



Designing the Youth Programme

Introduction

Each NSO has a duty to develop and regularly update its Youth Programme, which is based on the fundamental elements of Scouting and takes the needs and aspirations of young people into account. As these needs and aspirations vary according to the sociocultural environment in which young people live, it is not useful for one NSO to copy a Youth Programme designed by another NSO in a different context.

Youth Programme designing

Development starts with design: the preparation of a note, sketch, outline, or scheme that represents an idea, an object, an action or succession of actions, an aspiration, or a project that serves as a guide to the activity. For example, an artist's sketch of what they plan to paint.

Unlike a painting, where the artist controls every part of their work from the sketch to the final product, different actors will intervene at different times throughout the design and development of a Youth Programme. Designing implies foresight, the separation in time of the functions involved, and an understanding of the practices that will be carried out later.

Education is a complex and, to some extent, uncertain process. Unlike an industrial process, education does not seek to produce products with standard characteristics. In education, the more complex the content is, the less determined the design can be to regulate the practice that will achieve it. The variety of learning opportunities and lived experiences will make a unique contribution to each young person's development.

Who designs the Youth Programme?

A multiplicity of actors is involved in the overall design, dissemination, and implementation phases of a NSO's Youth Programme. They will make rational decisions in a specific social context. The **National Programme Team** is responsible for supervising and making decisions, with the guidance and advice of experts, but the **adult leader** and **young person** will also be involved in the process along the way, especially when it comes to the dissemination and implementation of the new Youth Programme at a grassroots level.

The design of the Youth Programme is not just about carefully prepared materials, beautifully printed books, or the proposal of great ideas. The design is an instrument for guiding the implementation of the Youth Programme. It should strongly consider both the young people in your NSO, as the main agents of the Programme, and the adults who support it in specific, often complex, circumstances.

There should be a partnership between those at national level who design the proposals and those at local level who contribute to the final programme design according to their local reality, with space for autonomy and adaptation accordingly.



Due to its complexity and unpredictability, this process demands intuition, creativity, openness, improvisation, and expressiveness.

Principles guiding the design of the Youth Programme

A series of principles should be taken into account by the National Programme Team when facing this task:

- **Scouting's educational approach:** an approach drawn from the founder's educational thinking and expressed in the Scout Movement's educational approach.¹
- **Methodology principles:** a sequence of eight steps that gives a rational approach to the development process.²
- **Selection principles:** principles to guide the selection of cultural content to be included in the Youth Programme, for example, the definition of educational trails and subsequent educational competencies.

Dissemination of and engagement in the Youth Programme

Designing a good Youth Programme is not enough. It also needs to be widely disseminated. Spreading the Programme throughout your NSO can be a demanding and complex task. High-quality documents are required, presented in a clear and attractive way, both for adults and young people.

Direct contact should be maintained with the adult leader responsible for implementing the Programme, so that it can be presented and explained clearly to them by those who understand it well.

Dissemination is closely linked to training and to the field support that adults receive. In other words, when your NSO decides to update its Youth Programme, it has to work simultaneously on designing it, creating supported tools for its dissemination and implementation, and developing training and support for trainers and leaders at the regional and local level.

Key principles³

All Youth Programmes should...

...have young people at their centre. Youth Programmes should be created by young people, not for them. Development and implementation of the Programme should be based on the active participation of young people, as they are the main agents of their self-development.

¹ The Essential Characteristics of Scouting, WOSM 2019

² Based on the original steps of Renewing Approach to Programme (RAP), WOSM, 1998

³ World Scout Youth Programme Policy, WOSM, 2018



...be about education. Scouting is a non-formal educational movement. NSOs should offer a Youth Programme that provides, in a progressive way, the opportunity for young people to fully grow as individuals and be introduced to the real world. It should also help them in their search for their significant life skills. All that we do in Scouting should carry an educational value with a successful development and implementation life cycle.

...develop active citizens: The Programme should create learning opportunities for young people to become active citizens of their communities and to be responsible and committed leaders of today and tomorrow (cooperative followers). It should empower them to be autonomous decision-makers inside Scouting from the unit level to the institutional level, and outside Scouting in society. The Youth Programme is the crucible that transforms young people into active citizens, first in Scouting and then in the community.

...be locally adapted and globally united. While Scouting Fundamentals (purpose, principles, and method) are universal and have remained constant over the years, NSOs have the flexibility to develop their own cultural interpretation of these fundamentals without changing the core elements or principles. The Youth Programme should maintain a careful balance between invariable values and variable factors.

...be up-to-date and relevant: A Youth Programme should be the product of a constant reflection on educational practices and developed continually in relation to the Scouting Fundamentals (purpose, principles, and method). It should take into account the cultural, social, political, and economic dimensions in society, and should reflect and meet the needs and interests of young people, both today and in the near future.

...be open to all. The Youth Programme should meet the needs of all young people, designed with the necessary flexibility to adapt to each society's culture, society, economy, race, spiritual diversity, and gender. It should also include people with disabilities.

...be attractive, challenging, and meaningful. The Youth Programme should be fun with purpose. It should challenge the abilities of young people and be directed at their interests. What we provide in Scouting is a learning opportunity for young people, facilitated by adults and created by a cooperative process between adults and young people. These learning opportunities are not random activities; they should sit in a structured educational framework that will lead to a meaningful and fulfilling experience for young people.



Methodology to renew the Youth Programme

Macpro and RAP as inspirational documents

The 18th Interamerican Scout Conference, held in San José, Costa Rica, in July 1992, recommended that NSOs in region

"...periodically review the Youth Programme in accordance with the tendencies, needs and aspirations of Young People and the fundamental principles of the Movement."⁴

In July of 1993, the Interamerica's Regional Plan indicated the need for a "global conception of the development of the programme". This was how the first version of **Macpro** came about.

In 1998, the European Scout Office launched **RAP: Renewed Approach to Programme**. Developed in close collaboration with the Interamerican Office and with the Educational Methods Group of the World Scout Bureau (WSB), RAP differed from Macpro in some stages of the framework. The WSB went on to publish *Green Island in 2005*, a story of a National Programme Team using RAP to improve their NSO's Youth Programme.

In 2016, the Interamerican region decided to update Macpro, while in 2017 the World Scout Conference adopted a resolution to review all WOSM documents, hence unifying all documents under the Educational Method workstream.

The Guide to Youth Programme in Scouting (GPS) - A Merged and Updated Methodology

The Guide to Youth Programme in Scouting (GPS) is a systematic approach based on Scouting Fundamentals. It aims to support the development of an updated, relevant, and significant Youth Programme. The process of programme review or renewal is a journey, and what better tool to have with you on your journey than your very own GPS. Both Macpro and RAP were revolutionary for their time, guiding NSOs through a process that enabled the production of quality Youth Programmes. The GPS builds on that legacy, providing links to tools, examples of other NSOs' Youth Programmes, and insights into challenges that were overcome or turned into opportunities by those who have travelled the road before. The cause of Scouting is Education for Life; the Youth Programme is the main medium through which young people gain the competencies they need for that journey.

⁴ Método de Actualización y Creación Permanente del Programa de Jóvenes. Presentación. Gráfica El Altílo. Santiago, Chile. Oficina Scout Interamericana. 1994



Characteristics of the GPS

- **The GPS is a procedure** by which something is achieved, in this case, the design of a Youth Programme. It is a tool especially designed for National Programme Teams.
- **The GPS is a rational and systematic framework** consisting of eight stages, organised logically and based on principles and technical criteria that guide the decisions of the National Programme Team.

Programme updates are often the result of personal interest and spontaneous impulses of certain groups of institutional leaders, rather than a systematic and reflective action of an NSO.

- **The GPS is a global approach** that considers the Youth Programme as a whole, spread across different age sections. The Youth Programme is seen as a system and therefore its parts are interrelated.

It is essential that the Youth Programme offered by each section is linked to the Youth Programmes of the other sections and to be coherent with your NSO's Educational Proposal.

In view of this, it is clear that even if your NSO wishes to revise the Youth Programme for just one section, you will have to consider the effects on the programmes of all the other sections, in order to preserve the necessary coherence of the whole.

A combination of methodology, stakeholders and social context

The process of designing or reviewing your Youth Programme not only requires using a rational methodology, but also must include and involve all stakeholders of the process and the social context in which the Youth Programme is based.



Fig. 1



- Stakeholders

By stakeholders we mean the individuals (adults and young people) and the groups (teams, councils, committees, etc.) both inside and outside of Scouting that to a lesser or greater extent are involved in or affected by the design or review process.

These stakeholders work in different areas, either where the learning opportunities take place – units and Scout groups – and there we identify young people, adult leaders, parents and sponsors, or in the support structures – trainers, district or national leaders, community workers, etc.

In the processes of designing or reviewing your Youth Programme, which can also have an impact on your NSO as a whole, it is vital that young people participate. Your NSO must ensure the most appropriate mechanisms to integrate young people in the tasks, as well as in making the decisions that lead to the development of a new Youth Programme.

- Social context

Designing or reviewing your Youth Programme cannot be done separately from the diverse social, economic, and cultural context in which it is based. This process must be seen and analysed as a product that is fit for purpose in the specific social context and meets the needs of all young people.

The answers, ideas, strategies, and procedures that your NSO produces must be analysed from the trends and factors that affect it in the present, and also look to the future.

- Methodologies

Methodologies are formalised processes and procedures, on the one hand products of normative mechanisms (in our case, the World Youth Programme Policy) and on the other products of discourses that come from educational, sociological, and psychological theories. They are legitimised from the institution (expressed in norms) and from knowledge (expressed in speeches and theories).

The design and review of a Youth Programme is a practice guided by methodologies (in our case, the GPS), but these methodologies do not emerge from nothing; they are also products of certain stakeholders in a specific social context.



GPS Phases

The GPS is a methodology composed of eight steps that are not part of a linear process. Each step interacts with the others and can be grouped into three major phases:

Phase 1. Setting goals (steps 1, 2, and 3)

Phase 2. Organising age sections (steps 4 and 5)

Phase 3. Making the system work (steps 6, 7, and 8)

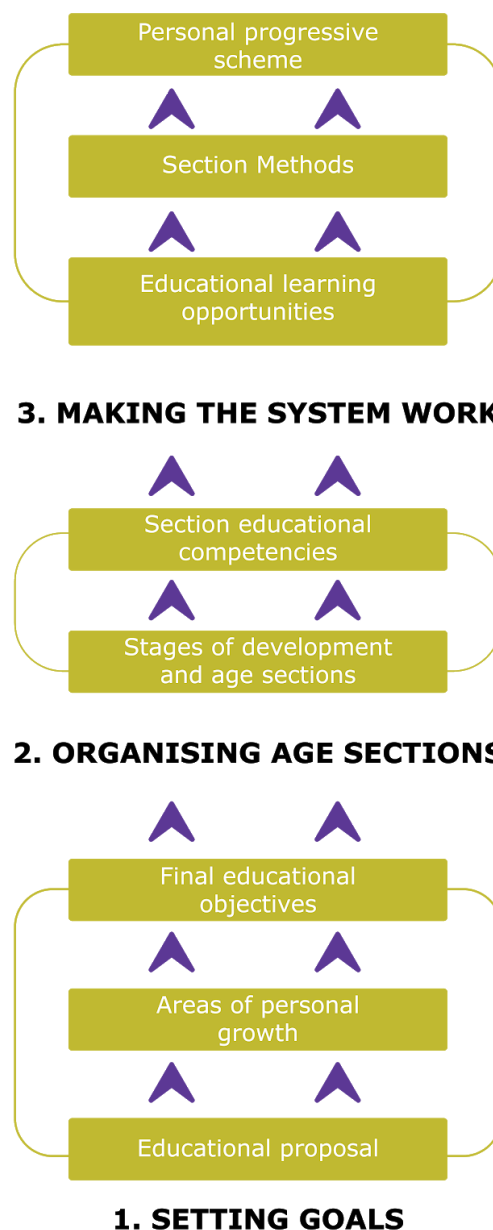


Fig. 2



Setting goals

This phase involves the whole NSO in an extensive debate at all levels to obtain a broad consensus and the commitment of all leaders to the NSO's fundamental raison d'être: its Educational Proposal and the general objectives it proposes.

Organising age sections

In this phase, the different stages of development of children and young people, in a given society at a specific moment in time, are analysed, to identify the age ranges that your NSO will take into account when determining its system of age sections and the progression from one section to another. Experts should be involved to develop this system and to draft the intermediate competencies for each one, which must be coherent with the final educational competencies.

Making the system work

This phase aims to find ways in which the final educational competencies can be reached while respecting young people's interests at different ages. It is necessary to identify learning opportunities that correspond to the educational competencies chosen; adapt the overall Scout Method to each age range, thus creating the section methods; and develop a personal progressive scheme. This phase requires field-testing among pilot units.

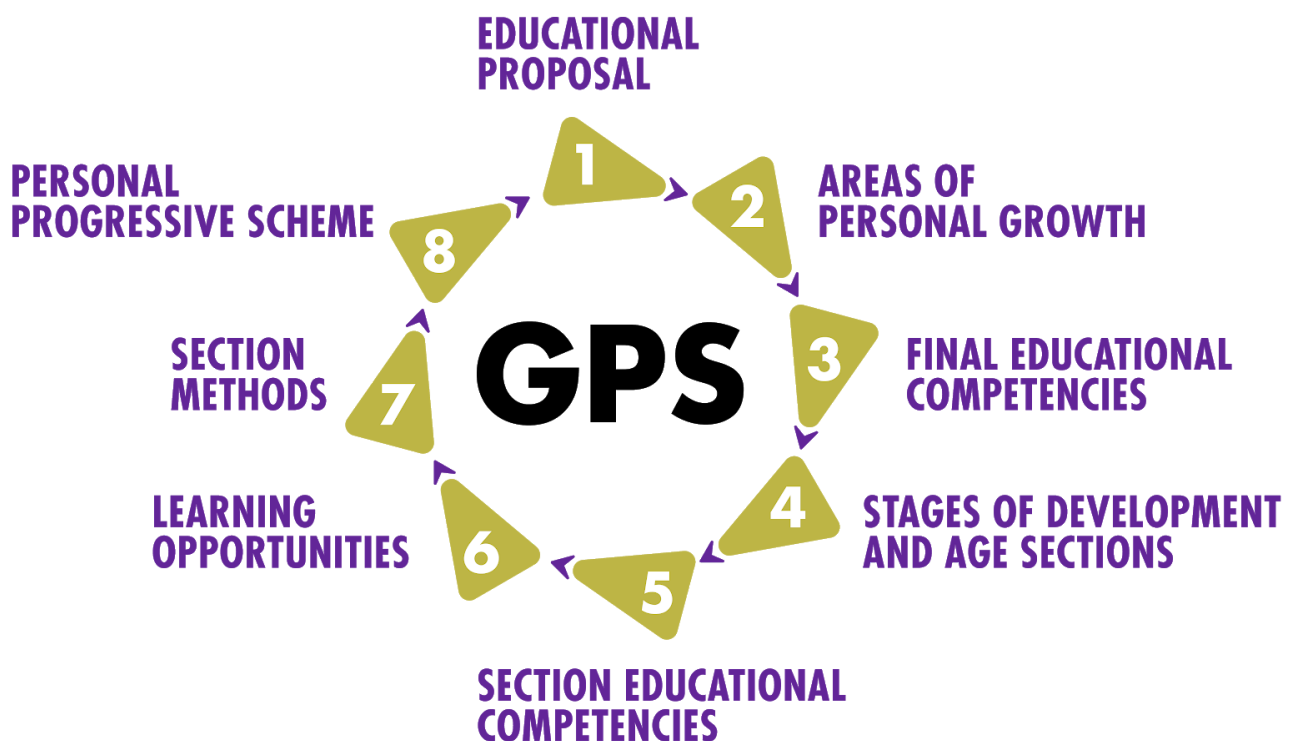


Fig. 3



Based on Scouting's Educational Approach, the eight steps can be described as follows:

1. **Define an Educational Proposal for your NSO**, which will present your educational intention both internally and externally and guide the development of your Youth Programme.
 2. **Determine the areas of personal growth**, taking into account all dimensions of the young person.
 3. **Establish the final educational competencies**, expressing concretely for each one of the areas of personal growth the desirable profile at the time the young person completes their educational journey and departs from the Scout Movement.
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1. **Define the corresponding age sections** to your NSO's Youth Programme, based on the analysis of the different stages of development of children and young people.
 2. **Establish the section educational competencies** for each of the age sections, according to a coherent progression.
 3. **Develop learning opportunities** that will allow young people to achieve intermediate objectives or competencies.
 4. **Adapt the Scout Method** to the characteristics of each age section.
 5. **Build a system of personal progression** for each of the age sections, a system that helps young people identify the challenges to overcome in their growth process and motivates them to progress.

About the GPS

We can understand the GPS as an umbrella, comprising interrelated and interdependent elements on a delivery platform.

As a knowledge management system,⁵ the GPS transfers knowledge from where it is generated to where it will be used. It requires the development of the necessary competencies within your NSO to share and use it, and, if that knowledge is outside your NSO, to value and assimilate it.

Knowledge management, in this context, is a means of providing answers to knowledge problems in the organisational processes related to your Youth Programme. It can be described as the process of encouraging, managing, identifying, recovering, systemising, storing, and distributing the knowledge generated in the organisation for educational improvement, to any place where it helps to produce better results.

⁵ *Knowledge Management is the process of creating, sharing, using and managing the knowledge and information of an organization*, in Girard, J.P., & Girard, J.L. (2015). Defining knowledge management: Toward an applied compendium, *Online Journal of Applied Knowledge Management*. 3(1), 1-20



GPS delivery platform

1. Concept documents

Concept documents provide information and frameworks to help National Programme Teams to review or design a Youth Programme.

2. Toolbox

The toolbox is made up of tools to help further appreciate the information and framework in the concept documents, as well as tools for the development and implementation of your Youth Programme.

3. Best practices

Best practices share the experience of NSOs that have undertaken the renewal, implementation, and evaluation of their Youth Programmes and the processes and resources produced along the way.

4. Communities of practice

Communities of practice is an online space where Youth Programme teams and adult leaders can share their experience and views, seek support, and discover the repository of relevant documents and tools that can be used, modified, and reviewed.

Link to WOSM Services

The WOSM Service Platform is a one-stop shop to support and strengthen the ability of NSOs to deliver better Scouting activities and programmes to more young people worldwide. Youth Programme is one of the 13 services provided. On this platform, NSOs can ask for direct support from a consultant who will help the National Programme Team to implement all the changes they need.

It also contains virtual courses and videos based on the GPS, with the aim of strengthening National Programme Teams, equipping them with competences related to innovation, implementation, supervision, and evaluation of a Youth Programme.

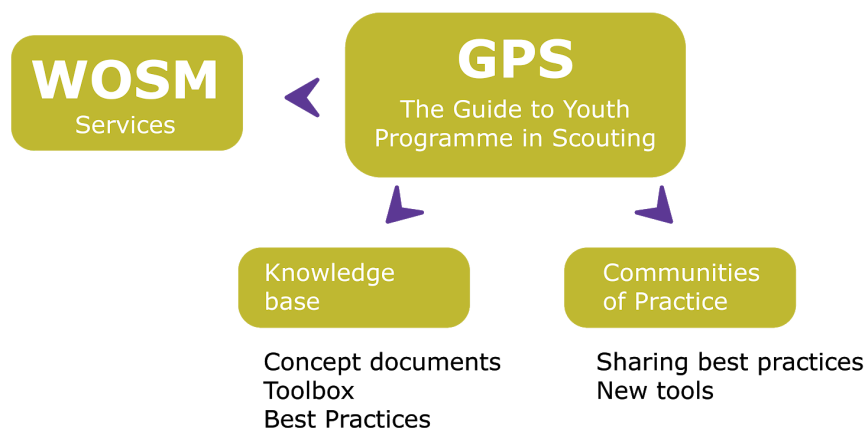


Fig. 4