

MYE SCORECARD

A Guide for Improving Meaningful Youth
Engagement (MYE) in Policy-Making in Kenya





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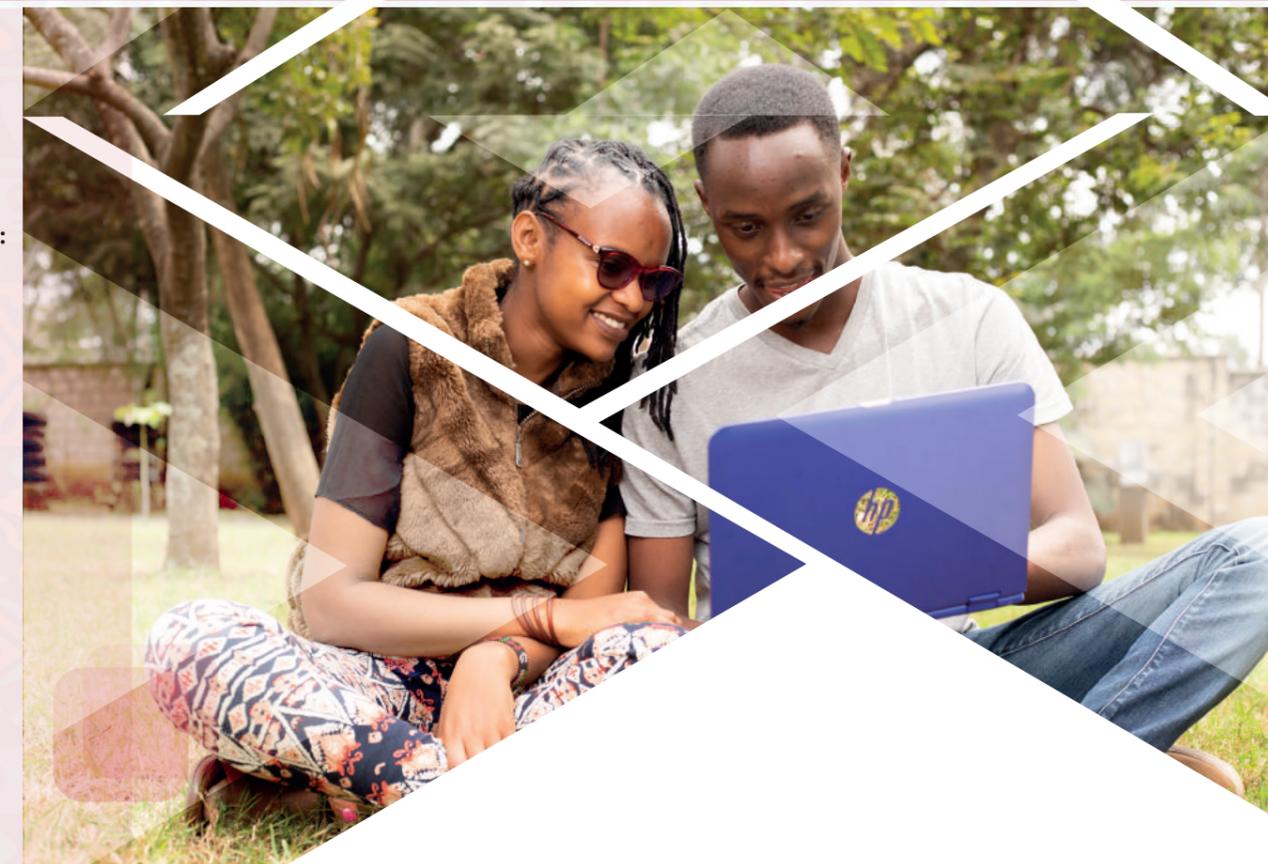
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Youth Advocacy Project (Y-ACT)



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ABOUT: Y-ACT



Y-Act is an initiative by Amref Health Africa and the Advocacy Accelerator that works with partners and communities across the country to strengthen the voice, skills and participation of youth across Kenya to advocate for youth-identified policy and resource priorities in the areas of gender equality and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) at national, sub-national and grassroots levels. 

Our Key Objectives:

Identify priorities, needs, and opportunities to pursuing a Sexual and Reproductive Health & Rights (SRHR) youth advocacy agenda in Kenya.

Develop, test, refine and offer capacity strengthening trainings and support for youth-led advocacy organizations and individuals. 

Provide platforms for visibility, engagement, alignment, and information-sharing for youth advocates.



BACKGROUND

A Guide for Improving Meaningful Youth Engagement (MYE) in Policy-Making in Kenya

Young People under the age of 35 make up 70% of the Kenyan population. However, too often their priorities are not reflected in government priorities, policies, and budgeting processes and outcomes. At a time when the importance of their role and potential for improving policies to meet their need is at its greatest, Kenyan youth have a huge opportunity to shift the country's policy landscape.

Kenya's County Governments Act in section 106 (4) obligates counties to provide for citizen participation that shall be done in a process that involves "meaningful engagement of citizens" (105(1-d)). Thus, formulation, implementation and monitoring of youth policies should be consultative, participatory and transparent. However, youth are often not represented on decision-making or priority-setting bodies and, when they are, their engagement may not be active or represent the full set of youth perspective desired.

To address this gap, policy makers must prioritize the meaningful engagement of youth in policy-making and implementing processes that can impact their health and well-being. Their inputs and perspectives will go a long way in ensuring that resources are directed to the programs that they need and in a way that is effective.

It is important to note that meaningful engagement means more than mere presence or representation in policy-making processes. It requires allowing youth the trust, respect, and decision-making authority they need to have a true impact. But the responsibility goes both ways. Youth need to be prepared, engaged, and educated about the processes they seek to inform. Since youth are as diverse as their older counterparts, they also need to be willing and able to represent the interests of their peers, as well as themselves. Youth priorities and perspectives may vary by age, gender, socio-economic status, geographical location and many other factors. And it is imperative that the voices of those who are marginalized and vulnerable are heard.

To address this need, Y-ACT *Youth in Action* embarked on a process of supporting youth to document what meaningful youth engagement means to them, the gaps that exist in policy decision-making structures, the elements of meaningful youth engagements, and practical strategies for decision-makers to adopt. The results of this process are outlined below, along with a practical tool to measure, track and hold decision-makers accountable for ensuring meaningful youth engagement.





PRINCIPLES OF MEANINGFUL YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Principles

Meaningful youth engagement exists when it is..!

Inclusive

Youth are represented in policy-making bodies and engaged in policy-making processes.

Representative

Youth are able and willing to represent the perspectives of the broader youth community in their region, including marginalized and vulnerable populations.

Challenges

But...

- Youth may not be aware of public engagement opportunities in policymaking because notices are most often relayed through print media, which they do not access.
- Youth are often not invited as official members of policy-making bodies and processes. If they are, they are rarely actively engaged in agenda-setting and decision-making capacities throughout the entire policy-making process.
- Youth may not have the resources to engage.

But...

- Youth may not be sufficiently knowledgeable about policy making processes and norms of engagement to maximize their effectiveness.
- Youth invited to participate may not be part of networks that represent the interests and priorities of the full youth constituency of a region, including marginalized and vulnerable populations.
- Youth may not be notified of opportunities for engagement with enough time to solicit perspectives from other youth in advance.

Solutions

What is needed is...

- Decision-makers communicate about opportunities for public engagement in policy making processes relayed through channels utilized by youth and with sufficient advance notice.
- Decision-makers engage youth at every step of the policymaking process, including the identification, development, implementation, and evaluation of youth-related policies, budgets and programming.
- Decision-makers invite youth representatives as official members of youth-related policy advisory committees and bodies.
- Decision-makers give decision-making authority to youth in agenda- and priority-setting, as well as membership decisions.
- Decision-makers provide resources for youth as needed for engagement.

What is needed is...

- Decision-makers provide educational opportunities for youth to learn about policy-making processes and norms
- Decision-makers engage youth representatives who are part of a network that allows them to solicit and share perspectives of a diverse set of stakeholders (e.g., socio-economic status, gender, age, geography, education, inclusive of marginalized and vulnerable populations)
- Decision-makers provide sufficient notice for representatives to solicit stakeholder perspectives on agenda items before attending meetings and forums.

MEANINGFUL YOUTH ENGAGEMENT EXISTS WHEN IT IS



YOUTH ARE REPRESENTED AND ENGAGED

INCLUSIVE



YOUTH ARE ABLE AND WILLING

REPRESENTATIVE

CHALLENGES

BUT YOUTH..

- Not aware of public engagement opportunities
- Not invited as official members
- May not have resources to engage

- Not sufficiently knowledgeable - processes and norms
- May not represent full youth + marginalized and vulnerable
- May not be notified of opportunities for engagement

SOLUTIONS

DECISION MAKERS

- Communicate about opportunities
- Engage the youth at every step
- Invite youth representative as official member
- Provide Resources

- Provide educational opportunities
- Engage Youth representative
- Provide sufficient notice.

PRINCIPLES OF MEANINGFUL YOUTH ENGAGEMENT - DECISION MAKERS

Principles	Challenges	Solutions
<p>When decision-makers are...</p> <p>Skilled</p> <p>Decision-makers understand the challenges to meaningful youth engagement and practice methods to overcome them.</p>	<p>But...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision-makers may not have any experience engaging youth in policymaking processes. Decision-makers may not be aware of the unique challenges that youth face to engaging in policy-making processes and the mechanisms to overcome them. 	<p>What is needed is...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision-makers seek out opportunities to engage with youth in various settings. Decision-makers ask their peers and avail themselves with resources about ways to effectively engage youth in decision-making processes. Decision-makers ask youth about the challenges they face and what they need to engage in policy-making processes more effectively.
<p>Supportive</p> <p>Decision-makers value the engagement of youth in decision-making processes.</p>	<p>But...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision-makers may be unaware of how the engagement of youth can add value to their policy-making processes and outcomes. Decision-makers may see the engagement of youth as challenging and an extra burden. 	<p>What is needed is...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision-makers communicate with their peers about the value they have experienced by engaging with youth. Decision-makers champion initiatives or create new roles that encourage active engagement of youth.
<p>Transparent</p> <p>Decision-makers value the engagement of youth in decision-making processes.</p>	<p>But...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision-makers may be unaware of how the engagement of youth can add value to their policy-making processes and outcomes. Decision-makers may see the engagement of youth as challenging and an extra burden. 	<p>What is needed is...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision-makers communicate with their peers about the value they have experienced by engaging with youth. Decision-makers champion initiatives or create new roles that encourage active engagement of youth.





PRINCIPLES OF MEANINGFUL YOUTH ENGAGEMENT - YOUTH

Principles	Challenges	Solutions
<p>When youth are...</p> <p>Engaged</p> <p>Youth are present, professional, timely, responsive, and actively participate when they are engaged in policy-making processes.</p>	<p>But...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth may not prioritize engagement with policy-makers because they do not anticipate their perspectives to be valued and respected, based on previous experience. 	<p>What is needed is...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth arrive to meetings and events at the appointed time. Youth provide timely responses to commitments they have made. Youth are respectful and professional in their behaviour and dress. Youth actively participate in the policy dialogue at appropriate moments.
<p>Educated</p> <p>Youth understand the policymaking processes and norms for effective engagement.</p>	<p>But...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth have few opportunities to learn about the policy making and budgeting processes and roles nationally and sub-nationally. Youth may be inexperienced in the norms and behaviors that will increase acceptance of their perspectives and priorities at meetings and events with decision-makers. 	<p>What is needed is...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth seek opportunities to educate themselves about their local policy-making and budgeting processes, including the timing and decision-makers at each step. Youth engage with peers and/or observe policy-making events (live, online, on television) to better understand the norms of engagement in policy-making meetings and processes.
<p>Prepared</p> <p>Youth have a strategy and a plan for achieving specific policy goals and objectives.</p>	<p>But...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth may not come to meetings prepared with a specific goal, objectives, and desirable decision-maker actions for each meeting. Youth may not have the appropriate documentation, data, and messengers they need to effectively communicate their messages. 	<p>What is needed is...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth lead a consultative and evidence-driven process to identify their policy goal and objectives, as well as what actions target decision-makers need to take to achieve them. Youth develop communications strategies with documentation, data and trained messengers who can answer questions that may arise in support of the goals and objectives.
<p>Networked</p> <p>Youth have mechanisms for soliciting and sharing information to inform advocacy strategies and plans.</p>	<p>But...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth may not have strong networks with communications mechanisms that allow them to solicit and share information between all desired stakeholders in a timely manner. Youth may not have representatives that are well-versed in the challenges and priorities of a diverse set of stakeholders. 	<p>What is needed is...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth ensure that mechanisms are in place to efficiently communicate with and solicit feedback from a diverse and representative group of youth on the policy goal and objectives. Youth identify (or train, if necessary) representatives that are well-versed in the full range of perspectives among youth constituencies.

WHEN YOUTH ARE...

- Present
- Professional
- Timely
- Responsive
- Actively Participating

CHALLENGES

BUT YOUTH...

Do Not Expect their Perspectives to be Valued & Respected

Have Few Opportunities to Learn

May have no Specific goal, Objectives & desirable actions.

No documentation, data & a good messenger

Have no Strong Networks Well-versed Representative

SOLUTIONS

- Keep Time
- Commit
- Be respectful & professional
- Actively Participate

Educate themselves Engage with Peers to Understand

Develop Policy goal

Develop Communication Strategies

Put mechanism in place for efficient Communication

Identify/ Train Representatives

ENGAGED

Youth Understand

EDUCATED

Specific

PREPARED

Soliciting and Sharing Information

NETWORKED

The MYE Scorecard: How to Use it?

A GUIDE FOR EVALUATING AND STRENGTHENING MEANINGFUL YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN POLICY-MAKING IN KENYA

To improve MYE in Kenya, the challenges and solutions outlined above need to be..

Evaluated: What is the current status of MYE by both policymakers and youth?

Understood: What knowledge and actions need to be improved?

Addressed: Engage in efforts to improve knowledge and actions

And....evaluate again: has there been any improvement?

STEP 1: DETERMINE WHO WILL BE EVALUATED

- What committees or government bodies are responsible for the policy changes you want to see?

.....

.....

.....

- Who are the youth that are seeking that change? Who will participate in the evaluation?
(select no more than four youth representataives, ideally those most knowledgeable about the policymaker and policymaking process)

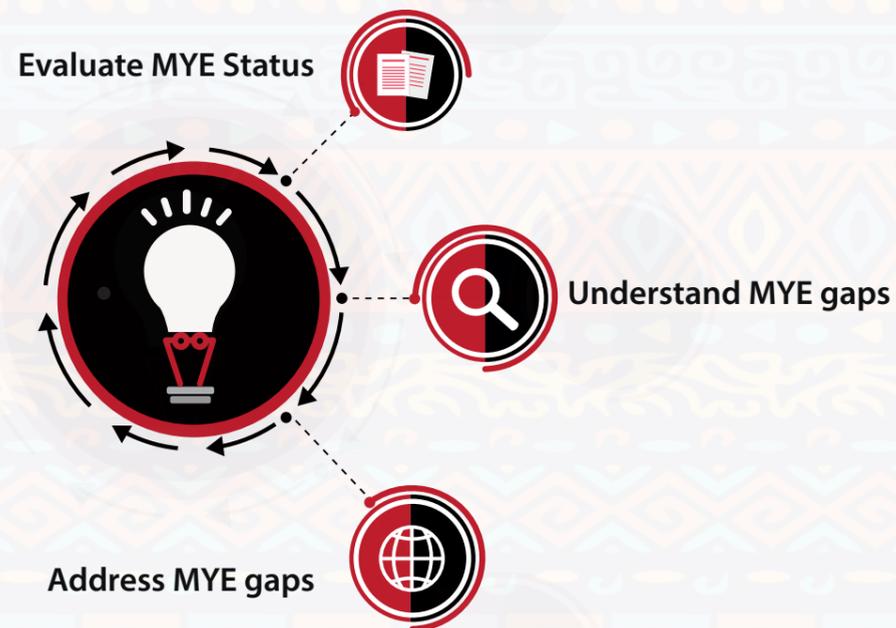
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STEP 2 : INVITE POLICYMAKERS TO GO THROUGH THE ASSESSMENT WITH YOU

- Introduce your topic and desire to engage with them to address  topic. Explain that you want to make sure that your engagement is productive as possible, to maximize the quality and impact of your contributions. Invite them to go through an evaluation and learning process with you.
- Send the MYE Scorecard document to the policy-makers in advance of the meeting.
- Select a small group of youth to meet with the relevant policymakers to review the indicators together. Ideally the meeting will take place at a neutral location.



The MYE Scorecard: How to Use it?

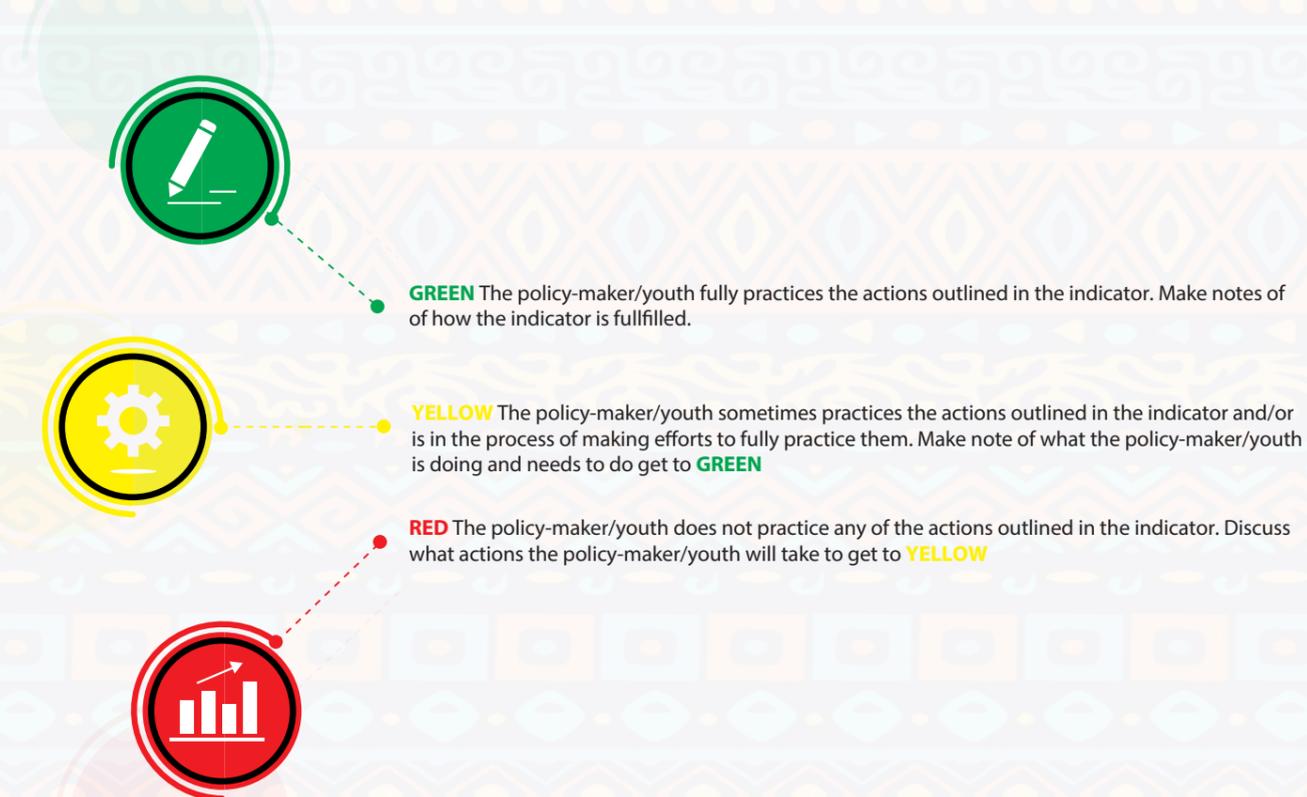
A GUIDE FOR EVALUATING AND STRENGTHENING MEANINGFUL YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN POLICY-MAKING IN KENYA

STEP 3 : COMPLETE THE SCORECARD

- Use the form on the following pages to review the indicators jointly with the policymakers and take notes of examples provided by the policy-maker and youth at the meeting for each indicator.
- Come to agreement on how to score each indicator, making notes of specific actions that have been or will be taken in a specific timeframe. These notes will become an **ACTION PLAN**.

STEP 4 : IMPLEMENT THE ACTION PLAN AND RE-EVALUATE

- Meet again with the policy-maker at the determined time-frame to review the initial scorecard and document any changes.
- Revise the scorecard accordingly, making note of and commending any improvements.
- Continue to meet and assess until all indicators are green.





Scorecard: Standards for Meaningful Policy- Maker Engagemment with Youth



- = High
- = Medium
- = Low

Principles	Indicators	Measure
<i>Meaningful youth engagement exists when it is...</i>		
Inclusive Youth are represented in policy-making bodies and engaged in policy-making processes.	Communications on opportunities for public engagement in policymaking processes (e.g., community hearings) are relayed through television, radio, and social media channels at least fourteen business days in advance.	● ● ●
	Youth are invited to engage at every step of the policymaking process, including the identification, developemnet, implementation, and evaluation of youth-related policies, budgets and programming.	●
	At least one young person between the ages of 18-35 is an official member of youth-related policy advisory committees and bodies.	●
	Youth representatives have decision-making authority and are engaged in agenda-and priority-setting, as well as membership decisions.	●
	Resources needed by youth are provided.	●
Representative Youth are able and willing to represent the perspectives of the broader youth community in their region, including marginalized and vulnerable populations.	Decision-makers provide educational opportunities for youth to learn about policy-making processes and norms.	●
	Youth invited as representatives are part of a network tha allows them to solicit and share perspectives of a diverse set of stakeholders) e.g., socio-economic status, gender, age, geography, education, inclusive of marginalized and vulnerable populations)	●
	At least fourteen business days` notice is given for representatives to solicit stakeholder perspectives on agenda items before attending meetings and forums.	●
<i>When decision-makers are...</i>		
Skilled Decision-makers understand the challenges to meaningful youth engagement and practice merthods to overcome them,	Decision-makers have attended a youth-sensitization training or forum.	●
	Decision-makers have participated in a youth-led initiatives.	●
	Decision-makers can accurately identify the challenges and solutions to meaningful youth engagement outlined in this document.	●
Supportive Decision-makers value the engagement of youth in decision-making processes.	Decision-makers have championed an initiative or created a new role that encourages active engagement of youth.	●
	Decision-makers have participated in a youth-led initiatives.	●
	Decision-makers can accurately identify the challenges and solutions to meaningful youth engagement outlined in this document.	●
Transparent Decision-makers effectively communicate their progress and actions taken on youth priorities.	Decision-makers communicate their progress and actions at each stage of the policy-making process (e.g., iedntification, development, implementation, and evaluation) through social media channels used by youth.	●
	Communications of progress and actions are made within 14 business days of the decision or action.	●
	Decision-makers communicate using simple, common language.	●



Scorecard: Standards for Meaningful Youth Engagement with Policy-Makers



- = High
- = Medium
- = Low

Principles	Indicators	Measure
<i>Meaningful engagement exists when youth are...</i>		
Engaged Youth are present, professional, timely, responsive, and actively participate when they are engaged with decision-makers.	Youth arrive to meetings with decision-makers before the appointed time.	● ● ●
	Youth provide follow-up to commitments made at meetings with decision-makers within fourteen business days.	●
	Youth arrive to meetings and events with decision-makers dressed in professional attire.	●
	Youth representatives have decision-making authority and are engaged in agenda-and priority-setting, as well as membership decisions.	●
Educated Youth understand the policymaking processes and norms for effective engagement.	Youth educated themselves about their local policy-making and budgeting processes, understanding the timings and decision-makers at each step.	●
	Youth engage with peers and/or observe policy-making events (live, online, on television) to better understand the norms of engagement in policy-making meetings and processes.	●
Prepared Youth have a strategy and plan for achieving specific policy goal and objectives.	Youth have come to consensus on an evidence-driven policy goal and objectives, as well as what actions target decision-makers need to take to achieve them.	●
	Youth have developed communications strategies with documentation, data, and trained messengers who can answer questions that may arise in support of the goals and objectives.	●
Networked Youth have mechanisms for soliciting and shairng information to inform advocacy strategies and plans	Youth have established mechanisms to efficiently communicate with and solicit feedback from a diverse and representative group of youth on the policy goals and objectives.	●
	Youth have identified (or trained, if necessary) representatives that are well-versed in the full range of perspectives among youth constituencies.	●



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