



Photo credits: Caritas Lebanon
Youth providing humanitarian assistance after the Beirut blast

Cordaid's Youth Engagement Scorecard

Lifting youth participation in partnerships for development

Today's youth are visibly contributing as political actors, social mobilisers, innovators, entrepreneurs and peacebuilders. At the same time, especially in fragile countries, youth face disproportionate social, economic and political barriers which prevent them from unleashing their full potential. Young people represent a large part of the population in the Global South. Almost all programs influence young people and increasingly focus specifically on youth. Evidence has shown that when young people have the ability to influence and shape the programs and decisions that affect their lives these programs yield more impact.

Meaningful Youth Participation

The level of youth engagement in programs may vary depending on the type of program, whether youth is the specific target group or not. Meaningful youth participation can only occur if it entails active, informed and effective engagement of youth in decision-making at various levels in an organization and in all stages of programming (design phase, implementation and post implementation) and policy-making. Ideally this programming becomes increasingly youth led and youth transformative; meaning it addresses the causes of age-based inequality and includes strategies that foster positive changes in power relations between young people and adults. For this to become reality, young people's role and influence in programs and policy making should be systematically improved.

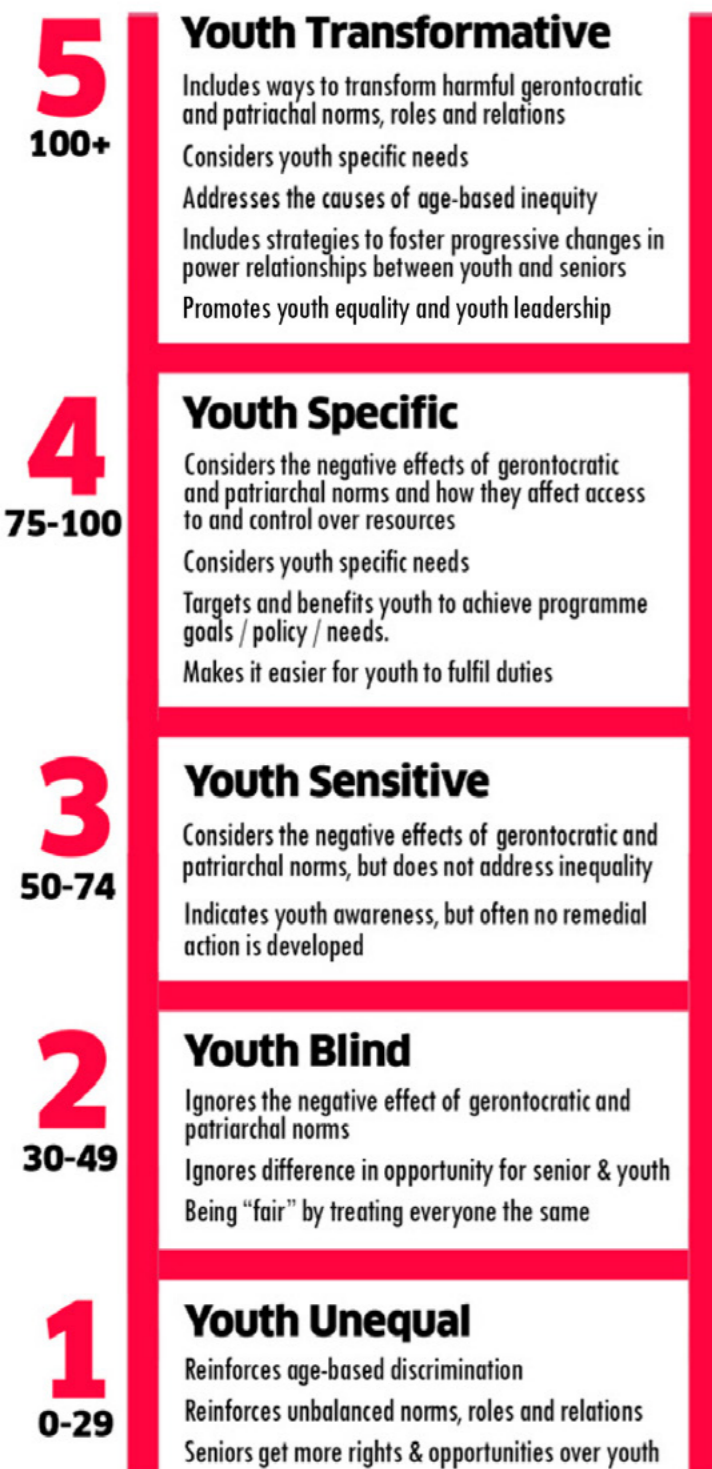
The Youth Engagement Scorecard provides professionals in the development sector the possibility to measure the level of youth engagement in programs or projects during different phases (design phase, implementation and post implementation). It is a user-friendly, insightful, fun and limited-time-consuming tool that aims to make us reflect and learn about the possibilities of youth engagement and how to lift this to a higher level.

Cordaid's Youth Engagement Scorecard

How to use the Scorecard

The Youth Engagement Scorecard can be used in the different program phases; design phase, implementation and post-implementation. There is an excel version available that you can download from the Cordaid website, with a separate tab for each phase.

You can fill out the Scorecard for two different types of programs. Youth-centred programs that have youth as the target group or work with youth-led partner organizations. Youth mainstreaming programs in which youth plays a relevant role but is not seen as the first target group. This assures that every project can obtain an indication on the level of youth engagement that is in line with the role that youth is playing in the project itself. The Scorecard is an accountability and monitoring tool that helps projects to assess the degree of youth integration within our programs.



Assessment Scale

After filling out the Scorecard the assessment scale will indicate what this score actually means. The assessment scale is divided into five levels, going from youth unequal to youth-transformative programs. The assessment scale aims to sketch a clear overview on where a program stands and what still can be done in order to climb up the assessment scale.

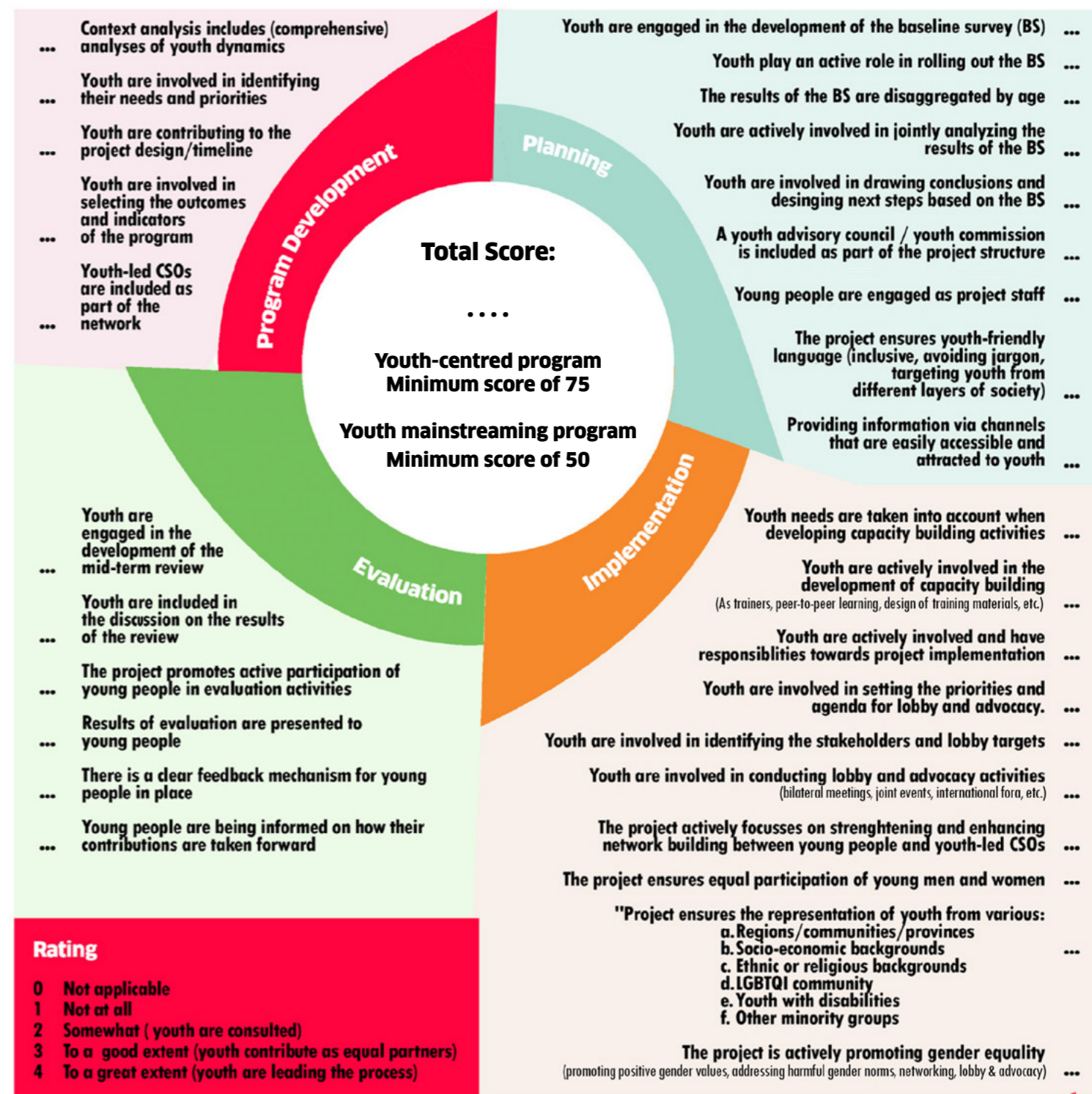
Youth-centred programs need a **minimum score of 75**, the level of Youth Specific on the assessment scale. When youth are the main target group of your program, then it is important that young people and youth-led organizations are equal partners or play a leading role in the program. When the program also opposes successfully the negative effects of gerontocratic and patriarchal norms, they can be considered as youth transformative. Norms are transformed and the causes of age-base inequity are addressed.

Youth mainstreaming programs need a **minimum score of 50**, the level of Youth Sensitive. In your program, you are aware of youth engagement and consult youth in the different program phases. You consider the harmful effects of gerontocratic norms. Your next step would be to include youth as equal partners in your program and address their specific needs.

If you want to improve the level of youth engagement in your program, or you did not reach the minimum score for your youth centred (75) and youth mainstreaming (50) program, this is what you can do:

Select the questions where you had the lowest scores. Turn these questions into actions and re-design your program accordingly. You can list your actions in the scorecard, to monitor your progress and improve your score. See the paragraph 'Lifting Youth Participation to a higher level' for some suggestions (p.4).

Fill out the Youth Engagement Scorecard:



Gender

For Cordaid working on gender means working with women, men, and non-binary people from diverse backgrounds and from an intersectional approach. This means we strive to work inclusively and to not discriminate based on gender, age, class, ethnic background, sexual orientation, or gender expression (LGBTQI+) and physical ability (disabled people).

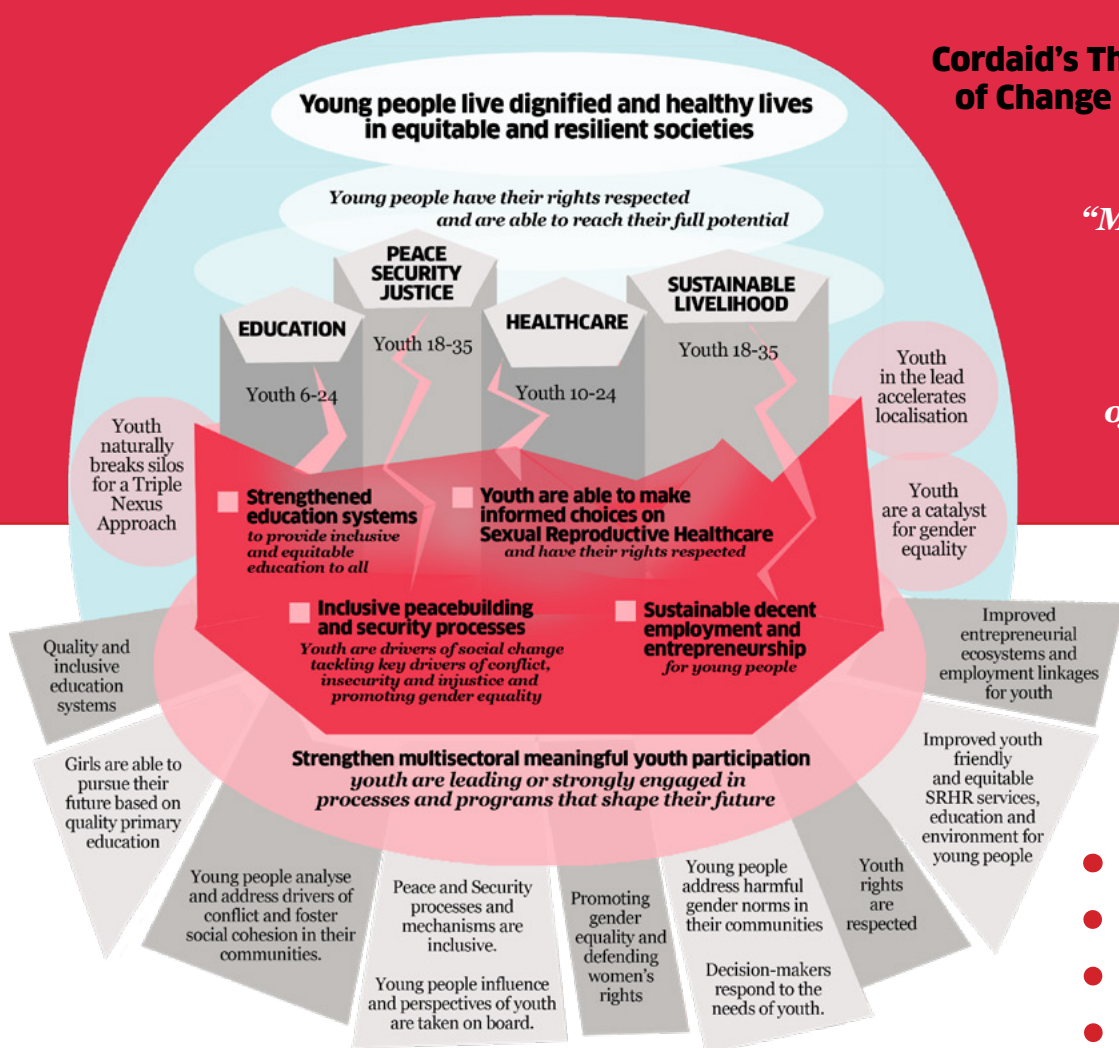
Inter generational approach

Youth participation does not by definition exclude the participation of adults. Meaningful programming can only be achieved based on collaborative efforts between youth and older generations as equal partners. An inter-generational approach is also key to find common ground for action, develop mutual respect and bridge trust gaps between youth and other members of society.

Lifting youth participation to a higher level

Young people, both young women and men, need to be included in all stages of the program from the start. Young people are not a homogenous group, therefore it is important to be aware of this diversity (in for instance social-economic background, education, age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity) and ensure a maximum inclusive approach. Youth should be involved in the design, implementation and evaluation phase as equal partners. Often this includes to engage youth in the baseline studies and monitoring an evaluation, joint development of process and success indicators and joint harvest of outcomes and successes and presentations to the donor. Provide a chance for employment of young people as project staff. In the communication it is important to use youth-friendly language and dissemination channels that are accessible for or frequented visited by young people. When incorporating capacity strengthening, it is crucial to assign young people as (co)-trainers and focus on topics that young people themselves prioritise applying approaches that are interactive and facilitate exchange of knowledge and best practises. Policy influencing and lobby and advocacy activities are more effective when youth lead or contribute to the agenda-setting, identify lobby targets and conduct lobby and advocacy activities.

Meaningful youth participation in partnership for development will lead to more impact as young people are a great force in society. Meaningful engaged youth are the key to success in bringing positive social change and contributing to humanitarian assistance, development, gender equality and peace.



Cordaid's Theory of Change

“Meaningful Youth Participation is essential for inclusive partnerships of development”

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**CARE. ACT.
SHARE.
LIKE CORDAID.**

A multi-sectoral approach matters

While the largest ever cohort of young people is coming of age, young people, especially in fragile and conflict settings, face multiple challenges. Addressing this in a sustainable manner requires a multisectoral (integrated) approach and meaningful youth engagement. With and for young people, Cordaid works at strengthening the education systems, creating sustainable decent employment and entrepreneurship, supporting inclusive peacebuilding and security processes and access to health services to make informed (sexual reproductive) health choices. In these programs, youth are either leading the programs or strongly engaged in shaping the decisions that affect their future. By doing so, youth are powerful forces for localisation in development and gender equality.