't want to impose therefore you need to engage the local politicians. This meeting will provide you with valuable information and insights that you can use to achieve your goal.

Present the findings from the meeting with the young people to the local politicians and establish common ground where the problems are and thereafter chart a way forward. During the presentation of the findings from the young people you can invite the young people to present their position to the local politicians if they are willing.

In Lusaka it was established that the formation of the Junior Council would be an effective and sustainable platform to ensure that the young people can participate and be included in the decision making processes on various issues which also included environmental issues vis a vie climate change issues. Therefore, the Junior Council would be a replica of the main council, complete with junior councilors representing the 33 wards in the city headed by a Junior mayor and a deputy.

6. Process for Formation of the Junior Council

1. Ensure that the junior council program is institutionalized through a full council resolution
2. Form a technical working group comprising of representatives from all departments in the local authority, so that no one feels left out and this group will spearhead the formation of the Junior Council through coming up with; a concept note and setting up of the terms and references
3. Engage various interested stakeholders such as District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) and organizations with similar objectives
4. Set the roadmap for selection of the junior councilors which will include:
 - Advertising for junior councilors in schools
 - Receiving application letters from interested candidates
 - Shortlisting of applicants
 - Conducting interviews
 - Selection of successful candidates
 - Orientation workshop for successful candidates
 - Installation of the Junior mayor and the deputy

7. Platforms for Young People Engagement

It is important to identify various platforms within and outside the municipality/city council through which young people can speak out and carry out various activities as part of youth engagement.

Identify already existing platforms which can be used by young people. Remember it is easier to work with already existing structures as opposed to creating new ones. This is also due to the fact that resources are a challenge in most Local Authorities.

Lusaka City Council had identified the following platforms:

- Green Schools Partnership Program (GSSP)
- Make Zambia Clean Green and Healthy Campaign
- Pop up Radio Shows (Agents of Change)

8. Wrap Up and Review

Review the entire process in order to learn from issues that may have gone wrong and try to correct the mistakes for future dialogue processes to include young people. Finally call it a wrap!!



LUSAKA CITY COUNCIL



City of Malmö



**Swedish International
Centre for Local Democracy**