

## Appendix 1: Hart's ladder of youth participation

In his book *Children's participation: the theory and practice of involving young citizens in community development and environmental care*, Roger Hart plants the concept of youth participation in the context of a global movement for participation (Hart, 1992). Hart followed in the steps of Arnstein (1969) and developed the 'ladder of children's participation', also called the 'ladder of youth participation'. The ladder consists of eight rungs and they are discussed as follows (UNFPA, 2015b; Hart, 1992):

- **First rung: manipulative participation**

This is the first level in the ladder from the bottom. This is about manipulation, where youth participants are not consulted in framing issues or in making solutions. Their ideas, visions and aspirations are largely ignored by decision-makers in planning authorities. Youth's role is passive and they have no power to influence decisions or policy agendas.

- **Second rung: passive participation**

This represents a tokenistic or ostensible level of engagement. Youth here could be consulted but without any assurance of taking their views, opinions, and suggestions into consideration. In contrast to passive participation, citizens are engaged in active citizenship to deliberatively influence decision-making. In this stage, youth, as a passive group, are marginalised from the political agenda and from the means and ends of public sector programmes. They are merely recipients of development outcomes, unable to articulate their own development agenda.

- **Third rung: participation by consultation**

This step, like the first two steps, falls under the 'non-participation' category of youth. Here, youth have a very small or no role in the decision-making process. In this stage, planning mechanisms grant the power of designing and implementing planning activities to be direct by adults. Youth's role could be confined to that of implementer of activities, with no influence on decisions.

- **Fourth rung: youth assigned but informed**

This step marks a new stage of youth power and engagement. At this level, youth have greater opportunities to voice their opinions and adults give them more attention and respect their contribution. However, adults still dominate and control the decision-making process in planning projects. Adults may integrate

youth's opinions and views in the designing phase, but there is no clear mechanism to guarantee that their points of view are implemented. Youth's role here is still considered as voluntary and they lack leadership skills.

- **Fifth rung: youth consulted and informed**

At this level of the ladder, youth's suggestions and input are given greater attention and weight in decision-making. This implies that adults still initiate and administer the planning project, but youth could be members of the planning committee to deliver youth needs and feedback and design activities accordingly.

- **Sixth rung: adult-initiated; shared decisions with young people**

At this level, participation is recognised as a right for youth. Adults and youth are mutually engaged in a joint analysis effort for the development of plans. Youth have a significant leadership role in planning and designing planning activities. However, youth may still refer to adults to assist them financially and technically for the implementation of their activities. Planning is still initiated by adults but youth are granted greater involvement in the phases of planning from inception through to implementation.

- **Seventh rung: youth initiate and direct planning activities**

This step of the ladder sees youth as self-mobilised. Instead of relying on adult-oriented structures, youth lead their programmes. They launch an idea and guide its implementation. In coordination with planning authorities, youth implements their activities by themselves. In this manner, youth are active pioneers within their communities, taking initiatives for the common good of their society. In this level, young people are taking action independently and determining how available resources are used.

- **Eighth rung: young people and adults share decision-making**

On this step of the ladder, the work of planning is perceived as a collaborative effort. It marks the highest category in the ladder where both parties collaboratively share responsibility for making decisions. Youth are empowered enough to initiate the idea, set up the plan and invite adults to the design and implementation of planning activities. Their project aims to serve their local community or go beyond that to help their city.