

YOUTH AND DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND GOVERNANCE TOOLKIT

Module 6: Political Party Programming



USAID

Political parties are the primary mechanisms through which citizens access political leadership, and they represent a central avenue through which people engage in the political process and influence policy. Democratic, transparent, inclusive political parties are therefore a vital element of democratic societies in which diverse voices are heard and all people have an opportunity to meaningfully participate in electoral politics. However, while political parties are usually the gateway to political leadership, formal and informal barriers often exclude youth and other marginalized communities from meaningful

participation and leadership in parties. When parties fail to include youth and other marginalized groups in their policies and practices, they perpetuate inequality and sacrifice potentially important electoral advantages. When all people are fairly represented within the political party system, it provides a peaceful means to express concerns and preferences through the political process. Important opportunities to foster such inclusion exist within parties' internal organizational structures, governance structures, and external engagement practices.



INTERMEDIATE RESULTS AND ILLUSTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

INTERMEDIATE RESULT	PYD FEATURES AND ILLUSTRATIVE ACTIVITIES	
Parties develop formal and/or informal policies and practices that enable youth participation and leadership and improve party responsiveness to all constituents.	Skill-Building	Provide technical assistance to political party youth wing members to build skills that allow them to more effectively participate in general political party decision-making and demonstrate their value within the party.
	Youth Engagement and Contribution	Support party leaders in establishing policy development practices that are more inclusive of young members, including women and other marginalized groups. This may include improving communication with youth and women party wings and reserving spaces for youth, women, and other marginalized communities on party decision-making bodies.
	Positive Norms, Expectations, and Perceptions	Facilitate training and discussion sessions with party leaders on the negative effects of youth discrimination and the benefits of meaningful youth participation within political parties.
Political parties build diverse support bases and nominate diverse young members as candidates.	Belonging and Membership	Support partnerships and coalitions between political party members, young party and civil society leaders, and youth-led civil society organizations (CSOs) to create a larger networking, support, and advocacy network for young candidates or potential candidates.
	Youth Engagement and Contribution	Support efforts to hold parties accountable to candidate quota laws, voluntary targets, and campaign support commitments related to young women and men. Combine informal methods, such as supporting advocacy and awareness-raising by media, civil society, and party leadership, with formal methods, such as working with electoral management bodies, to encourage compliance.
	Positive Norms, Expectations, and Perceptions	Strengthen parties' capacities to effectively reach out to diverse citizens, engage them actively in the party, and incorporate their interests into policy platforms. Where possible, assist parties to make targeted efforts to engage youth with intersecting marginalized groups.
Parties provide equal support for young candidates and actively engage young voters.	Healthy Relationships	Assist parties in creating and managing mentorship programs to provide support, advice, and learning opportunities for young candidates and current and aspiring young party leaders and candidates.
	Youth Engagement and Contribution	Encourage parties to engage youth and representatives of marginalized groups in the electoral process as campaign workers and party poll watchers at polling stations. Assist parties in training youth to work in these positions. Establish multi-party youth forums to inclusively engage and educate youth with diverse political views.
	Safe Public Spaces	Support party youth wings to collaboratively organize multiparty discussions with youth to discuss their issue priorities, the electoral process, and how to make informed voter decisions.

Political parties remain relevant to diverse constituencies between elections and consider opportunities for more inclusive approaches in the future.	Skill-Building	Provide technical support to party caucuses, youth caucuses, and other legislative groups on incorporating the needs of youth, including young women and youth from other marginalized communities, when drafting and reviewing legislation.
	Healthy Relationships	Work with political parties to provide training and professional development opportunities for newly elected young members to enhance skills that are important in the local context. Such skills may include citizen outreach, public speaking, policy development, negotiation, coalition-building, and advocacy.
	Positive Norms, Expectations, and Perceptions	Conduct activities to create and strengthen formal and informal relationships between political parties and civil society organizations working to advance human rights and equality for youth and other minority groups.

ILLUSTRATIVE PYD OR YOUTH-FOCUSED INDICATORS

To effectively measure PYD or youth-focused outcomes, indicators should be selected that are practical to measure and pertain as directly as possible to the PYD feature the program addresses. It is important to disaggregate monitoring data by relevant social segments including sex, geographic location, marital status, marginalized or at risk populations, and age (e.g., early adolescence (10-14); adolescence (15-19); emerging adulthood (20-24); transition to adulthood (25-29)). As a complement to inclusive indicator development, a [complexity-aware approach to monitoring, evaluation, and learning \(MEL\)](#) is likely to be useful for many USAID programs focused on social change in complex environments.

PYD FEATURE	ILLUSTRATIVE INDICATOR
Skill-Building	% change in youth reporting a “high” or “moderate” understanding of the difference between local political party platforms.
Youth Engagement and Contribution	% change of youth in leadership structures of political parties
Youth Engagement and Contribution	% change of youth candidates fielded for national or local elections by political parties
Positive Norms, Expectations, and Perceptions	# of youth-focused policy initiatives undertaken by political parties

PROGRAM EXAMPLE: INTER-PARTY YOUTH FORUM (KENYA)

Kenya’s Inter-Party Youth Forum (IPYF), established in 2009 with support from the National Democratic Institute (NDI), brings together young political party activists and leaders from across the political spectrum to collaborate on solutions to the most pressing issues facing the nation’s youth. With NDI support, the IPYF has expanded its reach to hold more forums across Kenya’s 47 counties to strengthen political awareness and participation among young people, both during and outside of electoral periods. The forums, led by young people, have provided a space for Kenyan youth to convene across partisan lines to discuss how to organize themselves to address issues they identify as priorities. Issues addressed through the program have included advocacy for more credible and transparent elections, countering inter-ethnic conflict, and lowering substance abuse and unemployment.




PYD FEATURE	PROGRAM COMPONENT
Youth Engagement and Contribution	Young people lead the forums and spearhead advocacy and public awareness-raising initiatives based on priority issues identified by youth. Youth engage their broader party structures and leadership to advance their priorities.
Belonging and Membership	The forums provide an opportunity for dialogue and cooperation between youth from different political parties and ethnic communities.
Positive Norms, Expectations, and Perceptions	The forums promote norms of constructive, multi-partisan discourse about important issues affecting young people in Kenya and peaceful engagement in elections. This discourages young party members from engaging in electoral violence and promotes civil discourse.
Safe Public Space	The forums provide a safe public space for young political party members to discuss priority issues and propose solutions alongside members of other parties and ethnic groups. These opportunities are significant given previous incidents of intergroup violence during elections in Kenya.

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USAID YouthPower Learning generates and disseminates knowledge about the implementation and impact of positive youth development (PYD) and cross-sectoral approaches in international development. The project leads research, evaluations, and events designed to build the evidence base related to PYD. Concurrently, YouthPower Learning employs expertise in learning and knowledge sharing to promote engagement and inform the global community about how to successfully help transition young people into productive, healthy adults. YouthPower Learning supports the implementation of the 2012 USAID Youth in Development Policy to improve capacity and enable the aspirations of youth so that they can contribute to, and benefit from more stable, democratic, and prosperous communities.

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