



## Health, education and social protection

# Child and youth development: approaches and methods

### The challenge

Children and young people under 25 years of age are a particularly important target group for development cooperation. In many partner countries, they make up as much as 70 per cent of the population. It is increasingly being recognised that young people's potential is essential for development and social reforms.

In practice, however, the implementation of child and youth rights continues to pose major challenges to government institutions. They therefore require practical support in this area, especially to enable them to fulfil their international commitments.

### Our approach

With our child and youth development programmes, we support government decision-makers with the implementation of child and youth rights. We help them to involve children and young people and harness their potential. At the same time, we encourage young people to exercise their rights and participate actively in social processes. This creates synergies with other thematic areas such as poverty reduction, democratisation, decentralisation, urban development, economic development and employment, education, health, public safety and crisis prevention. Our approaches also include measures aimed at the prevention of violence, peace education, the protection of young people from violence and exploitation, as well as promoting youth employment, juvenile health, and environmental education.

### Our services

The ongoing development of innovative approaches and methods in child and youth development and a critical evaluation of projects and programmes are crucial to the

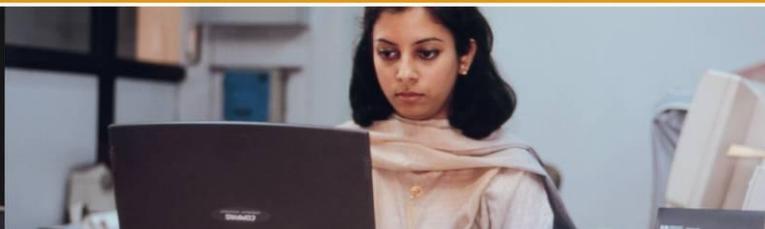
quality of our work. Our services focus on the key priorities of youth policy and training. We attach particular importance to firmly establishing participatory processes which guarantee young people's participation and promote cooperation between state and civil society structures.

### Youth policy

- We provide advice to ministries and institutions responsible for child and youth development on the elaboration and implementation of child and youth rights, in close cooperation with other specialised ministries (e.g. health, education, justice, administration, finance).
- We provide support for the creation of decentralised government structures for youth development with a view to boosting young people's active participation in democratic processes and the shaping of their environment.
- We initiate, advise on and promote cooperation and networking among state institutions and civil society youth organisations.

### Training

- Training of government employed youth workers at national and community level to facilitate the effective and efficient use of resources and facilitate a scaled-up commitment and advocacy on behalf of children and young people
- Training in organisational development and management for the leaders of youth organisations so that they can establish high-quality services for young people
- Training for young people as multipliers and peer educators



## The benefits

As GIZ's partner, you benefit from our many years of international experience in youth policy advice and development and implementation. We work with recognised organisations worldwide, have experts available and apply a wide range of methodologies. In doing so, we analyse each situation individually and, together with our partners, plan the most appropriate strategies and measures.

With our services, we support governments and state institutions in their efforts to make the internationally guaranteed child and youth rights a reality. We help children and young people to play an active role in improving their life situation and asserting their rights. Training for stakeholders in politics, administration and civil society ensures that young people are given support, protection and a hearing, so that they are empowered to improve their own situation and play an active role in society. In this way, we help to establish or strengthen democratic structures and integrative processes, based on equality, at national and local level and foster our partners' ownership at the same time.

## An example from the field

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, GIZ, on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), has initiated the project "Establishment and Promotion of Structures in the Youth Sector". Through cooperation with state structures, non-governmental organisations and youth councils, we are implementing programmes which promote the interests of young people. These offer young people new prospects and the opportunity to influence the development of youth policy. The long-term goal is to make young people's political, social and economic participation a reality.

The programmes offer them new prospects and promote peaceful coexistence in Bosnia's multiethnic society. The background is as follows: young people make up a quarter of the population in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 2008, youth unemployment was almost 50 per cent nationwide, according to GIZ and UNDP figures. In the frame of the national youth policy analysis it was reported that more than half the young people in the 14-30 age group would leave the country if they could.

In the project regions, youth development strategies have been produced in cooperation with the relevant stakeholders from the administration, state structures and civil society. Government funding for youth development has now doubled, and staff in the administration have been trained as youth policy officers to enable them to develop and implement youth programmes on their own initiative. They act as mediators between the local administration and youth organisations.

By the end of 2009, 45 local youth strategies had already been approved. They are scheduled to run for 2-3 years. One example is the provision of training for young people to become youth leaders. These targets highly motivated young people who receive methodological training and act as multipliers in clubs and organisations in the field of child and youth work and are partners to the local government for the implementation of local youth strategies.

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