



# Implementing the Youth Programme



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## Introduction

Any process of designing or reviewing your Youth Programme is incomplete and insufficient, if the Educational Proposal resulting from this process is not verified in practice in the local units.

You can only talk about a new Youth Programme when the concrete Educational Proposal is put into practice, innovating and improving the quality of the Youth Programme that is lived in the local units and not just by including them in materials or resources produced by your NSO.

In this chapter, we present some guidelines on implementing your NSO's Youth Programme once the review process is finished. If your Youth Programme is not implemented and does not achieve positive changes in educational practices, it is not a Youth Programme, but merely a set of texts of dubious literary value.

## Concept

The implementation of your NSO's Youth Programme is a systematic and planned process through which it is put into operation, i.e., local units apply the main concepts in their educational practices.

## Purposes of the implementation

- Disseminate the main programme's concepts and tools among adult leaders and young people, so that they become familiar with them.
- Support adult leaders to acquire the necessary skills for the new Youth Programme implementation.
- Facilitate the application of the core concepts of the Youth Programme in local units, producing changes in educational practices.

## Characteristics of an implementation process

- **Governance:** Any implementation process must respond to a governance will of the associative decision body, expressed in official documents and known by most of the adult members of your NSO.
- **Rational:** Implementation is a complex process that must be rigorously planned through the design of an implementation strategy based on rational decision-making that defines the objectives, resources, times, actions, and means of evaluation.



- **Progressive:** The process of implementation must take into account the diverse territorial realities, cultural contexts, and actors involved. It is not a homogeneous and uniform process, in which all the local units advance at the same speed. On the contrary, the district should be viewed as a mosaic of different shapes and colours, in which we find different degrees of progress in implementation.
- **Participatory:** It is a process that involves almost all the actors and associative structures, that will have different roles and responsibilities. These specific responsibilities must be clearly defined, for example, in the National Youth Programme Policy and/or in the implementation strategy and be known by all the people involved.
- **Sustainability:** It is not by national decree that the local units begin to apply a new Youth Programme instantaneously. Time for proper implementation has to be defined.
- **Attractive:** The process must be attractive enough for local units to decide to implement the new Youth Programme. An appropriate balance between "push" and "pull" motivation should be sought, taking into account the local organisational culture. The language used should be easily understood by all, and without the use of abbreviations.

Scout leaders need time to familiarise themselves with the basic documents of the new programme, understand the virtues of change, and acquire the necessary skills to apply it.

The time required for the implementation process will vary according to the size of your NSO, , the district size, the available resources, the organisational culture, etc.

- **Close follow-up and support:** The times of implementation of a new Youth Programme are times of change. Change often leads to uncertainty and loss of expert power in many adults. Therefore, those who have district or regional support roles should carry out a close follow and support that reinforces the right practices, clears doubts, reduces anxieties, and helps adult leaders to acquire the necessary skills.

## Strategy for the implementation of a Youth Programme

Since the Youth Programme is your NSO's core business, the implementation of a new Programme needs to be approached from the perspective of change management.

For the process to be successful, it is necessary to involve your NSO's key actors at different times: the governing bodies, adults, both those who work directly with young people and those who carry out institutional functions, as well as young people in all age ranges, as the main users.

The Programme implementation process must consider the following stages:

1. Make a diagnosis and raise awareness.
2. Establish a plan that involves all actors.



3. Implement pilot groups.
4. Adapt the NSO's Adult Management System.
5. Listen and prepare your young people for change.
6. Establish an adequate support network
7. Communicate the change.
8. Disseminate the proposal.
9. Institute a permanent evaluation and feedback mechanism.
10. Adhere to a specific timeline.

Stages	Actions
Make a diagnosis and raise awareness	Make a diagnosis of the initial situation; analyse the political, cultural, historical, and organisational conditions of the NSO; analyse the social moment in which the change will be implemented.
Establish a plan that involves all actors.	Define the actions that each area and associative level will carry out depending on the implementation.  Prepare a document that presents the strategy to the relevant associative areas.
Implement pilot groups.	A good practice is to establish pilot groups (pilot units) that allow the proposed changes to be applied in a controlled environment. With the results obtained, the necessary adjustments to the plan are made.
Adapt the NSO's Adult Management System.	Incorporate the new Youth Programme concepts into the Adult Management System, at the same time eliminating those concepts that contradict the new Programme.  Adapt the competencies of the Adult Management System so that they respond to the needs of the new Programme.  If your NSO has trainers, engage them at the beginning of the process so that they do not feel threatened by change.  Train and engage adult educators at the local level in the implementation of the new Programme.  Maintain fluid communications with the territorial teams. Assist them, train them, and provide useful materials for monitoring and territorial animation.



Listen and prepare your young people for change.	<p>Establish a permanent mechanism so that your young people can be informed about the new Programme, as well as to receive their feedback. Young people should not be disadvantaged through the transition process.</p> <p>Prepare materials (graphics, audio-visuals) aimed at young people in which the changes are presented and explained.</p>
Establish an adequate support network.	<p>Accompany the process of change through close, appropriate, and timely tutoring, which highlights the positive aspects of educational practices.</p> <p>Maintain fluid communication with the district or regional teams. Assist them, train them, and provide useful materials for monitoring and accompaniment at the grassroots level. How you maintain a consistent approach to the Youth Programme's implementation will depend on your organisational structure.</p> <p>Promote and highlight successful educational practices.</p> <p>Organise reference events, especially for young people, but occasionally also for adults, in which the innovative concepts of the Youth Programme that we are implementing are put into practice and promoted.</p> <p>Identify and analyse the usual difficulties that appear in the application of the new Youth Programme.</p>
Communicate the change.	<p>Establish a communication strategy for the new Programme, both internal and external.</p> <p>Promote change and its advantages through brochures, notes on the website, videos, interviews, promotional products, etc.</p>



<p>Disseminate the proposal.</p>	<p>Carry out events to launch the new proposal. For example: material presentation seminars, workshops and round tables, or a national gathering.</p> <p>Make materials (printed or online) available to adult leaders through the NSO's store. Distribute training teams and territorial teams. Deliver directly to local units.</p> <p>Discontinue the sale and distribution of all those materials related to the previous Youth Programme and any that are incompatible with the new Programme.</p> <p>NSOs should consider operating digital Youth Programme delivery and training systems. If your NSO is already operating a digital system, consider how this may be mapped with the new Youth Programme or if it is still fit for purpose.</p>
<p>Institute a permanent evaluation and feedback mechanism.</p>	<p>Build instruments to evaluate the process and the degree of implementation, identifying difficulties in implementing and interpreting their causes.</p> <p>Carry out local, regional, or national assessments and measurements that can provide you with insights into how and when your NSO will be aligned with its mission and purpose.</p> <p>Systematise the implementation process. Share experiences nationally and internationally.</p>