



Youth Democracy, Human Rights & Governance (DRG) Cross-Sectoral Initiative (CSI)

CEPPS supported European Democracy Youth Network (EDYN) country chapter in Ukraine help local councils distribute supplies to the elderly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under the USAID Global Elections and Political Transitions (GEPT) award, CEPPS kicked off the Youth DRG CSI with a launch event bringing together practitioners, donors, and young leaders from across the world. This initiative is a forum and learning community for youth development practitioner to explore challenges and opportunities that foster meaningful political participation and leadership by young people.

“Cross-sectoral approaches are important because political engagement (and disengagement) is shaped in various segments of life (family, school, civic associations, workplaces, etc.)”

Key Challenges

- Many programs are not funded as "cross-sector" programs and have narrowly defined, sector-specific indicators and targets.
- Limited knowledge and understanding of how to incentivize specific sectors to integrate DRG principles within their work.
- Identifying entry points to incorporate youth political participation/leadership interventions and outcomes into non-governance programs.

Key Opportunities

- Explore [Human-Centered Design](#) through the Unleash Innovation Lab, one approach to help young leaders develop cross-sectoral initiatives.
- Mobilize youth participation and leadership around different sectors and other thematic areas. For example, if young people are passionate about responding to health inequities, build their advocacy skills and connect them with health-focused organizations, policymakers and decision-making processes around health.
- Improve youth participation and leadership in the fight against COVID-19 at the grassroots and decision-making levels.

Key Resources

- [USAID’s Toolkit for Youth Inclusion in Democracy, Human Rights and Governance](#)
- [Evidence in Support of DRG Integration – Recommended Reading](#)
- [CEPPS White Paper: Mitigating the Impact of COVID-19 through DRG Assistance](#)



Annouchka Wijesinghe, a Hurford Youth Fellow at the National Endowment for Democracy and Research Coordinator at the Alliance Development Trust (ADT) in Sri Lanka, presented on the importance of integrating peace and security into DRG programs. In 2016, ADT engaged youth across ethnic and religious divides to raise awareness on national reconciliation and transitional justice efforts. Following Sri Lanka’s 2018 constitutional crisis, ADT implemented a DRG program and saw the need to adopt a cross-sectoral approach for more holistic outcomes. Annouchka also discussed the importance of integrating peace and security experts into programs and building up a generation of young people who recognize the overall importance and impact of democracy and human rights in all aspects of life.



Youth-Driven Policy Solutions to Emigration in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Since 2016, NDI has worked with a group of 20 young politicians from nine political parties, known as [Group 9](#). This group came together, setting aside ethnic and partisan differences, to develop measures to spur business development, encourage young entrepreneurs, and increase professional skills preparation in higher education. In June 2019, over 150 participants and experts gathered from five countries to debut Group 9's proposals, discuss the drivers of youth emigration, and explore solutions. Following the conference, Group 9 has been working with several members of parliament to build consensus on their proposed reforms.



Connecting Youth Workforce Development with Local Governance

First conducted in Panama in 2016, IRI's [Ideathon](#) program uses a competition model to help young people design, pitch and pilot solutions to local problems to municipal governments. Teaching technical and soft skills, the Ideathon combines social entrepreneurship and workforce development with citizen engagement, ultimately connecting young people with local governments to launch their projects. Municipalities have gone on to own the Ideathon process, conducting competitions for young people across Panama as way to collaborate on projects to help improve communities across the countries.



Empowering Youth to Mitigate Conflict through Youth Engagement

IFES' [People Against Violence in Elections](#) (PAVE) program, developed in 2013 with funding from USAID, is an election security initiative that equips local leaders with the tools needed to anticipate, mitigate, and prevent electoral violence through peacebuilding activities. IFES piloted PAVE Youth with university students providing them with tools to identify root causes of violence, build dialogue skills, and mitigate conflict in nonviolent ways. PAVE participants created nine [Students Against Violence Everywhere](#) university chapters, led by university students who implement activities to mitigate student violence and promote peace on campus.

Continue to Engage with the Youth DRG CSI

- Network with youth development thought leaders, practitioners, and donors across sectors;
- Discover effective approaches and updates related to youth political participation and leadership within a Positive Youth Development framework; and
- Identify lessons learned and promising practices related to youth political participation and cross-sectoral programs.

For more information, please contact CEPPS partners:

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