**M5-T7-H1-Youth-led Review Overview**

Youth-led evaluation (of projects) specifically can make your project/ programme more relevant and more accountable, and can promote ownership of programmes. This document is used by Restless Development staff to conduct reviews of our work. The annual review process is an opportunity to combine all of the lessons learned and look at the broader success of our programmes based on our own strategic direction. This allows for learning to be owned and shared by the whole team and for decisions to be made based on this learning.

**STAGE ONE – PREPARATION**

Reviews need to be carefully planned for and prepared so that the right people are involved at each stage and the goals of the exercise are achieved. There should be a few simple questions that form the focus of a review. These can address the relevance of interventions to the local or national context, the effectiveness of methodologies used, the use of advocacy to strengthen other approaches, the sustainability of our programmes or any other issue that is relevant to the country programme. All monitoring and evaluation data as well as national or regional statistics should be included in a review for use by both staff and stakeholders. This should be presented in an accessible way that allows easy interpretation. This is a chance to look at programmes individually or as a whole to assess how they contribute to the country strategy. Information about national trends, other organisations and current affairs should also be included and based on the most up-to-date information available from the most reliable sources. Information about the review – including the focus questions, time and location of the review, agenda and M&E data – should be made available to all relevant stakeholders well in advance. The purpose of the review and the reasons for requesting input should be specified clearly.

**STAGE TWO – STAKEHOLDER REVIEW**

In order to ensure that ownership of our programmes lies with those we work with – specifically, young people – stakeholder(including young people’s) reflections and opinions need to feed into any review process. The best people to help us discover how we are doing as an organisation and what more we need to achieve are the young people involved with our programmes. Again, this does not just refer to younger members of our team. It is also insufficient to seek input from only those enthusiastic young people who are readily available to share their thoughts. Rather, it is essential that a wide range of youth from the communities where we work are involved in reviewing how we are doing and what needs improvement. After all, it is for these young people that we exist.

Youth participation at this stage means setting up some type of sessions with different stakeholders to ensure that they are able to have their voices heard. This can be done through **focus groups, community activities, semi-structured interviews, surveys, or any other appropriate techniqu**e – whichever method is identified as the best way to collect the information required. It is advisable that there be some sort of annual review activity in each community where we work. If this is not feasible, delegates from each community can be brought together centrally to feed into the process. This will help ensure that youth are leading our own organisational development from the grassroots level.

**It is essential that a wide range of stakeholders are involved.** As a youth led organisation, the voices of young people are essential to our work and our values. At the same time, however, participation from other key stakeholders is needed to deepen our understanding of progress and impact. This can include local experts, community leaders, teachers and government officials and partner organisations. The emphasis should be placed on including the people most connected to or affected by our programmes. It is important to facilitate an environment in which everyone can speak openly and honestly. Thus, special attention should be given to these contexts. For instance, young people may find it easier to share independently from community leaders, and men and women may need separate sessions, too. The information gathered must be recorded, and a summary should be sent to all those involved, as well as to other relevant stakeholders. The summary should include actions or findings that have come from the review sessions.

**STAGE THREE – ANNUAL REVIEW**

All staff should be involved in this process as well as a number of relevant stakeholders – young community members, local leaders and officials, partner or donor organisation staff and whoever is identified as a key stakeholder during the stakeholder analysis. This ensures joint ownership of programmes, a high level of community engagement and, most importantly perhaps, empowerment of young people in the communities where we work.

The ultimate focus of an annual review should be the National and Global Strategic Frameworks and the lessons learned by the country programme over the previous year so that evidence-based decisions can be made for the year to come. Other important questions should also be discussed, and the lessons learned from the stakeholder review should be considered in detail. This is an opportunity to share and analyse data that has been collected over the previous annual cycle. High quality, accessible data should be sent to participants in advance and be available for consideration and discussion by all staff during the session.

Information from any stakeholder reviews carried out should be analysed in advance and further examined as part of the strategic review. This is an essential part of the review process and should be prioritised when planning.