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Strengthening Democracy
Through Partnership

Youth Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Cross-Sectoral Initiative

Background

The CEPPS Youth Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Cross-Sectoral Initiative (Youth DRG CSI) is a multi-phased program exploring and uncovering promising practices that advance the political participation, representation, power, and leadership of young people in decision-making positions and processes. Starting in 2020, the initial phase of the project was a virtual discussion and knowledge-sharing forum dedicated to helping practitioners, donors, and young leaders across sectors explore the challenges and opportunities impacting cross-sectoral leadership and participation. The current phase of the initiative aims to better equip young leaders and practitioners with tools to implement programming that leverages young people's assets and leadership across sectors to foster sustained and inclusive democratic outcomes.



Purpose

Young people's participation in public life is largely driven by specific issues or interests. This requires working across development sectors to better engage young people on issues they care about, while also connecting them to spaces for decision-making and political participation. Research suggests that young people prefer more informal, grassroots forms of participation. However, if young people only engage with democracy through informal avenues, they will continue to be left out of critical decision-making processes, resulting in policies and practices that do not meaningfully represent them. That is why it is important to coordinate resources, networks, and expertise across sectors to address the complex development challenges young people face and amplify their leadership and representation.

**Find more
information**

www.cepps.org/youth-initiative

In response to the current trends in youth participation and development, the Youth DRG CSI:

- Identifies and deliberates trends and challenges impacting youth political participation;
- Expands existing knowledge on youth-focused, cross-sectoral programming and social behavior change (SBC)-informed interventions;
- Engages young leaders through a Youth Advisory Group platform to provide input and feedback on program deliverables;
- Identifies good practices for employing intersectional approaches in youth programming; and
- Contributes to new and existing efforts to develop Positive Youth Development-informed initiatives across sectors.



Program Outputs and Outcomes

Key deliverables from past programming under the initiative include:

- Establishing a Youth Advisory Group for young people to inform project deliverables. Meet the [2022 -23 CEPPS Youth DRG CSI Advisory Group](#) and learn about the 2021 pilot Youth Advisory Group [here](#).
- Developing a cross-sectoral toolkit and an interactive [web-based guide](#) for youth development practitioners and young leaders implementing programs to support young people in gaining political knowledge and assuming political leadership.
- Creating a [Practitioners Guide](#) on SBC with actionable steps for designing, implementing, and learning from SBC-informed approaches to strengthen youth leadership and political participation.
- Under Phase I, CEPPS convened young leaders, youth development practitioners, and donors for monthly discussions on the challenges and opportunities to implementing cross-sectoral programming and recommendations for meaningful engagement.
- Developing [monthly briefs](#) on youth, peace, and security; health and humanitarian responses; and families and communities.
- Developing a [report](#) to synthesize learning into four key cross-sectoral challenges and seven key recommendations to better support the implementation of cross-sectoral youth programs.
- In advance of the first Summit for Democracy in 2021, convened a roundtable of young leaders that developed [CEPPS' Youth for Democratic Renewal Declaration](#), outlining recommendations around key themes of the Summit.

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