

Human Rights of Youth: Working with and for youth in vulnerable situations including conflict, violence and insecurity

Youth Consultations Concept Note

Background

'Human Rights of Youth: Working *with* and *for* youth in vulnerable situations including conflict, violence and insecurity' is a project between Education Above All Foundation (EAA), Silatech and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) aimed at empowering and mobilizing young people to stand up for their human rights.

During Phase I of the project, the three partners will work jointly to create quality learning resources on human rights advocacy for youth. Participation of young people and their authentic ownership of the process, which are critical to the project's success, will be ensured through establishment of a Youth Advisory Board (YAB) and a series of youth consultations.

Once developed, in the project's Phase II, the resources will be used in a series of capacity-building workshops for youth advocates and peacebuilders globally, providing them with the crucial building blocks to better understand and claim their human rights. The empowered youth will then return to their communities with their newfound knowledge and skills sharing what they have learned, thereby creating a ripple effect that reaches the most marginalized members of the community.

The youth consultations will be critical in ensuring young people are engaged in the development of learning resources on youth rights that are developed with, by and for young people.

The objectives of the youth consultations, scope and methodology and participants are outlined below.

Objectives

The youth consultations are aimed at:

- Gauging knowledge and awareness of human rights among young people, as well as ways to effectively promote Human Rights Education;
- Understanding key human rights obstacles and challenges for youth, including when defending or advocating for human rights, across different national and regional contexts;
- Understanding the capacity building needs and support required for young people in advocating for and defending human rights;
- Investigating the level of knowledge and awareness of legal and policy frameworks or mechanisms to address human rights violations and/or promote respect for human rights (at national, regional and international level);
- Exploring how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted, and continues to impact youth rights.

The outcomes from the youth consultations will be used to feed into the development of a youth rights toolkit, to be launched in autumn 2022.

Additionally, the consultations can serve as a basis for a preliminary country-level analysis to identify countries and/or regions where implementation should be prioritized in phase II of the project (2022-23).

Scope and methodology

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic with travel and/or in-person meeting restrictions in a number of countries, the youth consultations will be carried out predominately online. A total of six sets of consultations will be held at regional/country level, to be led by OHCHR with support from its following field presences:

- Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa (Beirut, Lebanon)
- Western Africa Regional Office (Dakar, Senegal)
- Regional Office for Central Asia (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan)
- Guatemala Country Office (Guatemala City)
- Regional Office for Europe (Brussels, Belgium)
- Eastern Africa Regional Office & Regional Office for Southern Africa (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia & Pretoria, South Africa)

In order to reach youth in contexts with limited internet and/or IT equipment accessibility, some consultations may be held in person, depending on the capacity of the OHCHR field offices. Alternative options such as free of charge dial-in features for conference calls may also be considered.

Each set of consultations (per country/region) will feature two components:

1. A questionnaire to be disseminated using a survey tool such as Google Forms, SurveyMonkey or LimeSurvey.
2. Two live sessions of 1.5-2hrs, to be held using an online meeting platform such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire will be disseminated the week prior to the live session and will serve primarily for gathering quantitative data in advance of the live session. In particular, the survey will focus on:

- Challenges for youth in defending or advocating for human rights, across different national and regional contexts
- Knowledge and awareness of legal and policy frameworks or mechanisms to address human rights violations and/or to promote respect for human rights (at national, regional and international level)

The questionnaire will be aimed at the young people that will participate in the consultations but may be addressed to a wider audience in the country or region.

Live sessions

The live sessions will last for 1.5 to 2 hours, and build on the preliminary outcomes of the survey/questionnaire, with a focus on:

- Key human rights obstacles and challenges for youth
- The impacts of COVID-19 on youth rights
- Capacity building needs and support required for young people in advocating for and defending human rights

To ensure consistency across the consultations, a more detailed outline of the consultation methodology will be developed by the Child and Youth Rights Unit and shared with the OHCHR field offices.

The youth consultations will be facilitated by the OHCHR youth officers and youth focal points, with support from the Child and Youth Rights Unit. Members of the project's Youth Advisory Board may also participate in, or support the facilitation of the consultations. Consultations will be delivered in an official UN language, or in a local language, if relevant and feasible.

In addition to the consultations implemented by OHCHR field presences, Youth Advisory Board Members may plan youth consultations on their own initiative provided they use the resources including guidance and methodology, to ensure consistency.

Participants

Each set of consultations will bring together approximately 20-25 young people from the country or region, ideally youth activists, youth human rights defenders (HRDs) and/or youth peacebuilders aged 18-34. Given the focus of the project on working with and for youth in vulnerable situations, efforts will be made to include youth in post-conflict settings as well as young people belonging to minority groups.

The participants will be young people and/or youth networks OHCHR works with as well as any others recommended by project partners or members of the project's Youth Advisory Board.

Youth Advisory Board members may also participate in or support with facilitation of the consultations, particularly where their country or region is covered by one of OHCHR's field presences mentioned above.