



# Capacity Development for Youth Transition

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## A Practical Guide

*Young people want to use their evolving skills to participate in **Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (AYSRHR)** efforts in more diverse ways. They want to build skills that prepare them to lead their own initiatives or assume influential organizational positions. Thus, we must explore how AYSRHR stakeholders can initiate support mechanisms and processes to build young people's capabilities to transition to professional roles.*

## How to use this guide

This practical resource guide is sourced from the YIELD Hub's fourth Action Learning Cycle on **Capacity Building for Youth Transition**. The guide is divided into four practical sections: Themes for Exploration, Organisational Levels of Development, Recommendations & Sample Actions, and Next Steps. These sections aim to assist you or your team in assessing your organisation's efforts towards the topic, utilising the provided tools and resources to achieve your organisational goals, and connecting with other organisations to share your journey with a wider community.

## Acknowledgements

This guide would not be possible without the commitment and contribution of the **Cycle 4 member organisations** who worked with the YIELD Hub over the course of 7 months. The practical recommendations are derived directly from their Action Learning Goals and Implementation activities. Nine organisations participated in the cycle: organisations participated in the cycle: **MenEngage Alliance, African Population and Health Research Center, Nyanam International, Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG), Visible Impact, Save The Children, Restless Development, Projet Jeune Leader, and Sonke Gender Justice**. Through their collective experience and learning, they identified significant areas for reflection, commitment, and recommendations. These have also been compiled into a valuable resource that is accessible on the [YIELD Hub website](#).

## Glossary

**ALC** - Action Learning Cycle

**ALG** - Action Learning Group

**AYSRHR** - Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights



It helps to create opportunity for young people to come in [to your organisation], be able to learn, gain the skills and grow themselves, and eventually help them transition

- ALC 4 Member -

## Capacity Development for Youth Transition

The topic of priority from this cycle draws from the [YIELD research findings](#). The research highlighted that youth participation is not only about engaging young people as partners or leaders but necessarily develops from a broad, foundational base, including providing relevant skills (capabilities) and opportunities to apply them (agency). When young people have the relevant skills and opportunities, they age up into professional roles within the AYSRHR ecosystem and not age out. Young people want to use their evolving skills to participate in AYSRHR efforts in more diverse ways, reinforcing the need to provide training that exposes young people to specialized competencies and allows them to build skills

## Themes for Exploration

Several important themes emerged from the topic of Capacity Development for Youth Transition. These themes reflect what organisations have to consider when developing young people's personal, technical, and functional capabilities to help them transition into professional opportunities. Take a moment to **review the themes** below, consider how your organisation implements the practices described under each theme, and **rate your progress** using the scale provided for each theme. Mark the stars to rate your progress.

### 01. Coaching & Training

Many organisations offer comprehensive training programmes to develop the skills of their youth workers. This includes essential areas like CV writing, project management, business planning, research & evaluation, administration, finance, and leadership development. **Rate how effectively your organisation provides and improves these training opportunities for youth workers.**



### 02. Management & Strategy

Organisational support often extends to enhancing the overall capacity and governance of youth-led initiatives. However, challenges exist, such as a lack of tailored capacity-building resources and methods that fully cater to the needs and perspectives of young people. **Evaluate the extent to which your organisation has successfully implemented child- and youth-centred approaches to capacity strengthening.**



### 03. Opportunities

Sharing opportunities such as internships, job vacancies, mentorships, and other relevant resources is a key focus for many organisations. This is aimed at enriching the professional and personal growth of young volunteers. **Assess how well your organisation identifies and communicates these opportunities to the youth involved in your programmes.**



### 04. Compensation

Recognising the contributions of youth workers and volunteers through financial rewards and incentives is a practice adopted by some organisations. This might include payment for work typically done by consultants or saving a portion of their earnings for future use, such as education or personal projects. **Reflect on how your organisation compensates youth workers and volunteers and rate the adequacy and impact of these compensation methods.**



## Rating Themes – Scoring Guide



**Extremely Effective** - Implementation is exemplary and consistently achieves desired outcomes with best practices in place.



**Very Effective** - Implementation is consistent and successful, with only minor areas for further improvement.



**Moderately Effective** - Implementation is regular with moderate success, though further enhancements could be made.



**Somewhat Effective** - Implementation occurs but with inconsistent results, indicating a need for refinement.



**Not Effective** - Implementation is rare or unsuccessful, with significant room for improvement.

### Self-assessment

Lower scores (1-2 stars) suggest starting with Foundational Level strategies in the practical guide to build a stronger basis towards capacitating youth with relevant skills and competences. Moderate scores (3 stars) indicate readiness to refine existing practices. You should look at the guide's Proficient Level recommendations, activities, and tools. High scores (4-5 stars) imply a strong foundation, allowing your organisation to focus on Advanced Level strategies within the guide, aiming to champion youth leadership. Whether you're looking to build foundational strategies, enhance your proficient practices, or innovate at an advanced level, the guide provides a valuable resource for progressing in each of these critical areas.

# Organisational Levels of Development

The scores above should indicate where your organisation stands in its journey towards ensuring young leaders are transitioned and sustained progressively within an organisation. Based on this rating, different means and methods are available to evaluate and achieve your goals. Below are three levels: **Foundational**, **Proficient**, and **Advanced**. Depending on the level of work your organisation has done so far, each level offers recommendations, actions, and tools to help you progress towards your goal. We've created a checklist for each level description to help you determine from which level to begin making use of the recommendations. If you've checked 3 or less points from a level's checklist, this means that this is the level you should begin.

## 1. Foundational Level

At the foundational level, organisations are in the early stages of incorporating youth work into their operations. They are beginning to recognise the importance of youth engagement and are taking initial steps to integrate young people into their programs and activities.

### Checklist

	<b>Initial Engagement:</b> Your organisation has started to engage young people in some of its activities or programs.
	<b>Basic Training:</b> There are some basic training and development opportunities available for youth workers or volunteers.
	<b>Awareness of Needs:</b> There's an emerging awareness within the organisation of the diverse needs of young people.
	<b>Youth Input:</b> Young people have begun to provide input or feedback in some areas of the organisation's work.
	<b>Resource Allocation:</b> Initial resources (time, funding, personnel) are being allocated specifically for youth-related activities.

#### FOOD FOR THOUGHT



**Establish Open Forums:** Create regular, informal spaces where young people can express their ideas and feedback without fear of judgement. Ensure that your engagement strategies reach a diverse cross-section of youth, not just those who are already well-connected or outspoken.

## 2. Proficient Level

Organisations at the proficient level have established systems and processes for engaging youth and have seen tangible outcomes from these efforts. They actively seek to improve and expand their youth engagement strategies and have a clearer understanding of the needs and potential of young people.

### Checklist

	<b>Structured Programs:</b> Your organisation has structured programs or initiatives specifically designed for youth engagement and development.
	<b>Regular Training:</b> There are regular, structured training and development programs for youth workers and volunteers.
	<b>Youth Leadership:</b> Young people hold leadership roles or are actively involved in decision-making processes within the organisation.
	<b>Feedback and Adaptation:</b> The organisation has a system for collecting feedback from young people and adapts its strategies based on this feedback.
	<b>Strategic Investment:</b> There is a strategic investment in youth work, including dedicated budgets, staff positions, or departments focusing on youth.

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT



- 1. Capacity Building:** Focus on building the capacity of young people within your organisation not just as participants, but as leaders and decision-makers.
- 2. Partnerships:** Build partnerships with other organisations, schools, and community groups to expand the reach and impact of your youth engagement efforts.
- 3. Celebrate Successes:** Recognise and celebrate the contributions and achievements of young people within your organisation to encourage continued involvement and leadership.

### 3. Advanced Level

At the advanced level, organisations are leaders in the field of youth work. They have integrated youth engagement deeply into their culture and operations. These organisations not only have extensive programs and opportunities for young people but also contribute to the broader community and sector by sharing best practices and advocating for youth engagement.

#### Checklist

	<b>Innovative Engagement:</b> Your organisation is recognised for its innovative approaches to engaging young people and setting trends in youth work.
	<b>Comprehensive Support:</b> Comprehensive support systems exist for young people, including mentorship, career development, and mental health resources.
	<b>Youth-Driven Initiatives:</b> The majority of initiatives are youth-driven, with young people empowered to design, implement, and evaluate projects.
	<b>Sector Influence:</b> The organisation influences the sector by sharing best practices, research findings, and advocating for youth engagement policies.
	<b>Sustainable Impact:</b> There is clear evidence of sustainable impact on both the young people involved and the broader community or sector.

#### FOOD FOR THOUGHT



- 1. Mentor Other Organisations:** Offer mentorship and guidance to other organisations that are in the earlier stages of developing their youth engagement strategies.
- 2. Sustainability Planning:** Focus on long-term sustainability of youth initiatives by exploring innovative funding models, partnerships, and engagement strategies.
- 3. Advocacy:** Use your organisation's influence to advocate for policies and practices that support youth development and engagement at local, national, and international levels.

## Recommendations & Sample Actions

You may now move on to the level that indicates your organisational development best and implement the recommendations that align with your goals.

### Level 1: Foundational



**Secure dedicated funding for youth-focused programs to facilitate their growth and successful transition.**

#### Activities

- Develop a comprehensive funding strategy specifically for youth programs, integrating it with the broader organisational fundraising approach.
- Identify and pursue grants and sponsorships that specifically target youth development initiatives.
- Organise community fundraising events that highlight the successes and potential of youth programs to attract local support.

#### Tools & Resources

**Guide:** "[The Beginner's Guide to Nonprofit Fundraising](#)" by Classy: Offers step-by-step instructions on setting up effective fundraising strategies for nonprofit organizations, including those focusing on youth programs.

**Financial Management Software:** Tools like Sage or Xero can help manage and track funding allocated to youth programmes within the broader organisational budget.

**Nonprofit Finance Fund's Financial Planning Toolkit:** Offers comprehensive guides on strategic financial planning.



**Empower young individuals to lead and drive projects within the organization, fostering ownership & accountability.**

#### Activities

- Implement a leadership development program for young members, including workshops on project management and leadership skills.
- Establish a youth advisory board to provide input on organisational decisions and project planning.
- Create a platform for young individuals to pitch and lead their own initiatives, supported by mentorship from experienced staff.

#### Tools & Resources

**Resource:** "[Youth Leadership Development Guide](#)" by ACT for Youth: A comprehensive guide designed to assist organizations in developing leadership skills among young people.

**Leadership Development Toolkit:** The "Youth Leadership Toolkit" by Advocates for Youth is tailored to young leaders in the SRHR field, offering customizable materials.

**Online Learning Platforms:** FutureLearn offers courses focused on leadership and project management, which could be particularly useful in the civil society and SRHR context.





## Level 1: Foundational (cont.)



**Enhance the employability of entry-level youth workers by equipping them with in-demand skills.**

### Activities

- Partner with educational institutions or online platforms to offer courses in high-demand skills such as digital literacy, communication, and critical thinking.
- Set up a mentorship program pairing young workers with experienced professionals in their field of interest.
- Organise career fairs and networking events with potential employers to provide practical opportunities for youth workers to engage with the job market.

### Tools & Resources

**Guide:** "[Partnerships Between Nonprofits and Businesses: A Guide](#)" by Nonprofit Hub:

Provides insights into forming successful partnerships with educational institutions and businesses to enhance youth training opportunities.

**Guide:** Mentoring.org's Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring provide guide to developing impactful mentoring relationships.

**Tool:** Handshake is a career development platform that can facilitate connections between young job seekers and employers.



**Provide meaningful internship experiences to young adults, enriching their skill sets and practical knowledge.**

### Activities

- Design internship programs in collaboration with interns to ensure alignment with their career aspirations and learning objectives.
- Offer workshops and training sessions as part of the internship, focusing on both technical and soft skills.
- Implement a feedback and evaluation system for interns to assess their experience and for the organisation to continuously improve the program.

### Tools & Resources

**Resource:** "Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring™" by MENTOR offers a comprehensive guide on establishing a high-quality mentoring program.

**Tool:** Chronus or Mentorloop, mentoring software that facilitates pairing mentors and mentees and tracks their progress.

**Tool:** [Internship Program Toolkit](#) by NACE offers best practices for structuring internships that meet both organisational and intern goals.



## Level 2: Proficient



### Foster long-term engagement in activism and decision-making from childhood through young adulthood.

#### Activities

- Develop a comprehensive pathway program that guides children through various stages of activism, providing age-appropriate resources and support.
- Organise annual youth forums where young activists can share ideas, learn from each other, and engage with decision-makers.
- Implement a mentorship program linking young activists with experienced advocates in their areas of interest.

#### Tools & Resources

**Resource:** "[Pathways to Youth Empowerment and Engagement: A Practical Guide](#)" by Search Institute offers practical strategies for creating programs that guide young people through various stages of engagement and activism.

**Guide:** "[How to Organize a Youth Forum](#)" by UNESCO provides a detailed framework for planning and executing successful youth forums that foster meaningful dialogue and engagement.

**Resource:** "[Effective Mentoring: A Guide for Mentors and Mentees](#)" by APA outlines best practices for mentorship relationships, focusing on linking young individuals with seasoned professionals or advocates.



### Enhance the capacity of youth workers through increased support and skill development opportunities.

#### Activities

- Create a continuous professional development program for youth workers, including workshops, webinars, and conferences.
- Establish a resource library accessible to youth workers, featuring materials on best practices, skill development, and innovation in youth work.
- Introduce a recognition and reward system to acknowledge the achievements and improvements of youth workers, fostering a culture of excellence and motivation.

#### Tools & Resources

**Guide:** "[A Guide to Creating a Learning Culture in Organizations](#)" by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)

**Resource:** "Effective Practices in Professional Development" by Learning Forward

**Guide:** "[Core Competencies for Youth Work Professionals](#)" by the Department of Youth & Community Development

**Resource:** "[Youth Work Essentials](#)" by European Union

**Guide:** "[Employee Recognition: The Complete Guide](#)" by SnackNation

**Resource:** "[A Guide to Developing a Recognition Strategy](#)" by WorldatWork



## Level 2: Proficient (cont.)



**Empower young individuals to become responsible leaders and change-makers in their communities.**

### Activities

- Launch a leadership academy for young people, focusing on ethical leadership, community organising, and advocacy.
- Support youth-led community projects with seed funding, mentorship, and resources to turn their visions into reality.
- Facilitate intergenerational dialogues where young leaders can exchange ideas with experienced leaders, fostering mutual learning and collaboration.

### Tools & Resources

**Guide:** "[Leadership Academy Manual](#)" by the League of Young Voters Education Fund  
**Resource:** "[Youth Leadership Development Programs: Best Practices](#)" by Youth.gov  
**Guide:** "[Seed Funding: The Guide for Social Enterprise and Nonprofit Projects](#)" by ClearlySo  
**Resource:** "[Mentorship in Community Projects: A Guide](#)" by Community Tool Box  
**Guide:** "[Intergenerational Dialogue: Practical Guide](#)" by United Nations Focal Point on Youth  
**Resource:** "[Toolkit for Intergenerational Living: Learning Programs](#)" by Generations United



**Provide access to a robust network of youth-led organisations and professional connections.**

### Activities

- Develop an online platform that serves as a hub for networking, collaboration, and sharing opportunities among youth-led organisations.
- Organise annual conferences or summits that bring together young leaders, professionals, and organizations to foster connections and collaborations.
- Partner with industry leaders to create internship, mentorship, and job shadowing opportunities for young people, enhancing their career trajectories.

### Tools & Resources

**Guide:** "[Creating Virtual Community: A Guide to Setting Up Online Platforms for Organisations](#)" by TechSoup  
**Resource:** "[The Nonprofit's Guide to Building Online Community](#)" by NTEN  
**Guide:** "[The Conference Planning Guide](#)" by Wild Apricot  
**Resource:** "[Summit Host Handbook](#)" by The Collective Impact Forum  
**Guide:** "[A Comprehensive Guide to Building Internship Programs](#)" a book by Intern Bridge  
**Resource:** "[Mentoring Toolkit: A Guide for Developing an Effective Mentoring Program](#)" by MENTOR National



## Level 3: Advanced



**Support child-led initiatives in evolving into sustainable, independent organisations.**

### Activities

- Offer organisational development workshops covering strategic planning, financial management, and governance tailored to young leaders.
- Provide incubation services, including legal advice, financial management training, and strategic planning assistance, to support the formalisation and growth of child-led initiatives.
- Establish a mentorship program that pairs child-led groups with established organisations for guidance and support.

### Tools & Resources

**Guide: "Strategic Planning in Nonprofits: A Guide and Toolkit"** by Washington Nonprofits offers comprehensive instructions on conducting strategic planning workshops, adaptable for organizational development in youth-centric organizations.

**Guide: "Nonprofit Incubator Toolkit"** by the National Business Incubation Association

**Resource: "Legal Guide for Nonprofits"** by Pro Bono Partnership

**Training Module: "Financial Management Training for Nonprofits"** by the Wallace Foundation

**Guide: "The Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring™"** by MENTOR

**Resource: "Building and Supporting Peer Mentoring Programs"** by YouthBuild USA



**Mentor youth-led initiatives to become impactful and transformative in addressing community challenges.**

### Activities

- Develop a tailored mentorship program focusing on project design, impact measurement, and sustainability for youth-led initiatives, pairing them with experienced professionals in relevant fields.
- Host innovation labs where youth-led initiatives can collaborate with experts to refine their projects and increase their impact.
- Facilitate access to small-scale funding for pilot projects, enabling youth-led initiatives to test and adapt their approaches to community problems.

### Tools & Resources

**Guide: "Designing Impactful Mentoring Programs for Youth"** by MentorCloud

**Resource: "Project Design and Management Workshops"** by Peace Corps

**Guide: "A Guide to Fundraising and Partnership Development for Social Enterprises"** by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) offers insights into securing funding for pilot projects, particularly useful for youth-led initiatives seeking to make a tangible impact.



## Level 3: Advanced (cont.)



**Leverage organisational networks to enhance young people's professional skills and competencies.**

### Activities

- Organise a series of career development workshops in partnership with universities and professional organizations, covering topics such as resume writing, interview skills, and networking.
- Establish a formal internship exchange program within the network, allowing young people to gain diverse professional experiences.
- Create a digital mentorship platform where young people can connect with professionals within the organisational network for career advice, skill development, and job shadowing opportunities.

### Tools & Resources

**Guide:** "[Career Workshop Facilitator's Guide](#)" by the University of California

**Resource:** "[Professional Development Workshops: A Guide for Universities](#)" by Higher Education Recruitment Consortium

**Guide:** "[The Internship Program Operators Manual](#)" by Internship Institute

**Resource:** "[Creating a Quality Internship Program](#)" by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)

**Guide:** "[Building a Virtual Mentoring Portal: An Implementation Toolkit](#)" by MENTOR National

**Resource:** "[A Guide to Digital Mentoring Platforms](#)" by the Mentoring Partnership of Southwestern Pennsylvania



## Next Steps

**Congratulations if you've reached the end of this resource. We understand that this is just the start of a journey that involves time, unlearning, consultations, substantial collaboration, and considerable budget support.** We advise organisations to use this guide as a starting point for introspection and action. Engage with the themes, implement the recommendations, and take concrete steps towards incorporating these insights into your organisational strategies. Remember, the journey of capacity building for youth transition is ongoing. We urge you to connect with others in this field, share your experiences and learnings, and continue contributing to the evolving narrative of youth engagement.



### Taking action

**Still not sure where to start? Take our [Capacity Building for Youth Transition Quiz](#) to find out which level of actions apply to your organisation.**

**[Start Quiz](#)**



### Connect & Share

- **Is your organisation on the journey to transition young people through capacity building? We'd love to hear how this resource is helping you take action. [Tag us on social media](#), and include [#LearningActivation](#)**
- **If you have made significant progress towards your goal but need more personalised and direct support, you can contact us. The YIELD Hub provides technical assistance in the form of consultancy services for organisations interested in delving deeper. [Send us an email, info@yieldhub.global](mailto:info@yieldhub.global)**

We deeply appreciate the ALC 4 member organisations for their invaluable contributions and insights. Their seven-month dedication was crucial in creating this comprehensive guide.

We also extend our thanks to you, the reader, for your dedication to this significant cause. Your efforts to capacitate young people to transition supports our mission to establish youth partnership as the norm, rather than the exception, in the AYSRHR field.

# Contact Us

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Want to learn more about this resource?



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