

# INFORMATION WORK AND YOUTH



VOLUME 2

# WORKING MANUAL FOR ONE STOP YOUTH INFORMATION AND RESOURCE CENTRES

GETTING STARTED GUIDELINES



Organised and written by Oslo Youth Council  
In close collaboration with Nairobi One Stop  
Youth Information Resource Centre  
Supported by UN-HABITAT

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In case of use of this document by projects developing their information services for young people; we would respectfully ask that Oslo Youth Council/BURO be acknowledged as the source of this information material in any work developed by projects using this publication. For support in the development of your information service for young people please contact:

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## FOREWORD



Over the past decade, agencies and governments across the world have begun to realize the value – and necessity – of engaging youth as partners and leaders in the development of cities and towns. As more and more of the issues of human development become urban issues, and ever-greater proportions of city populations are youth, the crucial intersection between empowering youth and actualizing our goals for sustainable urban development becomes clear. Just as in the 20th century, the vast majority of the world's nations recognized that the inclusion and full empowerment of women was key to success, in the 21st century we have begun to make similar strides towards the recognition of youth as full stakeholders in our shared future.

This series of training manuals was developed by UN-HABITAT in partnership with several international NGOs. The titles in this set of guidebooks are intended for use in Urban Youth Centres, offering resources for development partners and practitioners grappling with the issues of youth in urban spaces today. Each of the manuals builds on and interfaces with the other volumes in the series, and together the series offers a flexible and locally-adaptable roadmap to ensure that youth can be effectively engaged and empowered to make positive changes in their own lives and in their communities.

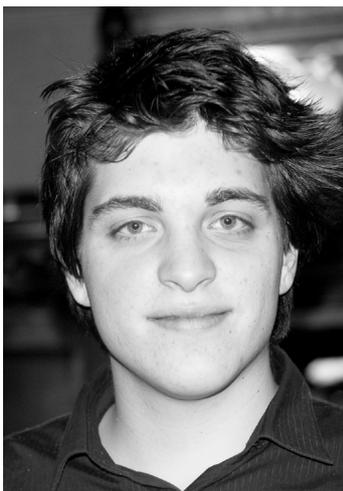
These manuals have been ground-tested with youth, partner organization representatives and municipal staff from One Stop Youth Resource Centres in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda. To date, we have seen an overwhelming response and desire by municipalities in countries across Africa and beyond for access to these training resources, reflecting the great need for safe urban spaces in which youth and local authorities can cooperatively interact and address shared concerns. It is our hope that with this series' wide distribution to municipal partners, we will see the expansion and evolution of the One Stop and We Are the Future Urban Youth Centre models across the developing world. This series can also be adapted at the national level by Ministries concerned with Youth issues.

As with any publication designed for use in multiple locations in the field of youth-led development, this series is expected to expand and be revised and updated regularly. To those beneficiaries of this first edition, we invite your contributions to the ongoing learning and feedback process that is the hallmark of successful participatory development.

I would like to extend thanks on behalf of UN-HABITAT to our development partners who have made resources available. To our municipal and civil society partners, and especially to the youth of today's cities, we entreat you to implement the learning contained in this series, to work together to create new opportunities for youth as leaders of today, and to continue your shared efforts to bring about lasting and meaningful change in your communities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joan Clos', written in a cursive style.

Dr. Joan Clos  
Executive Director, UN-HABITAT



UN-Habitat, Partner and youth section is pleased to publish this working manual for One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres. This manual is based on existing best practices, and is produced to enable existing and new upcoming Centres to provide quality service to young people. The information service, for which this working manual has been developed, is firmly embedded in the youth sector which, in turn, is part of the non-formal education process.

This manual is about the core principles and procedures for the starting up of, delivery of, and monitoring of One Stop Youth Information Resource Services. Using the guidelines within this manual will enable service users (and potential users) to be the central focus of service delivery. The purpose of the working manual, therefore, is to act as a point of reference for good practice, providing a framework for assessing the quality of services and the means of quality assurance for young people, information service managers and funding bodies.

This working manual, therefore, relates not only to assist access to information by young people but also to its relevance, the individual concerned and to the wider community. The youth information service is equally conscious of its role to alert young people of possibilities and choices available to them, so that they make informed decisions. One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres (OSYIRCs) are beacons in the range of information, choice and decision. The working manual promotes regular interaction with other sources of information, education and services to young people, thus adding value to the total education process.

Young people are growing up in a fast changing and complex world where they are confronted with many choices, conflicts, challenges and pressures. Often they have to make decisions, some of which will shape the rest of their lives. To do this effectively, they need reliable information on the options available.

OSYIRCs, aim to empower young people to make informed and responsible decisions about all aspects of their lives. They do this by providing fast and easy access to a wide range of information in an informal and supportive environment. OSYIRCs enable young people to have a wide range of opportunities, to develop their skills and abilities, and to actively participate in societal development at local, national and international level.

The right to information is a fundamental human right for all citizens and it is recognized in a number of international agreements and conventions such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. As access to information is a fundamental right which enables young people to make informed decisions about their lives, the OSYIRCs must be concerned with ensuring that information services are of a high quality and standards which will allow young people to be innovative, exercise and enjoy this right. Good luck!!

**Martin Eckhoff Andresen**

OSLO YOUTH COUNCIL

President of the board from March 2007 to June 2008

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

So that you do not get confused at the start, here is a list of the acronyms that appear in the manual

OSYIRC	One Stop Youth Information Resource Centre
BURO	Barne- og Ungdomsrådet i Oslo/ Oslo Youth Council
CIDJ	Centre d'Information et de Documentation Jeunesse
CCN	City Council of Nairobi
OYIC	Oslo Youth Information Centre
YIC	Youth Information Centre
ERYICA	European Youth Information and Counselling Agency
GPI	Global Partnership Initiative
GC	Governing Council
STD	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
VCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CV	Curriculum Vitae
COWA	Companionship of Works Association
NGO	Non Governmental Organisations
FUBU	For Us By Us (For Youth By Youth)
MDG	Millenium Development Goals
CRRIJ	Centre Relais- Ressources Information Jeunesse
NC	Nouvelle Calédonie/New Caledonia
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme

# **PART 1** – Principles and Values – Youth Information Work with Young People



## CHAPTER 1

Background  
Information**The story so far....**

In May 2003, the UN-HABITAT Governing Council adopted a resolution on the engagement of youth in the work of UN-HABITAT. Resolution GC19/13 directs the Executive Director to "ensure the active participation of UN-HABITAT in the Secretary General's initiative on youth employment; as well as to develop a Global Partnership Initiative on Urban Youth Development in Africa, in partnership with other relevant United Nations agencies, multilateral institutions and private foundations in the context of New Partnership for Africa's Development"<sup>1</sup>.

**The overarching goal** of the initiative, while respecting and integrating the various international covenants on human rights, gender equity, democratic values and sustainable development, is to mobilize and harness the resources of Africa's youth, to empower them and improve the quality of life for young people in cities and towns. The role of UN-HABITAT is to help nurture partnerships, lobby governments, and offer avenues for further collaboration at all levels and the international community, both at bi-lateral and multilateral levels.

**Another function Global Partnership Initiative** is trying to integrate the Millennium Development Goals with development programmes at the city level focusing on and working with urban youth in Africa. One of the programmes is the creation of One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres responding to a number of the MDGs, including Goal 7 Target 11 and Goal 8 Target 16, the GPI must be seen as an integrated effort to fulfil the MDGs and their targets<sup>2</sup>.

**As one of the concrete implementation of the above goals,** One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres are places where young people can address their issues and influence what kind of services they would like the centre to have. These centres are geared to give young people belongingness, fight against ignorance, promote youth participation and empower young people to make better informed life choices.

**Therefore, the UN-HABITAT** in close collaboration with Oslo Youth Council introduced this working manual to guide countries that want to start One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres. It provides a framework for provision of quality information services delivered by those Centres. This manual will be also a means of quality assurance for young people, information service managers and funding bodies.

**This manual is a comprehensive document** because it addresses different aspects to consider before and when starting up a One Stop Youth Information Resource Centre. It focuses also on youth led structures and youth led development. It touches partnerships because they integrate youth centres cooperating with national or local authorities, private sector and youth organisations, local youth councils and student bodies that are already in operation in many urban areas, fostering participation in governance projects. As a first document written for the One Stop concept, it is far from being complete, with time this document is expected to be upgraded with experiences from different One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres.

**The working manual is a useful document** because it is a collection of best practices from existing youth structures in Kenya, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Tunisia, Czech Republic, Wales-UK, France and Norway. The Nairobi One Stop Youth Information and Resource Centre being a pilot project in East-Africa have contributed enormously to this document.

<sup>1</sup> Official minutes from the UN HABITAT Governing Council, Nairobi, Kenya 2003

<sup>2</sup> United Nations, Millennium Development Goals Online available at [www.developmentgoals.org](http://www.developmentgoals.org)

### Youth Information and UN – *Improving opportunities for young people*

On 16 July 2001 the Secretary-General, along with the President of the World Bank and the Director-General of the ILO, met with the 12-member High-Level Panel of the Youth Employment Network at ILO headquarters in Geneva. At this meeting, the Secretary-General emphasized the need for both immediate action and a long-term commitment to achieve the target for youth employment established within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals. He further requested the ILO and other UN agencies to invest in education and vocational training for young people and improve the impact of those investments <sup>3</sup>.

Taking note from that milestone, the UN-Habitat, Partners and Youth Section took a lead in August 2003 and launched the One Stop Youth Information Resource concept as a tool of youth social inclusion where young people can be *informed* on the existing opportunities, their rights and get empowered through *informal education*.

#### Definition of the user

The operational definition and nuances of the term 'youth' often vary from country to country, depending on the specific socio-cultural, institutional, economic and political factors. Many countries also draw a line on youth at the age at which a person is given equal treatment under the law – often referred to as the 'age of majority'. This age is often 18 in many countries, and once a person passes this age, they are considered to be an adult.

Some simply define youth as a period of human life between childhood and maturity.

One of the most common definitions of youth in quantitative terms comprises persons between the age of 15 and 24. It is used by both the United Nations and the World Bank and is applied in many statistics and indicators. Young people are grouped together to form a statistical entity, making it possible to compare data across time and countries. However, this crude definition must be qualified somewhat, when youth is defined in qualitative terms <sup>4</sup>.

**Youth** is a period of transition between the **dependence** of childhood and the **independence** of adulthood, between the **dependence** of the child on the family, school and other institutions that contribute to its socialization, and the **autonomy** of working and personal life as an adult citizen<sup>5</sup>



<sup>3</sup> Official report from the meeting between ILO and the World Bank available at [www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/wyrl](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/wyrl)

<sup>4</sup> Definition from [www.worldbank.org/](http://www.worldbank.org/)

<sup>5</sup> Definition from [www.eryica.org](http://www.eryica.org)

## 1.1 Definition of youth information

### 1.1 Definition of youth information

Youth information can be defined as an educational process which aims to empower young people with the requisite information in order to make informed decisions and positive life choices <sup>6</sup>.

Information is definite knowledge acquired or supplied about something or somebody and in the case of information services it is the provision of a requested fact or detail with no recommendation made regarding its use, or appropriateness.

Main features of Youth Information in your centre should be:

- That information is easy to access
- That it is free of charge at point of delivery
- That it is generalist in nature
- That the information provided is factual and unbiased
- That services are well publicised
- Offering information via different formats according to young people's choice
- Engagement in outreach work
- Promoting of personal autonomy
- Working closely with other relevant agencies
- Offering an attractive and welcoming environment
- Providing access to other resources
- Developing skills in young people on how to use information
- That it is provided by competent workers
- That it also serves those who work with young people

Youth information enables young people to:

- Discover the latent potential within them.
- Develop their skills, abilities and capacity to solve their problems
- Access services, facilities and opportunities
- Actively participate in local, national and international level

One of the most important elements of a youth information service is that it acts as a first point of contact for a young person and this is where the 'One Stop' concept is important in that centres will be able to offer many services all under one roof and will also be given help in seeking assistance and identifying other appropriate places of support.

## 1.2 Aims of youth information centre

### 1.2 Aims of youth information centre

Young people today are constantly yearning for information that not only addresses their needs but is also delivered in a manner that shows interest in them. One Stop Youth Information centres should be shaped constantly by the changing needs of young people, so the methodology used in disseminating this information should encourage the active participation of young people in society. Providing information for young people eases and quickens the work for them as they go through sometimes difficult stages of their transition to adulthood.

<sup>6</sup> Useful documents: Eryica information kit [www.eryica.org.uk](http://www.eryica.org.uk)

Therefore a youth information centre should:

1. Act as an information coordinating unit for the many sources of information available to young people
2. Distribute information in a format or style which they can understand and in settings which they find comfortable and convenient to use. This means using all available forms of media, contacts and facilities in order to reach as many young people as possible
3. Collect information relevant to young people. Through adoption of a personalised approach, to help young people to interpret and exploit the information so that they apply it to their own particular needs and translate it into effective action.
4. Alert young people to the existence of a wide range of services, facilities and opportunities available to them; thus providing an active rather than a reactive and passive service which merely responds to an expressed need or problem.
5. Help to actively encourage young people to use their information sources and develop information skills as a basis for personal and social advancement.
6. Help to empower young people by doing things with them, not for them such that youth workers should help young people to reflect upon the best solutions for their issues.
7. Equip and share information with those who work with young people e.g. parents, teachers, youth workers, social workers and counsellors, to give them the necessary information to enable them to respond in an effective and timely manner.

### 1.3 Why youth information is necessary

#### 1.3 Why youth information is necessary

In recent years, many African countries have attached much importance to young people in seeking to develop coherent and comprehensive youth policies, by increasing their involvement in the formulation of youth policies and in the organisation and management of programmes and services aimed at young people.

In this area also, it is widely acknowledged that there can be no effective participation without young people being informed about the opportunities that are available to them, at the local, regional, national, continental and international level. Young people are unable to exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens if they are not adequately informed. It is through the provision of relevant information to the youths on the available opportunities for them that they are able to effectively participate in both local and international programmes.

*You cannot use a service or participate in an activity, if you do not know that it exists.*



If we accept that young people cannot be expected to participate in activities that they are not informed about, then information can be seen as a backbone of participation and inclusion. This inter-relationship can be summarized by the participation wheel here:-



The need for youth information especially in this era cannot be downplayed since young people represent one of the largest segments of the world's population. As a result of the breakdown of traditional systems including the family, which is the basic unit of socialisation, young people are today confronted with many issues that lack a reliable social support system. Also it's during the "youth stage" where young people are faced with many situations and decisions which may be linked to school life, courses and study options, family and

other relationships, leisure activities or the discovery of new environments and cultures. It is during this sensitive period that young people are trying to find their own way of life, to establish their own identities, to stand on their own feet and to construct a new way of relating to their parents and the adult world. Youth Information Centres are a powerful tool in helping construct positive life choices during these times.

### **Information process**

#### **It's not just about providing information but supporting the use of it too!**

Basically, the youth information work process is about helping young people to identify their own resources, make their own decisions and take their own actions. Youth information should not be viewed as a one-off event but as a process which is characterised by regular interactions between the One Stop Youth Information workers and young people.

This process involves a sympathetic and supportive intermediary who assists the young person:

- To locate and interpret the relevant information
- To understand the options available as well as the likely consequences and risks involved in each considered alternative
- To apply this information in the prevailing circumstances and decide on an appropriate course of action

The information should be provided in a warm, friendly, informal and welcoming atmosphere that encourages the active participation of the young person at all stages involved in the information process, in a manner which helps to develop their independence.

#### **It's not what you do but the way that you do it!**

Youth information is not merely about handing out information or facts, but also encouraging dialogue and observation as well as sensitive and sympathetic handling of the users. It involves uncovering the real needs of the user and looking beyond the initial request for other related needs which may not be expressed.

Often to deal with an enquiry at "face value" is to leave the real need unsatisfied as many young people do not find it easy to put their feelings and thoughts into words and are mostly shy in presenting their concerns. This is especially the case with those less articulate and those from disadvantaged backgrounds

## CHAPTER 2

# One Stop Youth Information Resource Centre (OSYIRC)

### 2.1 Definition of the OSYIRC

One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres are places where young people can meet and exercise their right for freedom of assembly, access to information and to participate in issues of interest and concern to them. These rights are laid out in the United Nations Articles of Children's Rights as adopted in 1989 at the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Being the African model of youth information centres, one stop youth information resource centres are also a concretisation of these rights and in particular article 15, 17, 29 and 31<sup>7</sup>. These articles state the need of creating a space where young people can meet and exercise their right to access information, education for personal fulfilment and participate in issues that concerns them. **See appendix 1**

Young people can address their issues and influence what kind of services they would like the centre to have. These centres are geared to give young people belongingness, fight against ignorance, promote youth participation, empower young people, bring institutions closer to young people and collect, create, organize and avail existing opportunities for young people to improve their livelihood.

One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres are also essentially **user-centred structures** that bring all relevant and reliable information and services to young people under one roof in order to ease their search for answers to their questions. The One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres or services adopts as its starting-point the questions and needs of the young people who it intends to serve (i.e. target group). As these cover a wide range of issues and problems, the centre is organised either to respond directly on a large number of topics or to refer them to other specialised information services e.g. careers, health, social issues, etc...

**Key message here - Remember - It is their problem not yours!! If you are able to help a young person quicker by passing them on to someone else then do just that.**

The centre may provide other services which are complementary to its basic information and education role i.e. organizing events, youth projects and organising training courses. It may also make available information from a wide range of sources (public and private institutions, associations etc) which promotes activities and opportunities needed by young people. This basically means that if you don't have the answer for the young person then you will know somebody or some organisation that does. Centres do not 'hold on' to their young people if there is a quicker way to get them help elsewhere. The 'open' front door policy must be accompanied by an 'open' back door policy so that young people can find help as quickly as possible!! OSYIRCs seek to do this in a way which enables the user to have a wider number of choices, and which respects her/his autonomy, anonymity and confidentiality

### 2.2 The OSYIRCs core values and principles

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#### Principles

In general, One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres and services are guided by values which are based on the UN-Habitat GPI – One Stop Concept paper sign in Vancouver between Nairobi One Stop Youth Information and Resource Centre, UN-Habitat and Oslo Youth Council<sup>8</sup>. The centre's operations will always be based on the underlying principles; the following are the global principles that the centre should base its operation on:

<sup>7</sup> United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, November 1989

<sup>8</sup> Official agreement available at Nairobi One Stop and UN-Habitat

1. Information provided should ideally be free of charge at point of delivery
2. The centre's services should be open to all young people without exception.
3. The centre's services will guarantee equality of access to all young people, regardless of their situation, origin, gender, religion, or social category.
4. The centre's services should be aware of potentially disadvantaged groups unable to access the centre. For example people with disabilities or with specific needs.
5. The information available should be based on the requests of young people and on their perceived information needs. It shall cover all topics that interest young people, and should evolve in order to cover new areas of interest.
6. Each user should be respected as an individual and the response to each question shall be personalised. This should be done in a way that empowers users, promotes the exercise of their autonomy, and develops their capacity to analyse and use information.
7. The information offered should be independent of any religious, political, or ideological bias. For example you should display information about all religions, political parties, etc so that the young person can make a choice
8. The centre should strive to reach the largest possible number of young people, in ways that are effective and appropriate to different groups and needs, and by being creative and innovative in their choice of strategies, methods and tools.
9. Young people should have the opportunity to participate, in appropriate ways, in different stages of the centre's work.
10. The centre should co-operate with other youth services and structures, especially in their geographical area, and shall network with intermediaries and other bodies that work with young people. In particular, local authority youth departments should be engaged in partnership projects and joint-initiatives.

### **Core Values - A Youth-friendly Service?**

It is important to involve young people in the planning of the OSYIRCs layout and furnishing. Many young people, especially those most in need, do not find it easy to visit any service (official or unofficial) for help. Arranging the OSYIRC so that it is attractive and informal will make it easier for young people to make the critical first step of entering the centre. At the same time, it is important to avoid the trap of trying to be too trendy because this will only attract a certain group of young users. The involvement of young people in the decisions regarding layout and furnishing can help to find the right balance.

### **Youth friendliness defined**

The term youth-friendly has in recent times become sort of a buzz word amongst many organisations working with young people who consider themselves as such just because they provide services to young people. Therefore, it would be wrong to pre-suppose that youth information centres and other agencies in the field of youth work can be considered youth-friendly merely because their primary target are young people.

Being youth-friendly should not be viewed as an abstract concept but as a practical approach that encompasses different components within the sphere of youth information work. These components include but are not limited to the following;

- Management structure of the organisation that encompasses youth views and needs
- Friendly but professional interaction between workers and users

- Buildings and facilities that are acceptable and appealing to young persons
- Existence of a youth body e.g. Youth Advisory Board
- Level of participation and sphere of influence by young people in shaping services
- Youth information workers have a positive attitude to work with young people and with interests to learn more about them

### Core Values in practice - Free of charge?

This factor takes into account that the right to information is fundamental to the development of any society and thus measures should be put in place to ensure that information is made accessible to young people by removing the barrier of cost. Realistically, there may be times when small charges need to be made where resources are scarce e.g. charging a small amount for printing of more than 2 pages but first two pages are free.

### Work with Disadvantaged groups

Moreover, special emphasis should be paid to disadvantaged groups and to young people with specific needs. This indicator also takes into account the fact that young people are largely unemployed and would therefore be unable to meet costs charged on these services. In Kenya for example young people account for 67% of the unemployed persons. In some youth information centres, like Oslo Youth Information Centre, all services are offered free of charge since the majority of the users come from relatively low-income backgrounds. These services include telephone calls, internet, printing of documents, trainings etc.

However, in some countries particularly those in Africa, the provision of free services may not be realistic due to a number of factors which are mostly centred on lack of adequate resources to support them. Whatever the case since a large number of young people are unemployed and most of young people in need for such services are those with less opportunity; there should not be any reason for charging them. This approach has worked well with Nairobi One Stop Youth Centre's model which provides its services free of charge along with partners who are based at the centre to young people using the facilities.

### Core Values in practice – Age of staff?

This is a crucial factor that cannot be overlooked if One Stop Youth Information Centres want to appeal to young people. Human beings have a tendency to associate with those whom they share a common background, values, norms etc and young people are not an exception. It's therefore an added advantage to have youth information workers who are young or relatively young as they are more likely to understand and respond to issues raised by users in their own "language". This also fosters the peer to peer approach towards youth information which is regarded as more efficient and effective. However, this element is not a pre-requisite to working with young people and as long as one is "young at heart" he/she has the capacity to be instrumental in this field.

*It is therefore imperative that the Centre categorises the ages of the people that it serves. However this varies from country to country depending on the legislative structures in place along with the level of economic development.*

### Core Values in practice – Accessibility for young people?

#### Operating hours

OSYIRC should not be too rigid with their opening hours and if circumstances arise they should be flexible enough to accommodate young people. In many cases the school going youth, due to their studies, lack the time to utilise the centres and when they are free i.e. during the evening and weekends the centres are usually closed. Thus, it's incumbent upon the respective OSYIRC to come up with a system that allows for extended working hours so that young people are not disadvantaged. For instance the issue of overtime for the youth information

workers can be considered or this system can be initiated on a pilot basis to evaluate its impact. It is however critical that both the interests of the users and the workers are taken into account before such measures are introduced.

### Equipment

When equipping the centre, particular attention should be given to the needs of both the staff and the public. In particular, a significant proportion of young people do not always have access to equipment which most would now take for granted, such as:

- Telephone, to contact potential employers or welfare agencies
- Photocopier, to make a copy of documents
- Computer, to prepare job applications or a curriculum vitae
- Internet connection to access information
- Projectors for trainings, etc.

## 2.3 Defining the Educational role of Youth Information Work

### 2.3 Defining the Educational role of Youth Information Work

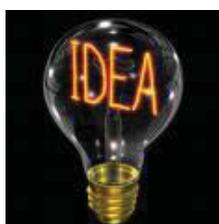
One Stop Youth Information Centres in Africa are going to operate in challenging environments where education is becoming expensive and there are still many barriers to formal education for many young people with great potential. Therefore One Stop Centres should give young people a chance to access non-formal education that offers access to learning opportunities in order to help improve their education level, employability and lifestyle choices.

One Stop centres should therefore offer or provide access to non-formal learning opportunities in a setting where young people feel less intimidated or more comfortable than they would do in a formal classroom. The setting should be accessible, and free, or at a very low cost. The ultimate goal is that an informal learning setting can lead to greater confidence in improving livelihoods of many young people.

One Stop Youth Information Centres as informal education institutions should propose different learning styles and multiple choices and offer supplementary, alternative study for informal education. It should offer unique opportunities through effective means for youth leaders, youth workers, parents and other care providers to share their knowledge, experience, expertise and time with the young people. It gives youth workers and young people direct access to professionals and other career role models in the business and public sector, as well as opportunities to acquire authentic skills that are expected to inspire and strengthen their capacity.

A key education role of OSYRIC workers and volunteers is that of partnering with other organisations that provide skills training and educational opportunities for young people. It is here that the link between informal and formal education can be strengthened and thereby provide a clear and coherent route into accredited or vocational training. Access courses to universities and colleges can be held in centres and provide a safe and progressive environment in which young people can learn at their own pace before moving onto further education. Basic Literacy and Numeracy Skills sessions for example can be the first steps towards securing employment opportunities.

OSYRICs are expected to create, collect and publicise educational opportunities for young people. Also, rather than being passive and just providing the information on notice boards, shelves and walls etc, workers should actively promote the activities to users by holding promotional workshops, roadshows and themed days.



**CASE STUDY - Education role in action**

Nairobi OSYRIC

During the International Youth Day that is marked annually on the 12th of August, NOSYIRC organizes youth market days that offer an opportunity for young people to exhibit and market their products to the general public. This is a good opportunity for young people to learn about how to promote their ideas and to get advice from business leaders and politicians in attendance. These informal education events are stepping stones to success for the young people involved and they learn a great deal from them

Participation in the youth market day is free of charge and this has allowed many youth groups to get involved. By getting exposure to a wider market, the youth have been able to attract many clients and get support and educational advice from key figures in the public and private sector.

**KEY MESSAGE ON DEFINING INFORMATION WORK**

The importance of information work with young people

“It is not so much the piece of information which matters. The real know how rests on an understanding of the ways and methods of informing oneself as a young person. Information for young people is therefore a tool for arriving at a mastery of their social, educational, or work environment.”

**Alain Calmat** (European Youth Information Centres, 1997)

## CHAPTER 3

# Youth Participation



A public recognition of young people as key players in the community development and social process has been strengthened through the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) as featured in chapter 2. This is the most widely ratified international agreement, which affirms the right to participation for all people up to 18 years of age. By stating that "all children have a right to express their views and to have them taken into account in all matters that affect them," the document recognizes youth participation as an integral element in a community's life.

### What is Youth Participation?

Youth participation, also called youth involvement, has been used by government agencies, researchers, educators, and youth organisations in Africa to define and examine the active engagement of young people in different aspects of society.

Meaningful youth participation involves recognizing and nurturing the strengths, interests, and abilities of young people through the provision of real opportunities for young people to become involved in decisions that affect them at individual and community levels as responsible citizens.

However, active citizenship cannot be expected to happen overnight, it is not something that can be handed over, it must be learned "by doing" and through everyday experiences, opportunities to participate, shared decision making, and in consulting on other people's opinions. These are individual skills that help build civil society and young people's commitment to their communities and democratic process.

The participation of young people in youth information work is important at different levels, namely:

- For young people
- For One Stop centres and services
- For the community and society

### 3.1 Reasons for Youth Participation in Youth Information Work

### 3.1 Reasons for Youth Participation in Youth Information Work

The following are some of the reasons why participation of young people is important:

Why involve young people in services which affect them?

- It helps to improve young people's impact and efficiency of any information service
- It helps young people to work with adults to access more resources and increases impact and relevance
- It helps to empower young people and develop their autonomy
- It helps young people learn by doing and acquiring useful skills
- It helps to inform and develop the capacity of young people
- It means a higher level of satisfaction for the users of youth information services as information provided "by young people for young people" will have more relevance
- It improves and promotes a notion of youth friendliness
- It helps centres to reflect better the trends that affect young people and their lives
- It contributes to "legitimising" youth information work
- It contributes to the social integration of young people and is therefore inclusive

Remember this from chapter 1?



*Participation Wheel provided by BURO, Norway.*

### 3.2 Youth participation guidelines in youth information work

#### 3.2 Youth participation guidelines in youth information work

- Opportunities for participation should be open and accessible for all young people without discrimination.
- Opportunities for participation should be offered with special attention to disadvantaged groups and those with specific needs.
- Participation should be FUN
- The forms of participation should be based on youth suggestions and ideas
- Young people should be given the training needed to enable them to undertake their activities in a professional way.
- Adequate resources should be provided by the sponsoring organisation according to the nature of the activity whilst encouraging young people to take the lead.
- Opportunities to participate should be free of any religious, political, or ideological bias
- Have a gender balance in youth participation work
- Creativity and innovation should be encouraged when developing different forms of participation by young people

### 3.3 Role of young people in youth information work

#### 3.3 Role of young people in youth information work

Due to the broader scope of youth information, young people are likely to participate in many areas. The following is a non-exhaustive list of areas into which young people can contribute:

- Young people identifying the information needs of their peers in their local areas
- Young people producing and distributing information materials using various methods
- Young people collecting and adapting information from various sources to distribute to their peers
- Young people informing and or advising other young people
- Young people evaluating the centres services in order to improve their quality
- Young people organising and managing information projects
- Young people acting as members of advisory boards or management committees with a view to influence youth information policy and structures

### 3.4 The conflict between youth participation and youth led approach



### 3.4 The conflict between youth participation and youth led approach

#### A lesson learnt from current practice – Youth Participation – The “ideal” model?

It is crucial to remember that in many countries in Africa or even Europe where the youth information structures originated it is hard to produce the “Ideal Youth Led Structure.” Therefore it is imperative to define what kind of youth led structure and processes you want to have. More focus on processes than structures when working with young people will mean that things move at the pace set by them.

In North, Central and West - Africa where France has been trying to help its former colonies to build up youth information structures, **it has been observed that when one says that the structure is youth led, young people intend to think that they are the managers of the structures.** This has led to conflicts with local or central governments who consider themselves as owners of the structures. Consequently some centres were closed or young people ended up boycotting them altogether. In some other cases youth who were accommodated by the centre since its inception “denied” other young people the opportunity to access the centre without their permission because they regarded themselves as the owners/managers of the centre.

A thorough research has been made recently by the French cultural cooperation in collaboration with the French National Youth Information Body and the findings highlighted that the mistakes were done in the opening of the centres because the role of young people was never clearly explained. In those cases, planners failed to explain:

1. To the young people that they were **users** but **not managers** of the centre that they are needed as a part of an influential body which can participate e.g. in the Advisory board or board of governance, without interfering with the management of the centre.
2. To the young people that they can also be part of a **feedback panel** that can be consulted in order to express their view on how services are delivered hence influencing the changes that will suit their needs and bring about the youth friendly information and services required.

#### What are the key questions then?

The fundamental questions we need to ask ourselves are, if a local or central government opens a centre and young people assumes its management, to whom are they going to report to?

Will they automatically be given employment by that local or central government?

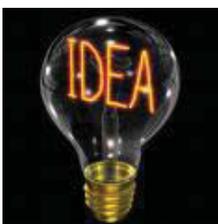
How, when and where should we involve the young people?

What precisely will be the role of young people?

How are we going to monitor and evaluate the management of that structure, with which indicators and under which regulations?

All these questions have to be asked and mechanisms be put in place to help the smooth management of the centre prior to its opening.

### 3.5 The Participation Ladder



### 3.5 The Participation Ladder

Professionally, **Roger Hart** is one of the most respected scholars in youth research and he has been broadly concerned with developing theory, research and programs which foster the greater participation of young people. He states that most organisations can place themselves on one of the 'rungs' of his ladder depending on the level of participation by their young people.

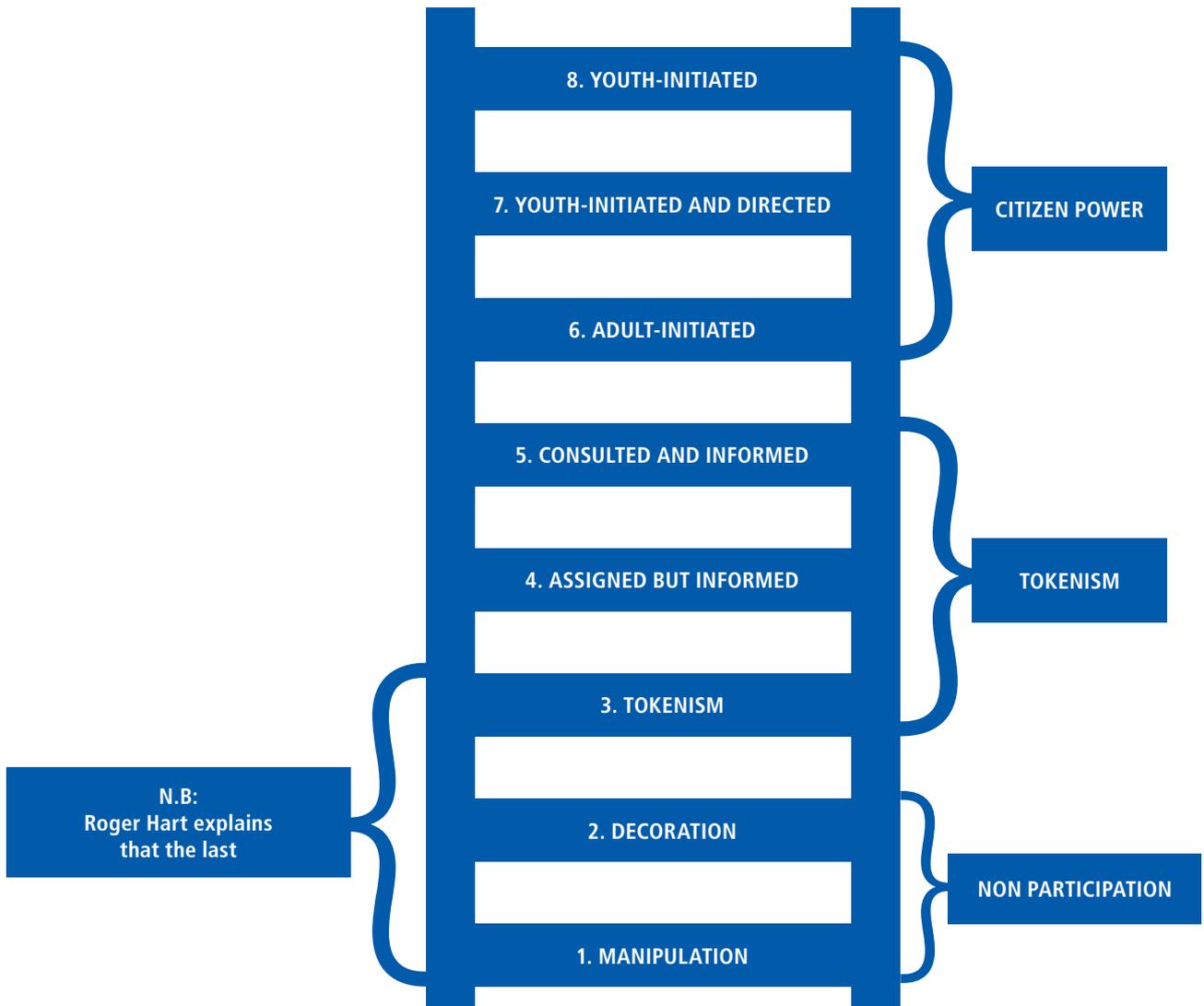
**Exercise** - Have a look at the ladder and see where you think your organisation is? What can you do to move up the ladder? Do you want to?

#### Youth's participation ladder from Tokenism to Citizenship

Levels of participation associated with Hart's Ladder

- 1) **Manipulation** is where adults use youth to support causes and pretend that the causes are inspired by youth.
- 2) **Decoration** is where young people are used to help or "bolster" a cause in a relatively indirect way, although adults do not pretend that the cause is inspired by youth.
- 3) **Tokenism** is where young people appear to be given a voice, but in fact have little or no choice about what they do or how they participate.
- 4) **Assigned but informed**, is where youth are assigned a specific role and informed about how and why they are being involved.
- 5) **Consulted and informed**, is when youth give advice on projects or programs designed and run by adults. The youth are informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of the decisions made by adults.
- 6) **Adult-initiated**, shared decisions with youth are when projects or programs are initiated by adults but the decision-making is shared with the young people.
- 7) **Youth-initiated and directed**, is when young people initiate and direct a project or programme. Adults are involved only in a supportive role.
- 8) **Youth-initiated**, shared decisions with adults are when projects or programs are initiated by young people and decision-making is shared among young people and adults. These projects empower young people while at the same time enabling them to access and learn from the life experience and expertise of adults.

## PARTICIPATION LEVELS



*Roger Hart (1992) Youth's Participation Ladder from tokenism to citizenship*

### 3.6 Debate on an Ideal youth participation approach

### 3.7 An ideal youth led structure



### 3.6 Debate on an Ideal youth participation approach

Ideal youth participation is one of the most controversial issues in youth work today. Reasons are many and it is up to each country to define how far it wants to involve directly or indirectly young people in the centre's management and how many steps of the Roger's ladder it wants to climb.

Roger Hart's Ladder of Participation shows Youth-initiated, shared decisions with adults as the top form of youth participation, followed immediately by Youth-initiated and directed. This is a somewhat controversial issue for many people working with and around young people.

Essentially, the debate is which of these levels of participation is actually the most meaningful?

Many believe that shared decision making is most beneficial to both young people and adults. This may be true in its purest form where adults and young people are equal and where power struggles rarely occur. Others believe that young people are most empowered when they are making decisions without the influence of adults. Most often, this doesn't exclude adults but reduces their role to that of support.

### 3.7 An ideal youth led structure

It is a structure where young people are the architects, are the board members, are the managers, are the youth information officers and report to an overall youth body. In another words, a youth led structure is a youth centre opened by young people, for young people, managed by young people in all levels known as: "FUBU CONCEPT – For Us (young people), By Us" (young people) See appendix 2. It is hard to find an ideal youth led structure within the public institution centres and even in the non profit making organizations set ups unless there is a clear exit mechanism for the service providers therein. **What needs to be done in both cases is to encompass the views of young persons in all their activities by bringing them on board thus working with them and not for them.**

#### Case study - lesson learnt from current practice – Youth Participation

##### A successful Youth Participation Model: Oslo example

The FUBU concept Youth Information Structure has been developed in Oslo – Norway. This concept was a result of coincidence that came from three youth organizations (Conservative youth party, Labour youth party and Nature and youth organization) that came to an understanding on the fact that they have different political ideologies but share the same challenges as youth. With their experience in working closely with senior politicians who often did not prioritize issues of youth interest, they decided to form a council in 1985 aimed to have a common approach for ensuring youth influence and power in the city. The council which took the name of Oslo Youth Council quickly became a regionally based umbrella of all sorts of organizations for voluntary child and youth organizations in Oslo with a politically and religiously neutral character. It is the largest regional umbrella organization of its kind in Norway and gathers about 30000 young members between 13-26 from 57 member organizations.

Together these organizations found out that without information, youth participation will only be a dream. Therefore they decided to start a project called Oslo Youth Information Centre in 1992. The board of the Oslo Youth Council, which is composed of young people from youth organizations, applied for funds to run the project. The board hired relatively young information officers and the manager of the project. The municipality has since then granted funds to run the structure based on their merits to deliver quality services to young people and showing best practices.



The Oslo Youth Information Resource Centre is the biggest youth information centre in Norway and because of its best practices it has been considered as a national centre where other youth centres come to train their staff.

This FUBU concept as it is in Oslo with youth participation in all levels has a particular lesson to give to new centres. Even though young people are on the executive board and the youth information manager and his/her officers are also relatively young, the day to day running of the centre is left to these staff put in place by the board. Young people from the user groups, youth groups and other organisations do not have any control with the daily programmes provided. However, they can influence the nature of the services delivered at the centre through appropriate and representative feedback mechanisms put in place by the management structure.

#### **KEY MESSAGE - PARTICIPATION**

The simple key message in this chapter on Participation is that the involvement of young people in the setting up and running of your centre should be honest and visible in terms of the level at which they operate. You must be aware of how representative of ALL young people your group are. Beware of self-interest groups of young people who may have a one-track agenda which would be detrimental to your inclusive approach



## **PART 2** – Practical advice on how to start a Youth Information Centre



## CHAPTER 4

# Establishing a One Stop Centre

### 4.1 Learning from what exists

### 4.2 Establishing a Planning group

## Getting started!!

Planning is half the job. Starting a centre is a huge task. Here is some practical advice and important things to remember in the process.

### 4.1 Learning from what exists

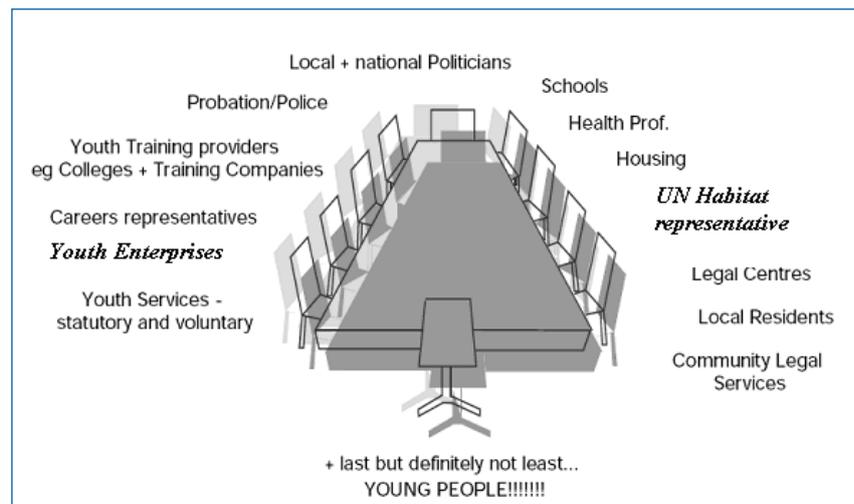
Youth information work, in many African countries, is not recognized as a part of youth work. If there are youth information structures in your neighbouring countries; arrange to visit one or two existing OSYIRCs with different approaches. Talking to people already doing this work will help you test your ideas, probably raise a whole lot of new questions, and will certainly reinforce your enthusiasm to see your project through to a successful conclusion.

### 4.2 Establishing a Planning group

It is advisable to form a planning group. This group should involve persons already working as professionals in the youth field such as youth workers, teachers, social workers etc. This team should include person(s) who conceptualised the idea for such a centre. In order to reflect the local reality, it is probably a good idea to have in the initial planning group a mix of people who are interested in and committed to the project, and others possibly representing local services providers who might want to be involved in the management of the centre by virtue of their field of/area of work. (See Diagram 4.2a) This brings in people with open mind and reduces scepticism about the project leading to bringing more dynamism in setting up the centre. When the involved team in the creation of the OSYIRC has put together basic ideas of starting the centre, the ultimate steps are:

- Examine the need for an OSYIRC.
- Prepare a detailed plan for the establishment and management of the OSYIRC, if the need for such a centre is demonstrated. (See Diagram 4.3a)
- If it is possible visit other existing OSYIRC to be inspired.
- Allocate resources according to the size of the centre. Even if the eventual OSYIRC will be small such a project requires considerable planning and resources. If the OSYIRC will be larger, with more staff and equipment, the need for resources will obviously be significant.
- 

**Diagram 4.2a.** What your OSYIRC planning group might look like:



### 4.3 Crucial steps in the planning of a One Stop Centre



### 4.3 Crucial steps in the planning of a One Stop Centre

The OSYIRC concept is not an idea that can be implemented over night. Between the initial ideas/or inspirations and the day that the OSYIRC receives its first young person, there is a journey that can be long and confusing and as the Chinese saying goes:

“A journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step.”

The following are crucial steps to consider on that journey!!

Use the template in (Box 3) to assist you in making sure that you are clear in what you are doing and why you are doing it!

- a. Identify your target group and their information needs
- b. Clarify the precise services which the proposed OSYIRC will offer
- c. Prepare a detailed plan and budget for the first two or three years of the project
- d. Obtain political and financial support for the project
- e. Decide and arrange the legal status of the OSYIRC
- f. Obtain, adapt and furnish / equip the premises
- g. Hire and train OSYIRC staff members (salaried and voluntary)
- h. Collect and organise resources for the information services
- i. Review and identify other services provided by the OSYIRC
- j. Promote the OSYIRC in the local community.

#### KEY MESSAGES ABOUT PLANNING YOUR OSYIRC

Your plan should be a realistic view of the expectations. You should incorporate 3 aspects to it in relation to your One Stop Centre plan:

- 1 - Your long range vision, i.e. Where do you want to be in say, 3 years time?
- 2 – Your intermediate aims i.e. What will be happening in your development stages?
- 3 -Your immediate short range actions i.e. how will you get started and supported?

This is the framework within which your plan must operate. For groups seeking external support, the plan is the most important document and key to growth.

Remember, preparation of a comprehensive plan will not necessarily guarantee success, but lack of a sound plan will almost certainly ensure that you will run into problems.

PPP = PPP ..... Pretty Poor Planning leads to Pretty Poor Performance!

### Diagram 4.3a - Action Planning Template for establishing OSYIRC

Your organisation or planning team can complete this step-by-step template as you plan to establish your One Stop Youth Information Resource Centre.

<p><b>Evidence that OSYIRC is needed</b></p> <p>What is the need or problem to be addressed? What gap are you meeting in the community?</p> <p>Be concrete and specific in naming the problem in order to propose a solution.</p> <p>Research and statistics about the young people can help here e.g. % unemployed</p>	
<p><b>Mission Statement of OSYIRC?</b></p> <p>Name three clear goals for your OSYIRC. These will be your yardstick for determining success. Mission statements inform people what you are about but keep them clear and simple.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Will young people be involved?</b></p> <p>Who makes decisions about this issue? What influences or changes their decisions?</p>	
<p><b>Core Partners?</b></p> <p>What agencies/groups are most able to help you establish services?</p> <p>Who among them will be willing to participate in finding a solution?</p> <p>Arrange meetings and propose service level agreements with them</p>	
<p><b>Management Board</b></p> <p>In addition to the core members, who will be supportive and helpful on the organising effort? How will you get their support? Try to spread expertise across your members e.g. IT, Legal, Finance, Administration, and Training knowledge</p>	
<p><b>Possible Opposition to OSYIRC</b></p> <p>Who stands on the other side of this issue and will attempt to block/thwart or work against you? How will you deal with them?</p>	
<p><b>Key Messages</b></p> <p>Identify 4 key messages about OSYIRC to target young people with. Articulate them clearly and in a language and format that is accessible to them. e.g. Music videos, or slick posters and leaflets.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> <li>4.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Premises</b></p> <p>Where are young people most likely to go? Location of your premises is all important. Can you research premises that they use now and find something similar? List possible sites, show them to young people</p>	
<p><b>Activities</b></p> <p>Design activities to accomplish several things such as increasing involvement of your OSYIRC, impacting the media, showing strength to decision-makers and gaining the initiative with up-to-date issues affecting young people.</p>	

<p><b>Budget</b></p> <p>Determine the minimum amount of money you need to run your OSYIRC and how you might secure that. Build budgets with varying levels of resources. (Consider staff, rentals, power costs, office supplies, IT equipment, materials, etc)</p>	
<p><b>Staff</b></p> <p>What budget will you require for paid staff? How many &amp; who trains them?</p> <p>What is their Job description &amp; role</p>	
<p><b>Volunteers</b></p> <p>How many volunteers need to be mobilised and what will you ask them to do?</p> <p>Who will train them and in what?</p>	
<p><b>Timeline</b></p> <p>Sketch out a timeline for the setting up of the OSYIRC with milestones to reach. What will be accomplished at each milestone and by whom?</p>	
<p><b>Capacity Building</b></p> <p>What about sustainability / ongoing work? How will you get funds in 3 years time say if you are ok for funding now?</p>	
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p>How will you monitor your project from day to day?</p> <p>How will you know if you have been a success with your OSYIRC?</p>	

**4.4 Identifying your user group and their information needs**

**4.4 Identifying your user group and their information needs**

**A. Assess youth information needs**

Ask as many people as you know in different walks of life; what are the information needs of young people in your locality and you will probably receive responses that vary considerably. This provides a simple demonstration of the importance of researching youth information needs amongst young people in your community. This is one of the key steps in the process of creating an OSYIRC.

Information needs may be identified quite easily by reviewing in a planning group which youth services and information services are already available locally, and what is not available. However this approach is useful as a first step but is not likely to satisfy officials and funding agencies when they ask how you have established the need for a new centre or service.

**B. Consider Youth perspectives – Youth ownership**

Identifying local youth information needs is a key step in the creation of an OSYIRC, and it is essential to invest time and energy in this process. This enhances belongingness and a sense of ownership of the centre by the young people involved. The first task to ask is the young people themselves what information they are missing. This can and should be done in different ways:

**Questionnaires** can be circulated in schools

**Meetings** with youth groups and organisations

**Observation** by going to remote areas or marginalised areas, youth clubs and other places frequented by young people to find directly from young people.

**Interviews** with both individuals and groups

Recognise the fact that if the only question about the needs are coming from adults, the responses and the level of youth interest and participation are not necessarily going to be the same as when it is other young people asking the questions. It is therefore worthwhile to involve young people in the process of designing the questionnaires, giving them out, their collection and analysing the responses.

**Remember:**

- No body knows young people better than themselves
- Clarify the role of young people in the structure
- Differentiate youth participation in the structure and youth management of the structure as they can collide and create ugly conflicts

It is also vital to consult as widely as possible with other youth-related services providers in the area on the question of the local youth information and service needs. This will enable you to obtain a more precise idea of what already exists and functions thereby avoiding wasteful replication.



**Key message about identifying needs**

Do you agree? The conclusions of a survey involving several hundred completed questionnaires, plus meetings with a series of youth groups, are much more convincing to funders as evidence of need than are the individual opinions of the persons in the planning group

**C. Baseline Surveys (profile of services in the community for young people)**

Another way of assessing youth information and service needs (which is complementary to the survey mentioned above) is to make a “*Baseline survey*” of the socio-cultural environment in which the OSYIRC will operate. This involves making an inventory of the organizations and services (official and voluntary) working with and for young people in the locality including national structures to which young people may have access. Analyzing the existing resources in specific fields will also help to identify gaps and will provide a list of organisations with which the OSYIRC will cooperate with in future. The making of such an inventory can be done in parallel by the planning group and by a group of young people; the two resulting “*Baseline surveys*” may prove to be interestingly different.

**4.5 Clarifying the services which your OSYIRC will offer**

**4.5 Clarifying the services which your OSYIRC will offer**

A mix of services that can be offered at OSYIRC

The following list can give an idea of the mix of services that an OSYIRC can offer:

- a. **Practical information:** about local services and opportunities for young people, addresses, free local entertainment, cultural and leisure activities, events, etc.
- b. **Youth rights:** rights and obligations at school, in the family and in general, changes in legislation concerning young people
- c. **Access to specialist information services:** a centre can provide space on its premises at a regular time each week or permanently so that young people can consult specialists representing other services at the centre.
- d. **Sport, culture:** organising cultural events and football tournaments etc...
- e. **Information about studies,** careers, qualifications and training courses
- f. **Preparation of CV,** interview skills, job application, available jobs

- g. **Folders available** of documentation which the user can consult freely (without any intervention from the staff of the centre) – on all topics, or in certain fields, such as employment and careers, foreign countries, or on topics like VCT on STDs and HIV-AIDS
- h. Access to computer and Internet services if possible

**Start with a core team**

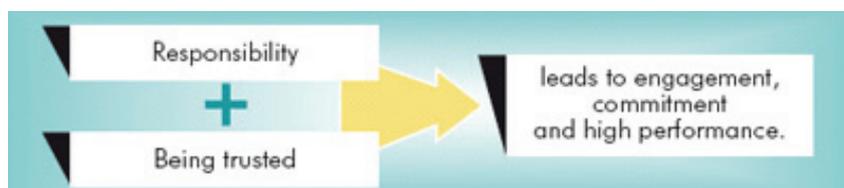
The main role of an OSYIRC is to make available under one roof, a range of information that is relevant to the needs of the young people in the locality. The role of the OSYIRC however is rarely limited to just information provision and the core team will soon find that they have to diversify activities in order to meet other identified needs of the young people that they meet.

In order to have a strong anchor in the beginning, it is essential to identify a core team of between two and four people who will be responsible to the project. These are people who share the same vision as that of the centre. These people are crucial as they will be the life blood of the whole project!!



**Key message about your core team**

People really matter. The success of your centre stems from high performance by your workers. People only perform well when they operate in a culture which nurtures and supports them and helps them to work towards the achievement of their ambitions in working with your young people



**4.6 Preparing a detailed plan and budget for the first two or three years of the project**



**4.6 Preparing a detailed plan and budget for the first two or three years of the project**

The management of the One Stop Centre should make sure there is financial provision, at a realistic level, to cover start-up and running costs for e.g. premises, staff, information materials, support services, furniture and equipment. This should be planned according to the local financial possibilities. Many people working with youth information centres throughout the world have been concerned with their centre’s sustainability. However, different centres in Africa agree on one point and that is, that the sustainability of the centre lies in the hands of local or central government. In the case of NGOs, the sustainability of the centre can be difficult to predict since its lies in the hands of donors or suitable partnerships with local authorities and government.

**Top Tip**

You will need to approach as many stakeholders as you can to get support to run services. Do not rely on just one source of funding as this will leave you vulnerable. Other stakeholders will put in money if you provide services for them and help them deliver a professional service to the young people. Plan for this at least 2 years before funding runs out!

## 4.7 Getting support for the project

### 4.7 Getting support for the project

#### Financing a one stop youth information resource centre

One of the key principles of One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres (OSYIRC) is that all young people should have equal access to the information/ services offered. In practical terms, it means that the basic information services in the OSYIRC should be accessible and free of charge. If an OSYIRC receives no income from its basic services, the question of how such a centre is financed is all-important. This is especially so if the OSYIRC is to have a stable financial base over a period of years. There is nothing more detrimental to the quality of the services offered by a OSYIRC than frequent doubts about its continued existence in the next financial year. Also there is factor of the de-motivation of staff when this happens!!

In general, the current practice in different African and European countries indicates four systems for financing the One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres alike:

#### Funded by central / regional government

The Centre is part of a programme administered by the central or regional government, which finances the staff, activities and equipment of the centre. In this case, as (for example) in Gabon and Tunisia, many of the persons employed in the centre are civil servants or employees of the central or regional administration, though they may be assisted by other staff with a different status.

#### Funded by the local authority

The Centre constitutes one element of the youth services which are administered and financed by the local authority (municipality or commune). In this case, as in Kenya, many of the persons employed in the centre are employees of the City Council of Nairobi.

#### Non-profit associations

The Centre has the legal status of a non-profit making association (or cooperative), which may be recognised by, and financed by the local authority, as is often the case in Norway, or jointly financed by the central and regional administrations as is the case in France. In these cases the staff of the centre are usually employees of the association (or cooperative), and the centres have to seek additional sources of funding to balance their budgets each year.

#### Project-funding

With this type of funding, the centre has been created as a project with funding from local, national or other funding sources, which is available for a limited period of time. This can lead to a situation where the centre does not exist very long, as it is unable to renew the project funding or obtain a more secure source of funding. But this method can also be used to finance the pilot phase of the OSYIRC, after which the necessary funding to continue operating is obtained from a more secure source.

In all Youth Information Centres (YICs), the main item of expenditure (and often the item which is the most difficult to finance) is the cost of staff: salaries, running costs, and training costs. In some countries, YICs are able to benefit from UN agencies such as UN-Habitat, UNDP and other national programmes for employment promotion, which cover the costs of one or more workers in a centre for a year or longer.

## 4.8 Deciding and arranging the legal status of the OSYIRC

### Legal status of a one stop youth information centre

In order to receive regular funding and to fulfil its functions as an employer and to meet other legal obligations, a One Stop Youth Information Resource Centre (OSYIRC) needs a legal status, established in accordance with the legislation of the country in which it operates.

The choice of legal status will largely depend on the way in which youth work is structured and organised in the country in question, and on the role which local groups, public government projects and non-governmental organisations play in youth work in the country.

### The OSYIRC as part of a public institution

This means that the policy and objectives of the OSYIRC, as well as its services and methods, are determined by an official body of the government (central, regional or local). It also means that the staff are either direct employees of the governmental body, or employed by it in terms which apply to external or fixed-term contracts. In such a case (as in Gabon and Tunisia / central government or Kenya / municipality), the OSYIRC will operate in accordance with the regulations which govern its supervisory body or which are laid down by it, and the OSYIRC will usually be totally financed by that body.

There are advantages in this approach, in that it reflects the importance that the government attaches to youth information. On the other hand, the degree to which young people will use such centres or services will largely depend on the degree of confidence which they have to the will and capacity of the concerned institutions to meet their needs.

### The OSYIRC as a non-profit making Non-Governmental Organisation

This means that, in accordance with the country's legislation on non-governmental non-profit-making associations, the OSYIRC is legally established and registered as such an organisation, with its own Constitution, management structure and internal procedures governing its finances and activities. In such a case, the OSYIRC may not or may be partially financed by the relevant (central, regional or local) governmental body. It is more likely as in Norway for example that the OSYIRC will only receive total or part of its budget from an official body responsible for youth matters, and that it will need to seek additional funds from other sources. In cases where the OSYIRC is not financed by the government then it needs to seek funding from potential stakeholders, both locally and internationally.

In many countries, the fact that OSYIRCs have the status of non-governmental associations reflects the importance of the role that the non-governmental sector (or the civil society) plays in society and youth work in particular. Many governments recognise that youth services are best provided by non-governmental structures, which are closer to the daily needs of the target-group, and in which the users have more confidence. On the other hand, the limited and precarious nature of funding from official sources for such centres can have a really negative effect on the quality and sustainability of their activities.

The choice of legal status can also have important implications for the autonomy of the centre, and this could affect its financing.



**The one best way for a One Stop centres does not exist – Find what suits!**

However objective and uniform we try to make One Stop Centres, they will not have the same meaning for individuals from different countries. The meanings perceived depend on the cultural preferences, know how and political systems in place.

The same will apply to how people perceive the concept of the organisation’s structure, its practices and policies that are culturally defined. This will dictate what different countries will pay attention to, how they will act and what they will value. One Stop centre managers have therefore to take in consideration these factors in its handling of employees and its young people in order to be able to make it relevant to its target group. This has to be an understanding that is embedded in management structures as early as possible to create a sense of ownership and belongingness for those involved.

**Functions of board of governance / Advisory board**

The main functions of a board of governance/Advisory board are to develop policies and procedures governing the operation of the OSYIRC, which will guide the Director/Coordinator of the centre, its staff and volunteers in the execution of their tasks. Depending on the legal status of the OSYIRC, but especially if it is an NGO, the board of governance will have a major role in securing the financing of the centre. Usually the director/coordinator of the OSYIRC will be appointed by the relevant department in the ministry or City administration, and will report regularly on the functioning of the centre.

In the case of an NGO, the board of governance/Advisory board will prepare (or receive from the director/coordinator of the OSYIRC) the annual budget and annual report of the centre, and submit both for adoption to the General Assembly of members or to another supervisory body.

**Composition of Management**

The composition of a board of governance should reflect its functions, and (if the OSYIRC is an NGO) should represent the diversity of its members. As a part of the youth service in its locality, the board of governance/Advisory board will normally have among its member’s representatives of other local bodies with competence in youth matters. It should also include some young people as representatives of the users of the centre, and / or should benefit from the advice of a Council of Users composed of young people i.e. junior council, youth council or other youth groups. (See diagram 4.2a)

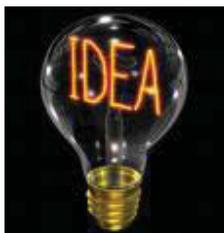
**4.9 Obtaining, adapting, furnishing and equipping the premises**

**4.9 Obtaining, adapting, furnishing and equipping the premises**

**Location, Location, Location! – It is essential to be visible**

The location of a One Stop Youth Information Resource Centre (OSYIRC), its size and the physical layout of the available space will have a considerable effect on users of the centre, on what services it can offer and on whether it can develop new services.

Ideally, the premises should be situated somewhere neutral in an area of your locality which is either already frequented by young people or easily accessible to them. In particular, the OSYIRC should be in an area that is easily accessible by public and other means of transport.



### **A place of their own!!**

It is important that the OSYIRC should have its own premises (not be sharing space with another service), so that its identity can be clearly defined and that young people can feel that it is for them. Be aware that the centre will appeal to more young people if it is physically and operationally independent of other specific institutions (church, school, municipal or central government). When you have identified possible premises, ask yourself a number of questions about their suitability, such as:

- Is the space available enough for all the services which the OSYIRC will offer?
- Is there any extra space (or flexibility) which will permit the OSYIRC to offer additional services in the future?
- Are the premises accessible for the physically handicapped?
- How youth friendly will the space be?

### **Suitable premises are important**

The One Stop Youth Information Resource Centre (OSYIRC), as a new concept is expected to be located in spacious premises, but it is clearly preferable if you can obtain premises that provide:

- Adequate space for an open reception area for the public
- One or two small rooms for private interviews
- Three or four offices for the director/coordinator of the OSYIRC, administrative staff, youth information officers and other staff of the centre
- A store-room for stocks of information leaflets and office supplies
- A meeting-room (for staff meetings, project-groups, teams of volunteers), which can also be made available to youth groups or rented to other external bodies.
- Other rooms required by specific programmes / services housed in the OSYIRC the reception area is the most important, as this is the part of the OSYIRC which every user sees and uses. It needs to be informal and welcoming, as well as functional, with chairs and tables, stands for leaflets to take away, shelves for files and other documentation to consult, plus one or more desks for the OSYIRC staff on duty in the public area, and (or in a separate room) one or more computers for public use.
- Toilets (to be used by both staff and public, if separate toilets are not possible)
- A kitchen if it is possible as offering a sweet tea helps relationship forming!!!

### **Centre layout needs thought**

The external layout of the centre is also a crucial factor in wooing young people to the centre. It should be well advertised and recognisable to the users and potential users. Some centres have come up with innovative means to make them youth friendly like drawing of murals and other artistic paintings on the walls of the centre to attract young people. Since this is done with the full participation of young people, it cultivates a sense of identity, ownership and belonging as they feel part and parcel of the centre.

As regards location, it is of paramount importance that One Stop Youth Information Centres are independent and autonomous from institutions that may be considered as formal. This does not imply that they should not receive support financial or otherwise from these institutions but rather seek (where possible) alternative locations from them so as not to alienate the young people.

#### 4.10 Hiring and training OSYIRC staff- (salaried and voluntary)

#### 4.10 Hiring and training OSYIRC staff- (salaried and voluntary)

The management of the One Stop centres should have clear and effective recruitment/selection procedures which are implemented to ensure the employment of suitably qualified staff (both paid and non-paid). Staff selected should (most importantly) be able to identify with, and relate to, young people. The management of the One Stop should make sure that there is a contract and job description for each worker, covering the areas specified. It should assess adequacy of staffing in the light of current and future service needs.

It is absolutely crucial that the management of the One Stop centres should devote a great deal of attention to an introduction training kit for all new staff members. It should also draft procedures for informing staff of both internal and external training opportunities. Routines for staff such as meetings and briefing sessions on changes in the information field are essential in ensuring that information updates are brought to the attention of all staff at the earliest possible opportunity.

##### Essential skills and attitudes needed

The experience from various youth information centres both in Africa and Europe has identified the following key youth information skills, emphasising that different kinds of skills are needed in youth information work:-

- Inter-personal skills
- Community development, social work and teaching experience
- Documentation and data management skills
- Professional principles and attitudes underlying youth information work
- Application of youth information theory to the practical work
- Identifying and recording youth information needs, and their social context
- Networking at the local and national (information sources, referrals, etc.)
- Skills in using information and communication technologies
- Administrative and self-management skills
- Skills in the production and distribution of information materials

These skills and attitudes can be considered as essential for youth information workers in small OSYIRCs with only one or two members of staff who are required to be flexible, but the same skills and attitudes are also needed in larger OSYIRCs, where different people can have different specialisations.

##### Have a Core of permanent professionally trained staff

It is fundamental that an OSYIRC has a permanent professionally trained staff team, even if that is a team of only one person at the beginning!!.

All the staff dealing directly with young people should have appropriate qualifications and / or receive appropriate training in the fields in which they will work. In some countries, formal qualifications relating to youth information work can be obtained through university courses or professional training institutions or can be provided by external training agencies e.g. Gabon and Tunisia where the youth Information staffs are trained from a Youth College. UN Habitat also recently provided accredited Youth Information Work Training in Nairobi, Kenya for One Stop Co-ordinators from across regions of East Africa

When an OSYIRC has several staff dealing directly with users, it is advisable to have a mix of (basic) qualifications represented among them, such as a youth work diploma, social worker training, librarianship or documentation management qualifications, teaching etc.

#### 4.11 Collecting and organising resources for the information services

#### 4.11 Collecting and organising resources for the information services

##### Signposting and Referrals

**Signposting** – Is the provision of a piece of information that will allow young people to be directed to the service they need without any other assistance.

**Referrals** – Is the involving of a third party (from within or outside the agency) in the work with an individual.

No youth information centre can have the answer to every question posed by its users. What the OSYIRC must have is a comprehensive knowledge of the other bodies or services (local and national) which have the competence to respond to needs or questions to which the OSYIRC is not able to respond. Each OSYIRC must therefore develop contacts and partnerships with a wide range of agencies and services. This is so that it can simply signpost a young person to the relevant agency when it receives a question to which it cannot itself address.

Often such a referral will concern a question of information which is in the domain of another organisation than the OSYIRC. On other occasions, the referral will concern a more complex issue or problem, where a user needs support or counselling over a shorter or longer period of time; here the role of the OSYIRC may be to accompany the young person in the first contacts with the other organisation, or to provide support in fulfilling administrative procedures.

#### 4.12 Reviewing and identifying other services provided by the OSYIRC

#### 4.12 Reviewing and identifying other services provided by the OSYIRC

The precise services that an OSYIRC will provide can vary quite considerably depending on what youth services already exist in the locality, the specific needs expressed by young people, and what is possible to provide with the resources available.



##### Here is a six point plan to follow in order to build a holistic range of services

- Clarify the identity of your structure to the users and partners in the business
- Identify what other youth structures are offering
- Prioritise services which the OSYIRC will offer initially
- Identify where you can send youths to compliment your services
- Identify which organizations you want to start partnership with in order to bring specific answers to youth questions and needs
- Identify other services which the OSYIRC will offer (when it has the necessary resources) in order to fulfil its mission

### 4.13 Promoting the OSYIRC in the local community.



### 4.13 Promoting the OSYIRC in the local community.

In order for young people to benefit from the services provided by a One Stop Centre, they must first be aware of its existence. You must ask yourself:

Do people know that our One Stop Centre exists?

Do people know what our One Stop Centre is?

Do people know what our One Stop Centre can provide?

The purpose of publicity is to ensure that young people and the general public are aware of your Centre and its activities, and that everyone is aware that you exist for their benefit and know the range of services that you can offer them.

A variety of activities and opportunities should be used to publicize the Centre, through a variety of media tools in order to keep interest high. You need to sell your services, making people want to use your Centre. The more creative and consistent you are, the better!! Be seen – be used!!

Publicity should be an ongoing process of selling your service. The methods for doing so are varied and more numerous from *newsletters, newspapers, posters, church announcements, local radio to Internet and even television adverts.*

#### Key message for promoting your centre

Some things can sell themselves!!

Always remember that **word of mouth** amongst the young people is the most effective marketing tool of all. Also think of **QUALITY** of product - your service can almost sell itself if you have a positive impact on the people that you help by providing a professional and quality service that meets their needs.

### Learning from what exists – Working example of Nairobi One Stop Youth Information Resource Centre

#### Case study - Setting up at new premises - Nairobi

NOSYRIC recently relocated to a new premise situated strategically within the city centre. This means that it is easily accessible to its users by public transport and is well located for access by foot. At the previous premises, it was necessary to pay rent and this took up a lot of the resources. However, the new premises are wholly owned by the City Council of Nairobi and through this partnership the centre does not pay any rent.

The premise also has adequate space both inside the youth centre and outside to accommodate additional services and activities. There is currently an ongoing process to maximise on this space so that young people can optimize on the potential of the youth centre.

Due to the council ownership status, the centre has undergone refurbishment making the layout more youth-friendly, thus encouraging more young people to access its services.

NOSYIRC has incorporated young people in designing the murals and artistic painting on the walls to encourage a sense of belonging and ownership for the young people. Since the building was closely associated with the City Council of Nairobi the youth friendly layout has now cultivated a different sense of identity, ownership and belonging amongst the young people.

### Capacity building

Through the support of partners, the staff at NOSYIRC have undergone relevant training(s) in the field of youth information work both locally and internationally. For example NOSYIRC entered into a collaboration with Oslo Youth Council in 2006, which later on resulted in a North-South exchange programme between the two organizations. This programme involved exchange of personnel i.e North participant (Oslo Youth Council) and South participant (NOSYIRC) for a period of one year. As a result of this partnership the South participant has been able to replicate the competence and experience gained to the benefit of NOSYIRC. Moreover, the North participant has been of great value by bringing in his wealth of experience and expertise on youth information work to the centre.

UN HABITAT has been a key partner to NOSYIRC and has also been instrumental in building the capacity of the Onestop staff by organizing training locally and also supporting the training abroad.

### Relationship with the municipal authorities

NOSYIRC is now a wholly owned program of the City Council of Nairobi hence it mainly relies on the support of its benefactor to run its operations and activities. However, partner organizations have also complemented the delivery of services to its users by offering technical support and provision of specialized services. e.g. Hope Worldwide VCT programme

### Successes

1. The Onestop centre premises was allocated by the City Council of Nairobi and thus no rent is payable.
2. The council has seconded its own staff to run the programme on its own costs.
3. Payment of utilities i.e. electricity, water bills among others by the council
4. Provision of stationery, furniture and equipping the centre.

### Challenges

1. The formalisation of the operational and management structure of NOSYIRC has been waiting on a proposed organisational structure which is yet to be incorporated or harmonized within the council departmental structure. Without this, the centre has found it difficult to meet some of the operational costs which can only be done through budget allocations. Also until the structure is formalised, staff members find themselves in an unenviable position since their upward mobility is curtailed.
2. Lack of security of tenure among the staff working at the centre is an issue. Although trained to work with young people, staff are prone to frequent transfers which make it difficult to maintain competence and sustainability.

3. There has been a lack of autonomy. Some decisions regarding the centre have to be taken with the approval of the city council and this sometimes has hampered the delivery of services. For example opening of an account where support to the centre can be channelled. There are also instances where decisions have been made externally without due consultation with the centre management. ie deploying incompetent officers unwilling to work effectively with young people
4. Red tape can be a hindrance too. Since the centre is a programme of the City Council it is inevitable that bureaucratic procedures have to be followed to the latter. Unfortunately this has undermined the efficiency and efficacy of services to the centre users.

## CHAPTER 5

### RUNNING YOUR ONE STOP YOUTH INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTRE

#### Introduction

Ok, so you have established your management board, found your now (fully trained) staff, located your ideal premises, secured 3 years of funding, have a fully participative group of young people and have partnerships with a range of stakeholders to provide quality services to your visitors!! Well, believe it or not but that is the easy bit!! Now you have to run the ship that you have built and apply effective management principles in order to maintain your original vision!!

#### MANAGEMENT OF OSYIRC

The management system of a One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres (OSYIRC) will largely depend on its legal status. If centres are formed as part of a system established and administered by the central or regional government, it will be managed in accordance with the rules set by its supervising Ministry, department within the City administration or other supervisory body. If the centre has the status of a non-governmental or non-profit-making association, its management system must conform to the legislation that governs such bodies. Usually a written document (Constitution) will state which are the organs governing the operations of the OSYIRC and their respective composition and responsibilities.

It is important to distinguish between firstly, the Planning Group, whose function is to plan and create the OSYIRC, secondly, the Board of Governance, whose function is to make policies and make decisions on the operating of the OSYIRC once it is open, and thirdly, any Advisory board, whose function is to make suggestions on how the OSYIRC can reflect young people's aspirations and needs. It is considered good practice if the advisory board is made up by various representative young people. Some members of the Planning Group may become members of the board of governance but the composition of the latter should take account of its different and long-term function.



*The OSYIRC manager will be good at juggling priorities!!*

The coordinator of the OSYIRC is primarily the legal representative of the centre. His job description will mainly be designed by his superior at local, central government level in its respective department and board of directors in the case of NGOs. He is also responsible of designing centre's routines and youth information worker's job descriptions. For an example of coordinator's job description see appendix 3

#### 5.1 Essential operational tasks for Information services

#### 5.1 Essential operational tasks for Information services

##### A. Structuring your information

In providing information on a wide range of subjects, the OSYIRC will inevitably collect a considerable amount of documentation produced by official and non-official bodies, both as reference materials and as copies which a user may take away.

It is therefore necessary to:

- Organise, select, classify, and catalogue these documents See appendix
- Arrange for the storage and distribution of the materials to be handed out to the public
- Think about practical methods to inform young people who can not read or write
- Ensure that the OSYIRC receives updated external versions of information materials



**Remember! – You may need to translate information from `government language` to `young-people language`! This adds to your youth-friendly factor.**

In addition, it is probable that your OSYIRC will create a certain amount of its own documentation, often recycling official information in terms and formats which make the information more accessible, understandable and relevant to your young people.

## B. Provision of Quality information

Information provided to young people should be *accurate, current, up-to-date, reliable* and *relevant* to the individual needs of the young people that you serve. Its content, presentation and delivery should be youth-centred to qualify as quality information. You should act as a sort of filter for information that you receive and only put out what you consider to be quality information



**You may not have room for everything so when selecting your information the following criteria may help you in assessing what is suitable and what is not:-**

- **Language and presentation:** Is it attractive, user-friendly, clear, accurate and in plain language for young people? e.g *Nairobi workers use `Sheng` language sometimes as it is a local `slang language` amongst their young people.*
- **Appropriateness:** Is the information religiously or politically biased, pornographic, or likely to cause offence to anyone? Does it reflect your OSYIRC policies and practice? Is it giving lawful information?
- **Up-to-date:** Does the information reflect current times and trends? Does it take into account changes in legislation or practice?
- **Relevance:** Is the material suitable for your age-groups in terms of how it presented, reading levels, and have you taken account for people with visual/sensory impairments, different ethnic groups etc?

## C. Information classification

### Focal points

The areas of information offered by an OSYIRC will usually depend on local youth needs and the experience in the youth information work. The comprehensive information will be mostly covered by having a well thought list of “Focal points” that can cover most of the young people’s questions. It is also important to remember that in the beginning it is difficult to start with a complete list and various sub-sections will develop in each of the focal point areas. This will develop with time and youth needs; in addition it will provide a classification system that is simple for both young people and information workers to retrieve information. **See appendix 3** which shows how the Nairobi system has developed from their original 6 focal points

The Information classification is the core of youth information work. The indexation and presentation of the information files is a significant factor in the easy retrieval of information. It is important that file navigation is made as simple as possible and that information held in files can be located quickly and efficiently. Remember that you may not be the only person who will be consulting the files – a young person, new staff member or parent needs to be able to locate information in a file as easily as yourself.



### Create a system that is easy to use and is understood by staff and young people alike

There is an example of the Nairobi One Stop Youth Information Resource Centre at appendix 3. This classification system is drawn from work done by existing projects across Africa and the rest of the World and in the case of the Nairobi example they tried to simplify the index system by using the motto 'never use a long word when a short one will do'. Why not try out the Nairobi index and see if you can utilize it within your OSYIRC?

## D. Collating and using Statistics

Keeping of and recording statistics are an essential part of the evaluation process of a OSYIRC and you will need to maintain at least minimal records about your users and their questions, in order to:

- Have statistics about the level of usage of your services (often required by the funding agencies that support you)
- Develop a profile of your users (e.g. age groups, gender, occupation and types of enquiries made)
- Keep track of changes in demand for specific services or fields of information
- Measure the level of satisfaction amongst your users
- Indicate your centre's traffic and its development path. **See appendix 4**

Often this is done by a combination of methods, such as recording basic details of each enquiry (gender, age group, occupation, type and mode of enquiry, while respecting the anonymity of the user), and conducting periodic surveys of users (and non-users).



### Key messages in use of statistics

Statistics are a great way to evidence a need for particular services or recording current trends and demands that young people are putting forward to your centre. What is important is that you involve staff in devising a system that works for you and that you don't simply impose a system upon staff and volunteers. It's about what works for you as a team. A balance is needed between recording enough information to give an accurate picture of traffic through the centre and the time taken in recording and processing the information. It is also advisable to inform young people about the reasons why you are recording information about them so that they feel involved in the process

If you do record the information the make sure that you use it to promote yourself!!

## 5.2 Monitoring and record Keeping

### 5.2 Monitoring and record Keeping

The question of keeping more detailed records, especially where personal matters are concerned and when the OSYIRC may have contacts with the user over a certain period of time, raises arguments both for and against, on which each OSYIRC must decide its policy.

It can be argued that such records are necessary because everyone (the user, the OSYIRC worker, the OSYIRC itself, and external bodies) needs them and that they help keep track of a case. They also show what the OSYIRC is doing and can help planning for the future, and they can assist further enquiries if the case is taken over by another body.

### A. Valid arguments against keeping personal records

It should be discouraged to keep personal records because it goes against the principal of anonymity, it discourages users as they cannot be sure that the information will not be seen or stolen by outsiders. The workers consider such records to be unethical and maintaining the confidentiality of the information will require elaborate procedures for defining what information should be recorded and for ensuring the secure storage of the same.

### B. Anonymity and confidentiality

It is one of the guiding principles of youth information work that a user can remain anonymous, and that any information which s/he gives relating to the matter raised with a member of the OSYIRC staff will be considered confidential. This is particularly the case when a user is raising issues of a personal nature (family situation, sexual or drug problems). The OSYIRC can only help the user if a certain level of trust is established between the user and the OSYIRC worker. The strict respect of the principles of anonymity and confidentiality is essential for the creation and maintenance of that trust. It is also very important that the OSYIRC worker knows precisely what information s/he can keep confidentially and what s/he is obliged (if requested) to give to the police or other authorities.



#### Key message concerning Confidentiality

Young people can quite often misinterpret what we mean by the word 'Confidential'. To them it can mean that you will keep a secret if they tell you something. 'Keeping secrets' is not what confidentiality is about, there are instances when you will need to break confidentiality in order to protect the young person or a third party and young people need to be told clearly what your centre's policy is. Young people should be involved at all levels when other people are given information about them, particularly when it goes to agencies outside of your project. Use the example of a Confidentiality policy in appendix 5 and make sure that the policy is visible in your centre for young people to read.

## 5.3 The priority tasks of your OSYIRC when young people drop in

### 5.3 The priority tasks of your OSYIRC when young people drop in

\*To answer, immediately and without prior appointment, a series of different questions on a wide range of topics that may be presented to you. This should be done in a youth friendly and non-judgemental way with the needs of the young person being paramount

\*To be able to indicate, if your OSYIRC itself does not have the information, a precise service where that information can be offered and signpost the young person to access this information.

\*If you have a case that requires a more urgent and specialised response, it is important to make a referral to a known partner organisation (or a person in that organisation) which can help with the issues faced by the young person.

#### A. In order to fulfil these three functions, the OSYIRC:

Must collect and organise information from a wide range of services

Must ensure that all the staff of the OSYIRC who are in contact with the centre's users are briefed on changes in legislation and other major issues which affect young people, and have access to up-to-date information sources

Must organise and maintain contacts and cooperation with other youth-related services and relevant sources of information.

## 5.4 Outreach activities

## 5.4 Outreach activities

Besides organising its services for the young people who come to visit it, an OSYIRC will also usually organise different ways of taking its services outside the centre to where young people are or where they are hanging around on a regular basis. This can include visits to schools, youth clubs and other places frequented by young people and especially where the disadvantaged young people can be found. Working with groups which have special difficulties or needs will need additional resources and you will need to take this into account when speaking to potential stakeholders. Some One Stop centres have developed a mobile information unit that takes their services to suburbs, slums and isolated communities.

## 5.5 Networking services

## 5.5 Networking services

One of the primary missions of an OSYIRC is to provide information on a wide range of subjects to meet the needs of young people in its area. However, information is often not enough, and the OSYIRC will develop other more specialised services which will enable it to provide advice to young people. This opens an opportunity to the centre to call upon specialised counselling agencies to provide this demanding and specialised service. E.g. Nairobi One Stop called upon Hope Worldwide to provide counselling by providing them space on its premises and COWA employment companionship in Nairobi One Stop case. (See case study below)

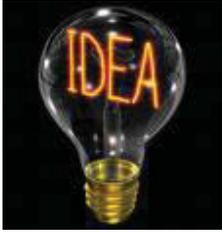
These specialists from other agencies will offer their services to the users of the OSYIRC either on a permanent basis or at certain specified times. Such counselling services can cover a variety of fields, such as:

- Legal advice, problems relating to the family and relationships
- Sexuality, STDs, HIV/AIDS and VCT
- Careers guidance and entrepreneurship etc....

### Complimentary services

An OSYIRC may develop such services as the VCT example above itself, but in a number of areas it can benefit from the expertise of the relevant local institutions (Organisation providing VCT e.g. Hope Worldwide), or of individual professionals (on a paid or voluntary basis). The precise mix of such services that an OSYIRC offers will largely depend on local needs, local expertise available, and on the existence (or absence) of other service providers operating in these fields.

When an OSYIRC develops such services itself, it is essential to foresee the necessary training and supervision of the staff (paid or voluntary) that will provide them. This can be done in cooperation with other organisations which specialise in giving information on issues such as health and sexuality, careers guidance. etc...



### Case study – Networking and Partnerships

Nairobi One Stop Youth Information & Resource Centre and Hope Worldwide Kenya

#### Introduction

Hope Worldwide Kenya is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) that was established in 1999 to run programmes that are designed to provide medical treatment, alleviate poverty and bring hope to the downcast in the society. Its primary goal is to help the underprivileged regain their worth, dignity and realize their potential.

Nairobi One Stop Youth Information and Resource Centre (NOSYIRC) primary role is to provide generalist information to its users but it did not have the capacity to provide specialized services. Thus, Hope Worldwide has complemented NOSYIRC by providing a voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) service at the premises of NOSYIRC which is offered by trained VCT counselors.

Hope worldwide Kenya also conducts outreach activities and conducts mobile clinics in order to raise awareness amongst the masses including young people in the need for behavior change. By reaching out to the outlying areas and informal settlements within the city, many people have been able to access this important service.

As a result of the partnership between NOSYIRC and Hope Worldwide there has been a tremendous response from young people who are the most vulnerable group in the fight against the HIV & AIDS scourge.

#### Benefits/outputs

1. Provision of a youth friendly space for a VCT clinic.
2. Provision of free VCT service
3. Increased number of young people seeking to know their HIV & AIDS status.
4. Attitude and behavior change amongst young people and the community at large
5. Infection rates of HIV & AIDS have substantially gone down.

## 5.6 Provision of other facilities

### 5.6 Provision of other facilities

In addition to its basic information services, and any advice services which an OSYIRC may provide, there are a range of other services which it may choose to offer in order to meet its users' needs. The following is not an exhaustive list but is intended to act as examples:

#### A. Meeting-rooms and equipment

An OSYIRC may provide its meeting-room free of charge to local youth organisations to use, or for youth groups or individuals to use its different kinds of equipment as long as the agenda for their meetings is to assist in youth empowerment

#### B. Youth mobility services

OSYIRCs should focus on the situation of the youth especially those who are in the remote areas and other disadvantaged places by offering specialised services to meet their needs. This can be done through activities that will be conducted in the field following a well know calendar of events or according to a local event or need.

### **C. Telephone and internet service if possible**

In order to increase their accessibility to young people One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres should see how to provide telephone service with a single number (sometimes free of charge) to allow young people to call relevant companies and institutions during their search for employment, school and other relevant information or use internet for the same purpose and bridge the digital divide. However, stringent measures should be put in place to curb the likely misuse of these facilities and other services.

## CHAPTER 6

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A YOUTH INFORMATION WORKER

**Introduction – A Youth Information Worker will need to be a Multi-Tasker!!!**

Many hands make light work!



The Youth Information Worker is called upon to play different roles in the course of discharging his/her duties. Such a situation is aptly referred to as role multiplicity whereby various roles are performed by the same person who applies different approaches and strategies in addressing the needs of young people. Therefore a youth information worker is required to be flexible and dynamic to enable him/her effectively adjust to these multiple roles.

The Youth information Worker is expected to deliver a variety of services to young people. In addition, they have to search, collect and distribute information and other opportunities to young people according to their needs. For an example of a Youth information officer's job description **see appendix 6**

However, it is important that the youth information worker knows when and how to play these roles to avoid instances of role strain and role confusion. The following define some of the roles of a youth information practitioner:-

#### 6.1 As a professional

##### 6.1 As a professional

- You must adhere to the code of ethics related to youth information work- see 6.4
- Understand the different stages of child and adolescent development
- Apply fundamentals of positive youth development
- Take into consideration current trends and issues that afflict young people
- Display commitment to the mission of the agency
- Produce relevant information materials which are simple, accurate, complete and understandable to young people
- Conduct and participate in trainings, workshops other capacity building forums as means of building up your levels of competence in related areas

#### 6.2 As a positive role model

##### 6.2 As a positive role model

- Demonstrate and teach positive values like honesty, respect, tolerance etc...
- Incorporate positive practises into personal lifestyle. You are expected to live according to the values and principles that you profess. Youth information workers should not "preach water and drink wine".
- Practice stress management and stress reduction
- Be interested in working with young persons and thus acting as a mentor to them



## 6.3 Tasks and duties

### Administration

- Assume the legal representative of the centre
- Do liaison between the centre and counsellors and director of social and housing dep.
- Articulate the issues of the centre at the City Hall Level
- Produce annual and other reports and submissions, as required
- Service meetings of the board if its exist
- Oversee the maintenance of equipment and premises
- Protect the interest of the workers

### Responsibilities:

- Planning and development
- Plan, coordinate and evaluate the information service
- Ensure the provision of a relevant and effective information service
- Keep up-to-date with issues affecting, and services and opportunities for, young people
- Keep at breast of youth information developments at local, national and international levels
- Ensure that all staff members are aware of the organization's policies and guidelines
- Management of information and its staff members
- Partnership and volunteer management
- Evaluate individual and collective training needs and make arrangements for relevant training set up development programs for information workers
- Organize regular meetings to keep information workers up-to-date on information changes
- Implement procedures for the recruitment and selection of information workers
- Delegate work, as appropriate, and arrange for the staffing of the Centre

### N.b. Mode of dress

This is also a means that youth information workers can attract young people to seek your services. It is advisable that the dressing should be informal and decent to make young people feel that they are welcome, but not too trendy to make young people shy away from the centre. A case in point is Oslo youth information centre which has a very informal milieu that makes it difficult to differentiate the workers and the users of the centre. This youth friendly mode of dressing and the professional nature in which the centre is run exemplifies the strong desire to reach out to young people.

## 6.2 As a positive role model

## 6.4 Ethical principles guiding youth information work

Code of ethics basically refers to basic principles of behaviour that guides the conduct of workers towards their clients in any given profession. This set of principles are fundamental for the purpose of informing intervention between youth information workers, young people and significant others. What follows is not intended to be an exhaustive list of principles but it's meant to develop ethical awareness and to encourage reflection as the basis of ethical conduct. Individual OSYIRCs can supplement this statement of principles with their own respective rules and guidelines.

### A. Individuality

This means that young people should not be perceived as a homogenous group but persons with individual attributes, values, attitudes etc

Young people should be treated with respect and dignity. Young people expect personalised understanding and undivided attention from youth information workers. Thus, affirming individuality implies freedom from bias and prejudice, avoidance of labelling, stereotyping, recognition and appreciation of diversity regardless of the young people's background.

### B. Acceptance

Acceptance is a fundamental aspect that implies a sincere understanding of young people. OSYIRCs are required to be open and accessible to all young people without any form of discrimination. Acceptance is conveyed through the expression of genuine concern, active listening, and the creation of an environment that is warm, welcoming and friendly in its appearance. Staff should display unconditional positive regard when welcoming young people to the centre for the first time as this is essential in making the centre psychologically accessible to the user and not just physically accessible.

**Remember – first impressions count!!**

### C. Self-determination

Youth information workers should respect and promote young peoples right to make their own decisions and choices. However, this freedom should be exercised within certain limits that do not infringe on the welfare or legitimate interests of the wider society.

Promote and ensure the safety and welfare of young people, while permitting them to learn through undertaking activities that address their concerns.

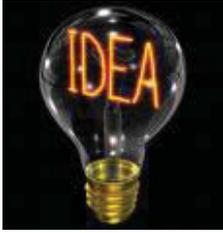
Recognise the need to be accountable to young people, their parents, guardians and significant others. Youth information workers need to be open and honest when dealing with young people, enabling them to access information that is relevant, complete, timely and understandable.

Develop and maintain the requisite skills needed in the field of youth information work.

Youth information workers need to regularly seek feedback from the young people and other actors on the quality of their work and constantly updating their skills and knowledge.

### D. Confidentiality and anonymity

Youth information workers are required to uphold the high level of trust bestowed upon them by treating personal information as confidential. The right to privacy implies that young people must give expressed consent before personal information can be revealed to external sources be they parents, guardians, law enforcement agencies etc. (see also 5.2)



### Key message – Role of a Youth Information Worker

Remember these key features that should be offered to the young people that you work with:-



## CHAPTER 7

### TECHNOLOGY FOR DEMOCRACY

Information Communication Technology or ICT are tools that use technology to communicate exchange and share information. Access to ICTs alone doesn't have a big impact on youth development - it is how the tools are used that creates the real benefit. ICTs can only assist communities in developing countries if it is seen as a method to achieve a goal and not the goal in itself, as Kofi Annan, ex-UN Secretary stated:

*"Information Technology is a powerful tool with diverse applications. Our challenge is to put that power at the service of all humankind"--- Kofi Annan*

According to the studies, the digital divide can be characterized by insufficient infrastructure, high cost of access, inappropriate or weak policy regimes, inefficiencies in the provision of telecommunication networks and services, lack of locally created content, and uneven ability to gain economic and social benefits from information-intensive activities. The UN-Habitat through the One Stop Youth Information and Resource concept is therefore trying to address the issues mentioned above and make the first step toward bridging the digital divide.

Serving today's so called "DOTCOM" generation, ICT skills for youth information workers is more important than ever. It should, at least, include an introduction to all basic applications software programmes that youth information workers need in order to search, acquire, process, file, index and retrieve information in addition to Internet Explorer (incl. Outlook Express) and website management.

#### 7.1 Well functioning website

#### 7.1 Well functioning website

Youth information workers have to be able to manage a website because it will be of interest both to young people themselves, and to those who work with them e.g. parents, teachers, other youth workers, guidance counsellors. This is also a key element that allows for communication between a youth information centre and its users. Since young people are said to have the highest computer literacy (worldwide) in comparison with other groups its imperative that One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres pay special importance to the content, design and efficient running of their website. By frequently updating it, the youth information workers can keep track of the views, comments and any other information posted into their website by the users. Through this feedback, the centre will know its inherent weaknesses and strengths and make improvements which will more likely result in an increased number of young people.

#### 7.2 Bridging the digital divide

#### 7.2 Bridging the digital divide

The One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres initiative strives to bridge this divide through information technology programs that enhance young people's confidence, create access to informal education, employment, life skills and civic engagement.

Bearing in mind that young people are not only the "consumers of information" but now start seeing them as "creators of information" it is obviously important to better equip youth information worker in ICT so that they can assist marginalized and disadvantaged young people to search and create their own information thus bridge the digital divide. Therefore, youth information workers are expected to come up with a youth-centred and demand-driven approach to deal with this change rather than technology-cantered and supply-driven approach.

#### 7.3 Access to computers

#### 7.3 Access to computers

Information technology is one of the major forces influencing opportunities for youths. Young people can be better informed, exchange best practices and be aware of social opportunities if they have access to computer and information technology. Unfortunately, the benefits of technology have accrued largely where "the digital revolution" began. Developed countries still have far more computers and Internet users. For example, the United States has more computers than the rest of the world combined. By comparison, less than 1% of African youth have access to information technology.

## 7.4 Technology for democracy



### 7.4 Technology for democracy

Information technology is not only about employment and resource mobilization, through innovative ways. Information Technology can also promote/ increase Citizens Rights. The nature of available ICT services is a democratic way to access to information for members of low-income communities. At the same time, programmes that integrate principles of civic engagement, community participation and empowerment can increase youth participation.

**The Democratisation of ICT** - while learning basic software packages necessary for obtaining employment, young people can also learn about human rights, leadership and health issues. By learning technical skills, young people build self-esteem and are able to participate actively in civic life and the living. One example of this is the flow of information exchange between young people during the democratic resistance in Burma and Tibet. Young people used ICT tools such as blogs, e-mails, you tube and mobile phone to exchange information, videos and pictures to inform the world of their issues.

#### Case study 1 – New Technologies YMCA Gambia - Success story

YMCA Gambia in collaboration with YMCA international has initiated a research through “Bridging divide Programme” using innovative ways. By setting up digital communication studios provides innovative training in graphic design and web development to youths interested in pursuing careers in information technology. Over 10,000 young Africans have benefited from the studios that are models for youth development, private sector linkages and program sustainability.

The research showed that when new or improved access to information technology is introduced to disadvantaged communities, Youth and technology initiatives benefit communities because computer-literate young people are an important asset to local technology businesses. They are also a needed source of skills and labour. By linking skilled participants with potential employers through internships and job placement, YMCA technology programs are breaking down social barriers between disadvantaged youth and local businesses. In turn, the linkages are sustaining these same programs by leveraging community resources and infrastructure (for example, computer donations from local businesses) to support YMCA initiatives<sup>9</sup>. In addition, technology programs in disadvantaged areas benefit young people in a number of ways, including:

- Increased self-esteem,
- Increased understanding of their own potential,
- Raised educational levels,
- Higher ability to obtain employment,
- Increased motivation and ability to create their own businesses

The YMCA report on Youth and ICT concluded that: *“Despite isolation and lack of opportunity, young people can be engaged through information technology in ways that transform their local reality into new opportunities”*.

<sup>9</sup> YMCA report on Youth and ICT available at <http://www.ymca.net>



## Case Study 2 – New Technologies

Nairobi Onestop Youth Information and Resource Centre (NOSYIRC) and NAIROBITS

### Introduction

Nairobi Onestop Youth and Information centre is a City Council of Nairobi programme which was established in August 2003 in partnership with various stakeholder organizations. NOSYIRC is a youth centre that provides a youth friendly space for young people to meet, network and become involved in positively transforming their lives and their communities. Services offered at the centre are geared towards all young people between 15 and 30 years

NAIROBITS trust is a non- profit making organization that offers training to disadvantaged young people which combines art and ICT skills customized to suit the local context. For example training on ICT with focus on web-design, entrepreneurship and life skills.

Through NOSYIRC partnership with NAIROBITS more than 70 young people have been trained in the three courses offered at the centre. NOSYIRC normally recruits young people for the training with a bias towards those who are bright and needy. They are also required to meet certain basic requirements before they can be shortlisted for interviews. i.e age, level of education. Those selected in the interviews are then subsequently admitted for the training which lasts for about 9 months but is done in three phases.

Since the course is very competitive, only the best performing students move to the next phase until they complete the 9 months of intensive training. At the end of the training there's a graduation where the successful students are now thrust into the job market.

Many of the students who graduate have been able to secure employment and scholarships opportunities. Hence, through the partnership between NOSYIRC and NAIROBITS young people have been empowered with relevant skills which have subsequently resulted in a positive transformation of their lives and their communities.

### Benefits/Outputs

The benefits derived from this training opportunities are two fold i.e at a personal level and at an organizational level(NOSYIRC).below are some of the benefits accrued;

1. Those trained in web-design have had opportunities to design web sites for clients.
2. Acquired and improved basic computer skills
3. Mentoring new students with computer skills and particularly on web-design
4. Designing and production of IEC materials
5. Enhanced their capacity to run income generating activities (IGAs) through the entrepreneurship training.
6. Assisting in the general maintenance and repair of computer hardware and software at the centre

## CHAPTER 8

### COOPERATION WITH EXISTING SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

#### 8.1 Networking

#### 8.2 Partnerships

#### Introduction

As in some African countries it is not a developed tradition of sharing information between institutions, it will not be surprising that some civil servants/officers do monopolise information and regards it as private properties. Here there is a big task to explain why you want information, how you are going to use it, how the specific institution is going to benefit from that collection and dissemination and who is going to benefit from it.

At last, one need to establish a professional relationship with a contact person within the institution in order to be up-dated when there is new information or to know whom one can refer young people to. That professional relationship helps to establish sources of relevant information in particular fields; the OSYIRC will obviously have an interest in working in cooperation with them, in order to receive their published materials or to have other forms of access to their information, e.g. data-banks. In case that there are no established information sources, the OSYIRC will usually develop its own information base, either acting alone or in cooperation with another OSYIRC in the country which also needs the same information.

#### 8.1 Networking

No OSYIRC can operate in a vacuum. An OSYIRC is always one element in the socio-cultural environment of the young people in its locality, along with a wide range of other youth service providers and bodies working with and for young people. In fact, for an OSYIRC to be effective it has to play the role of both a "giver" and a "taker" to its contacts and co-operation with other youth-serving bodies and services (in its locality, or at the national level).

On one hand, the OSYIRC helps to avail to young people activities and services of such other bodies, providing information about them to their target-group and distributing their information materials. On the other hand, the OSYIRC needs to receive regular information from these "source" organisations (official administrations, voluntary bodies, youth organisations), in order to fulfil its information role in an adequate manner, and it needs to be able to refer users to them when it is not able itself to respond to a question in their areas of competence. The OSYIRC must also keep them informed about its role and services, so that they can refer young people to the OSYIRC for matters which are in its areas of competence. This means that each OSYIRC must develop and maintain an up to dated network of contacts with other youth-serving bodies and "source" organisations, in order to fulfil its basic mission.

The networking activity of an OSYIRC has a second dimension, that of working with other OSYIRCs within the country and in its region. Increasingly, OSYIRCs will be organised in regional or national networks, which makes it possible to share certain tasks to cooperate in exchanges of methods and experience and the development of quality criteria, and to benefit from common services such as training.

#### 8.2 Partnerships

OSYIRC must have a comprehensive knowledge of the other institutions or services (local and national) which have the competence to respond to needs or questions to which the OSYIRC is not able to respond. In this regard the OSYIRC must develop contacts and cooperation with range institutions, organizations and services. Furthermore, the OSYIRC must initiate joint projects with partners in order to deliver appropriate and specific services to young people.

Dealing with different organizations that have different interests is not an easy task. At the same time, it is important to have a strong, close and honest relationship with partners. This requires safe guidelines agreed by the two parties where each party is committed to its responsibilities. This can only be possible with a comprehensive partnership agreement signed by the two parties. Consequently, the management has to design a standard partnership agreement based on these principles:

- Common interest between the two organizations
- Equal and mutual partnership
- Understandable rules of engagement
- Commitment to the responsibilities
- Good communication and respect between the two organizations
- Every partnership should be made in way that protects the integrity and the interest of the centre by respecting mutual needs and thus creating a win – win partnership

These relationships can bring problems if each party is not clear about what it is being asked to do. Networking amongst professionals in the locality is the best way to generate contacts and additional services that your staff and young people can tap into.

Clear service level agreements (SLAs) are needed with partners that offer their expertise. To avoid miscommunications and poor service to the young people, each partner must know clearly what it can expect from the other and what each partner will or will not provide in terms of support for the young person and in any financial contributions to be made as a result of the partnership



### Key message for forming partnerships and service level agreements (SLAs)

When partnering with other organisations agreements need to be SMART:

1. Specific ❖ What exactly will the young person's experience be with your partner organisation?
2. Measurable ❖ How will you evaluate / set targets for how the partnership is working?
3. Achievable ❖ Can all service providers achieve the level of service required?
4. Realistic ❖ Does the standard provided meet the needs of the young person?
5. Time-bound ❖ When will the services start and end? How often will they be delivered?

Those OSYIRCs that use SLAs find that the benefits are:

- Greater trust between OSYIRC and partner supplying service
- Improved communication
- Greater openness
- Acknowledged dependencies
- Joint team building approach to provision of support services for young people
- Sharing of resources and clarity of financial liabilities for each partner

## CHAPTER 9

### EVALUATING AND MONITORING QUALITY AT YOUR OSYIRC

#### 9.1 Recognising quality youth information - markers for success

##### Introduction

*Young people go for quality every time!*

As part of its work that aims to assist governments to develop quality youth services, UN HABITAT have put down, through this manual, the following 'markers' of quality youth information in order to help countries in the evaluation of their One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres.

The involvement of young Africans in youth initiatives and projects, in youth clubs, and in youth organisations, One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres (OSYIRC) can play an important role in the development of these evaluation initiatives. No-one knows better than the young people whether or not your OSYIRC is providing a quality service and they should be utilised in developing ways of monitoring and evaluating the impact that your service has on its users. The following markers are pointers that can be put down for you to check that you are going in the right direction with your project

**MARKERS FOR SUCCESS** – Use the questions below to help mark the way towards a successful and quality driven centre. If you are able to answer yes to all of the Markers below then you are well and truly on the right path to providing a great service to the young people that you serve!! If the answer to some of them is no, then there is work to be done!!

##### **MARKER 1: Is your One Stop Youth Information and Resource Centre well integrated in your Local or central authority's structure?**

One Stop Youth Information Resource Centre should be considered by Local or central Governments to be an important task that is an integral part of its overall youth policy, for which it needs to develop a national policy (or strategy) that seeks to develop a comprehensive, coherent and co-ordinated approach to the provision of youth information services throughout its country. Such an approach should include recognition of the independence of One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres in the accomplishment of their objectives, as well as the establishment of an appropriate national coordination / support unit.

##### **MARKER 2: Are you clear about your Legislative status and validity?**

According to which level of government has the legal competence for youth policy in a country, the provision of OSYIRC should have a legal basis in the relevant youth legislation.

##### **MARKER 3: Can you evidence that you have stable funding and adequate staffing?**

In order to be able to provide their services on a professional and sustained basis, One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres should be adequately funded and staffed. In order to gain truly economical stability and sustainability, the OSYIRC management should aim at working closely to the central or local authorities to include the centre's budget into the relevant authorities' overall budget.

##### **MARKER 4: Do you truly have 'Equal Access for all'**

Youth Information Services, whether provided through One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres, through youth-related services in other structures, or via Internet or other media, should be accessible to all young people. This implies a policy concerning the implementation of One Stop centres, as well as measures to ensure physical access to services, and the use of various methods to reach groups or persons with special needs. The centre should set its goal to maximise the participation of young female and physical challenged young people.

**MARKER 5: Do you have a local, regional and national dimension to your work?**

According to which level of government has the legal competence for youth policy in a country, the national youth policy (or strategy) should have a regional and local dimension in order for One Stop Youth Information Resource Services to reach a maximum number of young people. Local and regional authorities should be actively involved in supporting the provision of One Stop services.

**MARKER 6: Are you able to use local expertise and research organisations?**

A youth policy (or strategy) should be based on a sound knowledge of the needs and expectations of young people. This knowledge can be acquired by consulting young people (including by having them conduct the consultation), by consulting those who work with young people in the locality concerned, and by conducting scientific research on issues relating to youth services.

**MARKER 7: Can you evidence areas of innovation in your work with young people?**

One Stop Youth Information Resource Services must aim to improve constantly the quality of the information and counselling services that they provide to young people. This requires that a youth policy (or strategy) should promote innovation, and should encourage reflection by youth information workers and by young people about how to develop creative ways of meeting established and new needs and challenges.

**MARKER 8: Can you clearly evidence involving young people in your planning and delivery?**

One Stop Youth Information and Resource Centres should promote the active participation of young people in youth information work. It should aim at proposing the inclusion of youth participation into youth policy (or strategy). Possibilities should be created for young people to participate directly and in a meaningful way at all levels of the youth information process, including in the management and evaluation of projects and services.

**MARKER 9: How do you foster cross-sectoral co-operation?**

A comprehensive and coherent youth policy will require consultations and co-operation between a wide range of actors, including local and central governmental departments, official youth services, voluntary youth organisations and young people. A possible way to guarantee the necessary cross-sectoral cooperation is the establishment of a cross-sectoral committee or working-group, which has the tasks of developing, supporting, supervising and monitoring the implementation of the national Youth policy (or strategy).

**MARKER 10: Are their systems in place to ensure quality of Information provided?**

Your OSYIRC should include measures to maintain and develop the quality of the youth information and counselling services provided to young people. These measures may be based on UN-Habitat's principles guiding One Stop Youth Information Resource Centres presented in this manual. Such principles serve as a basis for the definition of minimum requirements and for developing methods of assessing the application of quality factors, which can lead to a recognised endorsement of One Stop Youth Information Resource Services.

**MARKER 11: Do you have a clear programme of training to support staff new and old?**

A priority component of a national youth policy is support for the basic and continued training of youth information workers, since the presence of trained staff is a pre-condition for installing and maintaining a high level of quality in the One Stop Youth Information Resource Services offered to young people.

**MARKER 12: Are you able to evidence diversity in the delivery of your services**

Even though your One Stop Youth Information Resource Centre is required to develop a stand alone programme of its core activities, the One Stop must have a comprehensive knowledge of other institutions or services (local and national) that can provide other services which are complementary to its initial objectives and mission without losing its basic information, educational and counselling role. The centre should cooperate with other organisations in to be able to bring concrete answers to young people's questions. (see Chapter 8.2)

A diverse service delivery means that your One Stop Youth Information Resource Centre should be concerned with its non-users as well as its users by setting up Outreach activities that are geared to bring services to most young people wherever they might be. In order to reach the largest possible public, and to meet the needs of specific groups, a youth policy (or strategy) should enable One Stop Youth Information Resource services to use a wide range of communication media and methods, including peer-involvement, outreach work, and cooperation with other structures and events which are frequented by young people.

In spite of all communication developments, face-to-face contact should remain an essential component of the information and counselling process that is provided by One Stop centres.

## CHAPTER 10

### APPENDICES

#### Appendix 1

##### **CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION AS RECOGNIZED IN THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD – November 1989**

###### **FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY: Article 15**

1. States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.
2. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of these rights other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (order public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

###### **ACCESS TO INFORMATION: Article 17**

States Parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health.

To this end, States Parties shall:

- (a) Encourage the mass media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to the child and in accordance with the spirit of article 29;
- (b) Encourage international co-operation in the production, exchange and dissemination of such information and material from a diversity of cultural, national and international sources;
- (c) Encourage the production and dissemination of children's books;
- (d) Encourage the mass media to have particular regard to the linguistic needs of the child who belongs to a minority group or who is indigenous;
- (e) Encourage the development of appropriate guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being, bearing in mind the provisions of articles 13 and 18.

###### **EDUCATION FOR PERSONAL FULFILMENT AND RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP: Article 29**

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:
  - (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
  - (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
  - (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;
  - (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;

(e) The development of respect for the natural environment.

2. No part of the present article or article 28 shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject always to the observance of the principle set forth in paragraph 1 of the present article and to the requirements that the education given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the State

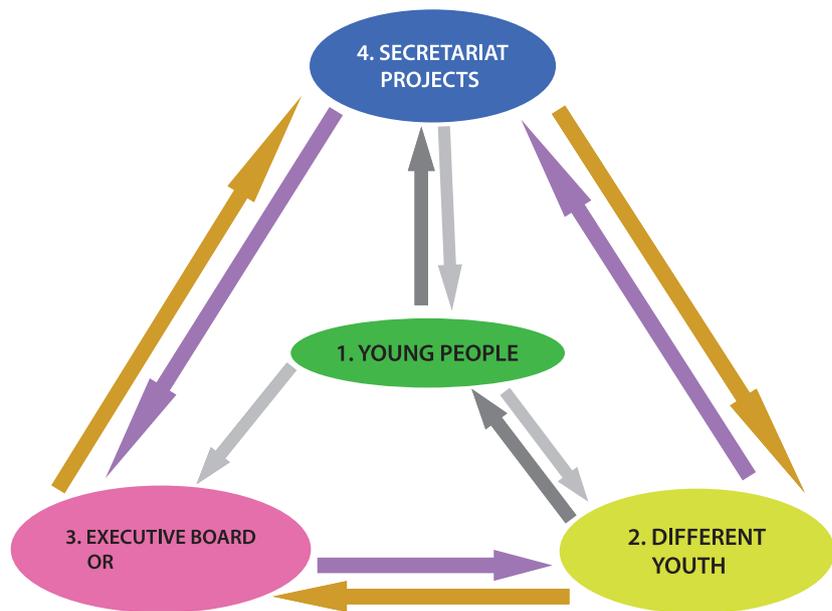
**PLAY AND PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE:  
Article 31**

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

**Appendix 2**

**FUBU - Youth Led Participation and Development Triangle**



**1. Young people**

Young people as starting point of a youth centred approach refers to young people who organise themselves in different organisations to get more influence hence increase demand to get more services. It can be seen in an organisation that wants to use principles of democracy and transparency to its users. The symmetrical relationship between 1 & 2 shows that young people as individuals without affiliation to organisations can still enjoy services from organised groups.

## 2. Different organisations

Using democratic principles of indirect representative system, young people choose their leaders within one organisation that will represent them in the board (Executive board or Advisory board) as alternative one. The second alternative is when young people are affiliated to different organisations so as to form an Umbrella organisation. Executive board or Advisory board is formed from the Umbrella organisation that will represent and protect interests of its member organisations. The symmetrical relationship between 2 & 3 shows that as long as a young person is not in the board; he becomes again a simple member of his organisation. This applies to an Umbrella organisation when one of its members is no longer in the board it remains in the network.

## 3. Executive board or Advisory board

From one organisation a board can form a secretariat that will run the organisation on daily basis. One of its main obligations will be to start up projects that will assist young people or answer to their questions in a way that it improves their livelihoods.

From an Umbrella organisation, a board can also form a more diverse secretariat that will run the organisation on daily basis. This board has as well the obligation of initiating projects that are geared to improve young people's livelihoods. The symmetrical relationship from 3 to 4 explains that the board is responsible to outlining policy, objectives and regulations which govern the secretariat and the secretariat is obliged to implement projects, deliver services to young people and report to the board.

## 4. Secretariat

Having the obligation of delivering services to young people and reporting to the board on the implementation of activities geared to helping individual young people and organisations, the secretariat has also to be accountable to its board and its users. The symmetrical relationship between (4 & 1) and (4 & 2) shows that the secretariat has responsibility towards individual young people and organisations. At the same time they can influence and shape services according to their needs.

### **1. EDUCATION**

- 1.1 Education (general)
- 1.2 Ministry of education
- 1.3 Public schools
- 1.4 Private schools
- 1.5 Correspondence/distance education
- 1.6 Schools/colleges: lists
- 1.7 Vocational training & Different courses
- 1.8 Studying abroad

### **2. EMPLOYMENT, CAREER GUIDANCE & TRAINING**

- 2.1 Employments (general)
- 2.2 Careers (general)
- 2.3 Practice and training
- 2.4 How to write a CV
- 2.5 How to write a job application
- 2.6 What to do on job interview, job hunting-interview techniques
- 2.7 Trade unions
- 2.8 Unemployment
- 2.9 Voluntary work

### **3. ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

- 3.1 Self employments (general)
- 3.2 Business (general)
- 3.3 Trade
- 3.4 Training
- 3.5 From idea to the selling concept
- 3.6 Management
- 3.7 Finance, Budgeting / saving and Credits & debt
- 3.8 Microfinance
- 3.9 Funding sources for youth and community groups
- 3.10 Taxation / VAT
- 3.11 Registration and licensing

### **4. ENVIRONMENT**

- 4.1 Environments (general)
- 4.2 Local/global environments
- 4.3 Conservation
- 4.4 Environmental organizations (a-z)
- 4.5 Animal/wildlife
- 4.6 Recycling
- 4.7 Alternative energy
- 4.8 Environmental management

### **5. HEALTH & SOCIAL ISSUES**

- 5.1 Health services (general)
- 5.2 Alcohol, drug and substance abuse
- 5.3 Child/sexual abuse
- 5.4 Counselling services
- 5.5 Family problems
- 5.6 VCT – STDs - HIV/AIDS
- 5.7 Mental health
- 5.8 Pregnancy/family planning
- 5.9 Rape
- 5.10 Relationships/sexuality

### **6. CITIZENSHIP**

- 6.1 Justice issues (general)
- 6.2 Citizen's obligations and responsibilities
- 6.3 Legal rights, legal advice/aid services
- 6.4 Prisoners/young offenders
- 6.5 Children rights and human rights
- 6.6 Human rights organizations

## Appendix 4 - Example of recording sheet for statistics

### DAILY REPORT

Day: ----- Date: -----200

	NUMBER OF USERS				GENDER		SUM	
	15 -20 Years	20 -25 Years	25 -30 Years	30 + Years	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>TIME</b>								
09.00 – 10.00								
10.00 – 11.00								
11.00 – 12.00								
12.00 – 13.00								
14.00 – 15.00								
16.00 – 17.00								
<b>ENQUIRY TOPIC</b>								
1.Education								
2.Employment								
3.Entrepreneurship								
4.Environment								
5.Health								
6.Citizenship								
<b>CONTACT TYPE</b>								
First visit								
Subsequent visit								
Referred								
Passing by								
Personal recom.								
Out – reach services								
<b>RESOURCES USED</b>								
Training								
Discussion only								
Leaflets - Photocopier								
VCT								
Meeting venue								
Computer - Internet								
<b>TOTAL</b>								

## Appendix 5 – Example of a confidentiality policy

From 'Setting up guidelines' 2008 – [www.canllaw-online.com](http://www.canllaw-online.com)

Canllaw online 2008.



The issue of confidentiality is a crucial one. Projects should offer total confidentiality to young people within prescribed limits.

These should be clear and transparent. Canllaw Online is committed to practices and procedures that ensure confidentiality in respect of information relating to users of the service. Within the service the individual is seen as a person in their own right and not an object of concern.

This confidentiality policy applies equally to workers and volunteers who have completed induction and all staff should have a clear understanding of it. Volunteers should have the same rights and responsibilities as workers during the placement period.

### INTERNAL CONFIDENTIALITY

Info will only be shared regarding individual young people within the team where it is regarded as being beneficial to the need of that young person. Individuals should be made aware of this and no promises made that we will never share information and issues within the team. It can be made clear at the time that staff may need to do this, not only for staff support but to provide a better service to individuals. Care should be taken to ensure that issues are not discussed within the hearing of others who are not members of the team.

### INFO TO THIRD PARTIES

As a general rule, except under exceptional circumstances, no information about a particular individual we are working with should be given to any third party or agency without the permission of the individual concerned. Where possible, the individual should be in the presence of the worker when consented information sharing is taking place or if that's not possible, the individual should be informed of the contact and substance of the conversation as soon as possible. No information will be requested of third parties regarding individuals by staff without prior permission of the person concerned.

### EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

There may be occasions when exceptional circumstances prevail. When the person or 3rd party is at risk or in immediate danger for e.g. there is no prescriptive list to cover all occasions but broad guidelines should be:

- Where a person is clearly not in control of his or her own safety, i.e. involved in an accident, suffering from a drug overdose.
- Where the emotional or mental state of the person concerned is such that it puts his or her own, or a third parties lives at risk.
- Where a third party is a risk of danger or abuse e.g. where a sibling is left the family and is being abused.
- Where work falls within organisational child protection procedures.

### YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE RUN AWAY

It is not the policy of the service to inform anyone of the whereabouts of a young person who has run away except in the following circumstances:

- If a Police Officer is seeking the whereabouts of the young person and has a recovery order.
- Where a member of staff is ordered to do so by a court of law.

Staff will make positive efforts to negotiate with carers on behalf of young people where they are in agreement with this course of action.

### RECORDS

Only info that is required for a specific purpose and that is adequate, relevant and not excessive for that purpose will be kept. Only information helpful in furthering the young person enquiry should be kept. An open record system should keep info accessible to relevant workers from the team. For security reasons all records will be kept under lock and key. Any monitoring system in place should ensure complete anonymity.

**THIS POLICY WILL BE DISPLAYED IN SERVICE BUILDINGS AND VENUES AND EFFORTS SHOULD BE MADE TO ENSURE THAT INDIVIDUALS USING THE SERVICE ARE AWARE OF THE POLICY.**

## Appendix 6 – Job Description Examples x 2

### Example of Job Description 1

Job description of One Stop Centre's Coordinator

#### **Job Title: One Stop Coordinator**

#### **Job Summary:**

To develop and coordinate the Nairobi One Stop Youth Information service aimed at providing an effective and relevant service to young people in Nairobi and those who work with them

#### **Responsible/Reports to:**

Director of his/her department at local / central Government Board of Governance depending on the structure

#### **Administration**

- Assume the legal representative of the centre
- Do liaison between the centre and counsellors and director of social and housing dep.
- Articulate the issues of the centre at the City Hall Level
- Produce annual and other reports and submissions, as required
- Service meetings of the board if its exist
- Oversee the maintenance of equipment and premises
- Protect the interest of the workers

#### **Responsibilities:**

- Planning and development
- Plan, coordinate and evaluate the information service
- Ensure the provision of a relevant and effective information service
- Keep up-to-date with issues affecting, and services and opportunities for, young people
- Keep at breast of youth information developments at local, national and international levels
- Ensure that all staff members are aware of the organization's policies and guidelines
- Management of information and its staff members
- Partnership and volunteer management
- Evaluate individual and collective training needs and make arrangements for relevant training set up development programs for information workers
- Organize regular meetings to keep information workers up-to-date on information changes
- Implement procedures for the recruitment and selection of information workers
- Delegate work, as appropriate, and arrange for the staffing of the Centre

## Example of job Description 2

### Job description of One Stop Centre's Youth Information workers

**Job Title:** *Youth Information Officer*

**Job Summary:**

- Search for and hand out accurate, reliable and relevant information or facts through dialogue
- Observe, be attentive to young people's need, and uncover the real needs as well as compassionate handling of youth issues
- Look beyond the initial request for other related needs which may not be articulated by young people

**Responsible/Reports To:** *Coordinator/ Director*

**Responsibilities:**

- Search, locate and interpret the relevant information to young people
- Hand out reliable and relevant information to young people that can help them to develop their autonomy
- Understand the options available as well as their likely outcomes and risks involved in each considered alternative
- Apply the information to her/his own circumstances so that she/he can decide on an appropriate course of action
- Fill out the statistic form, analyse them, interpret them and give alternative actions to respond to rise up or downfall of the traffic at the centre
- Help young people to identify their own resources,
- Help young people to take their own actions and decisions
- Provide a warm, informal, welcoming and youth friendly atmosphere
- Through dialogue, encourage the active participation of the young person at all stages of the process
- Uncover the real needs of the young people and look beyond the initial request to discover other needs that may not be articulated.
- Help the less articulated young people to put their feelings and thoughts into words and especially those from more disadvantaged backgrounds
- Be creative and pro-active in searching for projects or partnerships that gives tangible solutions to young people's problems

## CHAPTER 10

### LIST OF REFERENCES, PUBLICATIONS AND USEFUL WEBSITES

The creation of this document has its inspirations and texts from down listed sources. The author is very grateful to the organisations that contributed to this publication with ideas or elements from publications dealing with related subjects.

Angela J.Huebner, Examining "Empowerment": "A How-To Guide for the Youth Development Professional" (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University)

"Youth Participation in Youth Information"(ERYICA:3-6 Dec.2004, Revised draft –Jan.2005)

NYCI, "Induction Pack for Youth Information Workers" –The Irish Response, July 1989.

The National Youth Agency "Ethical Conduct in Youth Work", December 2004.

National Youth Development "Worker Competencies", January 2004.

Getting it right: "Ensuring quality in young people's information, advice, counselling and support services" - Youth Access, Published 2001.

Getting Started: "A guide to setting up youth information, advice and counselling service" - Youth Access, Published 1997.

"Guidelines for Setting up Information Services for Young People" – Canllaw Online Ltd

"Useful documents" – ERYICA

CIDJ reports – "Youth Information Centres in Gabon, Ivory Cost, Tunisia and Bahrain"

"Création du CRRIJ de NC" – F. Chartier, Avril 2005

YMCA of USA report: "Youth and Technology,"

#### USEFUL WEBSITES

[www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)

[www.eryica.org](http://www.eryica.org)

[www.ung.info](http://www.ung.info)

[www.youthaccess.org.uk](http://www.youthaccess.org.uk)

[www.youthinformation.ie](http://www.youthinformation.ie)

[www.canllaw-online.com](http://www.canllaw-online.com)

[www.youthinformation.com](http://www.youthinformation.com)

[www.unhabitat.org](http://www.unhabitat.org)

[www.ymca.net](http://www.ymca.net)

<http://web.worldbank.org>

[www.nyc.gov.sg](http://www.nyc.gov.sg)

[www.globalknowledge.org](http://www.globalknowledge.org)

[www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/wyrl](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/wyrl)

[www.sdn.org/undp.org/stories/terms.html](http://www.sdn.org/undp.org/stories/terms.html)

[www.knowledgeforsdevelopment.com/ICT4D03SP/index.htm](http://www.knowledgeforsdevelopment.com/ICT4D03SP/index.htm)

## URBAN YOUTH CENTRE TRAINING MANUALS

HS/059/11E

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