

CALL TO ACTION!

Youth-led organizations are becoming increasingly visible in international, regional and national arenas. They are playing a key role in enabling young people to exercise their right to participation and contribute to the success of programs, projects and initiatives aimed at young people because they are uniquely placed to address issues from a youth perspective. However, throughout the world, the important role of young people and the work of youth-led organizations is often unrecognized, undervalued and under-funded.

If we are to realize the positive change that we want to see in the world, we must ensure that youth activists and youth organizations at all levels are supported through youth-friendly, secure and sustained funding. We currently have the largest youth population ever, and it is essential that we capitalize on the expertise, skills and collective power of youth advocates and youth organizations. We can simply not afford to disempower and disenfranchise the next generation that will champion the change we want to see in the world.

We therefore call on funders, adult-led organizations and political leaders to commit to achieving sustainable youth leadership by investing in young leaders and youth-led organizations;



1 Invest directly in youth-led organizations and initiatives

The global agenda increasingly speaks of the importance of youth participation and how it positively contributes to peace, development and security, and thus funding and partnership opportunities are critical. Young people themselves should be able to take the lead in creating healthy, just and poverty-free societies for their generation and those to come.

2 Help youth-led organizations fund their core operating costs

Core funding for staff salaries, annual meetings, marketing and communications, recruitment, internal training, strategic planning, staff turnover and other organizational costs are indispensable to be able to run any organization that wants to have an impact.

3 Provide long-term funding for a minimum of one to three-year terms

Designing, implementing and evaluating youth programs takes time. Longer term funding is therefore key to allow for more strategic, sustainable programming. With solely short-term funding, time is often taken away from fulfilling other organizational objectives and the organization is left to struggle to cover administrative costs.

4 Make funding requirements more youth-friendly and accessible

Support youth-led organizations in obtaining funds by ensuring youth-friendly grant application forms, lower financial requirements (e.g. minimum annual financial turnover, own financial contribution), simple reporting formats and increased flexibility for funding youth partnerships, networks and voluntary organizations; ensuring that requirements do not impose organizational structures, instead recognizing and supporting existing formal and informal youth organizational structures.

5 Support institutional capacity-building, including fundraising skills

Youth-led initiatives often lack fundraising expertise, staff experience and long-term relationships with funders. Funding organizations and partners should institutionalize capacity strengthening support; through youth-adult mentorship, training programs, ensuring unrestricted funds are available to youth-led organizations to develop training programs for staff and volunteers; all of which are essential to ensure the continued development and strengthening of activities.

6 Value the work of youth-led organizations and acknowledge that young people are their own experts. Build and invest in meaningful youth-adult partnerships, which can be beneficial to both youth-led and non-youth-led organizations. Youth-led organizations can be mentors to youth-serving organizations, funders or political leaders with access to youth networks, program expertise and knowledge of youth priorities.

**ACT NOW!
RECOGNIZE THE
IMPORTANT WORK
YOUNG PEOPLE DO
AND MAKE SURE IT
CONTINUES!**

**CALL TO ACTION:
FOR GREATER SUPPORT
AND INVESTMENT
IN YOUTH-LED
ORGANIZATIONS**

