What is Youth Engagement?
Definitions and Objectives

- Youth
- Civic Engagement
- Community Service
- Service Learning
Promoting Youth Engagement

Two Approaches

Albania: Balkans Youth Link-Albania
Promoting Youth Engagement
Two Approaches

Romania: New Horizons Foundation
Lessons Learned
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- Combining the development of life skills with social action
- Creating a fun learning environment
- Using non-formal education as a way to develop new skills
- Creating social incubators
- Listening to youth/Trusting youth
- Recognizing youth
- Appropriate level of challenge
- Giving youth responsibility
- Learning by doing
- Building skills for the workplace
- Inviting all youth to participate
Lessons Learned

- Serving both in-school and out-of-school youth
- Building a positive enabling environment
- Bridging societal divides through teamwork
- Raising visibility/Building credibility
- Opportunities to engage at all levels: Local to global
- Strengthening the NGO sector
- Inter-sectoral partnering
- Context matters
- Scaling up
Key Components of a Successful Youth Engagement Program
Key Components of a Successful Youth Engagement Program

- Youth-driven
- Needs-based
- Offers a safe, neutral atmosphere
- Engages parents, peers, teachers and others in the community
- Develops critical life skills, including work skills
- Provides up-to-date-information on issues critical to youth
- Develops computer and language skills
- Provides opportunities for civic advocacy and service projects
Key Components of a Successful Youth Engagement Program

- Engages youth in design, implementation and evaluation
- Offers graduated levels of challenge
- Builds connections among youth across societal divides
- Provides opportunities for youth to take the lead
- Combines learning and social action with fun activities
- Builds skills and confidence
- Fosters capacity-sharing through networks of like-minded NGOs
Key Components of a Successful Youth Engagement Program

- Pursues partnerships with business, government, and civil society actors
- Works with public officials to create a positive enabling environment
- Provides both volunteer and paid opportunities for employment
- Raises the visibility of youth in the community and recognizes their contributions
- Builds social capital