



How to improve Youth Inclusion?

Supported by Life Project 4 Youth (LP4Y)
and l'Agence Française de Développement (AFD)

May 2020

YOUTH 4 CHANGE NETWORK

- Y4CN is an **international network of organisations** that develops and shares operational practices, and advocates in favor of the social & professional integration of vulnerable and excluded young adults.
- Created in 2011, the network gathers today **43 active organizations** of various sizes, in about 20 countries and 4 different zones which share :

→ A MISSION

The social and professional inclusion of young adults

→ AN APPROACH

All organizations are willing to join forces, exchange and work together.



How to improve Youth Inclusion?

INTRODUCTION

The global objective of the presented project is the creation of regional integration ecosystems conducive to the professional training and to the sustainable access to the decent job market of the Youth living in extreme poverty (less than US\$1.90/ day) and exclusion. One of the main mission of **Youth 4 Change Network** is to connect and bring together organizations working for Youth Inclusion and make them act together, by leading collective actions of advocacy.

Therefore, in collaboration with Life Project 4 Youth within their project South Asia Development supported by Agence Française de Développement, we decided to co-organize a series of workshops in India, in Myanmar and Nepal, on the topic **“How to improve Youth Inclusion?”**. The objective was to gather different local organizations (NGOs, companies, local authorities...) to brainstorm on the different challenges they are facing regarding Youth inclusion, to share experiences and best practices, and to find local solutions together.

During these rich discussions, we realized that the inputs and solutions shared would certainly interest other organisations working towards Youth Inclusion around the world, and that is why we decided to compile all learnings in this report.

We hope that you will find this guide useful.

The Y4CN team.



How to improve Youth Inclusion?

LIST OF CHALLENGES

During these workshops, some challenges were regularly emerging. As such, we identified **6 categories of challenges** that organizations face:

- **MOTIVATION & AMBITION** : How to accompany the Youth towards a real understanding of their opportunities and motivate them to aim at another future?
- **RECRUITMENT** : How can NGOs reach more and more young people by overcoming the obstacles limiting the recruitment of new Youth?
- **ENVIRONMENT: FAMILIES & SOCIAL PRESSURE** : How to deal with the families and social pressure?
- **LACK OF QUALITY EDUCATION** : How to overcome the knowledge and skills gap between the level of the Youth and the requirements of the companies?
- **JOB INTEGRATION** : How can NGOs really accompany the Youth towards a decent and sustainable professional inclusion?
- **SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROGRAM (FUNDS & PARTNERS)** : How to ensure a long-term sustainability of the program provided to the Youth? How to develop a proper network in order to raise enough funds ?

In the following pages, we listed the **ideas of solutions** that were discussed during the workshops for each of these categories. You will find some of these solutions several times, as they can be used to tackle different challenges.

1. Motivation & Ambition

Challenges

- Knowing themselves
- Avoiding self-censorship
- Finding examples / role models
- Developing aspiration on the long term

2. Recruitment

Challenges

- Lack of awareness
- Language barriers
- Reaching the rural areas
- Administrative difficulties
- Integration of differently abled Youth

3. Environment

Challenges

- Lack of support from the families
- Conservative mindset
- Toxic environment in the community

4. Lack of quality education

Challenges

- Language barriers
- Lack of knowledge about health
- Lack of soft skills
- Education system not up to date

5. Job integration

Challenges

- Opportunities awareness
- Knowing the companies' expectations
- Confidence
- Lack of long-term commitment

6. Sustainability

Challenges

- Making social work attractive
- Go beyond the staff turnover
- Getting funds



1. MOTIVATION & AMBITION



1. MOTIVATION & AMBITION

Living in exclusion, whatever the reason is, often leads to a lack of self-confidence, a lack of hope for the future. It is easy to believe that nothing can change, that this exclusion will remain forever. The main objective of the structures working for Youth inclusion is therefore to give them a real motivation, to show them that another way is possible: they have the right to be ambitious too!

How to accompany the Youth towards a real understanding of their opportunities and motivate them to aim at another future?

Knowing themselves

- Work with the Youth to make them understand :
 - What they **like**, what are their interests
 - What they are **good at**
 - What do they think **the world needs**
- Organize **mentoring sessions** between the Youth and a mentor (it can be someone working in a company, a volunteer from the NGO...). It will push the Youth to think about themselves through talking to someone else.
- Organize **role plays, team building experience**, etc. to make the Youth know the market situation and the companies requirements, and make them adapt their choice according to it.
- **Use internet** so the Youth can discover new things, explore new worlds, etc. with websites such as Youtube through which the Youth can **gain knowledge**. As they can feel overwhelmed by the possibilities and not know how to take advantage of it, guide them on the use of such tools.

1. MOTIVATION & AMBITION

- **Create opportunities** so that the Youth try new things: **cultural exposure** (visit of museums, parks) & **professional exposure** (internships in company, company visits). They will feel more comfortable in a new environment and will adapt more quickly if they are used to change.

Avoiding self-censorship - "I cannot"

- Try to understand the **backgrounds** and **motivations** of the Youth. Taking into account their background is important in order to be able to support them in the best way.

*You can have a look [here](#) at our previous report on "**Working with Youth with a hard life trajectory**", to have more inputs regarding this specific topic of background.*

- Push the Youth to **question themselves**, wondering why they think they are not able to succeed. Show them that their beliefs are unfounded; make them try step by step with **achievable goals** so that they can regain self-confidence.
- Have an **understanding and encouraging staff, act positively** in order to push them to gain confidence. **Encourage them** and let them know when they do well.
- **Organize testimonies** from former Youth who succeeded and went through the same kind of experience: so that the current Youth can gain more confidence. The Youth themselves are the best ambassadors and will be more easily trusted.

1. MOTIVATION & AMBITION



Finding examples / roles models

- Organize testimonies from **inspiring people** who can share about their personal and professional stories / the challenges they had and how they faced them.
- Organize testimonies from **former Youth** who succeeded and can share about their experience (alumni or from other NGOs).

Developing aspiration on the long term

- **Inspire them** to have goals and aspirations, so they can start to consider “a career” instead of “the next job”.
- **Organize a mentoring system** between Youth and someone from another environment, being an example of hard work, so they can keep in mind that success is measurable on the long-term and not immediate. Push them to develop a **step by step mindset**.

Note: the most important is still for the Youth to look for a job they will like.

- Expose the Youth to professionals to give them ideas and information:
 - **Put in contact the Youth with professionals** so the Youth can get information about the jobs they are thinking about doing;
 - **Organize testimonies of professionals** during the training time so the Youth understand all the aspects of a job (advantages / challenges / skills needed / steps to reach it);
 - **Organize company visits** so the Youth go out of their comfort zone, can see different work environments and can understand the expectations of an employer.



2. RECRUITMENT



2. RECRUITMENT

Developing programs for young people, whatever their content or length, requires a first step of recruitment. Even if the number of young people in situation of exclusion or vulnerability keeps increasing, it is not always easy to best ensure this step. Many obstacles can slow down and complicate the recruitment.

How can the NGOs reach more young people by overcoming these obstacles limiting the recruitment of new Youth?

Lack of awareness, from the Youth regarding the existence of the NGOs

Often, the Youth in the target of the NGO do not know that these organizations may be beneficial for them; they do not realize/believe they can do better in their life.

- Collaborate with the local environment:
 - **Partner and network with local organizations** as much as possible, so that people can spread the word about your organization.
 - **Create a link with the community / the families:** organize community events where all the community is invited and can get to know you. Show them interest so that they can trust you.
- **Provide ambitious and reliable information** regarding your activities and towards the community.
- **Use as many social media as possible** (especially the ones that the Youth you are targeting are using): create documentaries and videos to make them aware of the existence and activities of the NGO.

2. RECRUITMENT

Language barriers

- **Involve more local people** in the recruitment: to reach the most excluded ones and to face the problem of language barrier.
As the Youth sometimes do not even speak the local language properly - especially the Youth from rural areas and ethnic minorities - the support of locals becomes essential.

Reaching the rural areas

- **Provide accommodation** - as far as possible - to recruit Youth from the rural areas, so that they can have the opportunity to leave their home without unaffordable expenses.
- **Partner** as much as possible with **local organizations** based in these rural areas: they know better the context and the local environment.

Administrative difficulties (no ID cards...)

Administrative processes can slow down the recruitment and integration of the young people: opportunities are limited without an identity card, without a family booklet, etc...

2. RECRUITMENT

Integration of differently abled Youth

As an NGO, it is often more difficult to offer to the Youth with disabilities a training and job placement.

- Develop more inclusive **education**: include them in the “mainstream” education, as they are more than able to follow.
- **Change the mindset regarding the differently abled Youth**: persuade the families and the companies of the **potential of the Youth**, raise awareness through testimonies.

Sama Nepal & the Youth Advisory Group

Nepal

NGO established in Nepal to create an **inclusive** situation for everyone in need (able & differently able). They “promote barrier free, inclusive and right-based opportunities to everyone excluded from right to education”.

The Youth Advisory Group, composed of Youth with and without disabilities, advocate for inclusion and inclusive education.



3. ENVIRONMENT



3. ENVIRONMENT

The environment and more specifically the family is often seen as **one of the pillars** of the integration of a young adult: the support of the parents is essential, their opinion significant. It is difficult to ignore their (dis)agreement. However, NGOs and the Youth environment are not always in harmony. As going against the family and social pressure is almost impossible, making them aware of the cause of the NGOs turns out to be the **solution**.

How to deal with the families and social pressure?

Lack of support from the families

The families often do not understand or trust the programs provided by the NGOs.

- **Create a link with the families:** develop more awareness about the existence of your NGO in the families so that they can get to know and trust you. This can be done through family visits at the Youth's homes.
- **Develop the Alumni network:** the Alumni are the best ambassadors of your program, their success will give you a good reputation.
- **Engage with the community** as much as possible, by partnering with local organizations (local schools, boards, etc). They often have a deeper knowledge/understanding of the context.
 - **Spend time** to mingle and participate in local events etc.
 - **Organize community events** and invite the community - involve them as much as possible, show them interest.

3. ENVIRONMENT

Life Project 4 Youth

(LP4Y) - Asia

NGO working toward professional inclusion of excluded young adults in Asia.

The catalyts of LP4Y directly live within *marginalised communities*, in the slum areas where the Youth live. This facilitates both, the link with the *families*, and the one with the *community*.

They organize "community day" to welcome all the community to their center allowing them to know more about their activities.

Once the community understands your action, it is easier to be accepted and thus mobilize the Youth.

Magic Bus

India

NGO working with "children and young people taking them on a journey from Childhood to Livelihood and out of poverty"; in India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Myanmar.

They are working closely with the *whole ecosystem of the children and Youth*: their parents, families, peers, community and local institutions. The goal is to ensure a full support and encouragement of the young people to move out of poverty.

3. ENVIRONMENT

Conservative mindset

The background of the Youth, linked to a **conservative mindset** and some **potential social stigma** (religion, education, family background, caste discrimination, child labour, etc.) can often be seen as barriers for the Youth to join some programs of NGOs, or slow down their inclusion.

Toxic environment in the community

Different sources can be toxic to young people:

- *Abusive parents / relatives / friends (verbal, physical, sexual, etc...) can be demoralizing, if not worse.*
- *If friends are consuming drugs, the risks that the Youth fall into that are higher (peer pressure).*
- *Addiction to mobile phones*

- **Provide them an alternative space** far from the streets so they can express and spend time in a secure and healthy environment.
- **Push the Youth to disconnect their mobile phones** to reconnect to their environment (families, friends, communities, etc.)
 - Explain to them the effects of their addiction on them, as well as the benefits of other activities could have on them;
 - Make them try these activities so they can experience them.
- **Raise awareness among parents** on the effects of technology addiction as well. Develop partnerships with other organisations to provide these kinds of training.



4. LACK OF QUALITY EDUCATION



4. LACK OF QUALITY EDUCATION



Among the Youth supported by the NGOs, some of them had the opportunity to follow the educational path until the end of high school ; the others had to drop out way before for various reasons. Even though long hours have been spent in school, the skills needed to find a job were often not taught or acquired.

How to overcome this knowledge and skills gap between the level of the Youth and the requirements of the companies?

Language barriers

As English is an employability criteria for many companies, the Youth do not master it will be less employable than those speaking English. They sometimes do not even speak the local language properly.

- **Use online content**, which is also available for the young adults, and free of cost. For example, some courses are available on [Youtube](#), on [Coursera](#), or on some apps like [HelloEnglish](#).
- **Develop partnerships** with external trainers who can provide the language training.

Lack of computer skills

- Integrate **IT training** in your programs, encourage the use of emails.

Lack of knowledge about health, hygiene & safety

The Youth are not aware and do not have the codes for hygiene, safety and health which might be difficult in companies, especially those food-related.

4. LACK OF QUALITY EDUCATION



Lack of soft skills in today's education (both for their social and professional lives)

The Youth sometimes do not know how to behave in a company, how to be punctual or even to show up, how to speak in public. They do not know how to react in each circumstances, in the most constructive way.

- **Company visits** are a good way for the Youth to better understand how companies work and what can be expected of them in a professional environment.
- **Internships** are a good way to do so as well.

Life Project 4 Youth

(LP4Y) - Asia

The Youth have to do a 2-week long internship half-way through the program.

Education system and pedagogy not up to date

Graduation is needed but not sufficient to get a job.

*The curriculum are not up to date to the current world needs in public institutions: lack of contacts and discussions between the institutions and the companies, whereas the institutions should adapt their curriculum depending on the requirements and expectations of companies. The pedagogy in the education system does not push to think **outside the box**, whereas **creativity** has become a **key** in the recruitment processes.*

- Promote **open-school systems in India** for the Youth motivated to study in their free time. The NIOS - National Open School System is way cheaper than many schools and is a good way for Youth to validate their 8th, 10th, 12th standard etc.



5. JOB INTEGRATION



5. JOB INTEGRATION

The main goal for NGOs promoting Youth professional inclusion is to accompany the Youth towards a decent and sustainable one. Even if the Youth are motivated, the family supportive, there is still a long way to go. Time comes for the organization to support the Youth to allow him/her to gain self-confidence, to be aware of all the opportunities available and most of all to succeed in developing a **long term commitment**.

How can NGOs really accompany the Youth towards a decent and sustainable professional inclusion?

Opportunities awareness

The young adults are not aware of what is out there for them, they do not know what could be possible.

- **Organize company visits** so that the Youth discover more about the possible jobs. It is a challenging experience as the Youth get out of their comfort zone - being in highly professional environment of companies and meeting employees may be impressive and intimidating for the Youth. as they would be out of their comfort zone and to see buildings of big companies is impressive and intimidating.
- Expand awareness through professional **testimonies** (HR, Sales, Communication team members)

Knowing the companies' expectations

- Create links between institutions, companies and Youth so they are aligned on the **needs and requirements** to enter into decent professional world.
- **Organize mock interviews** to allow the Youth to practice their speech for an interview, and to do it in front of various and unknown persons (HR seniors for instance).

5. JOB INTEGRATION

Confidence

Some Youth are afraid of having a job and responsibilities.

- Provide the Youth with **certification**: indeed, to graduate can be a challenge for them so by giving them certificates, they can update their resume.
- Create **mentorship programs** with professionals and/or alumni, so the Youth have a regular ear to talk to and gain in confidence.

Lack of long term commitment

- **Follow-up the Youth** even after they integrate the companies. It is a good way for them to feel supported while beginning in the job : via mentors inside the company.
- Give the Youth a sense of belonging.
- After they finish the training, **connect the youth with other Alumni** through social media groups and/or events to gather them as they will be the best ambassadors of the program.

Yangon Bakehouse Myanmar

NGO in Myanmar providing culinary, bakery and life skills trainings to young women.
The main goal is to give women an opportunity to change their future.



6. SUSTAINABILITY



6. SUSTAINABILITY

Without developing a good network of partners and raising funds, it is difficult for any organization to ensure a long-term sustainability. However, if these two steps are essential, they are not always easy to be implemented.

How to ensure a long-term sustainability of the programs provided to the Youth? How to develop a proper network in order to raise enough funds?

Hiring volunteers & making social work attractive

- **Partner with local NGOs and institutions** to hire volunteers, to highlight your network.
- Companies can **reward their employees** for volunteering (for example, [Brillio](#) employees are encouraged to give ½ day per week to an NGO and they are receiving certificates in the end - “employee of the month”).
- **Organize workshops** in schools and colleges to promote the field of social work.

Life Project 4 Youth

(LP4Y) - Asia

In some of the centers, the Youth are also receiving such a certificate of “employee of the month”, to push them to develop their skills and be involved.

6. SUSTAINABILITY

Go beyond the staff turnover

The turnover can sometimes results in a loss of knowledge and a slowdown in the projects, weakening the sustainability of the organizations.

- **Capitalize** on the knowledge and experiences by uploading and updating information on the Drive so that all the staff can have access to it.

Getting funds from the CSR programs

Some CSRs want the NGOs to focus on the quantity, as they are mostly activity drivers ; on the contrary, some NGOs want to focus on the quality of the service they provide.

- Be as precise as possible **in the definition of your goals**: the companies will be much more willing to give money if they know exactly where the money will go and what it will be used for.
- **Take part in the events** that are organised by the CSRs: the closer you know them, the closer they know you, the more they will think about you when they have funds to give to a program.
- **Be willing to look for funds from companies outside** of your city/area/region: they might have funds to give to a program in your area.
- **Involve your local and/or international partners**: potential partners do not know what is going on in a community and what is happening on the field. Making them see it by themselves directly on the field might motivate them more easily to help your organization and provide funds.

How to improve Youth Inclusion ?

CONCLUSION

Thanks to these various workshops that we organized in India, Myanmar and Nepal, we had the chance to get to know more about the local environment, the challenges and best practices implemented locally.

Accompanying young people towards their inclusion, both social and professional, is definitely a long - but not impossible - way. Interacting with the local environment comes up as one of the most important points to ensure the recruitment and motivation of the Youth. Supporting them in improving self-confidence while helping them to acquire the necessary skills also appear as guiding principles in their integration.

The solutions gathered here have been suggested by our members, partners, and Youth themselves, but we are convinced that they can be applied to your work with Youth anywhere in the world.

In the future, we would like to go further in the understanding of these challenges in order to find new solutions, especially for those who still have few or no answers.

So let's all keep working together, being sincere and patient, communicating, and we will be able to accompany more Youth towards their social and professional inclusion!

The Y4CN team



THANK YOU TO ALL THE PARTICIPANTS...

INDIA

ASHIYANA
 Transforming lives of youth at risk

LIFE PROJECT 4 YOUTH

Magic Bus
 Childhood to Livelihood

REALITY GIVES

DECATHLON

YES AKADEmia

Youth 4 Jobs

KidZania Mumbai

Oasis

Alertaste Foundation
 Art for Empowerment

Capgemini

ROQUETTE
 Offering the best of nature™

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AMANI INSTITUTE

Pratham
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MYANMAR

Hlaingtharyar Youth Network

LinkAge

MRF

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Terre des hommes
 Aide à l'enfance.

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YANGON BAKEHOUSE

NEPAL

YAG

Sama NEPAL

EBMF

af
 Alliance Française
 Katmandou फ्रान्सेली केन्द्र

COCINA MITHO CHHA
 Association Nepal Aiki

'We' for CHANGE

utopia

STREET CHILD OF NEPAL

राष्ट्रिय युवा गैर सरकारी संस्था महासंघ नेपाल
 National Federation of Youth NGO Nepal

सेतो गुरांस राष्ट्रिय बाल विकास सेवा
 Seto Gurans National Child Development Services