Accountable Now's Annual Workshop 2018: People-powered accountability for the SDGs, Y Care International's Case Study

About Y Care International   www.ycareinternational.org| Facebook | Twitter | LinkedIn

Y Care International (YCI) is the international relief and development agency of the YMCA movement in the UK and Ireland. **Mission: We support the most vulnerable young people to achieve their aspirations by getting into work and out of poverty. We aim to create 2 million opportunities for decent work by 2030.**

- We work in 15 of the poorest countries – mainly in sub-Saharan Africa as well as Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East
- We work with young women and men aged 15-24 made vulnerable by poverty, inequality and injustice
- Through partnerships with YMCAs and other community-based organisations we equip the world's most vulnerable young people to move out of poverty and in to business and employment
- We believe young people are agents of change in their own and others' development, and that local organisations are best placed to help them fulfil their potential in body, mind and spirit, and to realise their rights.

Projects

YCI has embedded accountability mechanisms within its Monitoring Evaluation Accountability and Learning (MEAL) cycle for all projects/programmes, adhering to the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS). We have introduced SMS technology within our beneficiary feedback and complaints & response mechanisms, as well as new participatory MEAL approaches. YCI is committed to further strengthening these mechanisms both within projects and at the organisational level. Rather than focus on one specific project, this case study illustrates examples from two recently-ended projects, which operated in different contexts:

Asia – rural	Sub-Saharan Africa - urban
Location: Umerkot district, Sindh province, Pakistan Implementing partner: Community World Service Asia Dates: 2015- 2018 Donor: DFID SDGs: primary focus on SDGs 1 and 8. Secondary focus on SDGs 2, 5 Overview: development of embroidery businesses for young women artisans through business & life skills training, establishment of enterprise groups, facilitating market linkages, gender empowerment through community sensitisation, establishment of social enterprise. https://www.bond.org.uk/resources/stitching-up-poverty-podcast-series	Location: Freetown's slum communities, Sierra Leone Implementing partners: YMCA of Sierra Leone & CODOHSAPA, supported by SDI. Dates: 2013- 2018 Donor: Comic Relief SDGs: primary focus on SDGs 1 and 8. Secondary focus on SDGs 3, 6, 11 Overview: youth-led slum upgrading and development through livelihoods training, community mobilisation through savings/credit group formation, health sensitisation, water and sanitation improvements, community data collection and mapping, disaster risk reduction and response, advocacy with government https://www.ycareinternational.org/story/a-freetown-story-enterprising-answers-to-poverty/

MEAL & project cycle stage	Approaches	Examples and resources
Project design and planning	Needs assessments and market research: young people's participation in data collection and analysis Consultation and validation workshops with communities on projects' theories of change	"Collecting Youth Voices for Enterprise Choices" - Youth-led research in Sierra Leone and Liberia Overview: https://www.ycareinternational.org/project/collecting-youth-voices-for-enterprise-choices/ Toolkit: https://www.ycareinternational.org/collecting-voices-for-youth-enterprise-choices-toolkit-introductory-guidelines/
Implementation and monitoring	Establishment of Project/Community Steering committees with beneficiaries, community leaders, CSOs, government representatives Coordination with other agencies	Pakistan: Project/Steering Committees actively used Front Line SMS for monitoring project activities – see section below. Sierra Leone: coordination with other Comic Relief grantees, within the 4 Cities Initiative to enhance efficiency and impact.
Accountability	Beneficiary feedback and complaint mechanisms – introduction of SMS technology	Pakistan: use of Front Line SMS for real-time feedback and solutions. Mobile phones and credit provided to beneficiaries/stakeholders e.g. Steering Committee (centre attendance), Gender Activists (household meetings), Sales and Marketing Agents (orders). Use of codes, given low literacy levels; call-back from project staff. Sierra Leone: in a follow-on slums project, we would like to establish a real-time reporting platform to enable young people to share their stories via SMS/audio and engage in advocacy efforts, in collaboration with On Our Radar (https://www.onourradar.org/)
Learning	Adaptive programming; annual learning workshops with beneficiaries and stakeholders	Sierra Leone: adjustments made to project activities, in response to the Ebola outbreak Organisational level: introduction of an implementing partner feedback survey to elicit feedback on technical support provided by YCI, identify and action areas for improvement.
Evaluation	Mid-term reviews and external final evaluations using mixed methods and participatory approaches – to close the feedback and learning loop. Internal impact assessments 3-5 years post-project	Pakistan: use of outcome harvesting (mid-term review); Sprockler (final evaluation) based on "storytelling, story signification, sensible analysis and sharing insights". https://www.ycareinternational.org/2018/05/10/closing-the-learning-loop-how-to-extend-the-ownership-of-evaluation-findings-to-project-beneficiaries/ Sierra Leone: quantitative component (surveys, FGDs, SSIs) supplemented by a qualitative component using Participatory Video and Most Significant Change (PVMSC): young slumdwellers recounted and videoed their own stories in their own words, and selected those which they considered to be "most significant" and representative of the project's impact. These were then discussed and validated in a workshop with project stakeholders including families, government etc. http://insightshare.org/resources/participatory-video-and-the-most-significant-change/

Workshop expectations

YCI looks forward to learning more about dynamic accountability approaches, how others have mainstreamed these within their organisations, as well as how they have supported southern-based implementing partners to do the same. In particular, we are keen to explore how these approaches respond and adapt to sensitivities associated with child/young person protection and safeguarding. We will aim to adopt best practices within our work, including as part of our role within Restless Development's consortium for our new DFID-funded project "The Development Alternative". We very much look forward to meeting and sharing experiences with all participants! With many thanks to Accountable Now and partners from Rehana and colleagues at YCI.

YMCA Y Care International creates opportunities for vulnerable young people across the globe to change their lives for the better. Inspired by and faithful to our Christian values, we work with people of all faiths and none to build a more just world, free from poverty.

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