

Guidance Note for UN Country Teams: Meaningful Engagement with Young Persons with Disabilities



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The development and coordination of this report was led by the UN Youth Office, the Youth2030 Joint Working Group, and their Task Team on Young People with Disabilities. This task team includes representatives from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); the UN Youth Office; the World Health Organization (WHO); the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF); the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR); the International Labour Organization (ILO); the International Telecommunication Union (ITU); the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO); the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance (DMSPC); the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women); the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); the UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) Multi-Partner Trust Fund; the International Disability Alliance (IDA)’s Youth Committee; and the Global Network of Young Persons with Disabilities (GNYPWD).

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Acronyms

CCA	Common Country Analysis
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
JWP	Joint Work Plan
KPI	Key performance indicator
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex. The 'plus' is used to signify all of the gender identities and sexual orientations not specifically covered by the other five initials.
OPD	Organization of persons with disabilities
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Teams
UNDIS	United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UN Women	The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
YPS	Youth, Peace, and Security

1. Introduction

The UN Youth Strategy (Youth2030) and the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) are pivotal frameworks guiding the UN's commitment to "Leave No One Behind". The Youth2030 Strategy aims to enhance youth engagement and participation across every pillar of the UN's work. At the same time, UNDIS promotes disability inclusion and the active participation of persons with disabilities throughout all the Organization's endeavours. Together with the System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP), these strategies forge robust synergies, enriching the UN's intersectional approach to addressing human rights, development, peace, and security. These synergies fortify the UN's commitment to youth empowerment, disability inclusion, and gender equality, reinforcing inclusive practices across all its activities.

Meaningful engagement of young persons with disabilities is central to the success of Youth2030 and UNDIS. It is also essential for achieving the 2030 Agenda and realizing the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The CRPD mandates the close consultation and active involvement of persons with disabilities, recognizing them not as passive recipients but as key stakeholders in shaping inclusive policies. The unique insights of young persons with disabilities are crucial for creating solutions that align with real-world experiences and needs, fostering equality, and enhancing policy effectiveness.

What is the objective of this Guidance Note?

This Guidance Note seeks to assist UN Country Teams in strengthening their engagement with young persons with disabilities. It outlines strategies to create inclusive environments and ensure that the perspectives of young persons with disabilities are respected and actively considered. The goal is to facilitate their meaningful participation in shaping decisions at all levels, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and sustainable future.

Who is the Guidance Note for?

The Guidance Note aims to assist all UN staff within Country Teams – whether they are working in human rights, sustainable development, humanitarian assistance, peace and security, or operational functions – to meaningfully engage with young persons with disabilities from planning and design to implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

How should this Guidance Note be used?

The Guidance Note provides basic strategies and tools to meaningfully engage with young persons with disabilities. It is part of and aligned with the Youth2030 Knowledge documents and Toolkit.

This Guidance Note should be used in conjunction with the following documents:

- ▶ [Youth2030 Action Guide for United Nations Country Teams](#)
- ▶ [UNESCO Guidance for Meaningful Youth Engagement](#)
- ▶ [UNDIS Guidelines on Consulting Persons with Disabilities](#)
- ▶ [UNICEF Guidance, Take Us Seriously! Engaging Children with Disabilities in Decisions Affecting their Lives](#)
- ▶ [UN Youth Office, UNFPA, Youth2030 Disability Task Team, Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action: Checklist to Ensure the Meaningful Engagement of Young Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action](#)

2. Young persons with disabilities

Who are young persons with disabilities?

Disability is an evolving concept that results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers.¹ Persons with disabilities include those with long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.² Countries' definitions of disability may vary, but UN entities should adhere to the inclusive definition provided in this document.

The UN defines youth as individuals aged 15 to 24 years. However, there is no universally accepted definition, and UN entities and Country Teams may adjust their definition based on the national or regional context of their operations.³

Despite the growth in standardised data for children and adults with disabilities, a gap in data remains for young persons with disabilities aged 15 to 24. The disability prevalence in this age group across 46 countries is estimated to range from less than 1 per cent to 8 per cent. The average, weighted by countries' populations, is around 2 per cent, with similar rates between young men and women but a higher median prevalence in young men. Additionally, it should be noted this population is diverse and includes people with different types and degrees of disabilities, who often face a different array of barriers.



¹ CRPD, Preamble (e).

² CRPD, Article 1.

³ United Nations Youth Strategy, Youth 2030, p.4.

Basic concepts

- **The medical model of disability:** This approach sees persons with disabilities as sick or subjects of rehabilitation. It conditions participation to being rehabilitated or “fixed” to meet societal norms and to fit back into society.⁴
- **The charity model of disability:** This approach sees persons with disabilities as objects of benevolence who cannot take care of themselves. It conditions participation to receiving “help” or charity.⁵
- **The human rights model of disability:** This approach sees persons with disabilities as right holders with equal rights as everyone else. It moves away from charity and medical models of disability, embracing human diversity and calling to eliminate all barriers to participation.⁶
- **Accessibility:** This principle aims to ensure all physical environment, transportation, information, communications, and services enable access and participation of persons with disabilities and people with other access needs, on equal basis with others.
- **Reasonable accommodation:** These are the modifications and adjustments that are necessary and appropriate, not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure persons with disabilities enjoy and exercise their human rights on an equal basis with others.⁷
- **Intersectionality:** This concept and practical tool recognizes the complex ways in which social factors overlap and, in negative scenarios, can create compounding experiences of discrimination and concurrent forms of oppression based on two or more grounds.⁸

Understanding the challenges faced by young persons with disabilities

Young persons with disabilities confront numerous challenges, ranging from societal stigmas and discrimination to accessibility barriers, hindering their participation in community life, education, and employment. The interplay between youth and disability often amplifies their experience of exclusion and marginalisation. Their lives are further shaped by multiple factors, including gender, race, socioeconomic status, and cultural background. An intersectional approach helps to understand these complexities and the nuanced interactions between them.

Disability often correlates with socioeconomic disparities, particularly in education and employment. For instance, 29 per cent of young persons with disabilities have never attended school, in stark contrast to just 6 per cent of their peers without disabilities. This educational disparity is even more pronounced for young women with disabilities, especially those in rural areas. Regarding employment, young persons with disabilities lag by 13 percentage points. They are more inclined towards self-employment, presumably because of barriers in the labour market. Their chances of being both unschooled and unemployed are double that of their peers without disabilities, a disparity that is even more pronounced for young women with disabilities in low-income countries.

⁴ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Policy Guidelines for Inclusive Sustainable Development Goals, Foundations, 2020.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ CRPD, Article 2.

⁸ United Nations Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Guidance Note on Intersectionality, Racial Discrimination & Protection of Minorities, 2022.

In advocacy, young persons with disabilities face significant barriers, many of which are tied to entrenched power dynamics and systemic prejudices. These obstacles include societal and cultural biases, as well as the lack of a consistent application of an intersectional lens in policies and programmes. Compounding these challenges are the lasting effects of colonialism that continue to foster power imbalances and discrimination within advocacy spaces, which privilege white, global north leadership with traditionally esteemed academic backgrounds. Other challenges involve tokenism, limited accessibility, insufficient representation, and a shortage of resources for youth-led initiatives. The absence of dedicated spaces for youth organization and safe, youth-led environments, along with persistent legal and policy restrictions, further exacerbates these barriers.

The role of the UN Country Teams

The UN's commitment to young persons with disabilities is evident in its foundational frameworks. The UN Youth Strategy (Youth2030), the first of its kind from the UN, seeks to amplify youth voices, including the voices of marginalised youth such as young persons with disabilities. The UNDIS further grounds the UN's efforts, ensuring that disability inclusion permeates all aspects of its mission, from human rights to peace, security, and development. The CRPD, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) emphasize equal rights and full participation. The 2030 Agenda, with its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), underlines the significance of disability-inclusive development.

Against this background, the UN Country Teams play a crucial role in addressing the challenges faced by young persons with disabilities by advocating for their rights, promoting inclusive policies, and implementing programmes to remove barriers to participation. UN Country Teams can work collaboratively with governments, civil society, organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), and other stakeholders to promote a rights-based approach to disability, focusing on empowerment, equal opportunities, and non-discrimination.

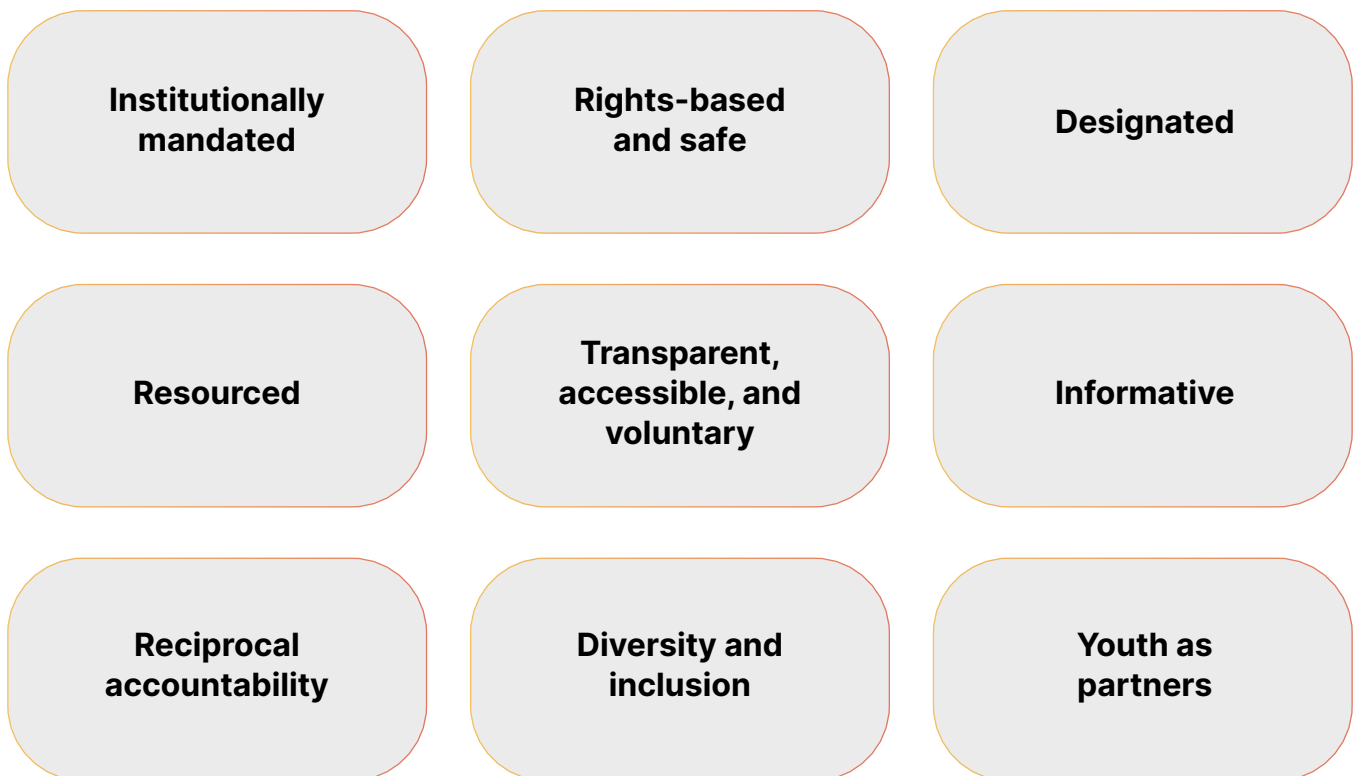
Meaningfully engaging young persons with disabilities is vital for the UN's work. Young persons with disabilities have diverse opinions and expertise on topics ranging from climate change to employment and mental health. Their insights and experiences offer a nuanced understanding of the challenges they encounter, facilitating the development of solutions tailored to their unique needs. Such engagement ensures their voices are heard and valued, unlocking their potential and bolstering the success of interventions. Moreover, the involvement of young persons with disabilities ensures the UN's programmes remain relevant and adaptive. By engaging this group of future leaders, the UN supports its inclusive mission and stays attuned to changing societal demands. Participation is a fundamental human right, and meaningful youth involvement is crucial to uphold this principle.



3. What is meaningful youth engagement?

Meaningful youth engagement means the active, genuine inclusion of young persons in decision-making processes affecting them and their communities. It is not merely about giving young persons a voice, but recognizing their leadership and valuing and integrating their ideas, experiences, and perspectives in policy, programmatic, and institutional decisions.⁹ It implies a multidimensional approach involving information sharing, dialogue, mutual respect, shared decision-making, and accountability.

Key guiding principles for meaningful youth engagement¹⁰

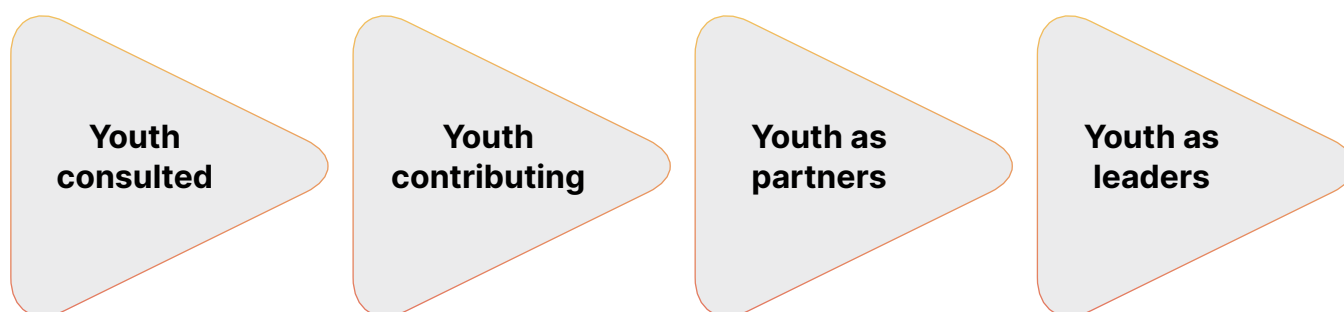


⁹ Youth Coalition, Global Network of Young Persons with Disabilities and UNFPA, Manifesto on meaningful youth engagement for young persons with disabilities, 2023.

¹⁰ Youth2030, Action Guide for United Nations Country Teams, p. 30-31.

The degree of youth engagement can take many forms:¹¹

- ◆ In a **consultative** approach, youth are invited to share their insights and ideas. This gives young persons the ability to influence proceedings but without holding direct control over the outcomes.
- ◆ When youth **contribute**, youth play a more defined role in certain aspects of a project or initiative, such as planning or implementation, though they do not retain complete control over outcomes.
- ◆ In a **partnership** model, youth are actively engaged in all decision-making stages, from planning to evaluation. This counters tokenism by ensuring youth's active participation, allowing them to influence and even challenge both the process and the results.
- ◆ When youth act as **leaders**, they drive the process from start to finish, determining concerns and controlling both the process and outcomes. In this model, the agency takes a backseat, acting as a facilitator, providing resources, guidance, and connections to help youth achieve their objectives.



Different stages or aspects of a programme or project may feature varying degrees of engagement. However, the UN has both an opportunity and responsibility to strive for the highest levels of meaningful youth involvement. The risk of tokenism diminishes by ensuring youth participate in every decision-making phase.

The Youth Coalition on Sexual and Reproductive Rights, the Global Network of Young Persons with Disabilities and UNFPA have produced a ► **Manifesto on meaningful youth engagement for young persons with disabilities**, which includes a series of principles and recommendations to support meaningful engagement.

¹¹ UNESCO, Meaningfully engaging with youth. Guidance and training for UN staff, 2019.

4. General considerations for meaningful engagement

Certain foundational principles must be observed for any engagement initiative to be meaningful and effective. This section delves into the key considerations that ensure interactions are respectful, inclusive, and adapted to the unique requirements of young persons with disabilities.

Recognize and value youth capacities

Young persons with disabilities have first-hand experiences on issues pertinent to all the UN's work pillars: human rights, development, peace, and security. Their perspectives are important beyond disability programmes per se, but to improving the quality of all programmatic areas. They are experts, leaders, representatives, professionals, researchers, entrepreneurs, and influential voices in public opinion, bringing creativity, resilience, innovation, and digital expertise. Recognizing and valuing their expertise enriches the UN's initiatives and fosters a more inclusive and representative global dialogue.

Respect for the rights and dignity of young persons with disabilities

Every engagement should begin with an unwavering commitment to respecting the rights and dignity of young persons with disabilities. Embracing the human rights model of disability is foundational to any meaningful dialogue or collaboration. This means recognizing persons with disabilities as right-holders with agency and equal rights and moving away from charity and medical approaches. UN Country Teams should have the awareness, skills, and resources to ensure meaningful engagement.

Promoting diversity and inclusivity

Embracing diversity goes beyond just acknowledging differences. It involves actively seeking out varied perspectives and ensuring that all voices are heard and valued, especially those from marginalised and underrepresented groups, such as ethnic and race minorities, LGBTQI+ persons, migrants, and refugees as well as persons with intellectual disabilities, persons with psychosocial disabilities, deafblind people, persons with albinism, and little persons, among others. An inclusive approach fosters a richer, more holistic view of the issues at hand that benefits everyone, not just the marginalized groups themselves.

Providing a safe and supportive environment

Safety and protection are key principles for meaningful youth engagement. Young persons with disabilities should be able to express their opinions without fear of discrimination, ridicule, retribution, abuse, or exploitation. UN Country Teams should adhere to the "Do No Harm" principle, ensuring confidentiality, managing power dynamics, and offering support resources, such as psychosocial assistance for emotional distress. It is crucial to be aware of language, age, and gender dynamics, and potential risks while reminding participants only to share what they are comfortable with.¹² Facilitators need training in how to effectively support participation of young persons with disabilities.

¹² United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy, Guidelines on Consulting Persons with Disabilities, Indicator 5, 2021.

The UN Youth Office has developed a youth-friendly online training on preventing abuse of authority, discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), and sexual exploitation and abuse, in the context of young people's engagement with the UN. All UN entities are encouraged to share this training with partners, and especially with young people they are collaborating with:

▶ www.un.org/youthenvoy/engaging-safely-at-the-un/

To learn more about disability-inclusive language, read the

▶ [UN Disability-Inclusive Communications Guidelines](#).

Ensuring ethical and sustainable engagement

To ensure that young persons with disabilities can participate in a way that is impactful, ethical, and sustainable, specific standards should be met. Otherwise, there is a risk that they might be exploited, put in harm's way, or not given a real chance to express their own opinions. Participation must always be voluntary and young persons with disabilities must be provided with full, accessible, disability- and age-appropriate information. Participation must be inclusive, relevant, adapted to disability and age-requirements, and sensitive to risks. A commitment to follow-up and evaluation is essential.

Adapting engagement strategies for different constituencies

Recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach is seldom effective, tailoring strategies to various groups' distinct preferences and requirements is vital. This guarantees that every participant finds their engagement pertinent and impactful. Integrating diverse strategies can enhance engagement, especially since some individuals may find certain methods uninteresting or even unchallenging. Offering preparatory workshops can be beneficial, as some young persons with disabilities might not be well-acquainted with the UN's operations or specific technical aspects.

The Youth2030 Disability Task Team and the Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action developed a ▶ [Checklist to ensure the meaningful engagement of young persons with disabilities in humanitarian action](#), which aims to provide guidance on how to ensure meaningful participation of young persons with disabilities in local humanitarian response.

5. Planning and preparation

Effective engagement with young persons with disabilities necessitates inclusive and proactive planning and preparation. This section outlines the key steps required to ensure meaningful interactions, from identifying and reaching out to these individuals to providing accessibility and setting clear objectives for the engagement.

Identifying and reaching out to young persons with disabilities

The initial step to achieving meaningful engagement involves identifying and actively inviting young persons with disabilities to participate. This identification should be a collaborative effort, leveraging the networks of local youth organizations, OPDs, women-led organizations, and other civil society organizations that may already have potential members or contacts. UN Country Teams should review available data and consider conducting a community mapping to identify and understand the situation of young persons with disabilities. Outreach to young persons with disabilities from marginalised and underrepresented groups should be prioritised, including youth with all types of disabilities – physical, intellectual, sensory, and psychosocial – as well as indigenous persons with disabilities and persons with disabilities from minority communities. Use media and digital platforms to amplify the outreach.

Key reference documents to be considered:

- ▶ **Youth2030 Scorecard for United Nations Country Teams:** KPI 6.2.
- ▶ UNDIS' UNCT Accountability Scorecard for Disability Inclusion: Indicator 5. Consultation with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities.
- ▶ **UNDIS Guidelines on Consulting Persons with Disabilities:** Section 1. Persons with Disabilities and their Representative Organizations.

Creating inclusive and disability-specific spaces for engagement

In planning to engage with young persons with disabilities, it is important to consider both inclusive and disability-specific strategies, which could be included in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). Inclusive settings allow young persons with disabilities to contribute to general discussions and engage with other youth, ensuring their perspectives are included. On the other hand, disability-specific spaces give young persons with disabilities a platform to discuss issues specific to them, which might not be fully addressed in a mixed environment. The choice between separate and inclusive participation should be offered to young persons with disabilities, ensuring they are not limited to one due to the lack of accessibility in the other.

Key reference documents to be considered:

- ▶ **Youth2030 Action Guide for United Nations Country Teams:** 2.2.1 Leadership and culture in UNCTs for meaningful youth engagement.
- ▶ UNDIS' UNCT Accountability Scorecard for Disability Inclusion: Indicator 5. Consultation with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities.

Ensuring accessibility

Accessibility is a key consideration for UN Country Teams' reporting both under UNDIS and Youth2030. To effectively engage young persons with disabilities in decision-making and broader youth discussions, accessibility is paramount. This goes beyond just physical accessibility; it also includes information and communication. Utilizing inclusive methods such as sign language, Braille, accessible digital platforms, and easy-to-read formats ensures that everyone, regardless of their disability, can participate fully and express their views. UN Country Teams should budget for accessibility and take proactive steps to make all interactions and materials inclusive from the beginning, including in the Common Country Analysis (CCA) and the UNSDCF. This helps to streamline meaningful engagement throughout the process and shows a genuine commitment to inclusivity and respect for every participant.

Key reference documents to be considered:

- ▶ **Youth2030 Scorecard for United Nations Country Teams:** KPIs 6.1 and 19.
- ▶ **Youth2030 Action Guide for United Nations Country Teams:** 2.2.1 Leadership and culture in UNCTs for meaningful youth engagement.
- ▶ UNDIS' UNCT Accountability Scorecard for Disability Inclusion: Indicator 6. Accessibility of UN Premises and Accommodation.
- ▶ **UNDIS Guidelines on Consulting Persons with Disabilities:** Checklist of elements to consider for type of consultation.
- ▶ **UN Disability-Inclusive Communications Guidelines:** Creating accessible content.

Providing reasonable accommodation and support

Even if accessibility is considered, some young persons with disabilities may require reasonable accommodations – such as personalized interpreters, human support, and transportation assistance – to engage on an equal basis with others. UN Country Teams should budget for these accommodation costs and ensure that young persons with disabilities receive all the support they need to participate in advocacy and decision-making spaces. Remember that young individuals with disabilities often face significant economic exclusion and disability-related extra costs.

Key reference documents to be considered:

- ▶ UNDIS' UNCT Accountability Scorecard for Disability Inclusion: Indicator 6. Accessibility of UN Premises and Accommodation.
- ▶ **UNDIS Guidelines on Consulting Persons with Disabilities:** Checklist of elements to consider for type of consultation.

Setting clear objectives for the engagement

Establishing and communicating well-defined objectives for the engagement is crucial to ensure alignment between the UN Country Team and the youth participants. This sets a clear direction for the engagement activities and provides a metric for assessing the engagement's effectiveness. Instead of imposing guidelines, it is more productive to collaborate with young people with disabilities, co-creating pathways to achieve shared goals.

Key reference documents to be considered:

- ▶ **Youth2030 Action Guide for United Nations Country Teams:** 2.2.1 Leadership and culture in UNCTs for meaningful youth engagement.



6. Engagement strategies

Different strategies can be used to engage with young persons with disabilities, depending on the context and objectives of the engagement. This section outlines various approaches to facilitate meaningful interactions and empower young persons with disabilities to actively participate in and lead UN Country Team initiatives.

Ensuring close consultation with young persons with disabilities

While deeper forms of engagement exist, consulting remains fundamental. Ensure consultations with young persons with disabilities are conducted with accountability and transparency to genuinely consider and implement their ideas, avoiding tokenism that may lead to youth feeling used merely to justify existing plans. To enrich the impact of the consultation and seek co-ownership, young persons with disabilities should be actively involved in the design of these consultation processes.

Key reference documents to be considered:

- ▶ **Youth2030 Action Guide for United Nations Country Teams:** 2.3.5 Youth engagement in design, monitoring, and review of in-country programmes.
- ▶ UNDIS' UNCT Accountability Scorecard for Disability Inclusion: Indicator 5. Consultation with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities.
- ▶ **UNDIS Guidelines on Consulting Persons with Disabilities.**

Fostering dialogue opportunities

Consider establishing regular online and offline channels for direct engagements between young persons with disabilities and staff members, including senior staff. Such continuous interactions can help bolster mutual understanding, alignment, and a culture of inclusivity and participation within the organization.

Key reference documents to be considered:

- ▶ **Youth2030 Action Guide for United Nations Country Teams:** 2.2.1 Leadership and culture in UNCTs for meaningful youth engagement.
- ▶ UNDIS' UNCT Accountability Scorecard for Disability Inclusion: Indicator 1. Leadership.

Inviting young persons with disabilities into coordination and advisory structures

Consider inviting young leaders with disabilities to decision-making platforms and structures within the UN Country Team structure or your entity, such as advisory boards, councils, committees, and expert panels. Young persons with disabilities should be considered in all platforms, not only in those around disability or youth matters.

Key reference documents to be considered:

- ▶ **Youth2030 Action Guide for United Nations Country Teams:** 2.2.2 Youth coordination architecture in UN Country Teams, and 2.3.6 In-country youth coordination mechanisms.
- ▶ UNDIS' UNCT Accountability Scorecard for Disability Inclusion: Indicator 4. Setup and Coordination

Inviting young persons with disabilities into programmatic and project structures

Inviting young persons with disabilities into programmatic and project structures is another strategic way to foster their effective engagement in decision-making. By actively participating in steering committees and other project structures, young persons with disabilities can influence the agenda, advocate for necessary accommodations, and ensure that programmes are genuinely inclusive.

Key reference documents to be considered:

- ▶ **Youth2030 Action Guide for United Nations Country Teams:** 2.2.1 (e) Meaningful youth engagement in UNCT-led projects and campaigns.
- ▶ UNDIS' UNCT Accountability Scorecard for Disability Inclusion: Indicators 5. Consultation with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities, and 8. Joint programmes.

Fostering partnerships and collaborations

Building partnerships with organizations led by and of young persons with disabilities helps to challenge power dynamics, empower young persons with disabilities, and establish trust. These partnerships ensure that the UN's work is grounded in the lived experiences of those they aim to serve.

Key reference documents to be considered:

- ▶ **Youth2030 Action Guide for United Nations Country Teams:** 2.3.5 Youth engagement in design, monitoring, and review of in-country programmes.
- ▶ UNDIS' UNCT Accountability Scorecard for Disability Inclusion: Indicator 5. Consultation with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities.
- ▶ **UNDIS Guidelines on Consulting Persons with Disabilities:** Section 4. Beyond Consultation: Building Partnerships.

Promoting capacity building and training

Facilitating capacity development opportunities for young persons with disabilities is instrumental. This can include mentorship programmes, peer support, tailored training, technical assistance, accessibility resources, and scholarships for further education. Capacity building for UN staff, focusing on disability inclusion and meaningful youth engagement, further ensures that these development opportunities are sustainable. Active involvement of youth in defining priorities and methodologies is essential.

Key reference documents to be considered:

- ▶ **Youth2030 Action Guide for United Nations Country Teams:** 2.2.3 Capacities for Youth2030 implementation in UN Country Teams and 2.4.2 UNCTs, youth and knowledge exchange.
- ▶ UNDIS' UNCT Accountability Scorecard for Disability Inclusion: Indicator 13: Capacity development for UN Staff.

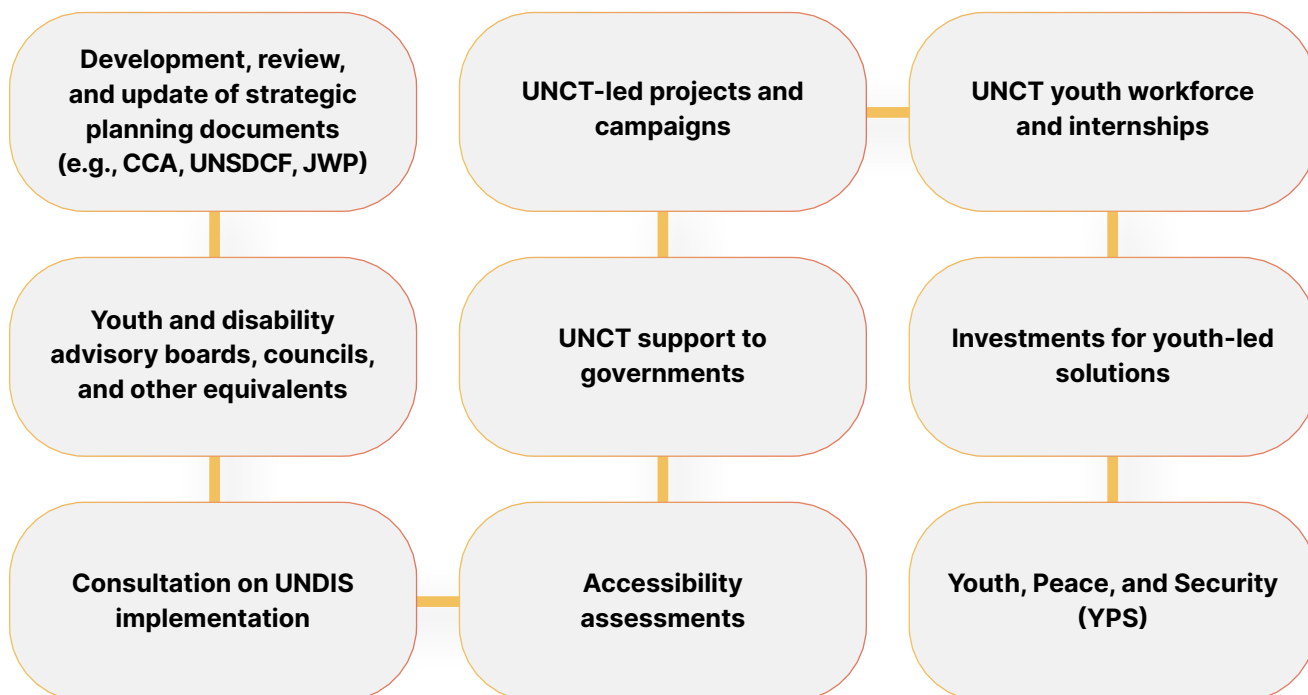
Supporting youth-led initiatives

Providing support to young persons with disabilities to take on active roles and leadership positions empowers them, ensuring that they shape the outcomes of any initiative. This support could entail platforms to voice their opinions, opportunities to engage directly with decision-makers and stakeholders, and direct funding to conduct their own initiatives. UN Country Teams should also aim to hire young persons with disabilities as part of UNDIS' commitments to inclusive employment, including through paid internships.

Key reference documents to be considered:

- ▶ **Youth2030 Action Guide for United Nations Country Teams:** 2.4.1 Investments in youth-led solutions, 2.2.4 Youth workforce in UN Country Teams, and 2.2.5 Fair and quality internships in UN Country Teams.
- ▶ UNDIS' UNCT Accountability Scorecard for Disability Inclusion: Indicator 12: Employment.

Examples of opportunities for meaningful engagement at UN Country Teams



7. Monitoring and evaluation

A final important step in effective engagement with young persons with disabilities is monitoring and evaluation, including assessments, gathering feedback, and making improvements based on the results.

Assessing the effectiveness of engagement strategies

To ensure the sustainability and success of engagement initiatives, the effectiveness of the strategies employed should be regularly assessed. This involves measuring outcomes against set objectives and understanding the impact of the engagement on young persons with disabilities.

Key reference documents to be considered:

- ▶ **Youth2030 Action Guide for United Nations Country Teams:** 2.1.1 Common Country Analysis contains a Youth Situational Analysis, and 2.1.5 Transparency of youth results in UN Country Teams.
- ▶ UNDIS' UNCT Accountability Scorecard for Disability Inclusion: Indicator 10. Monitoring and evaluation.
- ▶ UNEG's **Guidance on Integrating Disability Inclusion in Evaluations and Reporting on the UNDIS Entity Accountability Framework Evaluation Indicator.**

Gathering feedback from participants

Direct feedback from young persons with disabilities provides invaluable insights into the real-world efficacy of engagement efforts. Understanding their experiences, preferences, and challenges can help UN Country Teams fine-tune strategies to better serve the interests and needs of young persons with disabilities. Be sure feedback and evaluation methods are accessible.

Key reference documents to be considered:

- ▶ **Youth2030 Action Guide for United Nations Country Teams:** 2.4.2 UNCTs, youth and knowledge exchange.
- ▶ **UNDIS Guidelines on Consulting Persons with Disabilities:** Steps for a successful consultation.

Refining and improving engagement processes based on feedback and assessments

Continuous improvement is at the heart of effective engagement. By integrating feedback and assessment results, engagement processes can be refined, ensuring they remain relevant, inclusive, and effective over time.

Key reference documents to be considered:

- ▶ **Youth2030 Action Guide for United Nations Country Teams:** 2.4.2 UNCTs, youth and knowledge exchange.
- ▶ **UNDIS Guidelines on Consulting Persons with Disabilities:** Steps for a successful consultation.

YOUTH2030

