



**VISION
2030**

Turning YMCA Vision 2030 into action

Findings from 43 Co-Labs
at the 20th World Council

July 2022

WORLD
YMCA

04 INTRODUCTION

06 COMMUNITY WELLBEING

06-09 What does success look like? What are we working towards? What are we currently working on?

10-15 The YMCA vision for our future communities

16-23 Common ways we look at Community Wellbeing across the world and how we can support community wellbeing at the YMCA

24 MEANINGFUL WORK

24-31 The system elements we need to consider if we want to create a society which promotes meaningful work

32-35 Ways for the YMCA to ensure youth are able to dream, build strong partnerships, become entrepreneurs and engage in their education

36 SUSTAINABLE PLANET

36-39 Our current state considerations

40-47 Ideas for how the YMCA can respond to climate change and take positive action

48-51 Hope: Imagining the future for the world, our communities, and our YMCAs

52-53 What are our aspirations? How will we get there?

54 JUST WORLD

54-57 What does the term 'just world' mean to different people?

58-61 What we can do as the YMCA community and within our broader communities

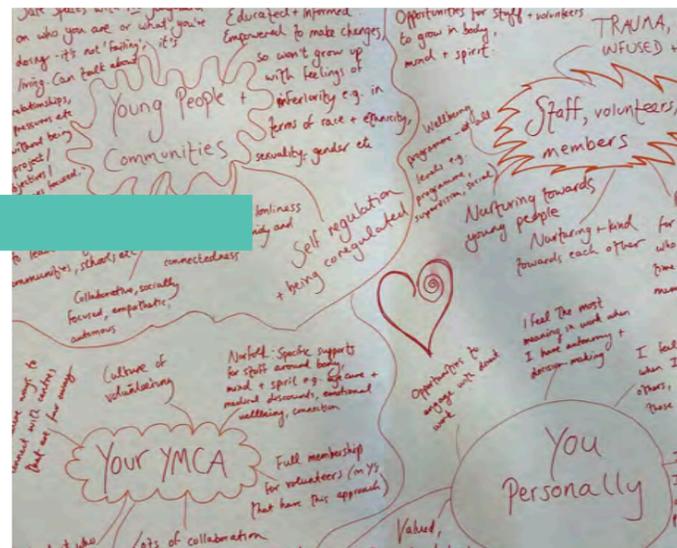
62 NEXT STEPS

64 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



36 Sustainable Planet

What can we take from Vision 2030?



24 Meaningful Work

How might we move from focusing on education to satisfaction in employment?
How might we prepare youth for future jobs that don't exist yet?

54 Just World

How might we become a brave organisation in a time of injustice and inequality?



06 Community Wellbeing

How might we create space for community wellbeing at local, national, regional and global scales?
How might we support youth to become self-reliant?





What is a Co-Lab?

A Co-Lab is an intimate circle to share, learn and redirect effort.

World Council Co-Labs was the first iteration of an innovation laboratory by which the YMCA global team will work to achieve Vision 2030. Co-Labs are an integral component of the World Council programme and our ongoing efforts to move towards our individual and collective goals. They are intergenerational co-creative spaces, which can be run in person and online. They give participants the opportunity to dive deep into a topic or goal, working with others to co-create solutions to implement in their local, national or regional YMCA settings.

What were our ways of working?

The most important thing to remember about Co-Labs is that they create safe spaces for learning, sharing, and innovating. The principles of how to run and participate in a Co-Lab are:

- Listen first with no judgement
- Be patient and understanding of one another and look after ourselves
- Be open minded, take risks
- Allow all ideas and questions
- Always respect people's different views, opinions or needs
- Be engaged and present to contribute freely and truthfully to the session
- Hold space for vulnerability and sharing of personal experiences
- Silence is okay - respect the right pass, allow people to take space if needed
- Apply dialectical thinking - be curious, discover blind-spots, ask questions
- Allow for respectful disagreement or critical feedback - try turning assumptions into questions
- Be mindful that English is not everyone's first language
- Be aware and respectful of physical space for COVID safety
- Smile and have fun!

INTRODUCTION

This document has been created using the outputs of the 20th YMCA World Council, which was held in Aarhus, Denmark in July 2022. While the 2022 World Council event came to a close, the Co-Labs have been designed to be an ongoing process which will evolve and grow as we continue to work towards Vision 2030.

While this document should act as a reminder of the Co-Labs World Council, we are also calling for additional ideas, case studies, and content. For more information on how you can contribute, please see the final section.



What does success look like?

When seeking to drive forward progress towards the Community Wellbeing Pillar goals, we recognise that we need to utilise what we have learned on a global scale, and bring it back to our own communities to invigorate them and drive forward change.

To do this effectively, we need to create open and empathetic ways to communicate and truly collaborate with each other, as a single global community. We want to bring people together in safe, inclusive, and inspiring spaces (both physical and online) to collaborate, build connections, and promote physical and mental wellbeing.

What are we working towards?

Under the Community Wellbeing Pillar, we are working towards:

- Furthering innovative social inclusion efforts through youth-led solutions and movements to eliminate exclusion and marginalisation within our communities.
- Creating safe physical and digital spaces for people to learn, grow and thrive within. This involves working to draw people into YMCA spaces, and also reaching out into communities.
- Supporting youth to advocate for the communities they want to live in, amplifying their voices and giving them the tools they need to create change.

COMMUNITY WELLBEING



What are we currently working on?

There are a number of programmes that are currently running across YMCA that contribute to Community Wellbeing. Some examples include:

Mental health coaching, Sweden

YMCA Sweden provides mental health coaching and support services for their staff and volunteers. These services not only create healthier individuals within YMCAs, but also better equip staff and volunteers to support each other and wider communities.

Summer camp, USA

The Summer Camp programme provides childcare for children 11 to 14 years of age during the summer break. In addition to activities that promote teamwork and communication, children are also provided with counselling and support.

Employment training, Kenya

YMCA Kenya works with young people to provide them with skills and training to support them in entering and remaining in the workforce. In doing this, the programme aims to address one of the key causes of youth vulnerability and suicide, while also empowering youth within their communities.

Holly Project, England

The Holly Project is a free support service for survivors of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), run by survivors of CSE. The project offers a safe place for individuals and their families to get support and advice from people who truly understand the trauma and lasting impacts of CSE.

Literacy Programme, South Sudan

The YMCA in South Sudan runs a literacy programme, focusing on providing young people with education and English language skills. The programme links with schools, and focuses on creating communities and supports for young people.

Streetgym, Australia

The Streetgym programme provides young people 12 to 18 years old with an opportunity to engage in activities in their own neighbourhood. The programme creates intentional space for young people to connect with each other, participate in outdoor activities, and receive counselling and support from local youth services.



safe space
policy

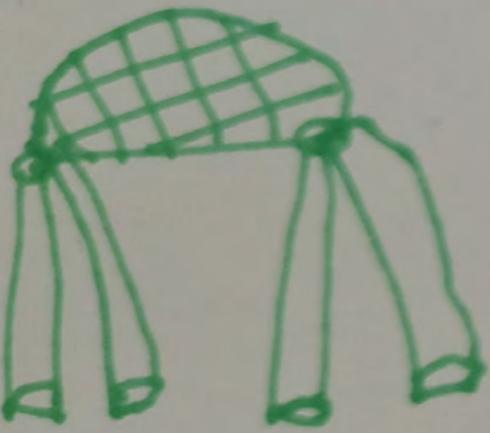
Parachute

NOT
collect youth
ideas.

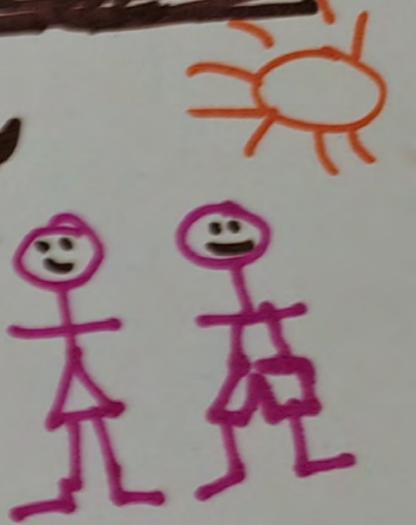
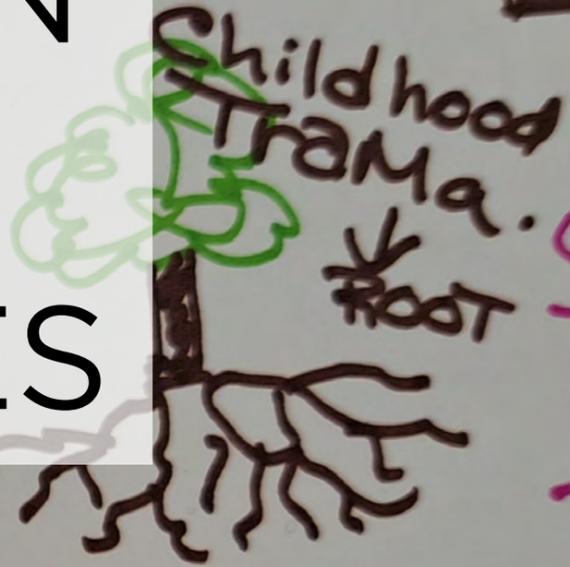
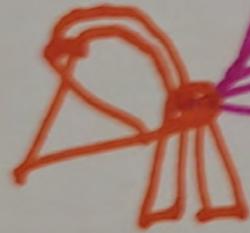
ECE
experience

YMCA VISION FOR OUR FUTURE COMMUNITIES

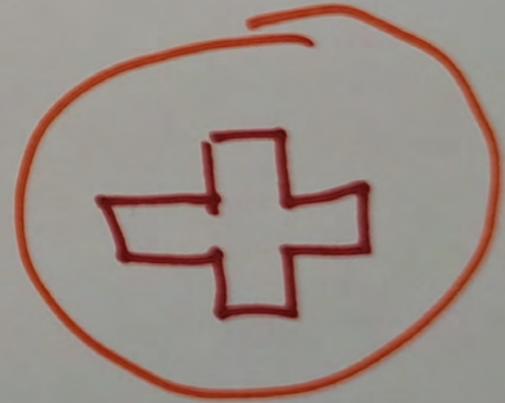
safety
net



Express
yourself
know more
about
opinion



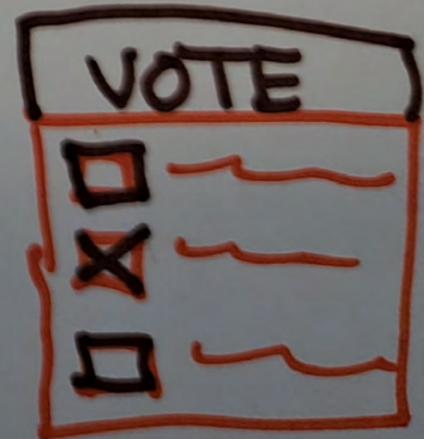
Public
Policy



Trauma
informed
Approach



VOTE
public
policy



GOOD
consultations
sweeden

connect
physical/
mental health.

How might we work to build wellbeing following a time of COVID-19 related challenges?

How might we create communities within the YMCA that support individuals to balance their family, work, education, and spirituality?

How might we encourage young people to harness their voice to create changes within their communities?

How might we create space for community wellbeing at local, national, regional, and global levels?

How might we remove structural barriers to youth leadership within communities?

How might we support youth to become self-reliant and resilient in a global environment of ongoing change?



We help young people deal with the rapid rate of change in the world

I am learning about how to be self reliant as a person

I feel supported within the YMCA to be who I want to be

Europe

I am being encouraged to be physically active and fit

Australia

Supported to develop my skills to support employment

Kenya

There are services for me if I am experiencing mental health issues

USA

Our staff are effective at mental health first approaches

The culture in my YMCA supports me and my peers

I am recognised for my contributions

Support the settlement of refugees

Japan

I can access support when I have health issues

West Africa

I feel a sense of freedom

Our YMCA has policies that make it an inclusive place to be

South America

We increase the hope in people

West Africa

Empowered to make decisions that can influence my YMCA

We use our influence to make positive change to country level policies

South Africa

We make meaningful partnerships to advocate for change

My YMCA gives me space to drive youth-led action and change

Europe

Access to clean water

West Africa

I have opportunities to grow and achieve what I want in life

We can provide solutions for those without housing

East Africa

We provide the community with tools and resources to help them be exposed to more of the world

Madagascar

I have support when experiencing issues relating to migration

South America





WHAT ARE THE COMMON WAYS WE LOOK AT COMMUNITY WELLBEING ACROSS THE WORLD?



Community Wellbeing means....

Being able to create change and lead

I need:

- A platform to connect
- Autonomy and trust from the organisation or the community
- Resources

Being supported to become the person I want to be

I need:

- Ability to explore who I am and what I want to achieve
- Access to connections, networks and resources
- I need my horizons expanded

Feeling comfortable to be me

I need:

- Policies, environments and spaces that are inclusive
- People like me represented in leadership
- People to meet me where I am

Having the bare essentials I need to survive

I need:

- Housing support
- Medical and mental health support
- Financial support
- A sense of community and belonging

A SAFE PLACE

A PLACE FOR YOU
TO FEEL SAFE AND
ABLE TO BE WHO
YOU WANT TO BE

We recognise the importance of taking the time to make connections with each other, and creating space for people to come together in meaningful ways.

In order to transform Community Wellbeing around the world, we need to create relationships on local, national and global levels that not only foster community wellbeing in their own right, but also allow us to make connections and align on a broader mission.

Vision 2030 has given us an opportunity to align on our shared vision and mission around community wellbeing. Creating alignment in work and common platforms for collaboration will help us become more efficient and better align our services in this space.

Idea: Building bridges for global citizenship and outreach

In order to build global networks of youth leaders, the YMCA will create direct lines of communication between individuals involved in youth-led leadership programmes globally. Working to break down geographic silos in communication, the initiative will promote collaboration and information sharing around the world, allowing individuals and groups to crowd-source ideas and connect with each other.

This initiative will amplify connectivity between existing programmes (such as the EGLI, Y Not, Youth in Government, and Change Agent programme) and using storytelling as a mechanism to create safe spaces for individuals to connect and converse. Ultimately, this initiative will create a single, youth-led resource for problem-solving, creative ideation, and cross-cultural conversation.

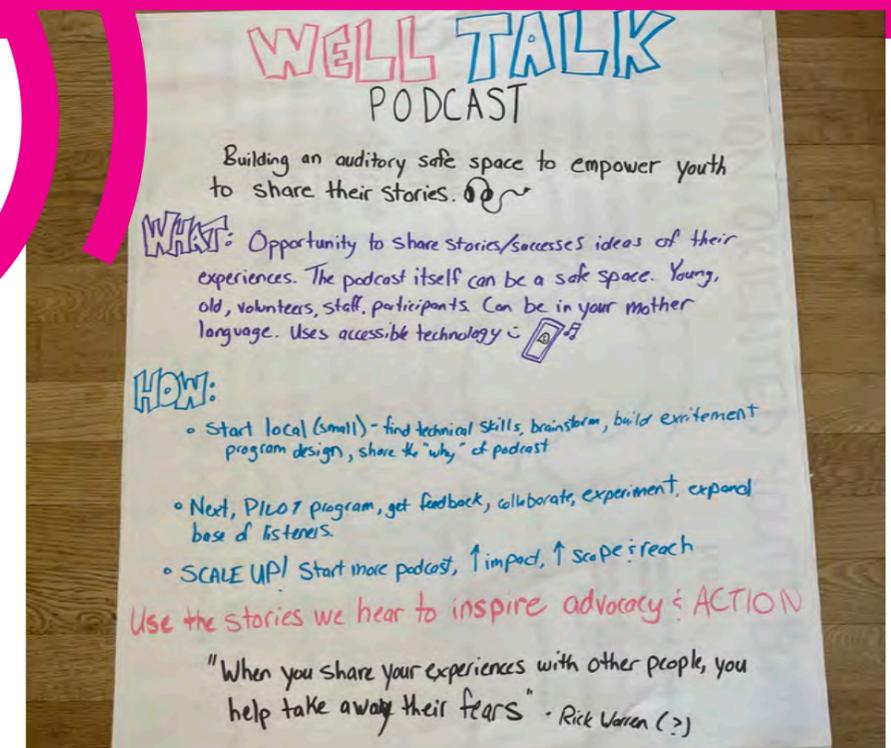
Idea: WellTalk podcast

Building an auditory safe space to empower youth to share their stories (see image above right).

Making physical spaces more attractive to youth, so that they can better serve them, is an important way to contribute to the attainment of the mission.

We recognise that we need to make physical spaces a true reflection of not only our value as the YMCA, but also what youth in our communities value. We also need to increase awareness of the value YMCAs deliver within their communities and bring more people into our spaces.

To do this, we need to go to youth (with pop-up or outreach activities) and bring them to us (with physical transportation and awareness programmes).



Idea: Project campfire

Campfire circles have provided an inclusive space for storytelling and sharing for centuries. The YMCA will take the campfire concept and transform it into a consistent way for individuals from across the YMCA to share their stories of success and current challenges. The purpose of the campfires will be for people to come together in a safe and inclusive space, with the common goal of connecting and working together.

The campfire spaces can be both physical and digital and will focus on creating and celebrating connection. They will have a set of guiding principles that will work to ensure they create safe and inclusive spaces for sharing.

ACHIEVING GOALS

A PLACE FOR YOU TO BECOME YOUR BEST SELF AND ACHIEVE YOUR LIFE GOALS

Across YMCAs, we want to work together to address the causes of exclusion within our communities. To do this, we need to take a holistic approach. This involves:

- Raising the visibility of issues and promoting acceptance of abilities, races, genders, generational traumas, identity, sexual orientation, religion, criminal history and other factors.
- Using the Ys global reach and presence to advocate for the rights of youth around the world.
- Setting up systems across the YMCA that grow and develop across local, national and international networks.
- Conducting outreach programmes that increase access to services and meet communities where they are.
- Igniting passion and energy within communities to bring more people into the mission.

Idea: Bringing diversity to our leadership teams

To better represent the diversity of our global YMCA community, we will work to increase the diversity in age, gender, ethnicity and background across Boards and YMCA leadership teams. This will not only provide more space for minority groups to represent themselves, but also give youth a sense of belonging and representation within YMCAs.

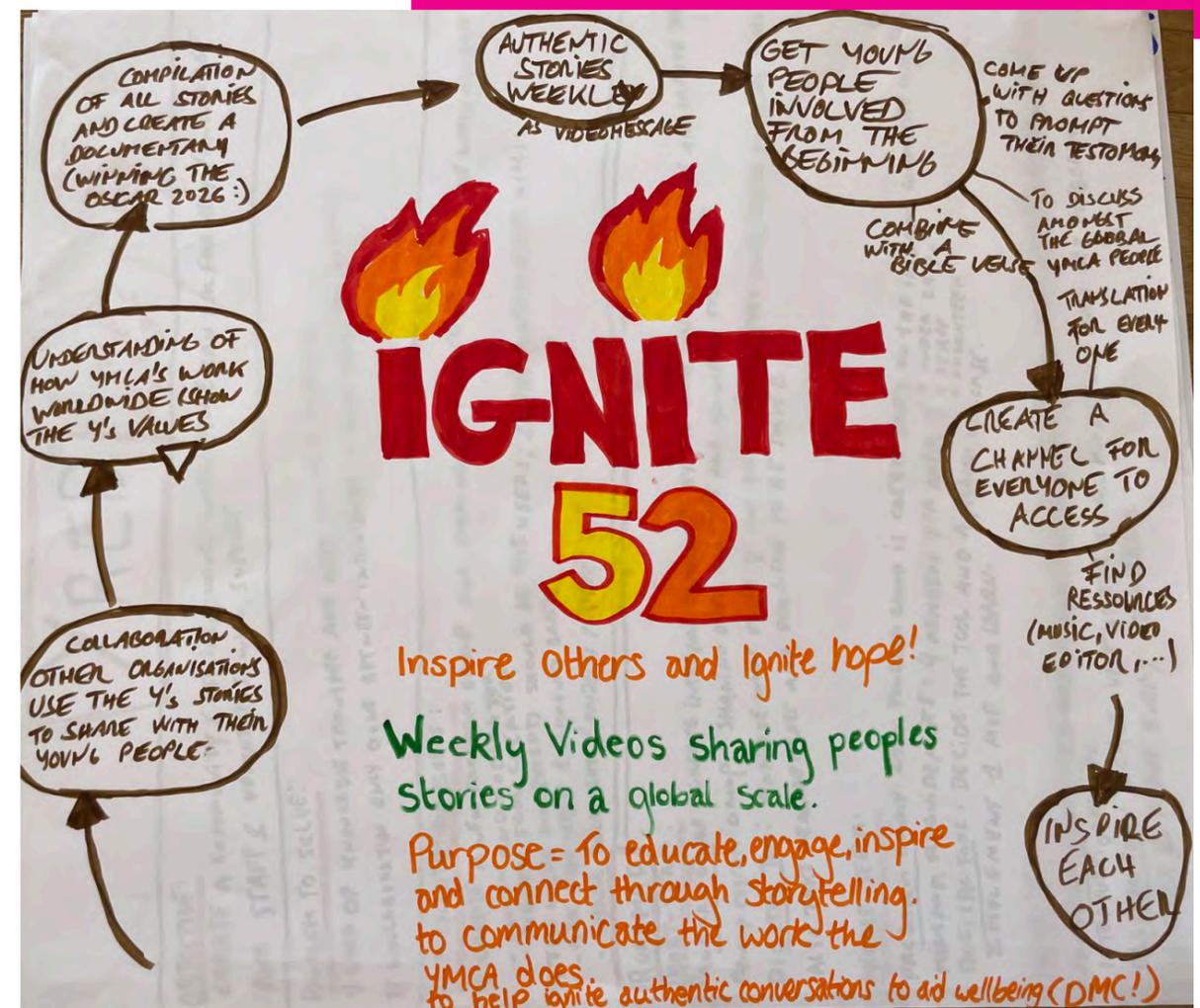
To do this, we will begin by starting conversations with leadership teams within YMCAs about the benefits and processes of more diverse leadership teams. YMCAs can consider adopting specific initiatives, including:

- Reverse mentoring, where current leaders are mentored by youth and given the opportunity to understand their life experiences.
- Implementing quotas and targets for leadership teams.
- Creating space for youth to contribute to strategic discussions and Board decisions.

Idea: Ignite52

To educate, engage, inspire and connect individuals through storytelling, ignite52 will communicate the work YMCAs do while igniting authentic conversations between people and improving overarching wellbeing.

The programme will involve sharing weekly videos and showcasing stories from around the world.



COMMUNITY PLATFORM

CREATING A PLATFORM FOR PEOPLE TO LEAD AND DRIVE COMMUNITY WELLBEING WITHIN THEIR YMCAS AND WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITIES

In order to give people the opportunity to create true wellbeing within their YMCAs and communities, we need to create intentional spaces and platforms for knowledge transfer and leadership.

Idea: Action-oriented Youth Boards

Youth are the future of not only the YMCA, but also the world – for the Y to remain relevant we know that we must listen and engage youth in the decisions that ultimately impact them, their communities, and future generations. Creating formal channels for meaningful youth voice and contributions to Board of Directors discussions would ensure that Board level decisions truly represent the experiences and needs of communities.

To do this, we will identify and appoint youth leaders to Boards, who have the responsibility of understanding the priorities of their local members and sharing them with the Board of Directors.

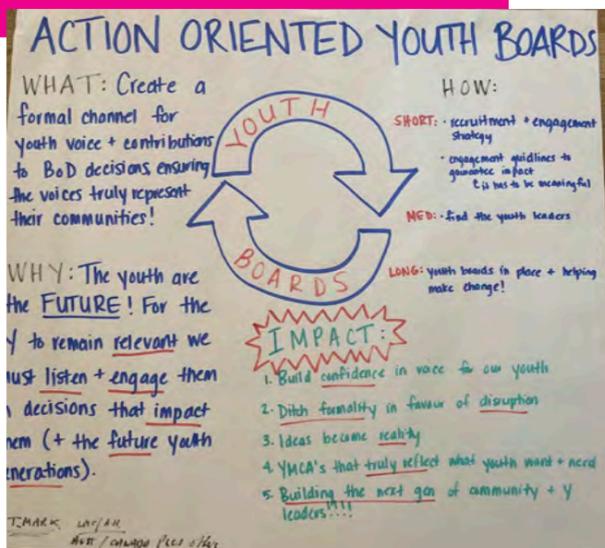
In doing this, we will build confidence in our youth and disrupt traditional processes which can allow innovative ideas to become reality. Ultimately, we will work towards creating YMCAs that truly reflect the desires and needs of youth while building the next generation of the YMCA community.

Idea: Y-RED

The objective of Y-RED is to create a community, both offline and online, that allows people to connect and help or share knowledge with one another. This is facilitated and supported by staff and volunteers. It solves the current problems of:

- A lack of knowledge transfer and best practice sharing.
- Collaboration is only done between individuals where people know one another personally.

See right for drafted implementation goals and roadmap.



Y-RED Implementation goals



Create a new programme group and digital tool for sharing best practice around the world alliance

The local movement should be the users of the platform who are asking for help or sharing documents, projects or ideas

Long term

Programme Group: Is active and is the main collaboration group between local and international Ys.

Digital Tool: Scale-up the tool to all movements and get feedback. Inspect and adapt every 12 weeks.

Medium term

Programme Group: New programme group is created based on the internal committee's work. Minimum requirements are 4 members per area (2 under 19 years old; 1 staff; 1 volunteer).

Digital Tool: Decide on the tool and a single problem use-case. Implement one MVP and learn.

Roadmap

Short term

Programme Group: Create internal committee by the world alliance to define and create the new programme group 'sharing best practice and knowledge transfer'.

Digital Tool: Analyse what other Ys are doing, ideas they have, and external tools they use. Also take requirements and problems to be solved.

MEANINGFUL WORK



What does this mean to different people?

We propose that we reflect and focus on barriers first. Then, we engage with employers to build purposeful relationships. As a result, we will partner and collaborate to develop meaningful multicultural experiences with enterprises at every level. Finally, let the world know through intentional awareness strategies.

Name the concept

"Reach out"

Describe it

A campaign with a celebrity who highlights what we can do to help and how to reach us. Create a Logo.

Draw it

Find out what you're good at

What problem is it trying to solve?
How does it work to achieve Vision 2030?
Who will benefit?

The opportunity to get a meaningful work and to reach those who needs it. It will both benefit the individuals as the society. ^{young people}

How would we implement?
What are the next steps in implementation? What resources are required?

Find contacts (people who)

Name the concept :

Meaningful work
(entrepreneurship)

Describe it:

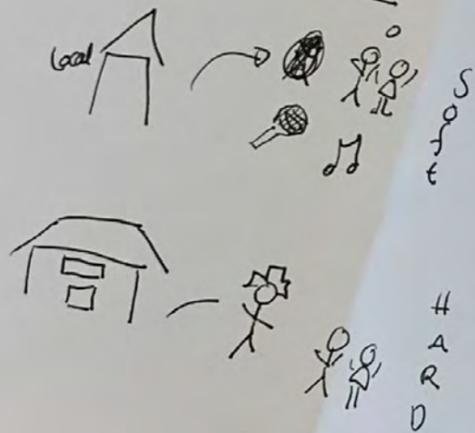
Focus on

What problem :

Meaningful

Mix between hard and soft skills. The soft skills comes from sports, the hard skills is a cooperation with the local professionals.

Draw it:



How might we connect young people who are typically overlooked with opportunities to engage in meaningful work?

How might we move from focusing on education to satisfaction in employment?

How might we prepare youth for future jobs that don't exist yet?

WHAT ARE THE PARTS OF THE SYSTEM WE NEED TO CONSIDER

AND DESIGN FOR IF WE WANT TO CREATE A SOCIETY WHICH PROMOTES MEANINGFUL WORK?

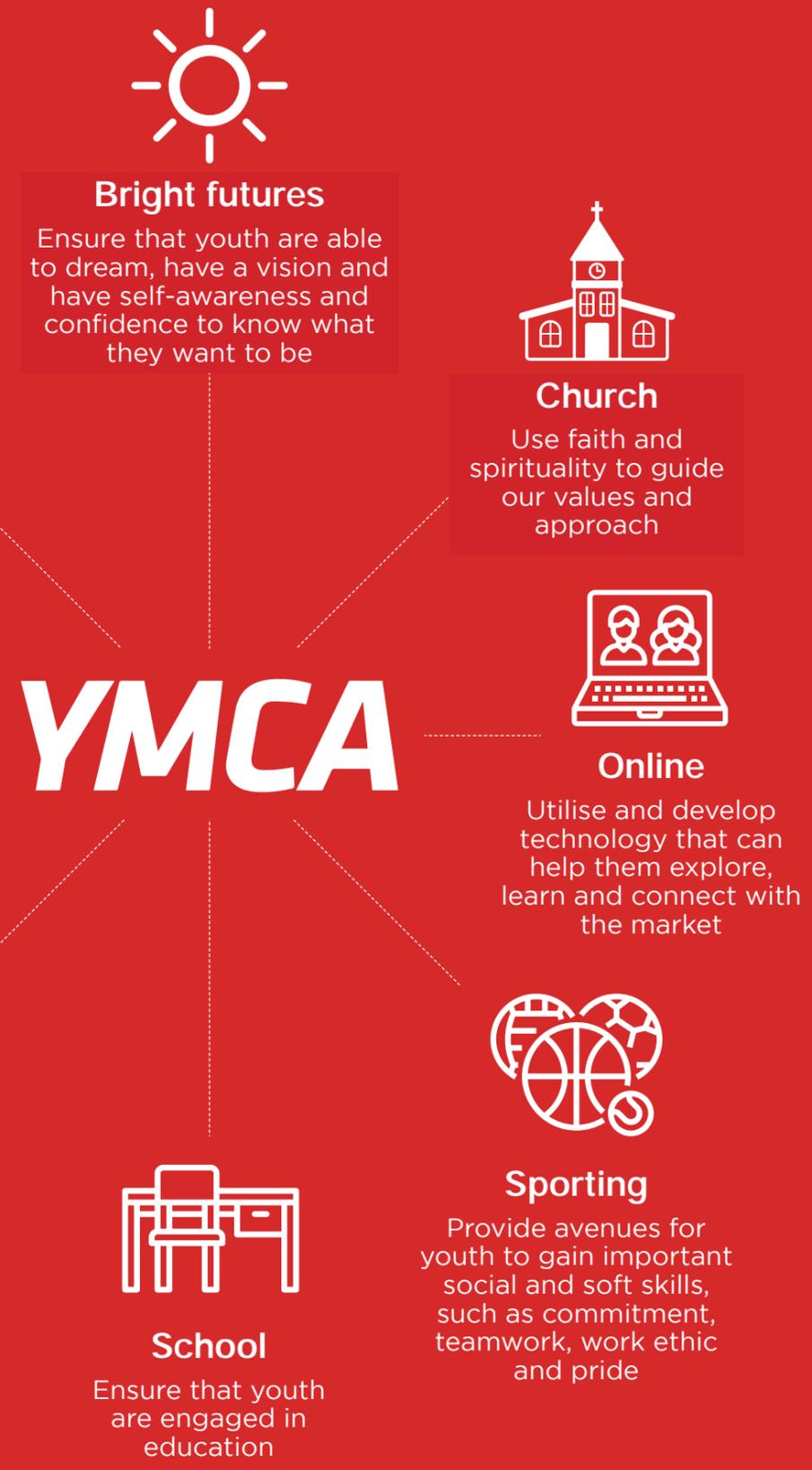
I'm Nigel, I pledge my support and commitment to developing a path for all young employees into meaningful, paid, and valued jobs reflecting the local community.

I'm Susannah and I pledge my support and commitment to developing a path for all young employees into meaningful, paid and valued jobs reflecting the local community.

I'm Nicki and I pledge my support + commitment to developing a path for all young employees into meaningful, paid, and valued jobs reflecting the local community.

I am Ishmael Bahali and I pledge my support and commitment to developing a path for young employees into meaningful, paid, and valued jobs reflecting the local community.

I am Denis and I pledge my support and commitment to developing a path for all young employees into meaningful, paid, and valued jobs reflecting the local community.



Workshop participants particularly focused on generating ideas to shift Bright Futures, Partners and School. The following pages present these concepts.



BRIGHT FUTURES

ENSURING THAT YOUTH ARE ABLE TO DREAM, HAVE A VISION AND HAVE SELF-AWARENESS AND CONFIDENCE TO KNOW WHAT THEY WANT TO BE

Tell our stories of successful YMCA youth who find themselves in meaningful leadership positions, to inspire the rest of the YMCA

Idea: Encouraging multicultural experiences for YMCA employees
Building connections to ensure that employees engage in local, regional and global experiences so that they cannot only connect with other people, but also so their own work is reflective of the YMCA's global citizenry.

To do this, we can:

- Create a cultural exchange programme that provides immersive experiences.
- Develop local, national and global skills exchange opportunities.
- Conduct global onboarding programmes for all new employees, to create these connections and ideas from the outset.



PARTNERS

CREATING CONNECTIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS SO THAT THE WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY IS GREATER FOR YOUTH

Better way to engage youth in the programmes we have

Idea: Creating connections and pathways to entrepreneurship

Create connections with local entrepreneurs and business people to understand what the path of an entrepreneur in their community could be, and connect them with networks of individuals who may be able to support them in their own journeys.

Idea: Creating networks and connecting with local businesses

Identifying and connecting with local companies and building relationships to: Create more opportunities for young people within organisations.

- Advocate for inclusive business processes.
- Expanding the opportunities to realise the YMCA vision through a larger network of partners.

Idea: Innovation Incubator

Providing young people with the tools they need to develop a business idea and launch it in the market. The idea of the incubator would be to:

- Help young people understand the markets in which they are operating, user needs, and develop viable business ideas.
- Support young people to develop the skills they need to establish and run businesses (for example: financial management).
- Connect young people with mentors or coaches from industry.

The programme would also aim to build the confidence of young people to try and experiment with business ideas in low-risk ways, in an environment that will support and celebrate success as well as failure.

Idea: Y Connect

Using the collaboration process as a way to engage more external stakeholders. A global platform for online information sharing, sharing of pathways, best practices and a place for youth to engage around meaningful work, in order to help youth with employability.

Youth are more entrepreneurial than ever before in history. However, significant barriers still prevent youth from pursuing their entrepreneurial pathways.

How can the YMCA support youth who want to be entrepreneurs?

Across the world, on average youth are 1.6 times more likely to wait to start a business than adults. In developing nations, significant barriers still exist which often prevent youth from becoming entrepreneurs.

Some examples include:

- Low levels of GDP growth.
- Low levels of youth employment, statistics show that never being employed is a large barrier to entrepreneurship.
- Increases in minimum wage, which is good, but it does make entering the workforce harder for youth.
- Lack of managerial, technical and entrepreneurship skills.
- Lack of access to finance.
- Lack of assets to use for collateral.
- Lack of visibility of opportunities and support mechanisms.

Migrant entrepreneurs significantly outweigh non-migrant entrepreneurs, suggesting that when given the right conditions, youth from developing nations are able to achieve great success in business.



How can the YMCA help to shift this?

1

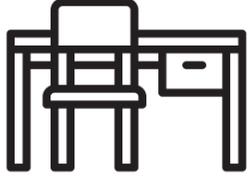
Create a platform for youth to see what support and programmes are available to them (within and outside the YMCA)

2

Programmes to get youth the necessary managerial and technical and entrepreneurial skills

3

Programmes to help youth get into their first jobs



SCHOOL

ENSURING THAT YOUTH ARE ENGAGED IN EDUCATION

Given increasing levels of unemployment globally, and the vulnerability of young people within their communities, the YMCA has an important role to play in supporting young people to develop the skills they need to enter and remain in the workforce. To do this, the YMCA can work with education institutions (both schools and universities) and employers to:

- Make connections between young people and education opportunities, and support young people through attendance.
- Increase opportunities for internal information sharing and skill-building.
- Connecting young people with employment opportunities within and outside the YMCA.

Specialised education to support young people entering the workforce

Idea: Standardised skills audit
Give young people the ability to have a standardised, recognised and trusted way to be able to communicate their skills (acquired through and outside of the YMCA), reduce bias, and help employability.

Idea: Youth employment agency
Develop an employment and training agency that can adapt to employment shortages in real time, empowering young people to develop skills and connect with employment opportunities.

The focus of the agency would be to activate the large and growing cohort of young people globally with opportunities and ideas to not only support them to enter the workforce, but also to activate industries and economies.

To do this, we can:

- Develop a training pipeline for youth development that is nuanced to local needs and opportunities.
- Draw on networks within the YMCA global community and partner with local educational institutions to develop and deliver content.
- Make connections with industries and organisations to give young people opportunities to enter the workforce.



Better way to engage youth in the programmes we already have

Idea: YMCA University
A global network of YMCA members who act as teachers, mentors, and coaches for others. Working in a globally inclusive platform, the platform will focus on representation and acknowledgement of the diversity of people, skills, and experiences in the workforce.

Members of YMCA University can act as both teachers and students, sharing skills and experiences from around the globe and within communities.

Idea: Teenager teachers
Training even younger people to be trainers and support youth to find employment and get into the employment system.



SUSTAINABLE PLANET

I am Tom Valentine and I pledge my support and commitment to youth-led climate solutions!

I am Shweta and I pledge my support and commitment to work with the team like and do friendly work at YMCAs as much as possible, and encourage others to do the same.

I am the one I pledge my support and commitment to work with the team and give the best of work to find inspiration in within a my local world.

I am Lisa and I pledge my support and commitment to making sure that YMCAs forward become more sustainable, socially, ecological and economic.

I am Tobias and I pledge my support and commitment for a more environmentally sustainable YMCAs worldwide, nationally and locally.

I am Sandra and I pledge my support and commitment to vision 2030 and to further a more environmentally responsible behaviour and practices at the Y.

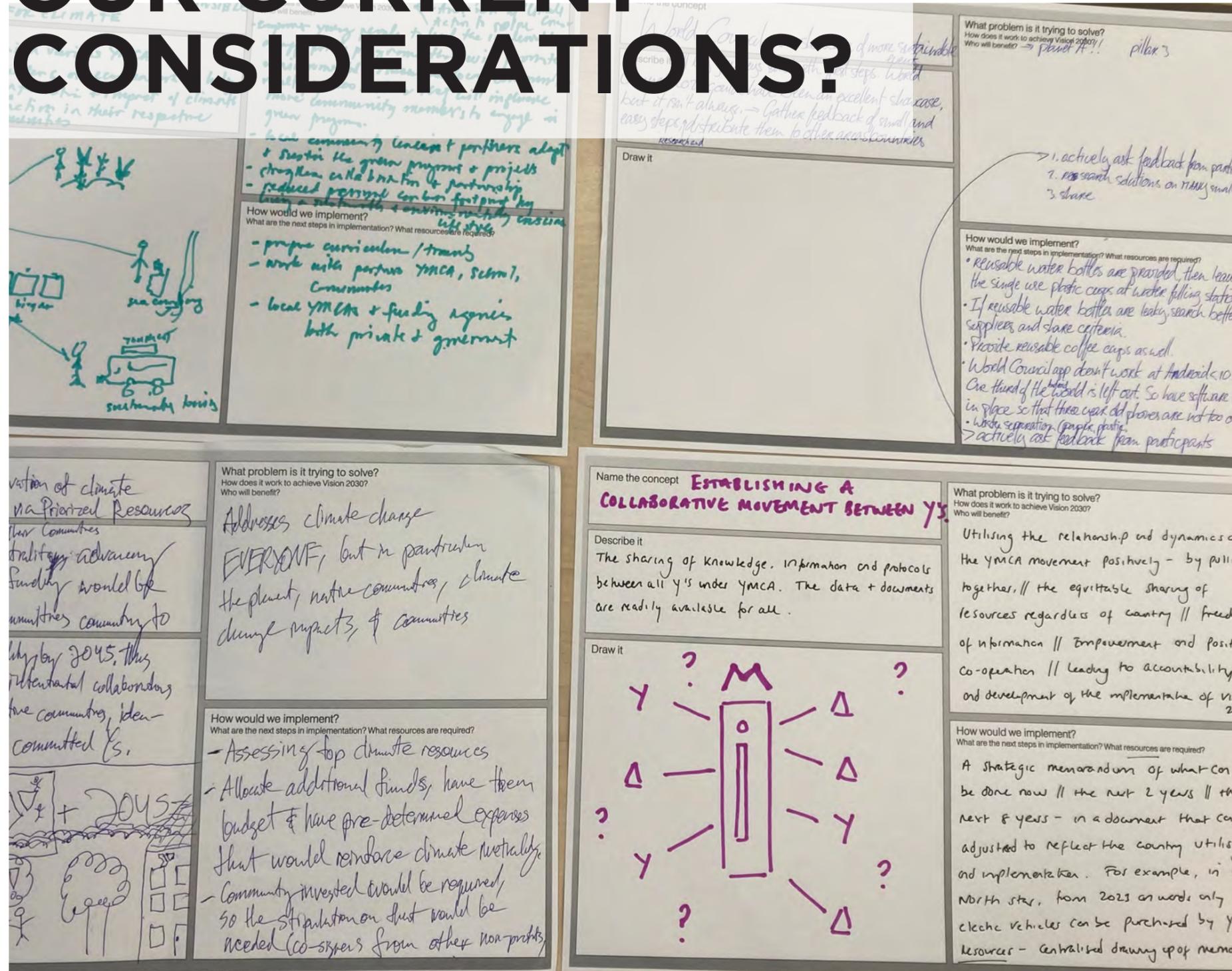
I am Lisa and I pledge my support and commitment to work hard to Myanmar and sharing my knowledge and experience from the United Nations Institute and networks.

I am Amber and I pledge my support and commitment to YMCAs, kids, youth-led climate solutions, volunteers, staff! ❤️

I am Amber and I pledge my support and commitment to YMCAs, kids, youth-led climate solutions, volunteers, staff! ❤️

I am Rasmus and I pledge my support and commitment to create a holistic and inclusive that fosters ownership and concrete action on the Environment and Climate.

WHAT ARE OUR CURRENT CONSIDERATIONS?



Members of the YMCA are feeling frustrated towards the World Council's lack of current sustainable action. YMCA youth are passionate about climate change and sustainable action within the organisation and on a global scale.

Feelings towards Ys in the northern hemisphere suggest a growing desire for the organisation to take on greater responsibility.

Currently there is an opportunity for the YMCA to implement practices and goals to contribute towards a sustainable planet and align with the Paris climate agreement to reach net zero by 2050.

What can we take from Vision 2030?

A number of examples emerged for how the YMCA might work towards obtaining a sustainable planet. This can be achieved by:

Local level

Formation of green teams, solar panels, planting and growing agriculture, education entered around reducing carbon footprints, informed purchasing and developing localised policies specific to that region's goals.

National level

Expanding upon youth-led mission by creating a climate manifesto, forming green teams at a national level and networking between local green teams, sustainable products, government green council, informed plans around climate action in each country.

Global level

YMCA green ambassadors, networking at a global level between green ambassadors and national green teams, seed money funding. entered around reducing carbon footprints, informed purchasing and developing localised policies specific to that region's goals.



COMMUNICATION

THE RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS CAN BE SIMPLIFIED IN THE FIELD OF ECOLOGY (AND IN GENERAL)

As a leader in climate action, the YMCA is aiming to be a reliable global source of information and resources in the climate movement. YMCA will be a recognised example for youth organisations to contribute to net zero.

The YMCA's response to this concept is fueled by how humanity is affected by climate change and seeking action for all people in the world. The YMCA hopes to make positive impact in the space.

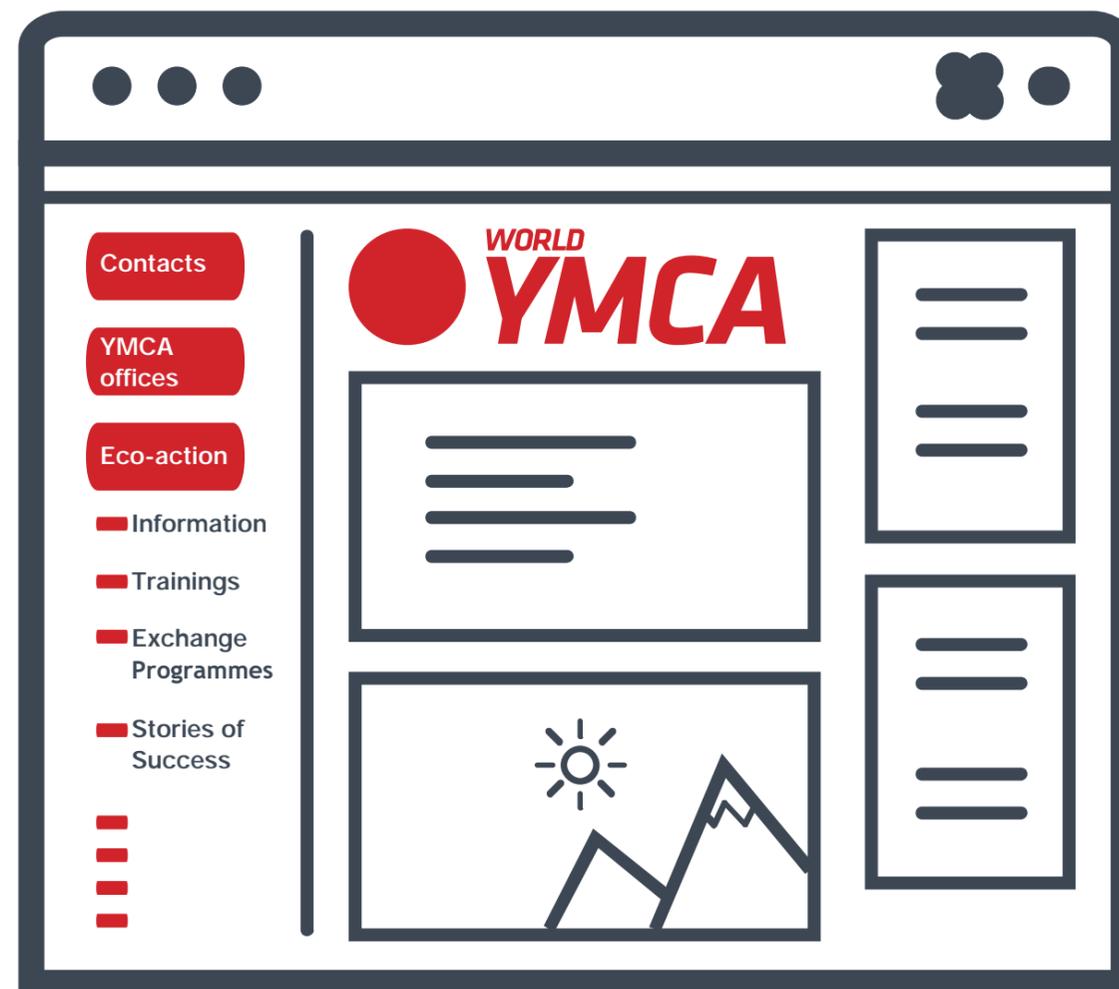
Idea: Carbon footprint tracking

Calculate the carbon footprint of the world YMCA and then work to decrease it.

Idea: Adding new sections to the YMCA world website and Y offices' websites
Articles to be written by YMCA members that include experiences of eco-action in the Y. These act as a vessel to inspire climate action and as a knowledge sharing point.

To do this, we need a sustainable solution database that is searchable and scalable, as well as appropriate for cultural adaptability. Implementation steps should include hiring experts or partnering with universities to assist with:

- Writing educational pieces and articles on climate change.
 - Organising and managing training and exchange programmes.
 - Gathering contacts and information about the YMCA offices.
 - Providing a review on current sustainable practices.
 - Instilling cohesion across the YMCA.
- Ongoing IT support will be required to update and manage information on the YMCA website. This could include a cloud storage solution for sharing resources.





COLLABORATION

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS, INFORMATION SHARING AND TRAINING THAT IS ABOUT FOSTERING A SUSTAINABLE PLANET

YMCA youth developed the idea of organising exchange programmes for YMCA staff and youth. These exchange programmes would aim to

encourage learning and knowledge sharing about how to have a sustainable planet.

Ideally exchange will involve individuals travelling to different YMCAs within their country and internationally. Travel is an amazing opportunity for youth to develop their independence, problem solving skills and cultural awareness. With fund raising and YMCA sponsorship individuals can learn the methods and unique ways a community practices sustainability.

Case Study: Individual practicing sustainability in their community

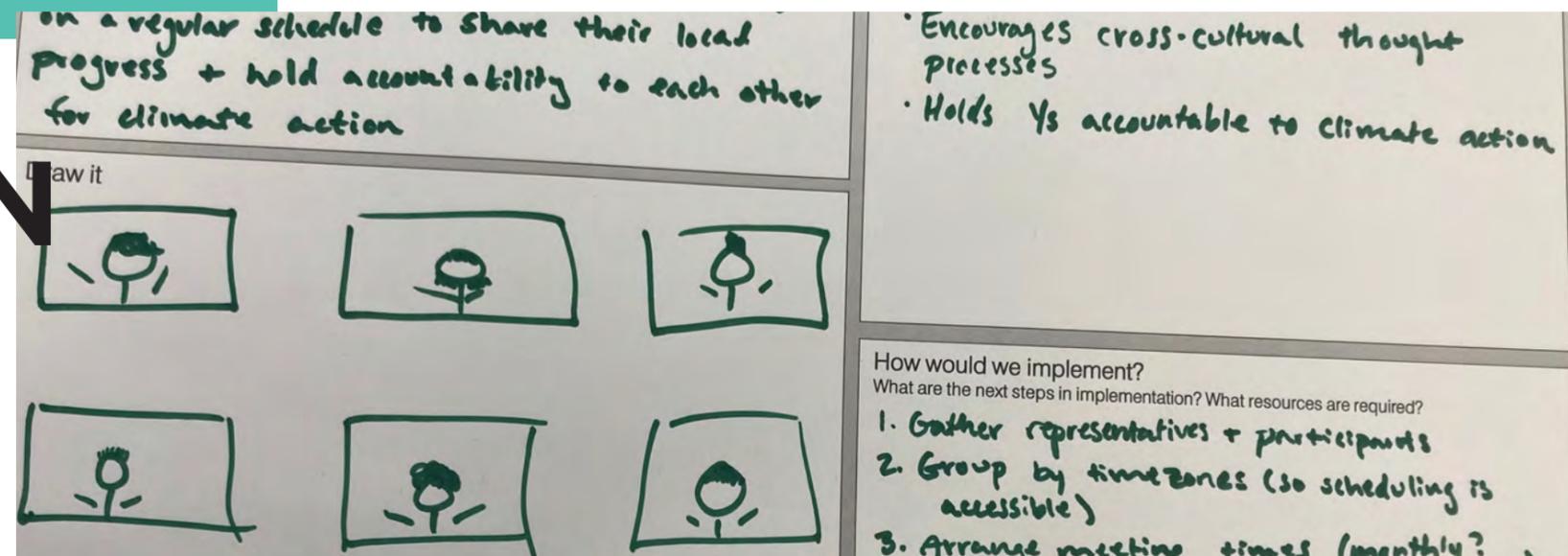
External factors such as financials, war, health concerns or natural disasters may act as a roadblock for exchange to occur. However, virtual exchange would aid individuals to collaborate and connect with other Ys globally. Video calls may not be able to assist a person to be immersed in a new culture, but they can create relationships and information sharing.

As well as information sharing, exchange programmes enable individuals to network and create partnerships within the YMCA. Sharing lived experiences is crucial in fostering empathy and building an understanding of culture. The sustainable practices an individual has in Australia are different to sustainable practices in South Africa or Denmark.

Idea: Internal training on sustainable practices done on a local, national and global level

There are so many creative and innovative ways to reduce your carbon footprint at home. These unique practices can be shared on exchange at a national and global level.

What it looks like in practice:
At your next Y meeting, share an example of how you care for the environment at home.



Do you use your bath water to water the garden?

Do you have a composting system set up?

How do you recycle your plastics?

Is there a fun way you can introduce this at the YMCA?





EDUCATION

Idea:



WHAT?

The YMCA has committed to the pillar of a Sustainable Planet being an integral part of the YMCA ethos. Sustainable Planet is a commitment to reducing the YMCA's carbon footprint, achieving carbon neutrality and educating youth about how they can protect the earth. The YMCA must use their platform and global reach to educate youth, volunteers and staff on how they can make a difference.

WHO?

The YMCA has a huge reach with an opportunity to educate youth globally. Education can take place internally within the YMCA. The YMCA has over 12,000 branches across the world all of which can contribute to educating staff, volunteers and youth on making a sustainable planet.

To further this, the YMCA has the potential to advocate beyond the organisation. Imagine, if each one of those branches educated 10 people in their community about how to care and nourish the environment. That's 120,000 people who can make a sustainable impact! Each person involved in the YMCA has the power to make a difference in their community. It comes down to the knowledge they receive and pass on that will make a difference.

WHEN?

Now!

The YMCA has set sustainable goals to meet before the year 2030. A key goal discussed was reaching net-zero emissions by 2030 within the YMCA. Now is the time to start discussions in our local Ys as to how you can achieve this.

HOW?

There are many methods of how the YMCA can educate the community on how to maintain a sustainable planet. However, each method should be centred around attainable steps and goals or future events.

Goal setting is a huge part of attaining lasting behaviour change. By using the SMART goal setting framework your local Y can discuss how sustainable impact can be achieved.

- S - Specific
- M - Measurable
- A - Attainable
- R - Relative
- T - Time-bound

What is your SMART goal for educating yourself or others on environmental change?



POLICIES & PRACTICE

CONCEPTS FOR SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES AND SUPPORTING ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES ACROSS THE YMCA

Idea: YMCA green task force (connectedness)

Every local Y creates a task force to review its environmental policies, programmes and its everyday practices. The task force helps the aim to reach climate neutrality through regular communications.

How this works:

- The green task force meets regularly by local time zones (e.g. quarterly or monthly basis) to collaboratively discuss relevant new and environmental initiatives.
- It involves someone to take minutes and draft a monthly report or newsletter. These are sent to national Y and incorporated into a monthly newsletter.
- Global Y compiles national reports into a 6-monthly report that outlines how the Y is utilising its green task force at a local, national and global level.

Idea: Clean and sustainable eating practices

The YMCA is situated in incredibly diverse areas of the world with even more incredible food! Food is a factor that brings communities together to share experiences and connect. To further the spectacular benefits of food and meals; this can be a method of sustainable improvements. Sustainable eating practices can be small changes to one's diet, shopping and consumption habits.

The YMCA can assist this idea by organising regular dinners to occur in local YMCAs for members and the community to join. These dinners will allow the YMCA to foster connectedness and education. Food eaten on the night can be locally sourced and environmentally conscious. For example, one dinner could be a vegan meal to benefit the environmental impact of the meat industry. Food can be purchased from local farmer markets; or even better grown in a community vegetable patch. Food can also be free range or brought from a member's home.

During the preparation and after the meal, education can be provided to explain how the meal was environmentally conscious. Further education could include the environmental benefits of eating vegan and vegetarian meals, how to grow food at home and how the YMCA can continue to improve their food consumption and waste. The lasting impact of the meal is aimed to reduce members carbon footprint and inspire members to eat sustainably at home.



MEASUREMENT

PROVIDING EDUCATION TO YMCAs GLOBALLY WHO ARE UNSURE OR OVERWHELMED BY HOW TO REDUCE THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The global issue of climate change is a vast and intimidating concept that may overwhelm many people. YMCA has pledged to reach net-zero emission by the year 2030. However, the small changes each YMCA team and member makes can be difficult to track. Each change in behaviour and attitude towards climate change is a vital step in achieving the YMCA's sustainable goals.

Idea: Measure to manage

The idea of measure to manage is a concept to track the YMCA's sustainable impact in their local space. This would look like a universal measurement of the environmental impact of the YMCA. This measurement could be submitted to a global platform to assess and compare outcomes. This platform could allow designated people to provide feedback to how local YMCA's can improve.

Measuring the YMCA's environmental impact is an exciting opportunity that will require industry expertise and funding. Expertise will be required to draft, iterate and implement the programme. This concept will also require a YMCA working group to fill in knowledge gap on YMCA practices.

Idea: Net Zero by 2030 Green Book

The YMCA can sign the green book agreeing to the goal of net zero by 2030. It is a way to track yearly carbon reporting and can be used to advocate for governments to commit to net zero.

Idea: A sustainable planet manifesto

The manifesto incorporates pledges completed at the local and national level. The pledge outlines actions and a sustainable plan at an individual and group level.



★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆
Assess your YMCA space for the building's energy efficiency in terms of lighting, energy use, waste management and water usage

- “
- What light fixtures are in your building? Can the bulbs be replaced by a more energy efficient choice such as LEDs?
 - Do you have separate trash disposal methods for recycling, soft plastics, hard plastics, organic waste and other non-recyclable waste?
 - Do you have a compost?
 - Are there appliances not in use? Can these be unplugged?
 - Are there any air leaks in your building? Can these be sealed?



Do you have any other suggestions? Share these with your YMCA team!



IMAGINING THE FUTURE...

...for the World

Renewable energy is the only source of energy available

Greener and more plentiful environment

Reduced deforestation, abundant plants and agricultural crops, greener urban settings

Healthy and positive relations between nations, strong democracies and a global mindset

Cleaner air and water globally

Citizen choice and opportunity to make change

No more world hunger, food scarcity and waste

...for our Communities

More oxygen, less air and water pollution

Fossil fuels are no longer used

Using locally sourced resources for positive global impact

Children are all well fed and nourished

No war, there is harmony and wellbeing of all citizens

...for our YMCAs

Supporting environmental change that addresses system not just individual needs

Incentivising nations and organisations to make sustainable choices

Framing climate change discussions and mindsets with a focus on the community, country and global goals

Gives power to the people and authority to the youth

Assisting those individuals who seek to make significant change to make an impact

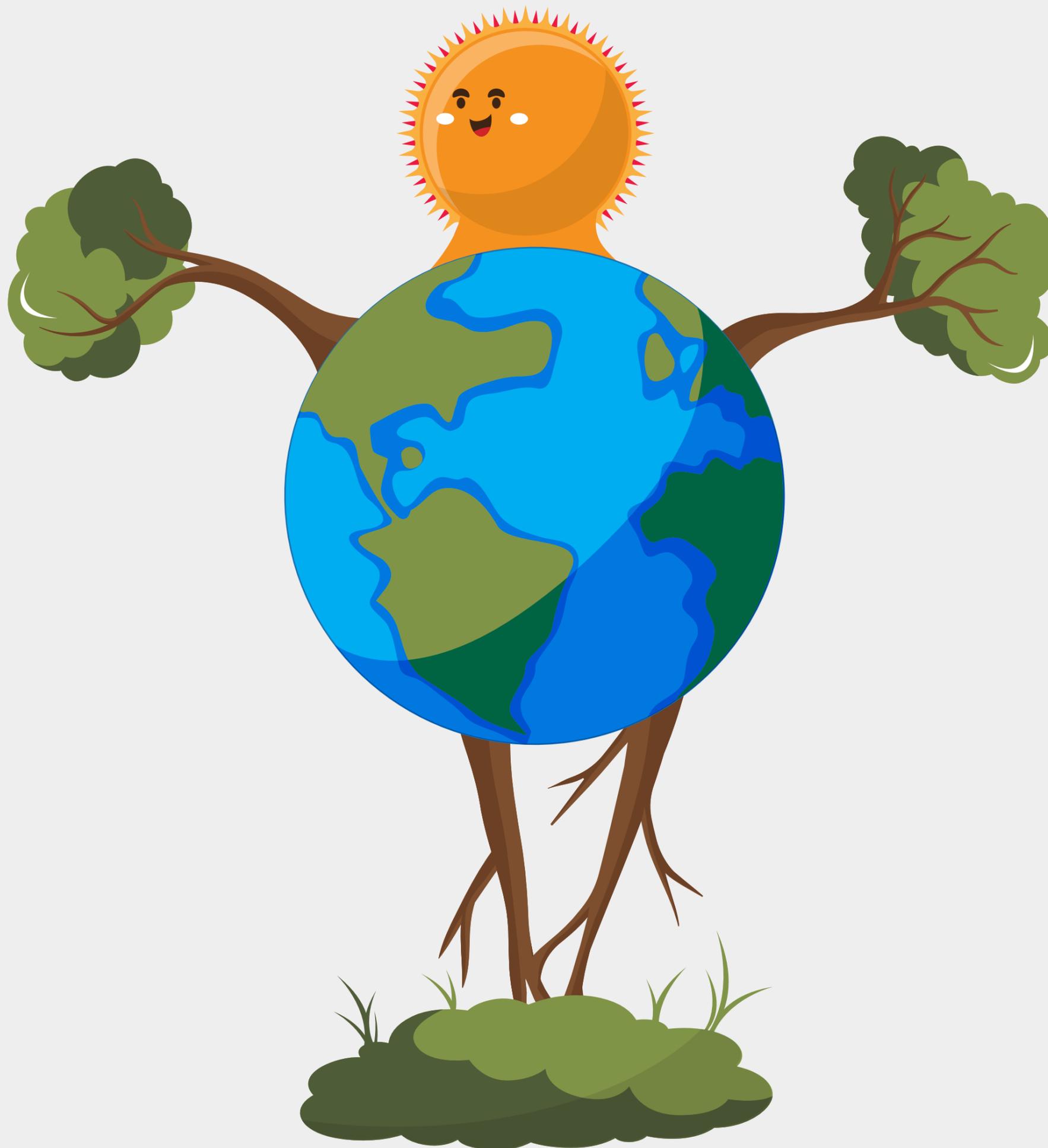
Connecting future leaders for climate initiatives

Committed and accountable to the sustainable goals and net-zero target at a local, national and global scale

Transparent about YMCA processes and achievements

Depiction of the Earth, ecosystem and the sun as a person. The Earth is the body of the person who must function to ensure the person thrives. If the Earth receives nourishment and care, then the body is fulfilling its duty to the person. The sun is the head of the body. The sun appears happy and is shining onto the earth.

This YMCA group described this model as hope!



ASPIRATIONS

What is the timeline?

Long-term

How do we inspire more leaders inside and outside the YMCA to commit to climate action?

~ KNOWLEDGE + HOPE ~

Aims: YMCA achieving sustainable practices

- Youth as an accelerator of change for their parents.
- Integrating sustainability goals and practices into YMCA 'law'.
- Ownership is important to keep change permanent.
- Measuring proof of positive action.

Actions:

- Facilitate a platform for Ys to help each other.
- Share experience of successful help between the Ys in the data book.
- Keep the data clear and accessible to supporting monitoring for progression.

Mid-term

How can the YMCA create a culture of ownership?

Aims:

- Regional Ys helping national Ys to measure their carbon footprint and the associate climate impact mitigation needs and strategies.
- World movement having strong recommendations to comply with until 2030.

Actions:

- Measure carbon footprint to inform the creation of incentives.
- Monthly/yearly meetings about impacts for a sustainable planet.
- Ownership anchored in the organisation and not the person.
- Fluent communications and resourcefulness of both individuals and YMCA as an organisation to solve problems.

Short-term

How can the YMCA ensure that its programmes, activities, camps and buildings are run environmentally feasible?

Actions:

- Focus on biodiversity around buildings and camps.
- Set high standards to achieve energy efficiency.
- Use reusable cutlery and plates in YMCA facilities and encourages Ys to continue practice in personal lives.

What are our pledges?

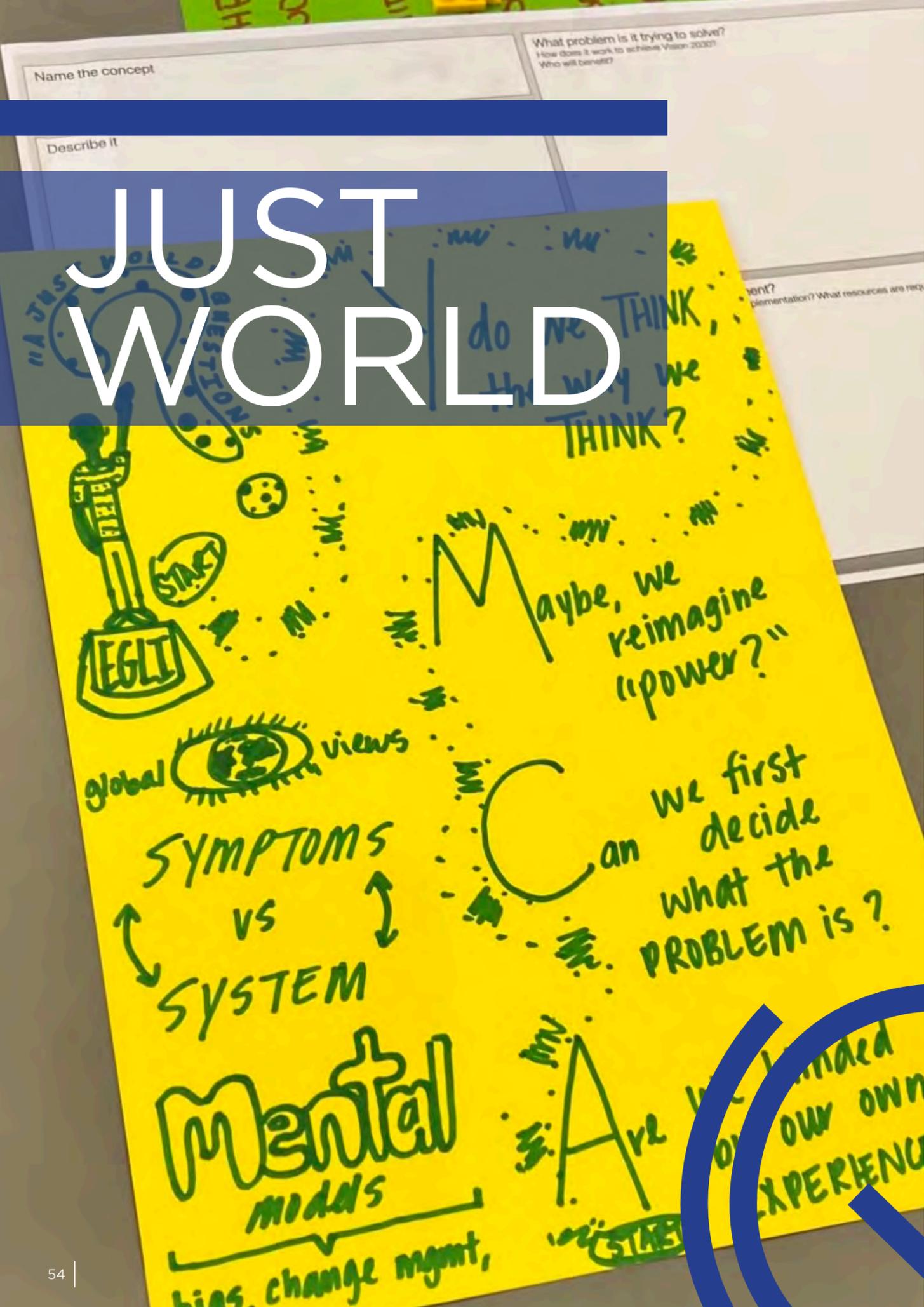
I am Sara and I pledge my support and commitment to building relationships and processes towards climate neutrality.

I am Fiona and I pledge my support and commitment to being consciously aware of my responsibilities in creating a sustainable planet.

I am Pablito and I pledge my support and commitment for Carbon Neutral 2030.

I am Thomas and I pledge my support and commitment to get the Dutch SDG working group to actually come to action.

JUST WORLD



What does this mean to different people?

We know that each individual has experiences that are unique, even when they are from the same group or geographic area. We need to adapt to changes in populations and take active steps to change, rather than doing things the way they have always been done.



Co-Lab Session 26 Group Photo

To truly make a just world, we also need to create space for all voices to be heard, celebrated, and respected.

We are all together as one

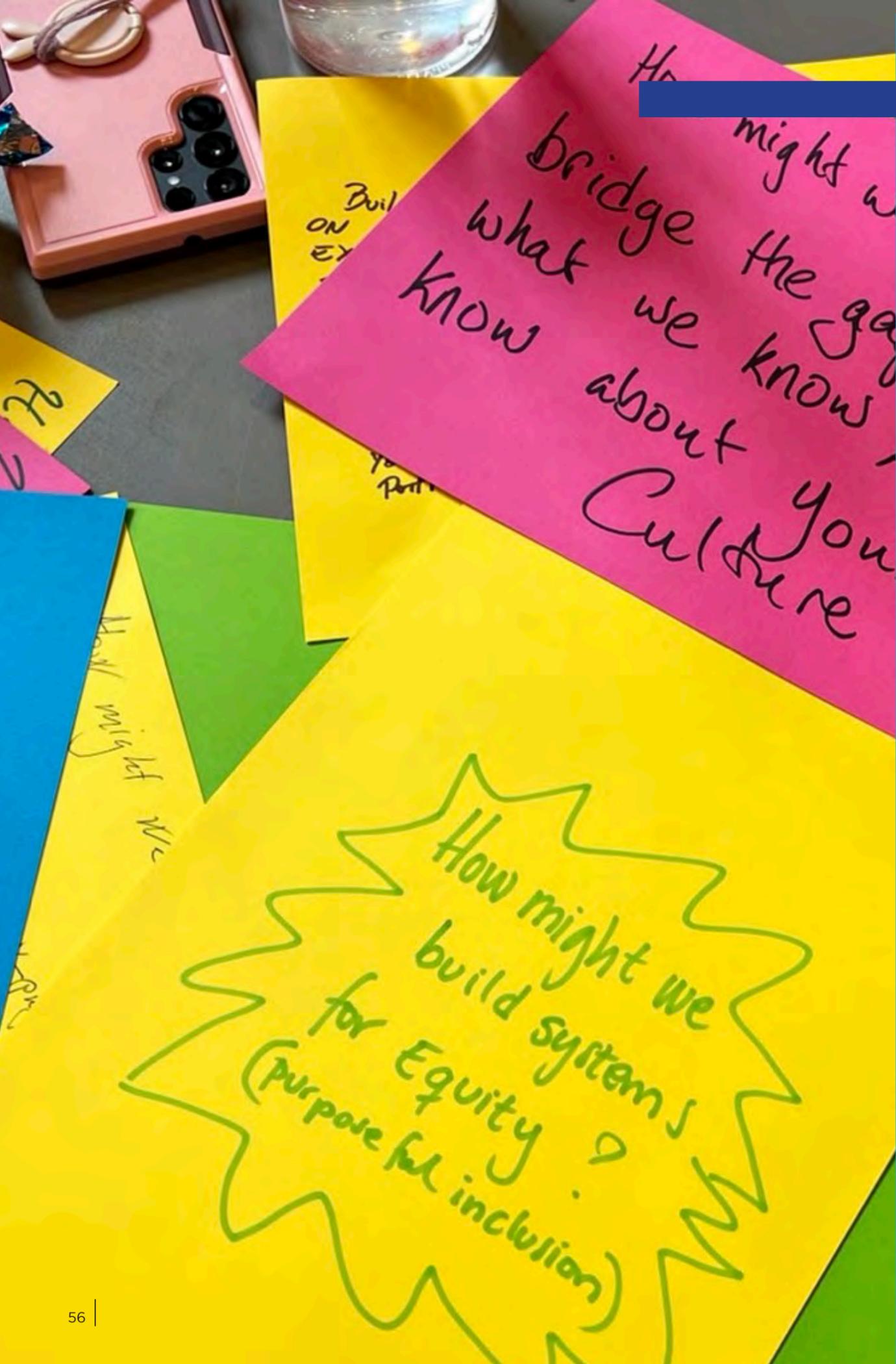
We see the human first, with all of their various dimensions

Embrace nature to de-stress (mental health, environmental sustainability)

Love is the foundation of all relationships

Respect for self and others



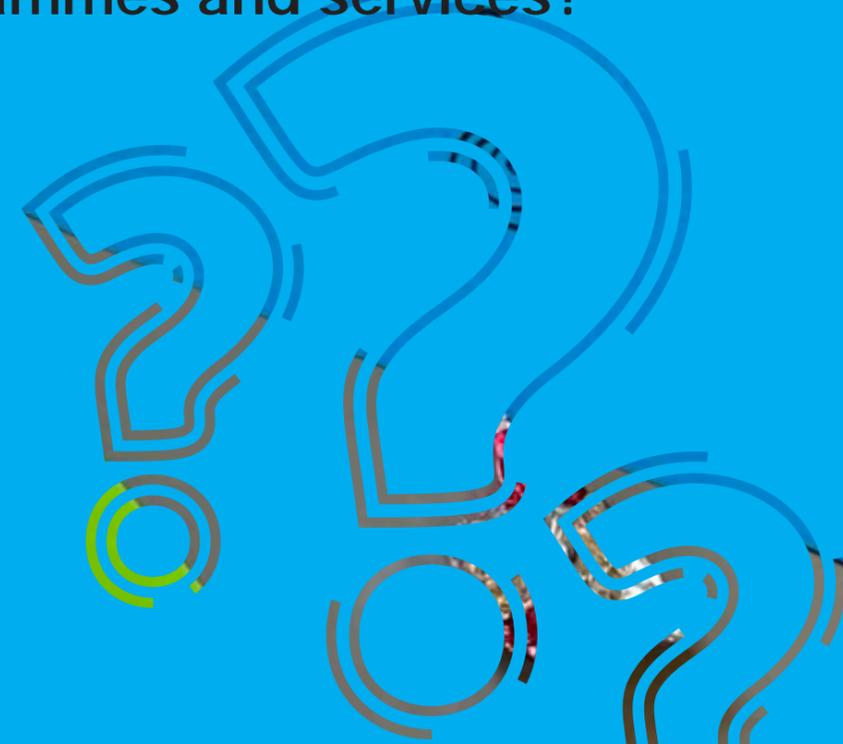


How might we discover and explore our weaknesses and challenges in order to challenge ourselves and grow as a community?

How might we be inclusive while acknowledging and celebrating difference?

How might we become a brave organisation in a time of injustice and inequality?

How might we embed inclusivity into our existing programmes and services?



What can we do as the YMCA community?

To move towards an inclusive organisation, we need to understand the shortcomings of our own policies and programmes.

Discovering the ways that our current policies and practices work to promote or prevent equality and inclusion is an important first step toward transformation.

Idea: Audit of policies and programmes to identify pockets for improvement

We can run an internal audit of YMCA policies and programmes (at local, regional and international levels) to understand the impact they have on inclusion practices. This can involve:

- Collecting feedback from volunteers and employees about the programmes and practices that impact them, including about the unintended consequences of policies. This should be done in both anonymous (for example, online surveys) and team-wide forums.
- Design and develop new ways of working to respond to the audit in collaboration with diverse stakeholder groups.
- Creating a strategy for how volunteers can take ownership over new policies and programmes within their region.
- Sharing findings and insights internationally, noting that solutions to changes will need to happen at both local and international levels.
- Track the change and impact new practices have over time, and sharing stories of success globally.

Idea: Creating inclusive training and education programmes to meet people where they are

In order to create a truly inclusive YMCA community, we need to approach training and education in a non-judgemental, active way.

This involves creating not only formal education and training programmes, but also the time and space for subconscious learning. This can be done through formal activities (for example, by using sport) to create time for people to connect and reflect, and through empathy-building activities (for example, theatre programmes) that inspire people to self-reflect.

In doing this work, it is essential that we keep all individuals safe and respect all points of view.

Idea: Set up a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council to advocate for a just world where no one gets left behind

Create a network made up of community members and allies of diverse backgrounds to advocate for a just world within YMCAs and wider communities.

The Council would be a channel for all YMCA members globally to exchange information and knowledge and develop partnerships to stand up and deliver projects that create a just world. The Council would collect and filter ideas and opportunities, connecting YMCAs who can exchange knowledge, skills, and resources to work together.

Idea: Youth Panel

The Youth Panel is an idea that works to support young people to participate in decision-making. It involves assembling a group of youth representatives to sit on a panel and having decision makers ask the panel questions and seek their advice before making decisions. This format shifts power imbalances, prioritising the voice of youth and giving decision-makers the opportunity to learn.



What can we do within our communities?

Within our wider YMCA communities, there are key actions that we can take to amplify young voices and create more equitable spaces for learning, growth and connection.

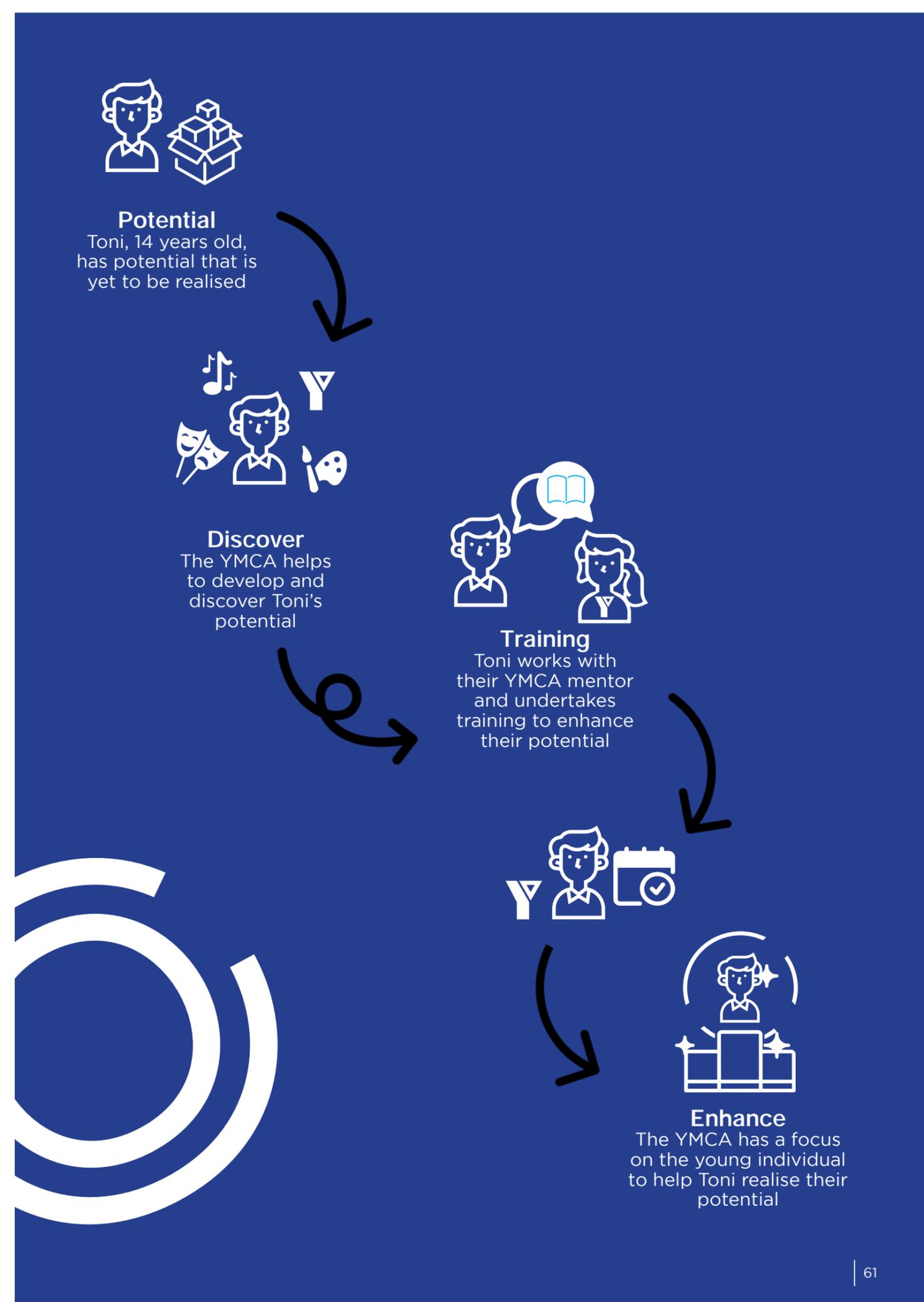
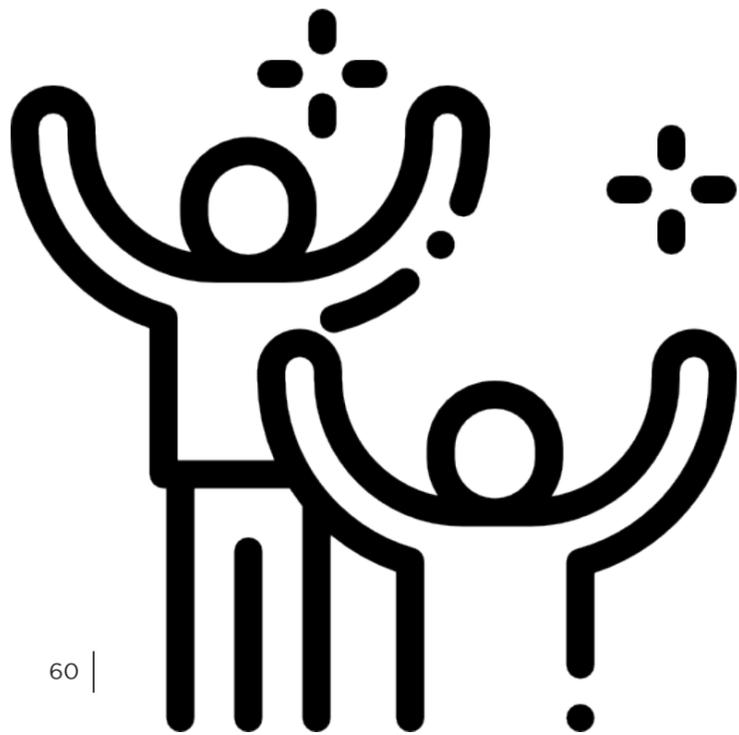
To do this, we need to:

- Encourage and support young people to raise their voices within their communities, and create safe spaces for them to do so.
- Facilitate connection between people who have differing experiences, including ensuring decision-makers and leaders understand the impact of their actions on different people.
- Work with partners within our communities (for example, schools and youth support services) to develop and implement creative solutions to build youth up.

Idea: Y-Heroes Programme

The Y-Heroes programme is a way for young people from the community to participate in activities and education opportunities that support them to develop their potential and advocate for themselves and others within their community.

The programme will be targeted specifically at young people who may have been unable to access programmes in the past and young people who are experiencing mental health challenges. The education programme and activities will be co-designed with young people, and will also incorporate peer-to-peer mentoring opportunities.



NEXT STEPS

Where to next?

The Co-Labs' outcomes are going to continue evolving, growing and building towards our desired future, as described in Vision 2030. In order to maintain the energy and momentum built at World Council, we are seeking additional inputs from you!

If you have something to contribute, please send us an email answering the following questions:

If you were at the World Council CoLabs and have a memory or experience you would like to share, please tell us:

What was your experience like?

What about the CoLabs worked well?
What could have been improved?

What were the outcomes you were most excited about?

If you have an idea that you would like to be shared, please tell us:

What is the title of the idea?

How does it work? Who benefits from it?

How would we implement it? Who needs to be involved in implementing it?

If you have a reflection on any of the Pillars of Vision 2030, please tell us:

What does the pillar mean to you?

What does the pillar look like in your community?

If you have run a Co-Lab in your local YMCA and would like to share how it went, please tell us:

How did the process go? Did you need to adapt or change it? How?

Who participated? What were their reflections on the process?

What were the outcomes? How are you going to carry them forward?
Who else could be involved?

Please share any photos of supporting materials!

If you have taken forward one of the ideas developed during the CoLabs, please tell us:

What was the initial idea? Did you need to adapt or change it? How?

What stage of implementation are you currently in?

What does the idea look like now it is implemented?



Please email your responses through to:

colabaarhus@gmail.com

We can't wait to hear what you have been doing!



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November 2022

For more information on the World Council or the Co-Lab process, please see the [YMCA website](#).

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... a resource
certifications, communities, affinity groups etc.
could be... in order for
with other YMCA staff, volunteers and peers across
WORLD!



Let your fingers do the walking...

What problem is it
How does it work to ach
Who will benefit?

A lot of the pro
are global. An
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