

YOUTH PARTICIPATION – KEY TO ACCELERATING GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT AMONG YOUTHS IN NIGER-DELTA REGION

Delivered by:

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1.0. Highlights

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- ❖ Niger-Delta Region Economic profile
- ❖ Youth participation in Growth and Development of Niger Delta Region
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1.1. Introduction

- ❖ It is axiomatic to posit that there is a linkage between youth and National integration.
- ❖ The links is not only symbiotically connected but also one depends on the other for its sustenance.
- ❖ The youth in any society are engine of growth and development because:
 - i. They provide the highest labour force.
 - ii. Their action and inaction can make or mar the hegemonies of the society.
- ❖ The role of youths in the Niger-Delta region development can not be over-emphasized.

- ❖ According to the 2006 National census, the youth population constituted over 70% of the total population of Nigeria.

- ❖ Any society that prepare their youth for the sake of future aspiration will:
 - i. Secure her future development

 - ii. Prepare her next set of leaders with challenges of national reconciliation and development.

1.2. Youth Population Contextualized

- ❖ There is no universal definition of youth population.
- ❖ Youths “is traditionally” defined as a period of transition from childhood to adulthood.
- ❖ In the African Youth Report (AYR-UNECA 2009), youths are defined as people between 15-39 years of age.
- ❖ Several African countries defined youth differently:
 - i. Ghana, Tanzania & South Africa (15-35 years)
 - ii. Nigeria & Swaziland (19-30 years)
 - iii. Botswana & Mauritania (14-25 years)
- ❖ For statistical purposes, the United Nations (2011) defined youths as that aged 15-25 years.

- ❖ The youth population according to 2006 census is almost a hundred million.
- ❖ 87% of the youth population are facing different challenges (UNO, 2007).
- ❖ 45 million people live in the Niger-Delta (25% of 180m).
- ❖ 62% of 45 million living and residing in the Niger-Delta are below 30 years.
- ❖ Niger-Delta region is an economic centre of Nigeria in terms of oil and gas resource endowment:
 - ✓ 95% export revenues
 - ✓ 80% government revenues
 - ✓ 32% GDP

- ❖ There should be a good plan to tap the energy and resourcefulness of youth population to fast track economic growth and development in the region (Aiyede, 2010).

- ❖ Youth are a heterogeneous group:
 - ✓ Life experiences
 - ✓ Cultural background
 - ✓ Education
 - ✓ Gender
 - ✓ Social group
 - ✓ Economic status.

- ❖ Understanding the dynamics of youth in every local context is, therefore, essential.

Why Work with Youth?

- ❖ The demographic imperative: the youth bulge
 - ✓ 62% of 45 million Niger-Delta population are youth
 - ✓ Each generation challenges
- ❖ Young people are assets: preventing and reducing vulnerabilities and risks.
- ❖ Aid effectiveness: engage with democracy, development and peace building .

- ❖ Human rights: young people are frequently in the position of needing to express their rights the most, but enjoy them the least.
- ❖ Critical rights issues for young people
 - ✓ Governance and accountability
 - ✓ Managerial decision making process
 - ✓ Capacity building in civil society
 - ✓ Sexual and reproductive health's and rights.

1.3. National Development

- ❖ National Development according to Steward (1981) is the ability of a country to improve and sustain social welfare of the people.
- ❖ This can be measured by the provision of;
 - ✓ Basic social amenities (road, hospital, schools, water)
 - ✓ Employment opportunities
 - ✓ Uninterrupted power supply
 - ✓ Effective communications

- ❖ National Development usually translates to sustainable economic growth in which resources use aims at meeting human needs which preserving the environment so that these needs are not only in the present but also for generation to come.
- ❖ It leads to meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the need of future generation.
- ❖ National Development is often broken down into three constituents:
 - ✓ Environmental sustainability
 - ✓ Economic sustainability
 - ✓ Socio-political sustainability

1.4. Niger-Delta Region Economy at a Glance

General	
9 States	South-South Zone: Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Rivers
185 LGAs	Extended Niger Delta includes: Abia, Imo, and Ondo—all oil producing states
Population	32 million (22% of total Nigerian population), 2/3 under 30 years of age
Population density	265 people per km ² ; 13, 329 settlements, 94% with < 5,000 population
Ethnic groups/languages	40 main ethnic groups; around 120 mutually unintelligible languages and dialects
Land area	112,000 km ² of land area is oil affected; core delta is 75,000 km ²
Ecological zones	Coastal barrier sandy ridge; mangrove swamp; freshwater swamp; lowland rainforest
Natural Resources	Petroleum, natural gas, tin, lead, coal, zinc, arable land
Livelihoods	Agriculture and fishing (48%); trading (17%); services (10%); Education/health (7%)
Social/Economic Indicators	
Infant mortality rate	120 per thousand (Nigeria: 100 per thousand)
Unemployment	Estimated youth unemployment (ages 15–24): 40% Official average for the South-South: 24% (2006)
Poverty	43% in relative poverty (2004); 75% perceive themselves as “poor”
Water	76 to 80% in rural areas and 50 to 55% in urban areas do not have access to safe drinking water
Energy	Firewood is the primary energy source for 73% 34% of population has access to electric power, when available

Oil and Gas Production

Crude oil production, mid-2011	<p>About 2.3 mbpd (including condensate); 3.2 mbpd installed capacity; supplies 95% of Nigeria's export earnings and 80% of federal government revenue</p> <p>On average, 25% of production was shut in due to violence or sabotage (2006–2009), at times up to 65%. Production fell from 2.6 mbpd in February 2006 to 1.3 mbpd in May 2009, during a major clash between combatants and the military before the Amnesty.</p>
Main international operators and principal Nigerian companies; all have onshore operations except ExxonMobil	<p>Shell (Shell Petroleum Development Company, Nigeria, Ltd);</p> <p>Chevron (Chevron Nigeria, Ltd.); ExxonMobil (Mobil Producing Unlimited); Eni (Nigerian Agip Oil Company); Total (Elf) (Total E&P Nigeria Limited, formerly EPNL)</p>
Main terminals/offshore platforms	<p>Bonny Island (Shell), Brass River (Eni/Agip), Escravos (Chevron), Forcados (Shell), Kwa Iboe platform (Mobil), Odudu platform (Total), Pennington (Chevron), etc.</p>
Oil reserves	<p>36 billion barrels—11th in the world, 2nd in Africa; estimated reserve life of 41 years</p>
Natural gas reserves	<p>187 trillion cubic feet—7th largest gas reserves in the world</p>
Oil/gas pipelines & fields	<p>Over 7,000 km of pipelines; 606 oil fields</p>
Gas plants/LNG	<p>30; NLNG Plant with 6 trains; 2 LNG plants in construction in Brass and Olokola</p>
Environment	<p>1958–2010: est. 546 million gallons spilled; av. 300 spills or nearly 10.8 million/year</p> <p>1986—2003: 50,000 acres of mangrove forest disappeared</p> <p>Q1 2010: 32% of associated gas flared (127 bcf)</p>
Source: Presenter Investigation (2020)	

1.5. Youth Participation in Niger-Delta Region

✓ Defining participation

- ❖ World Bank has defined participatory development as: “a process through which stakeholders **influence** and **share control** over development **initiatives** and the **decisions** and **resources** which affect them” (World Bank 2014).
- ✓ Definition of participation is linked to a rights perspective as follows: “enabling people to **realize their rights** -

- ✓ -to **participate in**, and **access information** relating to, the **decision-making** processes which affect their lives (DFID, 2014).
- ❖ There is increasing interest in Youth participations, driven to some extent by the discourse on **children's rights**.
- ❖ This rights has been limited and is often discussed only at a **superficial level**, in the sense that **young people** are often included in **one-off discussion** where their contributions of 'voice', do not actually affect our structural **policy decision**.

✓ Youth should be seen as assets.

❖ Which is an **active approach** that would make them to **recognize their potentials**.

❖ A shift in **working with** young people, and **valuing them** as assets: as advisors, colleagues and stakeholders is crucial if development policies are to be truly representative and effective.

- ❖ In ascended order of responsibility, young people can participate in development as **beneficiaries**, **partners** and **leaders** (DFID-CSO three-lens approach) as depicted in fig. below:
- ❖ Participation means **work with** young people, and not merely **work for** them.

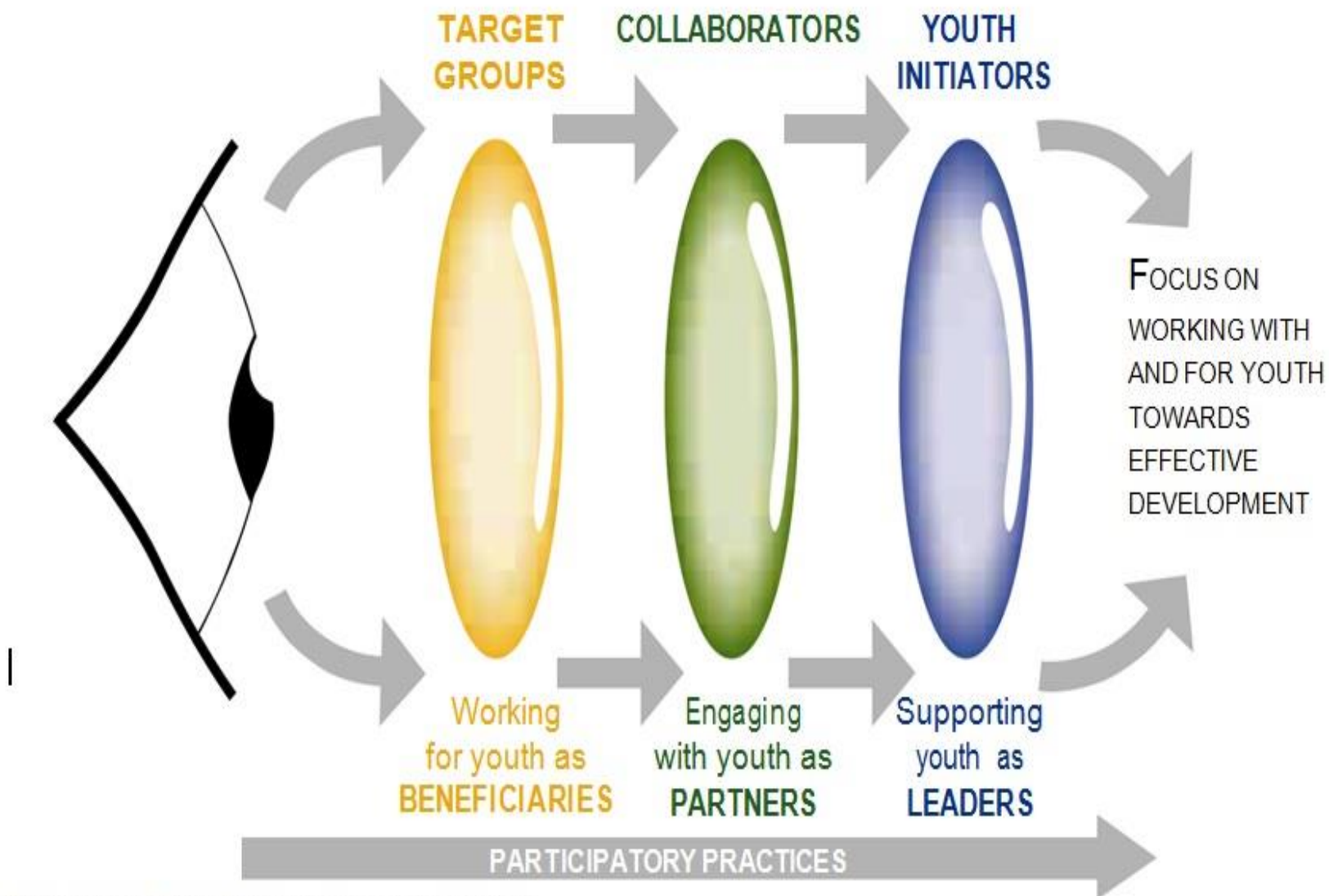
ROLES OF YOUTH IN NIGER-DELTA REGION

- ❖ At an operational level, participation is about:
 - ✓ Information sharing: people are informed in order to facilitate collective and individual action.
 - ✓ Consultation: people are consulted and interacting with an organization which can take account of their feedback.
 - ✓ Decision-making: people have this role, which may be theirs or joint with others, on specific issues of a policy or project.
 - ✓ Initiating action: people are proactive and able to take the initiative.

1.6. Approach to Youth Participation

- ❖ Youth participation is more than gathering their views in surveys representative (fig. 3).
- ❖ It is a formal consultation and dialogue that guide decision and opinion.
- ❖ The 3-lens approach to youth participation advocated that government **work for** the benefit of youth (**as target** beneficiary) **with youth** (as partners) and be shaped by youth **as leaders** (fig 1 and 2).
- ❖ This is an assets approach to youth participation in development.

Figure 1: The three-lens approach to youth participation

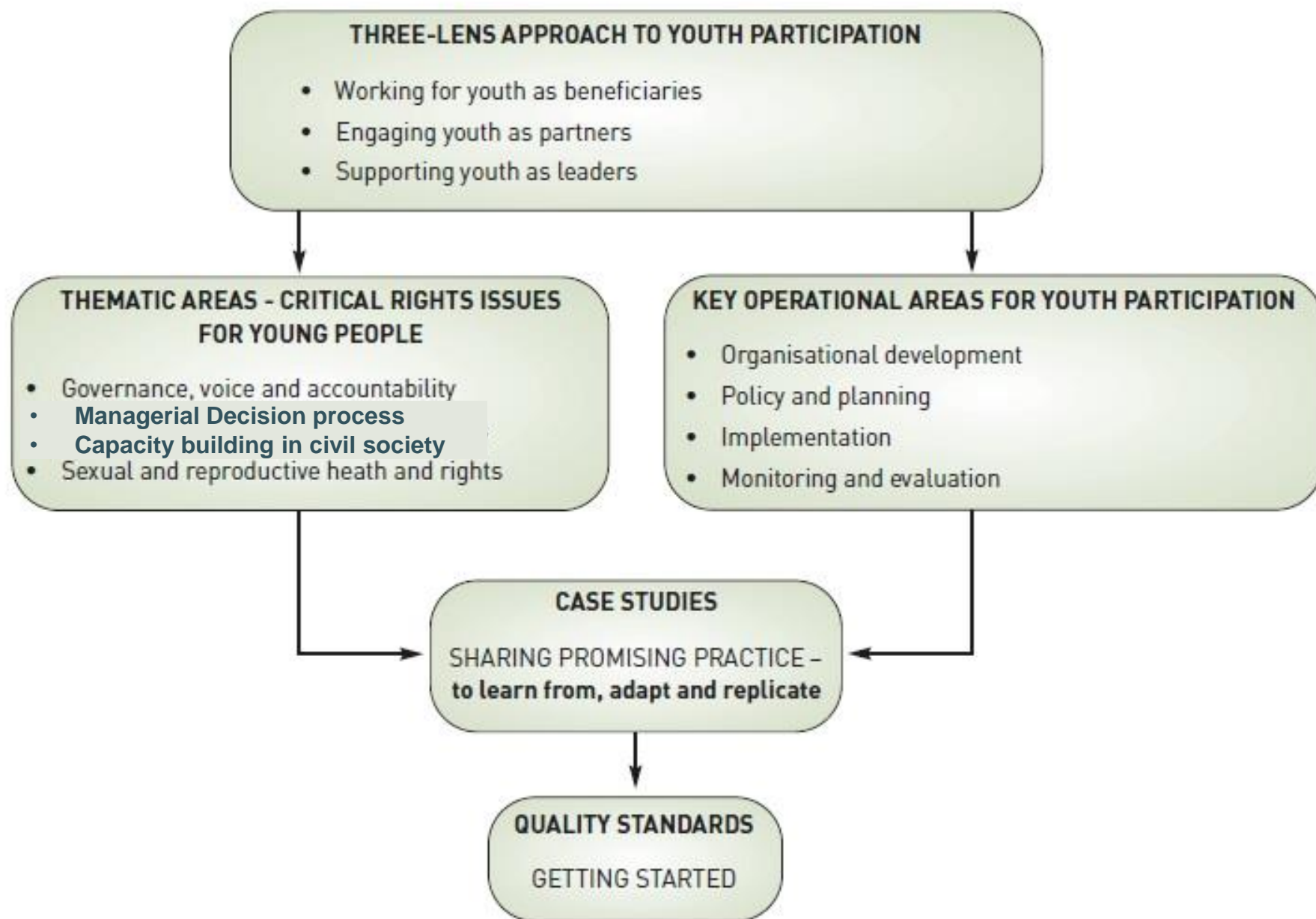


Adapted from: World Bank Development report 2007

Table 1: Definitions of beneficiaries, partners and leaders

Working for youth as beneficiaries	Defined as the basics of a good intervention for young people: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Youth as beneficiaries implies they are a target group and are adequately informed;• Explicitly focuses on youth issues through documentation;• Can prepare the ground for working with youth as partners.
Engaging with youth as partners	Defined as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborative interventions, where young people are fully consulted and informed;• Implies mutual co-operation and responsibility;• Recognises that young people generally need experience working at this level before progressing to becoming leaders and initiators of development (if appropriate) – a progression which not all will want or be able to make.
Supporting youth as leaders	Defined as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enabling youth-initiated and directed interventions;• Opening up a space for youth-led decision-making (delegation) within existing structures, systems and processes.

Figure 2 - Structure of the guide



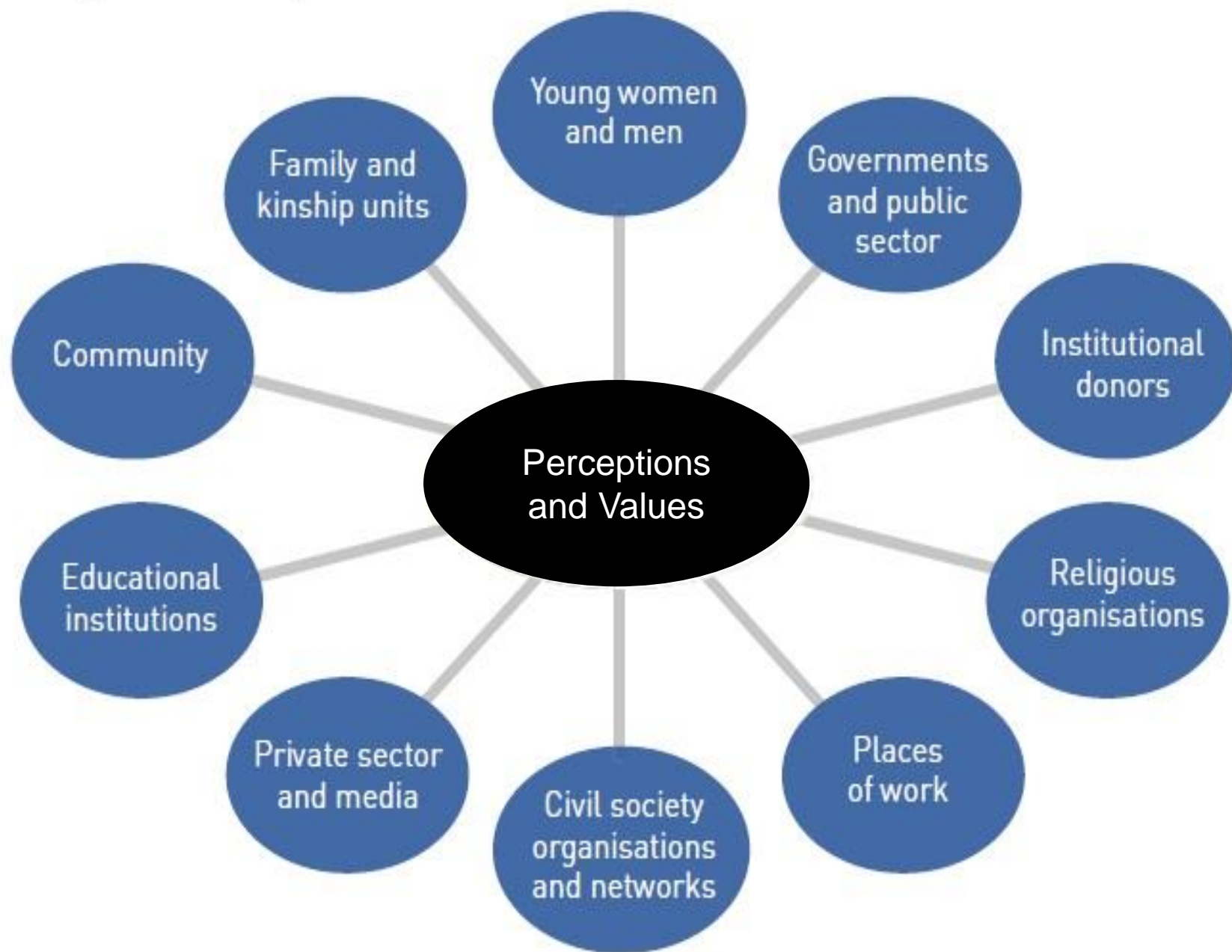
1.7. Obstacles to Youth Participation

- ❖ There are obstacles in developmental processes:
 - ✓ Poor education and training – Analytical skills for critical thinking for decision making
 - ✓ Weak infrastructure - Lacking direct access to institutional systems and structures within government
 - ✓ Inequality and exclusion - Youths are socially excluded within the youth sector
 - ✓ Cost effectiveness – Youth are more expensive to maintain than adult.

Overcoming Obstacles

- ❖ As a starting point, government should always consider **using international and national frameworks** which **ensure the rights of young people to participate** in development as a mechanism to overcome the inherent obstacles (fig. 4).
- ❖ Many of the obstacles can be overcome **by challenging the perceptions and values of colleagues, key stakeholders, and gatekeepers for youth.**

Figure 4: Key stakeholders for youth³⁵



1.8. Conclusion

- ❖ It is crucial that we engage the young decision makers of tomorrow in the Developmental process of Niger-Delta region in order to effectively harness the potential of the region optimally.
- ❖ The process of developing the relationship between the government and youths has stimulated considerable interest in the Niger-Delta regions.
- ❖ We hope that the sharing and learning networks will continue until we get to the desired destination.
- ❖ It makes them being the targets of outreach, to being actively engaged in the planning and implementation of development interventions.

**THANK YOU
FOR
LISTENING!**