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BCOP Budget Community of Practice

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

Participatory Budgeting for Youth

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Introduction

Participatory budgeting (PB) is "a mechanism or a process through which people make decisions on the destination of all or part of the available public resources,"[1] and offers several specific benefits, if executed well. It is a process that could help improve governance within a set of reforms, increase community cohesion, and generate trust in government.

PB has a history of more than three decades, and it has long become clear that one of its problems and challenges is that some citizens groups participate less than others, youth[2] among them. Youth can be a positive force for development and a great potential source of social and economic energy for their countries. Meanwhile youth priorities and needs may not align with the majority of their communities. However, because of their nature, young people may not want to participate in adult-focused practices. Moreover, as reported by the World Bank, "in every country, some groups confront barriers that prevent them from fully participating in political, economic, and social life… Disadvantage is often based on social identity, which may be derived from gender, age, location, occupation, race, ethnicity, religion, citizenship status, disability, and sexual orientation and gender identity, among other factors. Social inclusion is the right thing to do, and it also makes good economic sense. Social inclusion is the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society—improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity."[3]

PB offers an inclusive opportunity to enhance youth's interest in public engagement. To engage young people in PB, special approaches are needed. Youth differ from older people in many regards, and meet in life youth-specific barriers and uncertainties, while remaining strongly influenced by their social environment. With an aim to empower young people and "with the hope of contributing to increase the civic awareness and foster active citizenship behaviors in young generations"[4] many countries around the world introduced youth-based PB.

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[1] UN-HABITAT (2004). 72 Frequently Asked Questions about Participatory Budgeting. Urban Governance Toolkit Series. P.20, https://unhabitat.org/72-frequently-asked-questions-about-participatory-budgeting

[2] The UN's World Program of Action for Youth defines "youth" as people ages 15–24, while the World Health Organization and UNICEF use the terms "adolescent" for those 10–19, "youth" for those 15–24, and "young people" for those 10–24. The World Bank's World Development Report 2007 uses the terms "youth" and "young people" interchangeably, and focuses on the age range 12–24, see https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/5989. Countries laws differ in determining the age of young people, for example, in Ukraine, young people are citizens of Ukraine aged from 14 to 35 years, see https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2998-12

[3] https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/social-inclusion

[4] Dias, N., ed. (2018). Hope for Democracy 30 Years of Participatory Budgeting Worldwide. Epopeia Records, Oficina, https://www.oficina.org.pt/hopefordemocracy.html, p.39

SECTION 1

MAIN MODELS OF YOUTH PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

Youth inclusion in PB can take a variety of different forms and is exercised through three main models: (1) Independent youth PB process; (2) Youth participation as part of the adult PB process; and (3) School PB.

■ Independent Youth Participatory Budgeting Process

This is a separate PB process or PB subprocess, tied to a public budget, in which all of the decision-making participants are young people. Youth PB, like PB in general, was first exercised in Brazil. The first municipality to implement a separate process for children and youth was the city of Barra Mansa in 1997.

■ Example of the Independent Youth PB Process Model in Boston, USA

Goals

The first-ever youth PB process in the USA and a good practice example, named "Youth Lead the Change: Participatory Budgeting Boston", was launched in the city of Boston in 2014. Its goals included civic education and engagement, and the inclusion of youth voices that are typically marginalized from politics in the city's capital planning process.

Process

Through this process, young residents ages 12-25 put forward ideas for improving their communities, turned them into concrete proposals, and voted on the best ways to make Boston a better place.[5] They also played a central role in the Youth Lead the Change Steering Committee, which oversaw the process and determined its rules and structure. This pilot process ran from January to June 2014 and was a collaborative effort between the Participatory Budgeting Project, the city of Boston, the Mayor's Youth Council, and Boston Centers for Youth and Families.[6]

Since then young people propose projects every year, which must include improvements to physical city of Boston property, like parks, community centers, schools, and libraries, benefit the general public, and last at least five years. From 2019-2020 proposed projects included: creating more accessible parks for all Boston's youth; equipping Bostonian playgrounds with accessible and sensory equipment to make parks inclusive, usable, and fun for all youth, regardless of physical ability; planting more trees and plants to protect the environment; investing in the Woods Mullen Shelter (space for those experiencing homelessness) to provide new or updated furniture, facilities, and equipment; growing locally sourced fresh food in neighborhoods; and updating or replacing school heating systems for a more productive learning environment.

Budget and Scope

Youth PB 2014 had an amount of US$1 million of the city's budget.

■ Example of the Independent Youth PB Process Model in Rosario, Argentina

Goals

With an aim to develop responsible citizenship, the City Administration of Rosario implemented Youth PB. Every year since 2004 the young residents (age 13-18) of Rosario imagine, create, and plan new projects that are incorporated into the municipal budget for the next year.[7] They are encouraged to meet, discuss and debate at school, in the neighborhood, in clubs, with their peers on topics of interest to them, through which they can propose and choose projects, improving their quality of life in the city from their point of view.

Process

Rosario Youth PB includes the following stages: i) During the neighborhood assemblies in each city district youth learn about PB through party planning game, identify neighborhood priorities, and elect delegates

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[5] https://www.boston.gov/news/nations-first-ever-launch-youth-participatory-budgeting

[6] IOPD (2020). Keys for Child and Youth Participation: Youth Participatory Budgeting. International Observatory on Participatory Democracy, https://www.oidp.net/docs/Keys_for_child_and_youth_participation.pdf, p.7

[7] https://www.rosario.gob.ar/web/ciudad/jovenes/presupuesto-participativo-joven

to each district's Youth Participatory Council. ii) Full-day orientation meeting for budget delegates, to meet each other and learn about the PB process. iii) The Youth Participatory Councils meet regularly for several months to develop project proposals based on the neighborhood priorities. iv) The Councils present the proposals in a round of district assemblies where local youth vote on which proposals to implement.

Budget and Scope

Youth PB - 2019 allowed young residents to decide on how to spend US$1,820,000 from the municipal budget.[8] The youth of the city could choose six projects for their neighborhoods to be implemented during 2019. There were 112 proposals, among which were sports practices and swimming; recreational activities; placement of public solar panels to charge cell phones and heat water; guided tours; dance workshops; training courses; sex education workshops; recitals; awareness campaigns; sign language workshops; music and singing classes; healthy eating days; digital animation; fashion design and screen printing, among others. 23,000 young people voted in this year.

■ Example of the Independent Youth PB Process Model in Portugal (national)[9]

Goals

The most well-known example is the Youth PB Portugal (YPBP) at national level. It was set out by the State Budget Law and first implemented in 2017, aiming to: improve the quality of democracy and its tools, valuing participatory democracy within the Portuguese constitutional framework; foster active and informed participation of young people in decision-making processes, favoring the existence of a strong and active civil society towards cohesive economic and social development and the subsequent life quality improvement; promote young people's participation in the definition of the public policies that met their needs and are responsive to their opinions; reinforce education for citizenship and the sense of belonging to the community, and fostering responsible

citizenship through making public administration closer to young people.

Process

YPBP was applied in the nation as a whole. The criteria for the projects were set, among them: the thematic areas (inclusive sports; science and education; social innovation, environmental sustainability); a maximum budget of US$90,000; to be proposed and voted by young people between 14 and 30 years (both citizens and foreigners living legally in Portugal). Young people could submit their proposals at the special meetings and online on the website opjovem.gov.pt. 424 proposals were submitted. After a technical analysis, performed by government experts, proposals were selected to evolve into projects and be voted on by young residents. The final list included 167 projects. Young citizens could vote in the YPBP website and through a free-of-charge SMS system. About 10,000 young people voted to select seven winning projects.

Budget and Scope

For submitting proposals 20 meetings were organized in each district capital and in the autonomous regions of Madeira and Azores. Young people from 142 municipalities (46% of all municipalities) participated in the meetings. The overall budget in 2017 was US$360,000; in 2018 US$600,000.

■ Youth Participation as Part of the Adult Participatory Budgeting Process

Some countries go further and involve young people in the general PB, using a "youth-friendly" approach to ensure their participation. This model has been designed such that the general PB process simply includes youth as part of the larger community, either by setting minimum ages that allow older children

[8] https://www.rosario.gob.ar/web/gobierno/presupuestos/presupuesto-participativo

[9] Dias, N., ed. (2018). Hope for Democracy 30 Years of Participatory Budgeting Worldwide. Epopeia Records, Oficina. Retrieved from: https://www.oficina.org.pt/hopefordemocracy.html, p.479

and young people to participate, or by not setting any minimum age for participation. Youth involvement in adult PB first occurred in the 2000s in Latin America (Torres, in Venezuela; Barra Mansa, Icapuí, Recife, São Paulo, Goiania, Mundo Novo, and Alvorada in Brazil; and Cotacachi, in Ecuador).[10]

■ **Example of Youth Participation as Part of Adult PB Process Model in Helsinki, Finland[11]**

Goals

Helsinki city invites citizens and its partners to develop the city, its services and areas in a number of ways, PB among them. According to Section 8 of the Youth Act, "Young people must be given opportunities to take part in the handling of matters concerning local and regional youth work and youth policy. Further, young people shall be heard in matters concerning them." In addition to the Youth Act, e.g., the Local Government Act, obligates municipalities to ensure that the municipality's residents, including young people, have the chance to influence the activities of the municipality.

Process

Helsinki's participatory budgeting is called OmaStadi. Brainstorming and voting takes place in the online service OmaStadi.hel.fi. Ideas can be presented by anyone, regardless of age or place of residence. In the co-development phase, citizens and city experts develop suggestions for ideas at specially organized events, and then the proposals are voted on. In addition to this, the Youth website Ruuti[12] allows young people from Helsinki to send their own ideas, participate in discussions, comment, and support the ideas of others, get help with their own work, and join a new group.[13] The City of Helsinki implements the proposals that received the most votes.

Budget and Scope

Helsinki city makes US$5.3 million available annually to implement urban ideas. The first PB in Helsinki took place in 2018-2019 and produced 1273 ideas, of which 369 proposals were refined. Of these, 44 were selected for implementation.

■ **Example of Youth Participation as Part of Adult PB Process Model in Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA[14]**

Goals

With an aim to ensure that all community members (but especially marginalized communities, reticent voters, people with limited opportunities to engage in the political process, and young people) have a voice in the development and improvement of their city, this PB process allows children as young as 12 years to vote on budget proposals and does not have an age limit for participation in the other phases.

Process

Within these "youth-inclusive" processes a substantial subset create specific spaces where youth voice is meant to be amplified, such as youth committees within the proposal development phase or explicit idea generation activities with youth-serving organizations. The PB cycle runs from September to December and includes the following key phases: community members brainstorm and submit ideas about how to spend US$500,000 (in 2020) of the city's budget on capital projects; volunteer budget delegates research and prioritize ideas, ultimately developing final proposals for the PB ballot; city staff vet proposals for feasibility and cost; residents vote on which projects will be funded; results are announced and winning projects are included in the city's next year capital budget; winning projects are implemented.

[10] Cabbanes, Y. (2006) Children and Young People Build Participatory Democracy in Latin American cities. Environment and Urbanization, Vol. 18, 195-218, https://internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/Participatory-budgeting-a-significant-contribution-to-participatory-democracy-NL30.pdf; UN-HABITAT (2004).72 Frequently Asked Questions about Participatory Budgeting. Urban Governance Toolkit Series. Retrieved from: https://unhabitat.org/72-frequently-asked-questions-about-participatory-budgeting

[11] https://www.hel.fi/helsinki/fi/kaupunki-ja-hallinto/osallistu-ja-vaikuta/vaikuttamiskanavat/osallisuus-ja-vuorovaikutusmalli/osallistuva-budjetointi/

[12] https://ruutibudjetti.munstadi.fi; https://ruuti.munstadi.fi/en/frequently-asked-questions-faq/

[13] RuutiBudjet's website is currently being transferred to the Omastadi website together with the participatory budgeting of the entire city of Helsinki, http://ruutibudjetti.munstadi.fi/

[14] https://pb.cambridgema.gov

7,250 residents voted in the PB Cycle 7, which took place on January 4-9, 2021. Residents age 12 and up (and all 6th graders) voted on-line in English and 7 other languages, and over the phone. The following 7 projects won funding and will be included in the FY22 capital budget: Urban Micro-Forests for Cambridge (US$85,000); Rain Gardens for Resiliency (US$120,000); Bridging the Digital Divide (US$95,000); Bike Signals at Busy Intersections (US$40,000); Keep Cambridge Cleaner (US$45,000); Swinging into Inclusivity (US$40,000); Pedestrian-Controlled Crosswalk Lights (US$100,000).

■ Example of Youth Participation as Part of Adult PB Process Model in Seoul, South Korea

Goals

The Seoul Metropolitan Government began implementing PB in 2012. The first model was relatively straightforward, built on the Porto Alegre model. Evaluations of the first three years of Seoul's PB program identified some shortcomings, one of which was: "residents who volunteer for PB tend to have ample leisure time and be knowledgeable about city government, so youth, low-income residents, and other key groups are underrepresented."[15] Seoul revised the PB program to encourage diverse participation and ensure a variety of viewpoints.

Process

Prior to the PB process, Seoul offers residents the opportunity to study at the PB school; about 2,000 residents complete the course annually. Seats for a certain number of young people are reserved. The government also introduced mobile PB schools to reach organizations working with youth, women, and people with disabilities. In addition, citizens are not asked to provide a complete proposal. Citizens can propose very simple ideas, and the government improves them.

The Seoul PB budget is around US$60 million.[16] In comparison, Seoul's overall budget is around US$35 billion.[17] Types of projects include: improvement of citizen's convenience in two or more autonomous districts and resolution of metropolitan city problems; Integrating budget projects and giving incentives to participate in community innovation plan projects to solve local community problems, and projects such as village planning teams to solve problems at the village level. In 2020 2,923 were implemented, among them: 189 targeting women's education; 165 creating jobs; 402 in welfare; 419 – traffic; 311 – culture, sports, and tourism, 360 – environment; 399 – city safety; 62 – house-regeneration; 512 – parks.

■ School Participatory Budgeting

School PB is an adaptation of PB in a school environment to engage students, families, teachers, and staff in deciding how to spend a part of the school budget. Students collect ideas about the school's needs and how to improve the school, develop project proposals, and decide on projects to fund. School PB can be of two types: (i) PB for young people, initiated and organized partly or wholly by the government, which supplies the budget, and sets the rules. Sometimes, youth PB with a determined part of a public budget is organized directly in an environment which is the most convenient for young people - their schools, colleges, universities. (ii) PB, implemented autonomously in schools with school budget or additional budget from the government. In this case the school management designs the regulations and defines the rules.

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[15] https://www.bigboldcities.org/en/innovation/participatory-budgeting-'collaborative-budgeting'

[16] https://yesan.seoul.go.kr/intro/intro0102.do

[17] Plan for 2021, https://news.seoul.go.kr/gov/archives/511153

■ **Example of School Participatory Budgeting Model in Poitou-Charentes Region, France**[18]

Goals

One the first PB processes at schools in Europe was implemented from 2005 to 2012 in western France, Poitou-Charentes Region. The regional government implemented the PB procedure allowing students to determine priorities for a portion of the school budget, sometimes by themselves, and sometimes as part of a larger process that also included parents, teachers, and employees. This was done to offer equal opportunities for the whole population to participate.

Process

PB started from an initial meeting of all interested students, parents, teachers, and school employees at the beginning of the school year. During this general assembly an elected representative or a regional civil servant explained the rules. Working groups of 10 to 20 participants discussed the potential ideas and projects that could help to improve daily life at school and presented them. In the following weeks, the technical services examined the proposals, verifying if they were technically possible. If so, they estimated the costs for each project, which were not to exceed US$180,000. The process allowed funding the purchase of equipment, the fitting out of different kinds of premises, and projects to improve cultural and social life or wellness at school. Between January and April, the entire school community was invited again to take part in a second assembly meeting. Shortlisted projects and their cost were subject to debate and a vote.

Budget and Scope

The regional government of Poitou-Charentes allocated 10% of the regional investment budget for its 93 high schools, which included some private schools. US$12 million was budgeted annually for the whole school PB process in Poitou-Charentes. In 5 years, PB led to funding of almost 1400 projects (including facilities improvements, Wi-Fi, curricular materials, and sports programs), directly proposed and decided by the participants themselves.[19] Over 50,000 residents – 30,000 of whom were students – participated in this initiative between 2005 and 2009.

■ **Example of School Participatory Budgeting Model in New York, USA**

Goals

School PB was launched as part of the Civics for All initiative of the New York City Department of Education[20] in 2008 to strengthen opportunities for students to develop skills and knowledge related to democracy. It started in all 400+ public high schools across the city with the goal for all students to become engaged citizens who can think critically and are empowered to chart the course that the city and country take.

Process

Each school received $2,000 to fund a project proposed, researched, and promoted by students that will improve the students' quality of life at school. The NYC Department of Education provided a detailed guidebook to the schools' administration containing recommendations and options about how to organize the process. Three models were offered for implementation:[21] (a) "A Single Class or a Limited Number of Participants in a Small School": a steering committee creates the student body ballot for the selection of the project to be funded. All teams present project proposals to the school leadership team for feedback before a final whole school-wide presentation to be voted on by every member of the school community; (b) "Multiple Sections of Economics and Participation in Government Classes in a Large School" includes two phases: class level competition and school-wide competition with final determination; (c) "PB as an Extra-Curricular Activity": the student government organization can facilitate the planning and research process for possible proposals to be voted upon by the entire school.

[18] Participatory Democracy in Region Poitou-Charentes, https://www.oecd.org/gov/digital-government/41095800.pdf

[19] High School Participatory Budget (Poitou-Charantes, France). Participedia, https://participedia.net/case/24

[20] https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/subjects/civics-for-all

[21] NYC ED (2019). Participatory Budgeting In Your School, NYC Department of Education Civics for All. A Passport to Social Studies Economics and Participation in Government Companion, https://infohub.nyced.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/participatory-budgeting-in-your-school.pdf

Budget and Scope

$2,000 for a project to each of 400+ public schools in the city.

■ **Example of School Participatory Budgeting Model in Sakhalin, Russia**[22]

Goals

Every year since 2017 the budget provides funds for 125 schools in the Sakhalin Region to equip schools and develop public infrastructure according to school students' projects. To date, PB in the island's schools has already become an established tradition. It serves as an example of practice-oriented education for young people to improve budget literacy, promotes the development of their "flexible" skills and the acquisition of meaningful civic experience.

Process

The general procedure is like the adult PB (see PORT PB program, Sakhalin[23]). The Youth Council organizes and coordinates the work. At the preparatory stage, the council develops a PB implementation plan and informs everyone. Any student of the senior 3 classes can put forward a project idea; the best one is selected at the school meeting and later finalized by a project team. At the general meeting of delegates, projects from classes are presented, representatives of municipalities can be invited to evaluate them, and then there is a technical analysis of the projects, which ends with a school-wide voting among students of grades 9-11. After that, the relevant departments of the municipalities carry out an estimated calculation and prepare technical documentation for implementation. The SPB process include the following participants: (1) school students of grades 9-11 (the 3 higher grades); (2) the Youth Council - representatives of the classes in the school Parliament; (3)

the Curator of the project - supervising project teacher of the school; (4) the Project Coordinator – an administration specialist responsible for the overall coordination of the project in the municipality; (5) Experts - specialists of the administration responsible for the examination of projects and preparation of technical documentation.

Budget and Scope

The budget of around US$ 5.7 million, up to US$ 45,000 per school,[24] is provided mainly by the regional governments. 374 projects were implemented in 2018-2021 by schools in coordination with municipalities.

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[22] https://pib.sakhminfin.ru/show/mb

[23] https://pib.sakhminfin.ru

[24] https://www.cascais.pt/sites/default/files/anexos/gerais/new/elena_matveeva.pdf

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS IN YOUTH PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

Success can be measured qualitatively and quantitatively but key success criteria should be set at the beginning and associated with goals in order to know if success has been achieved. Apart from success criteria inherent in the adult PB,[25] there are additional benchmarks for organizing it specifically for young people. In a decontextualized youth PB model the criteria might include: demographic characteristics of participating young people; number of young people developing and submitting proposals (in meetings, and in voting); rate of increase of participation in selection rounds; the number of proposals that advance to voting (after technical expertise); and an assessment of the interest level of young people (are these the same young people who participated in the previous round(s); do they come more than once, etc.?).

As suggested by the "Welsh Government's PB with Young People Toolkit,"[26] a precondition for success is leading a PB project with young people. What is important is to make sure that young people are involved at the earliest stage in actionably designing the program and to learn about what barriers their groups and classmates are facing in participation. PB may benefit the young people in two ways: from better outcomes in services that affect them and/or others; and from the experience of taking part. Thus, it must address the issues that really matter for the young people and involve them in ways that are meaningful and realistic. And after the completion of the youth PB program, in addition to a prevalent form of activity evaluation through gathering online assessment forms and feedback, a necessary part in success measurement is the involvement of young people to reflect on the PB process.

A youth-friendly legal framework is important to enable youth PB. Legislation enabling youth political participation is a good pre-condition of success. However, youth PB implementation does not require establishment of additional national legislation governing the PB practice; it can be initiated and carried out through existing legal mechanisms. Although there are examples of national legal framework to encourage the development of general PB processes at the subnational level, there is only one widely known example of national regulation of the youth PB for the Portugal National PB for Schools. The example is a government initiative that makes the implementation of PB compulsory in all public schools providing lower and upper secondary education. This policy has generated around 1,500 small PBs spread throughout the country.[27] The process, coordination, funding, monitoring, etc.,[28] was regulated at the national level by the national Ministry of Education in its Regulation No. 436-A / 2017.[29]

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[25] See PEMPAL BCOP Knowledge Product on Participatory Budgeting, 2020

[26] PB Network (2012). Welsh Government Toolkit on Using PB with Young People, https://pbnetwork.org.uk/welsh-government-childrens-pb-toolkit/

[27] Dias, N., Sahsil E., Simone J. (eds), (2019). Participatory Budgeting World ATLAS 2019. Cascais: Oficina. https://www.cascais.pt/anexo/participatory-budgeting-world-atlas-2019, p.31

[28] See detailed procedure in Abrantes, P., Lopes, A., Baptista, J.M. The Schools Participatory Budgeting (SPB) in Portugal. In Dias, N., ed. (2018). Hope for Democracy 30 Years of Participatory Budgeting Worldwide. Epopeia Records, Oficina, https://www.oficina.org.pt/hopefordemocracy.html, pp. 469-476

[29] https://opescolas.pt/regulamento/

BASIC PRINCIPLES, VALUES, AND PARAMETERS

Regarding the youth PB organization, there could be basic principles, values, and parameters of the PB process, set up to consider it a good practice. Principles integral to PB are **transparency**, **equal opportunity**, and **empowerment**. "General Principles for Meaningful Youth Engagement at the United Nations"[30] include:

1. **Self-Organized.** This implies autonomy and being free from outside control or pressure. Each group of young people can decide the best structure and working style for them based on their interests and capacities.

2. **Legally Mandated Rights-Based.** The youth in the conversation have an equal say in any decision. This is critical to prevent an ad hoc approach and/ or be entirely dependent on the prerogative of the engaging party.

3. **Designated.** Young people should not be made to compete with other stakeholders, parties or groups for space in the modalities and process of engagement. Specific designated/reserved seats must be made available in mechanisms through which they engage.

4. **Well Resourced.** Young people should not have to spend out of pocket for the realization of this right. Arranging the budget for the engagement of young people should be the obligation of the engaging entity/entities.

5. **Accountable.** The respective engagement structures should have built in accountability, reporting, and feedback mechanisms towards a constituency of young people.

◼ Good Practice Parameters of Youth PB Set by Young People[31]

Some parameters of good PB practices for young people have been put forward in the Guidelines of the International Observatory on Participatory Democracy on the basis of how three different youth groups from England, France and Portugal agreed:

- PB at school should target both school and overall community.

- Projects leaders should be able to evaluate and negotiate the costs of their own project.

- Project leaders should get the possibility to get help for elaborating and marketing their PB project.

- PB projects should be publicized with videos and public presentations.

- PB should encourage deliberation with contradictory debate for each project.

- Ballot boxes should never be transparent, excluding bias about early voting trends.

- Ranking voting methods are good voting methods for PB because they ask participants to take into account different projects when people vote.

- Online voting should include deliberation about the different projects.

- Teenagers should debate about the rules when PB targets young people.

[30] UN MGCY (2017). United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth Principles and Barriers for Meaningful Youth Participation, https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20522UNMGCYPrinciplesandBarriersforMeaningfulYouthEngagement.pdf

[31] IOPD (2020). Keys for Child and Youth Participation: Youth Participatory Budgeting. International Observatory on Participatory Democracy https://www.oidp.net/docs/Keys_for_child_and_youth_participation.pdf

SECTION 4

RISKS IN YOUTH PARTIPATORY BUDGETING

As with any action undertaken at the expense of public budget, youth PB requires careful risk management and mitigation. Possible sources of risk may include:

1. **Limited resources.** Like any other activity, youth PB does require resources – time, expertise, and funding. The youth PB initiatives are usually less costly than the adult PBs; however, planning is essential to its success. Planning helps to critically assess the goals to see if they are realistic.

2. **Failed projects.** To avoid changes or project closure it is necessary that the technical input including compliance expertise is made before voting.

3. **Insufficient experience and skills.** Youth are a highly heterogeneous group with different backgrounds, skills, and capacities, which is one of the most important barriers to youth inclusion. Skills training, technical assistance, and provision of special youth-friendly channels of participation are needed to mitigate this risk.

4. **Too little youth input in the finished product.** Including young people in the steering committees at the preparation stage, involving them in monitoring, and ensuring that their ideas are put into practice are needed to make them feel included by decision-makers.[32]

5. **Insufficient feedback on how youth input is being used.**[33] Clear, transparent and timely feedback and follow-up information helps young people understand the impact of their contributions, and ensures their sustained participation.

6. **Lack of trust. Trust is crucial to the engagement of youth.** Trust is fragile; it must be established and not be lost. Transparency is the first step to dispelling young people doubts. Next, respect is needed for the young people's ideas. Keeping commitments and accountability are important to extend trust.

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[32] Taft, J.K., Gordon, H.R. Youth Activists, Youth Councils, and Constrained Democracy, Education, Citizenship and Social Justice 8, no. 1, (March 1, 2013): 87–100. https://doi.org/10.1177/1746197913475765

[33] OECD (2019). Engaging Young People in Open Government. A communication guide, https://www.oecd.org/mena/governance/Young-people-in-OG.pdf

IMPLEMENTATION

The procedure for implementing the PB practice is a context-sensitive scaled set of mechanisms, procedures, and parameters. The generalized and simplified PB process scheme comprises six steps built around the budgetary cycle: Step 1: Preparation and Design; Step 2: Engaging the Community and Building Capacity; Step 3: Proposing Projects and Review; Step 4: The PB Formulation; Step 5: Implementation and Monitoring; and Step 6: Evaluation and Analysis. The scheme is applicable to the national and subnational level.[34] Youth PB models "Independent Youth PB Process" and "Youth Participation as Part of Adult PB Process" may follow this structure, using the basic principles, values, and parameters of the PB process, set up to consider it a good practice.

A more detailed profile of the school PB process within the same structure contains the following components, based on synthesized good practice:[35]

Step 1: Preparation and Design

1. A decision about an introduction of school PB is made.[36] The budget amount allocated and eligibility criteria for this funding are determined and announced.

2. Training of all key organizing participants from schools and municipalities.

3. Establishing a steering committee in schools to coordinate all the PB related activities, consisting of student representatives, teachers, and, perhaps, parents, regional or municipal representative. It is important that students are part of organization and leading the PB process in their schools with the support of teachers, administrators and experts.

4. Organizing workshops in all classes and with school staff to identify problems, and the needs of the entire school community, find personal interest of school community members and motivate young people to search together possible improvements and problem solutions in school.

5. Developing the PB rules. The steering committee defines success criteria, designs regulations and other needed documents. It is possible that draft documents (guidelines) are provided to discuss, amend and focus on the important for young people details. This creates the feeling of ownership of the process and better motivates them to participate.

Step 2: Engaging the Community and Building Capacity

6. Information campaign, in the school(s), community, and the region. It should be disclosed what amount and kind of budget is going to be spent on PB projects. The steering committee communicates the PB benefits and the rules to the rest of the school community.

7. Training sessions to the youth participants. Training can include topics such as: introduction to public budgeting; economic decision making; funding for public schools; introduction to PB; project thinking; project proposal development; cost-benefit analysis; teamwork; presentation skills; etc., and be organized in the interactive form. The trainings can also be integrated into the school curriculum if there are subjects in the schedule that allow this to be done.[37]

Step 3: Proposing Projects and Review

8. Students propose preliminary project ideas to improve the school community and discuss them in the meetings in the classroom.

9. Students transform ideas into projects, conduct research on cost and feasibility.

[34] See PEMPAL BCOP Knowledge Product on Participatory Budgeting, 2020

[35] Bartlett, T., et al (2020). School Participatory Budgeting: A Toolkit for Inclusive Practice. Center for the Future of Arizona and Participatory Governance Initiative, https://spa.asu.edu/sites/default/files/2020-12/spb_toolkit_2020_11_25.pdf; PlaNET SOEN 2.0 (2020). Manual for Non-Formal Education in Students' Project Development. International Strategical Partnership PlaNET Social Enterprise 2.0, https://soen.sk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/PlaNET-SOEN-2.0_IO1_final.pdf; Khachatryan, G. N. et al, 2020. The Practice of School Participatory Budgeting. Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation and International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Moscow. https://yadi.sk/d/8o0Y2fLJr69_EQ?w=1; Operational Guidelines to School PB in the Sakhalin Oblast "Youth Budget", https://pib.sakhminfin.ru/show/mb; Participatory Budgeting in Schools & School Districts, https://www.participatorybudgeting.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/PB-in-Schools-Info-Sheet.pdf

[36] For example, it can be the Decision of Local Government, prescribing that school PB should be done in all schools of the municipality, see the Resolution of the Administration of the Yamalsky District Municipality of February 14, 2020 No. 127 "On Approval of the Regulations on School Participatory Budgeting in General Education Organizations of the Yamalsky District Municipality", http://до-ямальский.рф/tinybrowser/files/deiatelnost/shkolnoe_partisipatornoe/postanovlenie_-_127_ot_14.02.2020_ob_utverzhdenii_polozheniya_o_shkol-nom_partisipatornom_byudzhetirovanii.pdf

[37] NYC ED (2019). Participatory Budgeting In Your School, NYC Department of Education Civics for All. A Passport to Social Studies Economics and Participation in Government Companion. Training Materials, https://infohub.nyced.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/participatory-budgeting-in-your-school.pdf

10. To make information available to every student, the projects description and illustrative materials are placed on information stands displayed in the school lobby, library, and/or in other actively visited / publicly accessible places, it may need some extra interior design. Depending on the school practices, this may include information on school's website and other social media, films on school's YouTube channels, broadcasts on school TV/radio, and other creative events.

11. Students present their projects in front of the whole school or at the meeting of delegates from classes. At the meeting, students deliberate on viable proposals, and discuss their pros and cons. The projects are grouped, refined, and finalized. Based on the results of the meeting, an updated list of project proposals is formed.

Step 4: The PB Formulation

12. School administration or specialists of the municipal administration,[38] together with the steering committee, conduct a preliminary technical analysis of the proposals, their compliance to eligibility criteria, viability, and sustainability of results (accounting for the costs of maintaining the objects being created). At this stage, all the circumstances that prevent the implementation of a project should be identified.

13. Steering committee forms the ballot and announces the school-wide voting date.

14. Students[39] vote on projects from the final list to select winning projects. Schools may use paper ballots and/or an online voting system. It is helpful that guidelines for voting are designed within or together with regulations at the preparation stage to support school-wide voting for students and families.

Step 5: Implementation and Monitoring

15. Winning projects are funded and implemented. The school should not void or disregard the decision of the voters. All the circumstances that prevent the implementation of a project should have been identified during preliminary technical analysis. If they are identified during the preparation of technical documentation, it is necessary to return to the joint discussion and clarification of the project. Procurement of contractors/suppliers should be carried out in accordance with the legislation. The steering committee can monitor and document (video, photo) the progress on the agreement with the contractor, study the project financial reporting and place the information on the website, social network, etc.

Step 6: Evaluation and Analysis

16. After the process ends, the steering committee conducts an evaluation. The success criteria identified at the beginning are used. Students and the school community are invited to present their feedback via a form on a web-page, social network and/or at a committee's or the whole school's meeting. After this, the steering committee makes recommendations for improvements for the next school PB cycle. Typically, the school PB process takes several months, running from the second month of the school year.

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[38] Depending on the model – whether it is school PB initiated and organized partly or wholly by the government, and with means of public budget or School PB, implemented autonomously in schools with school budgets or additional part from the government.

[39] According to the regulations, only students of those classes who participated in the nomination of projects, or all students of the school, can be allowed to vote. In some cases, parents of schoolchildren participate in the voting. In the option if school PB is organized for the benefit of the whole community (eligibility of funds are announced by the PB organizer at the initial stage) the voting is conducted amongst all community members (residents of the municipality/district/region)

SECTION 6

IMPACTS AND BENEFITS OF YOUTH PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

By taking part in youth PB, young people work together on project proposals that simulate real life experiences and can develop their critical career and life skills. Examples of such skills include: leadership skills, ability to work collaboratively, research, interviewing, surveying, problem-solving, critical thinking, public speaking, financial literacy, project management, and marketing. This fosters the employability and productivity of young people through boosting their entrepreneurial skills as well. Youth PB is also an excellent civic education tool that encourages students to become active citizens. Youth PB at schools brings many benefits for the entire school community, building healthy relationships and partnerships among students, families, teachers, and administration.[40]

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[40] Participatory Budgeting in Schools - A schools-specific page on how you can use PB in your school, https://pbscotland.scot/pb-in-schools; A Guide to Participatory Budgeting in Schools. Participatory Budgeting Project, https://www.participatorybudgeting.org/pb-in-schools/; PlaNET SOEN 2.0 (2020). Manual for Non-Formal Education in Students' Project Development. International Strategical Partnership PlaNET Social Enterprise 2.0, https://soen.sk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/PlaNET-SOEN-2.0_IO1_final.pdf

SECTION 7

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that general PB be expanded to engage young people through a contextualized youth PB model which respects the principles of youth-led and youth-centered approaches. The principles of action include: offer real roles and relevant issues to young people; involve them from the beginning to the end of the process; create accessible space for young people's involvement with a youth friendly environment; understand what matters to them, value their opinions and contribution; develop a sense of belonging to the process for young people; provide young people with information and training that is fun and challenging to encourage their full participation; provide young people with timely feedback and how their input was used; involve young people in monitoring and evaluation; consider ways to make the youth PB programs more inclusive.[41]

Ensure that important aspects of the youth PB process are in place. Use the following checklist to assess the situation:

1. Have relationships between young people and government representatives been established?

2. Were the PB initiative and its goals well promoted and publicized among the community's young people? Do these goals correspond to the young people's expectations?

3. Were the risks considered prior to the establishment of procedures?

4. Does the steering committee truly represent the youth?

5. Was a thorough assessment of the needs and situation carried out before deciding on where the budget could be allocated?

6. Were youth-friendly discussion and debating spaces established?

7. Were the technologies and communication channels that young people use on a daily basis identified and were they provided with information in a form that they are used to?

8. Was the youth PB process designed in compliance with good practice?

9. Was the basic knowledge for PB (budget literacy, project design, and participation skills) provided to young people?

10. Was an assessment of the process to check whether it is effective been carried out?

The national Ministries of Finance can facilitate introduction of youth PB practices at national and subnational level in several ways:

1. Communicate the importance of youth engagement as part of a nation-wide adult PB awareness-raising campaign.[42]

2. Develop methodological recommendations for the preparation and implementation of the youth PB practices including framework of operational guidelines.

3. Organize training of responsible public authorities' representatives, representatives of schools, and youth organizations.

4. Implement pilot youth PB initiatives at the national level.

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[41] https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/social-inclusion

[42] See PEMPAL BCOP Knowledge Product on Participatory Budgeting, 2020

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