

Approach to Meaningful Participation of Adolescents and Young People in Decision-Making Bodies

1. Why Involve Adolescents and Young People?

Meaningful participation of young people in decision-making bodies:

- this means their active and genuine involvement, as equal partners, in the development and implementation of policies that affect them, going beyond a mere symbolic presence to exert a real influence on decisions.
- This means listening to them, involving them, taking their opinions seriously, providing them with the necessary tools, and negotiating roles and objectives together, recognizing their experience as valuable and essential for fair and sustainable solutions.



- Training sessions for adolescents and young people, including:
 - SDGs related to youth
 - Meaningful youth participation
 - Transformational leadership
 - Communication and advocacy
- Development of an advocacy plan.
- Organisation of advocacy visits and meetings with decision-makers.
- Participation of adolescents in budget policy debates.
- Exchange sessions between young people, mayors, and local authorities.
- Co-development of local operational plans with adolescents.
- Participation of young people in key decision-making bodies (POCT, budget debates, etc.).

2. What Worked Well (and Less Well)

Key Activities Implemented

- Mapping of youth organisations across the three localities.
- Mapping of existing services available to young people.
- Community dialogues to identify adolescents' priority concerns.

3. What We Will Do Differently Next Time

- Allocate **adequate resources** to strengthen and sustain advocacy actions.
- Systematically integrate **PVSMSC approaches** (Participation, Voice, Social and Citizen Mobilization).
- Identify and engage **municipal secretaries and influential actors** as advocacy champions.

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- Align future actions with **national advocacy priorities** for stronger coherence and impact.



4. Key Lessons Learned

Build Capacity Before Participation

Young people must be trained beforehand to understand issues, decision-making mechanisms, and their responsibilities. Competencies in communication, leadership, advocacy, and analysis of local issues are essential.

Engage Institutional Actors Early

Early collaboration with local authorities, technical departments, and community leaders increases buy-in and ensures adolescent priorities are integrated into institutional agendas.

Promote Co-Creation

Advocacy created *with* adolescents — not *for* them — leads to stronger motivation, commitment, and ownership.

Adapt to Political and Institutional Dynamics

Advocacy takes place within evolving systems. Understanding political contexts (elections, restructuring, appointments) helps anticipate risks and adjust strategies accordingly.

5. Impact of Our Advocacy

City of Pikine

- Recruitment of a midwife for adolescent health at CEDPS de Thiès.
- 120 volunteers mobilized for road safety.
- Free Wi-Fi provided to adolescents.
- 100 million CFA mobilized to subsidize youth organizations (Jenken Fund).
- Development of an adolescent-sensitive operational health plan.
- Launch of the “Traffic Lights” program (budget: 200 million CFA).
- Appointment of **three young people** to the Health Development Committee.
- Participation of adolescents in budget policy debates. Appointment of a young person as **Special Advisor to the Mayor**.

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CITY OF THIÈS



- Mayor's commitment to renovate the youth center and strengthen youth empowerment.
- Joint development of the Operational Health Plan with adolescents.
- Recruitment of a nurse at Mame Yelly Badiane High School.
- Appointment of a project participant as **Vice-President of the Municipal Advisory Council**.
- Strong adolescent participation in budget policy debates.
- Construction of a municipal library with free Wi-Fi.
- Municipal commitment to allocate **5% of the local budget** to adolescent health and well-being.
- 150 million CFA Green Fund program benefiting 60 youth associations.

CITY OF TIVAOUANE



- Systematic participation of young people in budget consultations.
- Equipment of recreational areas for adolescents.
- Municipal support for peer educator empowerment.
- Development of an adolescent-sensitive health action plan.
- Renovation of the stadium and basketball court.
- Equipment and improvement of a health center.
- Commitment to increase resources dedicated to adolescent health and well-being.