

# Engaging Generation Z

Motivating young people to  
engage positively with  
international development

October 2015



**2015**  
European Year  
for Development

our world  
our dignity  
our future

## About Bond

Bond is the UK membership body for over 440 organisations working in international development, ranging from large agencies with a world-wide presence to community and specialist organisations. We work to influence governments and policymakers, develop the skills of people in the sector, build organisational capacity and effectiveness, and provide opportunities to exchange information, knowledge and expertise.

## Acknowledgements

This report was authored by Livity and co-financed by the European Union as part of the European Year for Development. The contents of this report is the sole responsibility of Bond and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union.

Livity are a multi-disciplined youth marketing agency with over 14 years' experience delivering research, campaigns, content and communities of practice that are powered by youth insight. They are uniquely positioned to help brands engage and empower youth audiences, delivering both social and commercial benefit. [livity.co.uk](http://livity.co.uk)

The European Year for Development is the first ever European Year to deal with the European Union's external action and Europe's role in the world. In the UK, Bond is campaigning to increase understanding of the progress made in international development, and to inspire Europeans to join the conversation. [europa.eu/eyd2015/](http://europa.eu/eyd2015/)

Front cover: DFID

Design: TRUE [www.truedesign.co.uk](http://www.truedesign.co.uk)



**2015**  
European Year  
for Development



# Contents

<b>Background</b>	2
<b>Introduction</b>	2
<b>The challenge</b>	3
<b>Approach</b>	4
<b>Audience</b>	5
<b>The industry experts</b>	7
<b>Case studies</b>	8
<b>Key findings and recommendations</b>	12
<b>Summary of recommendations</b>	23
<b>Conclusion</b>	24
<b>Appendix</b>	24

# Background

---

With the international development sector facing an increasingly difficult external environment, there is an urgent need to find creative new ways to make change happen. Working with young people offers an exciting opportunity to achieve this goal. By injecting energy and vitality into programme delivery and overall branding, organisations can bring a new generation of supporters on the journey to becoming active citizens for years to come. Gaining the attention and support of a younger generation through campaigns provides positive by-products – it expands the donor bases of the future and develops advocates for life.

Adopting a playful style, tone and attitude can inject a sense of youthfulness into an NGO's overall communications. There are also a series of approaches and set of principles to follow to ensure that the campaigns are wholly relevant for a young audience. For many NGOs, working with this new audience marks a significant shift, and a period of testing and refinement will be necessary in order to develop effective and convincing strategies and ways of working.

A fundamental route to achieving success involves starting with the young people themselves, finding meaningful ways to involve them in developing

activities they can buy into and endorse among their peers. Fostering this collaboration will naturally align the work of an NGO with the needs of young people. It will lead to mutual benefit and establish a positive cycle to build on longer term.

While the essence of being a young person remains the same, and there are some universal truths for this audience, a significant percentage is ever-changing and communication approaches should mirror this fluidity. Existing in young people's landscapes provides the most comprehensive route to achieving this. Flexibility and responsiveness regarding social networks, potential ambassadors and celebrity endorsement are key.

Taking the conversations to the young people themselves and purposefully seeking out their contribution makes them feel valued and enables them to understand the role they can play in achieving positive change on a global level. Triggering this sentiment at an early age will achieve positive results, not only for the young people themselves, but also for the international development sector overall. It will encourage lifelong mutually beneficial partnerships to be formed.

# Introduction

---

In June 2015, Bond began a piece of work with Livity to gather and explore the experiences of a select number of expert practitioners working within the youth communication sector in the UK.

This report outlines the findings, which are informed by a literature review, a series of interviews with eight marketing professionals, and a collaborative workshop with development professionals.

The recommendations provide tips and ways of working to help those in the international development sector, particularly NGOs, looking to engage a youth audience.

# The challenge

---

The international development community faces a unique set of challenges, and with 2015 being appointed the European Year for Development by the European Parliament, now is a great opportunity to take stock of the changing landscape of youth media and reflect on its significance.

Research shows that the world today has the largest generation of 15-24 year olds, and yet young people remain a largely untapped resource. There needs to be increased focus on how this audience can be involved in decision making and affect change, and greater emphasis on the methods used to achieve this effectively.

As a newer audience, the parameters and capabilities of young people are still being explored and studied. Reflections on behaviour both online and offline show an increased interconnectedness among young people.

However, much of the research material produced is theoretical or reflective, and is often not rooted in practical ways of working. Approaches that enable organisations to understand the steps required to make the leap towards engaging young people are largely absent. The following are some of the challenges which need to be considered to give organisations the confidence to make these first steps:

## Engagement challenges and opportunities for the development community

### 1. Grappling with abstraction and complexity

- Talking about international development involves multi-layered and complex concepts.
- International development encompasses a wide range of organisations and issues, which cultivate a community and philosophy of interconnectedness.
- Global politics and economics are understood through a variety of theoretical frameworks.
- Audiences come from a range of perspectives and different levels of understanding.

### 2. Negotiating the age of austerity

- Economic altruism can seem hard to justify in a world of insecure financial futures.
- Young people are increasingly concerned about their own financial futures, from tuition fees to mortgage deposits.
- Fiscal narratives permeate the media, and all sectors of society are exposed.
- The dominant narrative is of curtailing overspending, and cutting back on 'benefits' of all kinds.

### 3. Inspiring engagement and involvement

- Corporate, community and individual initiatives all contribute to a 'global big society' where social issues are part of brand and consumer narratives.
- Within the communications landscape, overarching messaging about the international development sector as a whole competes with specific, issues-based messaging from individual NGOs, in an ever more contested battle for attention.
- Public engagement and the media share clusters around key moments – an opportunity to adopt an 'always on' approach to communications.
- Britain continues to diversify socially and ethnically, offering a range of perspectives which are often untapped.
- Financing models continue to evolve to match cultural shifts, and it is important that fundraising approaches evolve in tandem.

# Approach

---

In response to the challenges and opportunities identified in the brief, Livity devised a qualitative research approach comprised of:

- a literature review;
- structured expert interviews;
- a collaborative workshop with members of the international development sector.

The work centred on selecting and facilitating eight stakeholder interviews and compiling the findings and case studies to provide useful insights and strategic recommendations to be shared with members of the development community.

Underpinning this, Livity's experience delivering youth communications and engagement solutions for a range of clients provided a solid foundation to qualify and refine the information.

## **Literature review**

Existing research on the topic was analysed in order to ensure a solid basis of knowledge upon which to develop and shape the interview guide.

This included sector-specific and academic literature from marketing, business and media journals and websites.

## **Structured expert interviews**

Eight youth marketing professionals with expertise in engaging large numbers of young people in successful campaigns and initiatives were interviewed. Their organisations were selected based on their established effectiveness, spanning a range of public, private and third sector areas, in both the UK and overseas. The interviews encompassed a range of topics, from the changing media landscape, to strategies to make the abstract relevant to the everyday. Topics and areas of discussion included:

- use of social media and digital technology;
- positioning of local alongside global issues;
- varying methods of advertising;
- tools to engage the audience;
- working with influencers at local and national levels;
- navigating challenges with this audience;
- maintaining engagement beyond initial interest;
- ensuring breadth of engagement across the UK;
- the roles young people can play throughout their involvement.

## **Collaborative workshop**

A collaborative working session with members of the international development sector offered the opportunity to share, refine and test the findings within an informal discussion setting.

# Audience

## Portrait of a young person today

The new generation of adolescents in the western world – known as Generation Z (Gen Z) – is markedly different from its millennial predecessors. Born after 1995, members of Gen Z have never known life without the internet and omnipresent digital devices. For them, technology is not new and exciting – it's just life. Similarly, technological innovation isn't celebrated – it's expected. They do not remember life pre-9/11, and their formative years have been overshadowed by economic collapse.

The result? A generation of self-starters who have an enterprising spirit, are fluid across screens and devices, and use video, visuals and images as preferred means of communication.

This is a generation that isn't content to just wait for things to come to it. It is the most autonomous, self-determining and self-motivated generation ever.

These young people are seeking alternative ways to make it in the world and there's real appetite to create their own opportunities. The number of young people aspiring to own their own business or work for themselves is higher than ever before,<sup>1</sup> with record numbers starting their own businesses post-recession.<sup>2</sup> This hustler mind-set is not limited to enterprise – it is a sense of empowerment and self-starting that is carried across all areas of life.

## Democratisation of technology

Gen Z has grown up knowing that it is only a few clicks away from knowing anything it wants. These young people are extremely adept at finding information they need in the moment they need it. This too is empowering, giving them confidence to try their hand at new things to get satisfaction. And while they may not be excited by technology, they do feel enormously empowered and enabled by it. This is the maker generation, the era of the start-up kid. The means of production and distribution have been democratised – from using YouTube 'how to' videos to learn skills,



DFID

raising funds on Kickstarter and embracing advances in 3D printing, to selling on Etsy and promoting products through social media and vlogger endorsements. 24% of children in the UK now claim computing is their favourite subject.<sup>3</sup>

The mobile phone is the single most important object in young people's lives – they have a love/hate relationship with it. If the choice was no TV or no phone, the phone would win every time.<sup>4</sup> They feel guilty about the amount of time they spend on their mobile, but get stressed if they are away from it, or run out of battery. The mobile phone is their relationships' manager, their life planner, their safety net and their compass.

The digitally-connected world has allowed this generation to redefine the meaning of community. Their sense of belonging derives as much from online communities that they belong to, as their local real world peer groups. But it's as much about community-shared passions as the focus of that passion itself. It's important to recognise that Gen Z are often quite promiscuous in their fandom and passions. Young people are interested in experimentation and multiple passion points rather than in defining themselves through niche fandom and taste.

1. <https://united.org.uk/2013/09/13/populus-survey/>

2. [www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/yourbusiness/11133048/More-young-entrepreneurs-launch-start-ups-in-wake-of-recession.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/yourbusiness/11133048/More-young-entrepreneurs-launch-start-ups-in-wake-of-recession.html)

3. [www.computerweekly.com/news/2240238610/Nearly-a-quarter-of-school-children-cite-computing-as-favourite-subject](http://www.computerweekly.com/news/2240238610/Nearly-a-quarter-of-school-children-cite-computing-as-favourite-subject)

4. [www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/mediatechnologyandtelecoms/digital-media/11597743/Teenagers-spend-27-hours-a-week-online-how-internet-use-has-ballooned-in-the-last-decade.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/mediatechnologyandtelecoms/digital-media/11597743/Teenagers-spend-27-hours-a-week-online-how-internet-use-has-ballooned-in-the-last-decade.html)

They are as self-conscious as teens have always been, but with the added pressure of constant self-broadcast via social media. More so than their predecessors, they are cautious in terms of sharing data and revealing personal details online, and much more wary of sign-ups and spam. The Facebook 'Like' and YouTube 'Subscribe' functions are ways for them to register their engagement with a brand, service or issue, without needing to provide an email address.

### **An increased sense of responsibility**

Offline too, evidence demonstrates that young people are increasingly more cautious than their predecessors, and this is supported by curriculum changes which are enhancing their critical reasoning skills. As a result, young people are questioning information and highlighting corruption when they witness it. Figures surrounding underage drinking and smoking are both decreasing, with many taking fewer health risks.<sup>5</sup> Crime figures among 10-17 year olds have also fallen dramatically in the past decade, from 111,000 convicted or given a caution in 2007, to only 28,000 in 2013.<sup>6</sup>

### **Visual communicators**

This generation expect to process information through imagery – from emojis to YouTube thumbnails, Instagram and Snapchat. Language is evolving – photos and images are now a unit of conversation. Visual language is often more universal and richer in meaning than text, and it has become the way in which young people make themselves heard. Visual languages, such as GIFs, have become a way to describe complex subjects and have also become social currency, symbolising a shared sense of popular culture and self-expression in a way that is at the same time more personal than text.

### **A generation of change makers**

It goes without saying that young people's experience of stories, news and content happens seamlessly across devices. They expect to be able to access and interact with brands, celebrities and governments on their own terms. Trust and transparency are key for these young people who want to connect with what feels genuine to them, and they are quick to detect a lack of authenticity. The inaction of previous generations frustrates them and as such there's a strong desire to be change makers.

With greater philanthropic and community ambitions and an inherent sensibility to make the world a better place, this generation of young people is set to be the instigator of change in a hyper-connected world. Their formative years are being overshadowed by terror and conflict, but they feel that they have the potential to fix the mess they have inherited. The 2014 Aspirational Consumer Index demonstrates that the organisations and brands they interact with echo this changing mindset, with 93% of young people willing to pay more for brands which are based on environmental, social and community considerations, and 90% encouraging their peers to do so.<sup>7</sup> It's a time where climate change is an incontrovertible fact, and where their social feeds and media consumption echo and amplify their sense of resistance. Gen Z knows it can change the world, and fully expects to do it.

5. [www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-25652991](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-25652991)

6. [www.economist.com/news/briefing/21606795-todays-young-people-are-held-be-alienated-unhappy-violent-failures-they-are-proving](http://www.economist.com/news/briefing/21606795-todays-young-people-are-held-be-alienated-unhappy-violent-failures-they-are-proving)

7. [www.globescan.com/news-and-analysis/press-releases/press-releases-2014/99-press-releases-2014/314-coca-cola-microsoft-samsung-tata-unilever-and-nestle-top-list-of-world-s-most-responsible-companies.html](http://www.globescan.com/news-and-analysis/press-releases/press-releases-2014/99-press-releases-2014/314-coca-cola-microsoft-samsung-tata-unilever-and-nestle-top-list-of-world-s-most-responsible-companies.html)





DFID

## The industry experts

The following professionals from the youth engagement sector were interviewed as part of this study. See Appendix, for the structured interview discussion guide.

- 1. Barclays LifeSkills**  
Emma Austin, LifeSkills Implementation Manager
- 2. British Council, Study Work Create**  
Arti Sharma, Head of UK Youth Campaigns
- 3. Christian Aid Collective**  
Pippa Durn, Youth Manager
- 4. MTV Staying Alive Foundation**  
Georgia Arnold, Executive Director
- 5. Restless Development**  
Rachel Walker, Campaigns Coordinator
- 6. Nike Foundation, Girl Effect**  
Mark Sanderson, acting Head of Brand
- 7. Youth Sport Trust**  
Ali Oliver, Chief Executive Officer
- 8. National Curriculum, Citizenship**  
Sean Thompson, Citizenship and Cohesion Advisor for London Borough of Waltham Forest

# Case studies



## 1. Barclays LifeSkills

**Who and what:** Launched in May 2013, LifeSkills<sup>8</sup> is a free programme across the UK, created by one of the UK's largest banks, Barclays, and endorsed by City & Guilds. As part of their core corporate social responsibility strategy, Barclays have harnessed their connections at a community level to provide consistent work experience and learning opportunities. The programme is designed to help young people across the UK transition from school to work, by giving them access to the personal, professional and financial skills they need to make this move.

**Aim:** To help one million young people in England transition from school to work by the end of 2015.

**Impact:** Within the first year, the programme reached 410,000 young people between 11-19 years old, with 45,154 of them online. 1,499 businesses have signed up, offering 9,441 work experience opportunities.<sup>9</sup> The first year Impact Report (published in May 2014) found that 80% of participants felt more confident in their ability to succeed, and 83% were able to identify career paths that were better suited to their skill set. The numbers of participants who felt they had improved their ability to budget, their interview skills and their confidence levels were very high, all above 80%. Fronted by well-known vlogger Emma Blackery, the What's My Direction module saw 9,618 subscribers to the YouTube channel, with the first video alone achieving 55,777 views.<sup>10</sup>



## 2. British Council, Study Work Create

**Who and what:** The British Council are a UK-based international organisation, working across 100 countries to foster cross-cultural understanding, education and development opportunities, using language and art in particular to bring international opportunities to life. Study Work Create opens opportunities (such as the European Voluntary Service - EVS) for young people to experience another culture or volunteer their time to achieve positive change in society.

**Aim:** To develop solidarity, mutual understanding and tolerance among young people, while contributing to strengthening social cohesion and promoting active citizenship.

**Impact:** By December 2014, Study Work Create had opened over 30,000 opportunities globally for UK students to experience the wider world through work, study or creative roles. In its first year, its website attracted 110,000 UK users, and another 100,000 young people will have the opportunity to become involved in the programme in the next three years.<sup>11</sup>

8. [www.barclayslifeskills.com](http://www.barclayslifeskills.com)

9. Impact report: [www.bitc.org.uk/sites/default/files/barclays\\_lifeskills\\_-\\_1st\\_year\\_impact\\_report.pdf](http://www.bitc.org.uk/sites/default/files/barclays_lifeskills_-_1st_year_impact_report.pdf)

10. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=0M8pkSekImQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0M8pkSekImQ)

11. Annual Report: [www.britishcouncil.org/sites/britishcouncil.uk2/files/d554\\_annual\\_report\\_final.pdf](http://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/britishcouncil.uk2/files/d554_annual_report_final.pdf) [www.britishcouncil.org/study-work-create/opportunity/work-volunteer/volunteer-europe](http://www.britishcouncil.org/study-work-create/opportunity/work-volunteer/volunteer-europe)



### 3. Christian Aid Collective

**Who and what:** Christian Aid is a Christian organisation that works to eradicate the causes of poverty, striving to achieve equality, dignity and freedom for all, regardless of faith or nationality. The Christian Aid Collective<sup>12</sup> was launched in 2012 as a movement to encourage and inspire young people to tackle injustice, particularly poverty and inequality, on a regional, national and global scale. The Collective take part in a variety of activities and aim to inspire broader networks with ideas and resources to help supporters take their own action.

**Aim:** To use the collective talents, time and energy of young people to bring an end to global poverty.

**Impact:** The Christian Aid Collective has provided a platform for young people to share their talents with the movement and use their diverse skills to campaign on vital issues relating to global poverty including tax, climate change and equality among others.

12. [www.christianaidcollective.org](http://www.christianaidcollective.org)



### 4. MTV Staying Alive Foundation

**Who and what:** MTV Staying Alive<sup>13</sup> is an international initiative from MTV, developed in 2002 into a global multi-media campaign to provide a range of positive interventions around HIV, including programming, advocacy and grant making. With a mission to be passionate, preventative, holistic and creative, MTV Staying Alive supports youth-led organisations to fight the spread of HIV in their local communities in innovative ways. It simultaneously produces educational media content from documentaries to public service announcements, TV dramas to short films.

**Aim:** To develop an empowered, smart, and educated generation of young people, equipped with the tools and knowledge to protect themselves and their peers from the HIV epidemic.

**Impact:** Originally based in Kenya, the MTV Shuga television programme won an award at the World Media Festival 2010 for its frank discussion of the sexual, romantic and emotional lives of young people in Kenya. Season three was broadcast across 84 television stations globally, reaching 500 million households. Through social media, another 42 million people have been reached, with many engaging with the programme on an interactive level.<sup>14</sup>

13. <http://stayingalivefoundation.org>

14. Hall of Fame Winners 2014: <http://archive.worldmediafestival.org/>  
Impact Report: [http://stayingalivefoundation.org/downloads/2013\\_MTV\\_Staying\\_Alive\\_Foundation\\_Impact\\_Report.pdf](http://stayingalivefoundation.org/downloads/2013_MTV_Staying_Alive_Foundation_Impact_Report.pdf)

## Case studies *continued*



### 5. Restless Development

**Who and what:** A youth-focused international development agency using youth-led solutions to tackle the most persistent problems affecting young people.

**Aim:** To empower young people to take a leadership role in addressing the most urgent issues facing young people in their own national contexts and globally.

Their main areas of activity focus on:

1. Civic participation – working to ensure that young people are significant contributors to development processes.
2. Livelihoods and employment – working to help young people take up productive livelihoods and employment.
3. Sexual health and reproductive health and rights – working to promote safe sexual and reproductive practices among young people.

**Impact:** An example of success in ‘direct delivery’ can be seen in the Karamoja region in Uganda, which is plagued by social, political and economic difficulties. The initial pilot programme trained and supported 14 young Karamojong volunteer development professionals, who went on to reach over 3,300 young people in the district. These volunteers led activities aimed at improving their peer’s conflict resolution, sexual and reproductive health awareness and income-generating projects. Since their launch in 1985, Restless Development has reached over 7 million young people, both directly and indirectly. In 2014 it reached 450,000 young people through all programmes.<sup>15</sup>



GIRL EFFECT

### 6. Nike Foundation, Girl Effect

**Who and what:** Founded in 2008, Nike Foundation partnered with NoVo Foundation, United Nations Foundation and Coalition for Adolescent Girls to create Girl Effect. This is a global movement to champion the belief that girls are the most powerful force for change on the planet. Girl Hub provides a strategic collaboration with the UK Department for International Development, with focused work in Ethiopia, Rwanda and Nigeria, to put Girl Effect into practice.

**Aim:** To empower 250 million adolescent girls living in poverty to reach their full potential, through:

1. Advocacy – involving girls in the development and implementation of policies affecting their lives.
2. Brand and communication – developing communication approaches which work for this audience.
3. Partnerships and policy – informing and influencing decision makers to invest aid and development budgets in effective programmes for young girls.
4. Insight and knowledge – tracking the impact of their work over time.

**Impact:** Launched in 2013 the primary project in Ethiopia is Yegna, a flagship radio drama, talk show and music platform created by and for Ethiopian women. Its aim is to change the perception of women, by addressing issues of education, violence, lack of opportunities and sexual/reproductive health. The reaction to Yegna has been overwhelmingly positive, with girls themselves feeling more empowered by the radio programme. 84% of those interviewed said that Yegna has improved their confidence, and 76% stated that the programme has inspired them to continue their education, while 65% of all listeners, regardless of gender, have said Yegna has made them think differently about girls’ issues. Out of its listeners (35% of the population), 39% are regulars who tune in every week, and 44% feel that the show helps them start conversations with their parents.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup>. Annual Report: <http://restlessdevelopment.org/file/annual-report-2014-pdf>  
<http://restlessdevelopment.org/faq#one>

<sup>16</sup>. Listenership Survey, Sep 2013: [www.girleffect.org/media/1294/yegna-creds-deck.pdf](http://www.girleffect.org/media/1294/yegna-creds-deck.pdf)



## 7. Youth Sports Trust

**Who and what:** As an independent charity focused on changing young people's lives through sport, Youth Sport Trust's values of trust, integrity, and working in partnership run across all areas of their work. One particular strand, Sainsbury's School Games, seeks to motivate and inspire young people to take part in competitive sport, with four levels of activity: (i) competition in schools; (ii) competition between schools; (iii) competition at county/area level; and (iv) a national event for the most talented.

**Aim:** To improve standards and promote inclusive participation in sport, enabling young people to achieve their potential in a global society, through:

1. Giving every child a sporting start in life through high quality PE and sport in primary schools.
2. Ensuring all young people have a sporting chance by developing opportunities for those with special educational needs and disabilities.
3. Supporting all young people to achieve their sporting best in school and their personal best in life.

**Impact:** The Sainsbury's School Games Mark was developed to provide a nationally recognised award for the schools committed to developing PE and school sport. By August 2011, £115 million had been donated in equipment and expertise to organisations ranging from nurseries, schools, scout and guide groups, and sports clubs, with over 49,000 organisations registered. £21.95 million of public funding was used for the 2013/2014 Sainsbury's School Games, with 17,800 schools and over 7 million students participating.<sup>17</sup>

## 8. National Curriculum, Citizenship

**Who and what:** The Citizenship programme of study provides pupils with the knowledge, skills and understanding to prepare them to play a full and active role in society. In particular, citizenship education fosters pupils' awareness and understanding of democracy, government and how laws uphold the structures of society. Teaching equips pupils with the skills and knowledge to explore political and social issues critically, to weigh evidence, debate and make reasoned judgements.

**Aim:** To equip students to take their place in society as reasonable citizens, with a sound knowledge and understanding of how the United Kingdom is governed, and an ability to think critically, debate and make reasoned decisions. To encourage an interest in, and commitment to, participation in volunteering as well as other forms of responsible activity, that they will take with them into adulthood.

**Impact:** Figures from summer 2015 demonstrate that 21,628 students achieved the Citizenship qualification at GCSE level, a 10% increase on 2014, with 2,914 students achieving the qualification at A and AS level.

17. Investment report: [www.youthsporttrust.org/news-media/news/2014/november/sainsbury%E2%80%99s-school-games-delivers-huge-return-on-investment.aspx](http://www.youthsporttrust.org/news-media/news/2014/november/sainsbury%E2%80%99s-school-games-delivers-huge-return-on-investment.aspx)

# Key findings and recommendations

---

## 1. Collaborate with a youth audience

*“Talk with, not to.”*

Emma Austin, LifeSkills

Collaborating with a youth audience involves researching and designing communications and experiences in partnership with the audience. This ensures your organisation (and all associated communication) speaks their language, and meets their needs and expectations. The approach requires commitment to a different style of working, and may have resource and budget considerations, however the return on investment is significant and there are a range of options available.

### **Engage the audience at the start**

For Restless Development, toolkits are often unhelpful, being restrictive in their nature and created without the involvement of the audience. Instead, “start with the young people themselves, and find out what their interests are” (Rachel Walker, Restless Development).

For Youth Sports Trust, this has become a methodology for all their work; “embracing young people’s voices started as a route to engage those least engaged, however this simply grew until their voices were intrinsic in our methods of developing programmes, systematically hardwired into all work” (Ali Oliver, Youth Sports Trust).

### **Tailor the range of experiences available**

The British Council offers a range of activities and initiatives to get involved in; “ensuring breadth is key for this audience; making assumptions and lumping all young people together is alienating” (Arti Sharma, British Council). By comparison, the approach taken by Barclays LifeSkills is to map the specific opportunities based on the life stages of their audience, refining the experiences based on needs at each stage. Both approaches aim to hook and grow advocates over time.

LifeSkills attempt to be “bespoke where possible, and allow young people to mould things to their needs” (Emma Austin, LifeSkills). This may take the form of the content itself being interactive, or a method to simply pick and choose which assets are necessary and when.

### **Give young people a voice throughout their engagement**

This approach is employed by Youth Sports Trust, the British Council and Christian Aid to ensure participants are invested in the project’s success and feel a shared responsibility for it; “by allowing them to have a voice, many are inspired to take action” (Pippa Durn, Christian Aid) and “being heard fosters a sense of responsibility” (Arti Sharma at the British Council). Rather than offering a ready-made solution and seeking donations or endorsement for it, these organisations outline the challenge and collaborate with the audience on the solution. This ensures initiatives are co-designed and refined on an ongoing basis, consistently resulting in innovative ideas that carry greater weight with this audience and often don’t rely on financial donations.

Alternatively, harness the excitement of the maker culture, providing opportunities to develop solutions using new forms of digital technology. Again this often attracts support from those who may be unable to donate financially.

These communication approaches are aligned with the national curriculum. Sean Thompson, Citizenship and Cohesion Advisor for the London Borough of Waltham Forest, outlined an activity where students select a global issue that matters to them and develop a campaign to engage their peers with it. During this term-based activity, many schools plug into local organisations, which provide industry experts and routes to develop their interest. In many instances, this initial interest continues long beyond the end of term.

Encouraging young people to create their own content about issues they care about results in a greater propensity to share with their own networks. Allowing young people to put their own stamp or interpretation on an issue protects their authority and ownership. In turn this provides greater reach and credibility.



DFID

### **Harness the power and motivation of the collective 'we'**

This ensures narratives are structured around shared responsibility, demonstrating how small steps on an individual level contribute to a bigger goal. Restless Development's recent Tax Dodging Bill campaign<sup>18</sup> resulted in 70,000 people joining up to encourage the Conservative government in the UK to tackle tax avoidance and evasion. Similarly, communication from the Christian Aid Collective includes information to empower individuals to feel knowledgeable and understand the role their involvement will play in affecting positive change. The role of the individual is strongly positioned within the concept of thousands of people uniting to champion the same issues. This echoes a collective mindset which is increasingly prevalent among young people. They feel that problems can be solved through collective action, rather than them being someone else's responsibility.

'Understanding your impact' is a theme running through the citizenship curriculum, and can be applied to a range of issues, both in the UK and overseas. Identifying responsibility at individual, local, governmental and global level frames the bigger picture, and this can be taught in the classroom.

### **Empower your alumni with positions of authority**

Provide routes for members of the audience to become decision makers, through advisory boards or similar. Youth Sports Trust have developed routes to involve young people in aspects of delivery, from managing social channels, to delivering workshops, events and campaigning. Demonstrating trust and respect validates their opinions and results in a mutual exchange. For the British Council, a significant number of existing employees were themselves participants in a range of programmes at a younger age, demonstrating the "longevity and strength in advocacy" (Arti Sharma, British Council).

18. <http://taxdodgingbill.org.uk/>

## 2. Exist in their everyday digital landscape

*“Every platform has a different strength, use it for the right reason.”*

Georgia Arnold, MTV Staying Alive Foundation

Stay abreast of behaviours around changing technology. Be open to using new channels to stay in touch and up to date on issues affecting this audience, but acknowledge the role these play alongside face-to-face communication.

### Identify existing audiences that you can leverage

The majority of organisations successfully talking to this audience have taken conversations away from their own channels, and instead started them within the audience’s native environment; “harness platforms where young people feel comfortable and are therefore more empowered to feed in and make their feelings known” (Ali Oliver, Youth Sports Trust).

For LifeSkills and MTV Staying Alive, joining a bigger conversation taking place on a similar organisation’s channel, or capitalising on an event in the larger public narrative, have allowed communities to grow much faster through the speed at which stories and messages are then shared. Alternatively, research into smaller groups at a local level can engage highly motivated audiences.





### **Be open to light touch engagement**

Despite criticism around engagement based on the notion of ‘clicktivism’, these methods offer routes to attract the attention of a large number of young people, and for many it will be the first step to further engagement.

As evidenced by a number of Facebook initiatives during 2015, such as the rainbow posts in response to the Supreme Court’s ruling on same-sex marriage (resulting in 26 million people amending their profile picture), one-click functionality enables greater numbers to support a cause in a light-touch way. The initial explosion of rainbow posts demonstrated widespread support (in turn triggering conversations and opportunities for organisations to leverage), which gave way to a sustained ‘echo’ as the posts continued on a percentage of user profiles.

Another form of light touch engagement to be actively championed is that of sharing content. Behaviours around content sharing result in fewer opportunities for chance encounters upon initiatives and messages, therefore encouraging an ease of sharing via peer-to-peer communication is key, both for ensuring visibility of the message, and credibility.

The adage ‘keep things simple’ is key when working with this audience. Having attracted their attention, ensuring the steps to engage are straightforward and minimal – through clear instruction, effective user journeys and limited sign up processes – will limit the tendency to drop off.

### **Experiment and trial new platforms**

To achieve this successfully, there is a need to acknowledge the risk and accept the challenges and potential of failure. Organisations referenced instances when communication methods had not delivered the results they’d hoped for, such as using social platforms not aligned with their audience or failing to tailor the style of the content to the expectations of the platform, but they had simply applied the learnings to the next approach. In the case of MTV Shuga, they’ve ensured breadth and depth by placing content across TV, radio, comic books, two-way SMS and a variety of digital content.

### **Maintain social media engagement on an ongoing basis**

Organisations noted how easy it was to fall into the trap of communicating only when they had a request and witnessed that this led to disengagement. Being one-sided in communication is transparent, however cultivating an ongoing conversation and “drip feeding content throughout” (Emma Austin, LifeSkills) results in greater integrity.

### **Speak their language**

To achieve this authentically, LifeSkills’ social media channels are entirely managed by a youth editorial team. At a more accessible level, all organisations had developed a community of ambassadors to provide a network of reliable content sharers, often a role for programme alumni.

### 3. Align altruism and self-interest

*“Developing their leadership skills so they can become agents of change themselves.”*

Ali Oliver, Youth Sports Trust

Young people expect to make things happen for themselves and are less driven by guilt and a sense of obligation, rather by a sense of personal choice. However evidence demonstrates this audience is increasingly more altruistic than their predecessors, with a quarter claiming they would give away £1 million pounds<sup>19</sup> (and an increasing percentage seeking an employer who gives back to society). Harnessing this motivation to change the world they live in, while demonstrating clear routes to achieve personal gain will result in success.

#### Offer mutual benefit

Despite greater altruism overall, the landscape means “they’re savvy enough to realise that people won’t necessarily take care of them so they need to prioritise” (Arti Sharma, British Council). With pressing issues relating to them at home, such as finding employment, housing, and feeling confident about their futures, demonstrate ways for a cause to contribute to these areas.

For the British Council, this involves highlighting opportunities for overseas work, language development and broadening networks, and for Youth Sports Trust, programmes to develop skills which can be applied elsewhere.

Separate to these areas of personal and professional development, organisations such as MTV Staying Alive have ensured the exchange is clearly outlined and favourable for both parties. For MTV Shuga specifically,

a sign-up process, whereby tickets to a desirable event required collection from a registered HIV test centre, provided an educational opportunity in exchange for enviable tickets.

For those interested in enterprise, British Council initiatives enabling overseas travel have offered routes to support young people to visualise their own future enterprise; “you need to see the gap in order to know you can plug it with your own business idea” (Arti Sharma, British Council).

#### Allow people to develop skills

A number of organisations have developed activity within this space, focused around an individual’s professional development. However a challenge has been enabling young people to understand how these skills can then be used elsewhere. For Youth Sports Trust, particular focus is on empowering young people to feel confident to talk about these skills. This ensures there is an understanding about what the skill adds to their abilities, and ensures that they are included on CVs and discussed in an interview context. Similarly the British Council’s EVS programme uses language skills to improve an individual’s confidence, demonstrating how communicating across cultural and language barriers enables an individual to become resilient and adaptable to life’s challenges.

The What’s My Direction content strand from LifeSkills provided an interactive module that allowed the audience to assess their skills and consider the career paths most suited to them. The language and positioning encouraged them to recognise skills they possessed and think more broadly about other aspects of their lives which this could relate to. This took participants on a journey to join the dots between the ‘now’ and ‘then’.

Leadership skills are an area which align with school and business requirements and are clearly transferable. Significantly, “volunteering can be seen as a ‘nice to have’ whereas leadership is a core skill required for all” (Ali Oliver, Youth Sports Trust).

19. [www.wiserd.ac.uk/news/media/press-releases/quarter-young-people-say-they-would-give-away-1-million/](http://www.wiserd.ac.uk/news/media/press-releases/quarter-young-people-say-they-would-give-away-1-million/)

### Position narrative around themes of fairness and injustice

From the individuals we spoke to, and the evidence from a number of Livity-run campaigns, the concept of **injustice** consistently resonates with a younger audience and allows them to relate to situations seemingly far away. For the Christian Aid Collective, the term is consistently included across communication directed at this audience. A variety of terms, such as **fairness** and **inequality** all provide a hook to examine an array of issues and develop a connection with this audience.

In a curriculum context, this is a tool used to encourage students to explore beyond the feeling itself, such as “why something is deemed unfair, and therefore what can be done to rectify this” (Sean Thompson, Citizenship and Cohesion Advisor).

### Trigger feelings of empathy, rather than sympathy

Demonstrate the relevance of the issue for the specific individual, moving away from a feeling that bad things are happening far away. For Restless Development, and organisations such as Raleigh International, witnessing things first hand is incredibly motivating, therefore efforts are made to find ways to facilitate this.

Making sure journeys continue upon an individual’s return to the UK is a challenge. In the case of Restless Development, considerable investment is plugged into helping young people make connections to situations at home and find ways to continue their impact. This may include speaking to their MPs, delivering fundraising events or petitioning; “guiding them through this rather than assuming that they will be able to make the connections themselves is key” (Rachel Walker, Restless Development).



MTV, Staying Alive Foundation

For MTV Staying Alive, finding ways to bring things to life for those unable to view first hand, via a variety of content, has been key to their success, such as a recent piece fronted by ambassador Travis McCoy.<sup>20</sup> A robust content strategy underpins these, positioning those featured, or the situations themselves, as relatable for the audience watching at home.

20. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=8hvPzXOVbCQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8hvPzXOVbCQ)

## 4. Be agile and accommodating

*“Allow for churn; young people always evolve.”*

Georgia Arnold, MTV Staying Alive Foundation

### **Allow for a community in a constant state of flux**

Loyalty looks different to this audience and being open to different forms of commitment will put you in a confident position. With life changing rapidly around them, committing to something is a big ask; “real life will always take precedence; so you need to be accommodating about this” (Rachel Walker, Restless Development).

However a changing audience is often evidence of a growing audience and for programmes offering dedicated resources, this changing community frees up time to offer support for new people who’ve joined.

### **Exist in the background until you’re required**

Involvement may change from one day to the next; from how much or how little members of this audience choose to be involved, to what this involvement looks like. Allowing multiple entry points and flexible programmes of activity enables low barriers to entry and ensures you are prepared for the needs to vary considerably, and change regularly.

For Christian Aid and Restless Development, regular contact is maintained through newsletters, offering information about ways to get involved, yet always shared in a way that allows people to opt in if the timing is right. The lobbyist scheme from the Christian Aid Collective provides regular details about how to communicate effectively on a local, political level. Four times a year an email is shared with the network, providing details about how to get in contact with local members of parliament regarding issues relating to social justice and poverty.

MTV Shuga have demonstrated success ensuring touch points in as many correct locations as possible, accounting for the variety of young people.

A “constant readiness to change, or be changed” mindset is crucial (Georgia Arnold, MTV).

### **Capitalise on the wider cultural landscape**

Finding ways to align your narrative with other things in the cultural space offers opportunities to capture the zeitgeist. Although requiring agile internal processes, success can be witnessed when coinciding with big events, joining conversations or supporting cultural movements.

Brands have been successful in this, such as Oreo’s timely tweeting during the Superbowl blackout in 2013.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, Youth Sports Trust’s School Games activity capitalised on the magic of London 2012, tapping into the enthusiasm for sport in the run up to, and in the wake of, the Olympic Games, crucially ensuring activity allowed routes for disabled young people to take part.

### **Find alternative methods of capturing data**

The landscape of community has changed, and online communities have in some cases replaced traditional face-to-face groups. Conventional digital metrics around data collection, such as email data collection, is consistently outlined as a challenge both by organisations new to this audience and those who’ve worked with young people for a long time. Unfortunately there is no perfect solution and instead organisations are exploring a multitude of routes. Investing energy to find new ways to quantify and measure success, and alternative ways to stay in touch is a must.

For many this begins by analysing the specifics of the need. For those seeking regular contact on an ongoing basis, emailing has become a thing of the past, with many referring to groups of participants talking about events, campaigns and activities in WhatsApp groups.

To demonstrate the size of audience and networks, a variety of social tracking tools provide extensive metrics, going much further than traditional data capture. For most, ensuring content is engaging and relevant is all that’s required to result in it being shared organically by those in your networks.

21. [www.wired.com/2013/02/oreo-twitter-super-bowl/](http://www.wired.com/2013/02/oreo-twitter-super-bowl/)

## 5. Work with a range of influencers, both peer-led and well established

*“Formative years are heavily influenced by school, college and university, providing trusted individuals to work with.”*

Sean Thompson, Citizenship and Cohesion Advisor

*“There’s an increasing respect for people ‘just like them’ who are making a difference.”*

Emma Austin, LifeSkills

Success requires as many touch points as possible during a time when beliefs and interests are being developed. Operating alongside educational institutions provides a strategic opportunity to be in their lives on a day-to-day basis. Outside of these educational requirements of their time, the role of celebrity endorsement has changed, with the audience increasingly mindful of brands expecting them to care simply based on a well-known face. Instead working with individuals who are trusted experts and add value is more effective in ensuring the audience will choose to get involved when their time is their own.

### **Work with teachers to establish complementarity**

Mapping the opportunities on offer with the educational needs of the UK curriculum will highlight the benefits for teachers who are instrumental in initiating a dialogue with their students. The wide offer of the British Council, who have a dedicated schools team, ensures there’s something which appeals to all learning providers which isn’t too prescriptive. For Youth Sports Trust, PE and school sports lessons provide a vehicle to engage young people and offer the opportunity to raise national standards.



DFID

Having dedicated resources help to track and adapt to the fluctuations in curriculum. Often engagement relies upon the teacher’s initiative, therefore commitment to being flexible and maintaining these relationships is needed.

For LifeSkills, their offer remains relevant, with employability consistently high on the curriculum agenda, offering a rhetoric to initiate conversations.

### **Be authentic in your message and who you work with**

To counter scepticism about known public figures being plugged into a campaign, justify their involvement and establish a greater partnership. The involvement of Tinie Tempah for MTV Staying Alive was well received due to his clear investment in the cause from an early stage and ongoing justification for his involvement.

### **Seek audiences within the YouTube communities**

YouTube communities clustered around points of interest can align with specific causes and tap into highly engaged audiences. These channels are fronted by individuals who hold significant authority among younger demographics. They maintain regular dialogue with high numbers of comments leading to ongoing conversations. They also have an incredible ability to motivate their audience to take action.

With high numbers using YouTube for learning, creating content with this platform in mind allows them to discover and understand a topic via useful and engaging content. Research into popular search terms and content optimisation (through titling, thumbnails and descriptors) will ensure visibility and positive reception.

### **Ensure ambassadors are accessible**

Young people are keen to gain knowledge from well-positioned individuals of authority, whom they trust. Peers who are just ahead of them are individuals deemed motivating to listen to and their success is attainable, rather than someone whose experiences took place a long time ago and may no longer be relevant. These individuals may be niche, or relevant to local communities, something key to the success of Nike Foundation's Girl Hub. Working to identify who these individuals are requires time and research, before fostering relationships with them for future involvement.

### **Enable your alumni to tell their stories**

Using real people who have stories to tell about their involvement in international development provides consistent credibility. Having trialled a variety of advertising routes, Christian Aid found that advertorials, utilising the stories from young people themselves rather than abstract concepts, yielded greater return.

Storytelling has become key for a number of organisations and brands such as Restless Development and Nike Foundation, therefore finding ways to facilitate this is an area of focus. For Restless Development, encouraging participants to create blog pieces following involvement in domestic or overseas programmes often results in immediate successes. These are naturally shared across the young person's networks, as they engage their peers within their own environments.

In most instances, simply providing the tools (via training or similar) is all that's required; "the appetite is there, people just need help facilitating" (Arti Sharma, British Council).

Alumni programmes provide a number of benefits for organisations, in particular, developing a network of natural ambassadors. These are the individuals who will naturally speak convincingly about programmes and the organisations responsible for them, and become inspiring role models among their peer groups.

With an occasional mistrust of traditional positions of authority, or broader political apathy, content which demonstrates success at instigating positive change, achieved by their peers is an incredibly powerful offer. Supporting the individuals who have created these pieces of content, to take their message further, offers mutual benefit.



## 6. Encourage share-ability

*“Combining silly with serious.”*

Arti Sharma, British Council

Communities are determined by how fast messages are shared between its members, and young people are best placed to share these in a multitude of directions. Setting the right foundations for a positive online experience, will put you in the best position.

### Allow the audience to hear the opinions of their peers

Negative portrayals of young people have resulted in a belief that traditional media isn't listening to them, therefore why should they listen to it. They are arguably less tied into the established narrative surrounding global aid and instead have an appetite for something different. Traditional news is often viewed as one-dimensional by those keen to hear from multiple and informal sources. Finding an authentic way to achieve this through existing content creators enables the narrative to be introduced via a variety of viewpoints.

### Strike a balance between solemn and fun

For Restless Development, employing a BuzzFeed approach to their traditional newsletter by introducing a list format, attention grabbing titles and increased humour, has resulted in a greater open rate.

Comic Relief have also successfully struck this balance, achieving fundraising success by injecting a sense of humour into the otherwise business focus of raising significant funds to deliver international aid work. Their centralised messaging and event-based content encourages participation, with a low barrier to entry that avoids intellectual intimidation.

### Encourage greater storytelling

Telling personal stories offers a greater chance to trigger an emotive connection, encouraging the audience to compare themselves to the individual, exploring how their actions may be similar or different if faced with their circumstances. An example of this can be seen with MTV Staying Alive's introduction to Ruben, a 19 year old who founded youth-led HIV prevention organisation 'Jovenes Promotores por la VIHda' (Young Promoters of Life) in Guadalajara.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, MTV Shuga balances its core sexual health messaging alongside engaging and attention-grabbing storylines through credible characterisation to introduce crucial issues to a mass audience.

### Consider how messages can be communicated via imagery

Bold, motivating images are a great way to capture attention. With over 1.5 billion photos shared each day<sup>23</sup> and the popularity of platforms such as Instagram and Snapchat, a powerful image can often achieve more in a glance than extensive narrative or lengthy video content. Importantly, using positive imagery will frame conversations around empowerment and hope.

### Explore short form video formats for ease of sharing

Growth in new forms of media (such as GIFs and emojis) offers a range of visual tools to attract new audiences. Experimentation with short-form video is a worthwhile exercise, as evidenced in the changes to Facebook newsfeed algorithms and the rise of Snapchat Discover. There is an increasing acceptance of this as the most relevant media for young audiences.

22. [www.youtube.com/watch?t=52&v=OqCxxgFxq4M](http://www.youtube.com/watch?t=52&v=OqCxxgFxq4M)

23. <http://tech.firstpost.com/news-analysis/now-upload-share-1-8-billion-photos-everyday-meeke-report-224688.html>

## 7. Ensure consistency and clarity

*“Avoid inaccessible language but work with young people to decide how best to talk about issues with their peers.”*

Rachel Walker, Restless Development

A lack of knowledge will result in apathy – find ways to empower the audience by sharing information in digestible and beneficial ways. Develop a collective language – peer groups will naturally speak to their peers with the same terms and language.

### **Make sure terminology is accessible**

With terminology being used in different contexts, varying interpretations of certain terms may be alienating. Consistent and united messaging among those working around the same issues will aid understanding. Find ways to avoid terms which may be loaded or confusing, and be open to terms being used interchangeably, so as to ensure inclusivity.

### **Facilitate detailed conversations about complex topics**

MTV Staying Alive has tackled head on the sensitive or controversial nature of the issues they cover, and by respecting the audience’s commitment to understand, has witnessed greater involvement. Rather than simplifying the messages, being confident to enter into detailed conversations results in greater return among an audience sensitive to being patronised.

Varying levels of understanding will affect young people’s responsiveness to the messages. Similarly, attitudes to politics may pre-determine how the audience reacts to messages about international development. Initiating debate (through blogs etc) provides an opportunity to involve new people and explore themes in greater depth.

### **Collaborate with other organisations**

A number of organisations, such as Restless Development, consistently work alongside peer organisations, allowing them to form bigger conversations. Similarly, collaborating with stakeholders helps to join up smaller conversations to achieve greater cut-through in a busy media landscape. For Christian Aid, the actions taken depend on the country they’re focusing on, and often involve partnering with others within the sector. For example, working with Mali Folke-Centre (MFC) to get alternative energy sources (such as solar panels) to villages in Mali, thereby helping communities adapt to a changing climate.

With a nervousness about things feeling short-lived, MTV Staying Alive avoids activities which are deemed one-off. Consider joining up a series of activities or signposting activities delivered by other organisations to deliver a longer term calendar of activity. Alternatively, repeatable events allow recognition and familiarity to be built up over time.

For the British Council, the successes of their EVS projects are often achieved due to close collaboration and co-operation between multiple partners, including the organisation providing the volunteer, the organisation receiving the volunteer and the volunteer themselves.

For this audience, there’s a consistent demand to provide transparency. Campaigns such as LifeSkills have witnessed success when outlining the full journey a young person can expect to go on, enabling the young person to visualise their end goal.



# Summary of recommendations

## Collaborate with a youth audience

- Engage the audience at the start
- Tailor the range of experiences available
- Give young people a voice throughout their engagement
- Harness the power and motivation of the collective 'we'
- Empower your alumni with positions of authority

## Exist in their everyday digital landscape

- Identify existing audiences that you can leverage
- Be open to light touch engagement
- Experiment and trial new platforms
- Maintain social media engagement on an ongoing basis
- Speak their language

## Align altruism and self-interest

- Offer mutual benefit
- Allow people to develop skills
- Position narrative around themes of fairness and injustice
- Trigger feelings of empathy, rather than sympathy

## Be agile and accommodating

- Allow for a community in a constant state of flux
- Exist in the background until you're required
- Capitalise on the wider cultural landscape
- Find alternative methods of capturing data

## Work with a range of influencers, both peer-led and well established

- Work with teachers to establish complementarity
- Be authentic in your message and who you work with
- Seek audiences within the YouTube communities
- Ensure ambassadors are accessible
- Enable your alumni to tell their stories

## Encourage share-ability

- Allow the audience to hear the opinions of their peers
- Strike a balance between solemn and fun
- Encourage greater storytelling
- Consider how messages can be communicated via imagery
- Explore short form video formats for ease of sharing

## Ensure consistency and clarity

- Make sure terminology is accessible
- Facilitate detailed conversations about complex topics
- Collaborate with other organisations



## Conclusion

Working with young people brings immediate energy, excitement and reward. Offering this opportunity to your wider teams will ground this positivity throughout your organisation. Trial different approaches to attract and retain this audience, and you will quickly see what works for your organisation, how you can meet the needs of young people, and the best way to build an authentic, ongoing relationship with them. Developing this understanding will provide an excellent starting point from which to gain confidence and refine further collaborative ways of working.

At a time of change for the international development sector, gaining the attention and endorsement of a younger audience will prove fruitful for decades to come and provide a pipeline of lifelong advocates and donors. Galvanising this audience will likely result in a wealth of positive action, crucial at a time of scepticism around reliance on financial donations in particular. The value of participation from this audience will act as a catalyst to facilitate further opportunities to affect change, and will place your organisation in the best position for the future.



Bond

## Appendix

### Structured interview discussion guide

#### Areas of challenge

- Are you aware of any key challenges to working with young people? In your opinion, how do you tackle these challenges?
- How do you engage young people who do not have a current interest and therefore would not be seeking out initiatives/services/opportunities such as yours?
- What is your experience of the generation gap with regards to engagement tactics (such as celebrity endorsement)?
- How do you find an individual's confidence affects their willingness to take part/get involved?

#### Areas of success

- Are you involved with, or aware of, any particular methods to inspire and attract young people initially?
- What is your opinion of these methods? Are they successful? What are the best aspects of them?
- Similarly, are you involved with, or aware of, strategies to maintain engagement with young people? Are there particular structures to a user's journey?
- Thinking about the methods to engage that currently exist and what you know about them, where do you think there is room for improvement?
- In your opinion, how do you achieve an impact at scale with a limited budget?
- Does your organisation have particular ambitions for youth involvement more broadly?
- What do you think is the role peer groups play in engaging others?

- Do you think it's important to involve and work with influencers and gatekeepers for this audience? How do organisations manage this most effectively?
- What role do you think school/college/parents play in helping to engage people?
- Are there examples of working successfully with celebrity endorsers, or have alternative forms of promotion been particularly successful?

### Industry best practise

- How do you position large-scale activity alongside grassroots activity?
- What has been your experience of engagement in London alongside regional engagement, and urban alongside rural?
- In your experience, how does your organisation work alongside other agencies and organisations?
- What are your considerations regarding barriers of terminology and language when talking about social issues, and other phrases key to the work that you do?
- Are there particular methods you utilise with regards to exchange and incentivisation? And more broadly, how do you position the benefits for involvement? In your opinion, what do you think is the relationship between altruism and reward?

### Interest in social action

- Do you think young people are interested in social action? In your experience, what are the key areas of interest for young people in the social action sphere?
- Do you think young people are interested in global issues and areas of global citizenship? What do you think young people think of the developing world?
- How do you position local and global action together?
- Do young activists play a key role in motivating other young people?

### Wider industry

- In your opinion, what are the best examples of engaging young people around an issue (both within your organisation and beyond)?
- What examples have you come across of achieving impact with a small budget?
- Do you think there is a negative image of young people and if so, do you think this affects how they engage with broader issues?

### Other ideas

- What are the benefits of working with this audience? What role do they play?
- Is there a difference in engagement between males and females, and how does this affect your methods?
- Are you aware of any interesting and inspiring methods used outside of the youth engagement sector?
- In your experience working with youth initiatives, is there anything that you think is lacking, that you would love to see included, but have not seen to date?



Society Building  
8 All Saints Street  
London  
N1 9RL, UK

+44 (0)20 7837 8344  
[bond.org.uk](http://bond.org.uk)

Registered Charity No. 1068839  
Company registration No. 3395681 (England and Wales)

