Youth Engagement Program

📍 **Banda Aceh**

Juni-Agustus 2023

Online: Juni - Agustus 2023 | *Offline*: 29-30 Agustus 2023
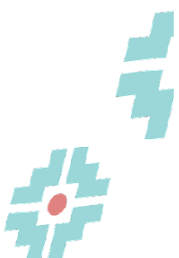

Proposal

Background

Youth participation and involvement in developing a region is very important, because youth are the spearhead of the changes that occur. Youth are expected to take a significant role in creating social and economic impact in their regions.

In the Youth Development Index (2021) report submitted by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Aceh is one of the lowest provinces in Indonesia for employment opportunities, youth participation and leadership. The data decreased in 2020 compared to 2019. Not only Aceh as a whole, the same thing also happened in Banda Aceh, only 10 to 15 youth organizations out of 54 Registered Youth Organizations in Banda Aceh (KNPI Report 2020-2021) actively participate in social issues.

While the youth data itself shows that the age of 16-30 years consists of 24% or around 54,295 youth from a total population of 265,111. Banda Aceh City Government through the Youth and Sports Department (Dispora) allocated grants/funds to only 1 to 5 youth and community participation organizations over the past 3 years (Youth Sector Report); and Banda Aceh City only has 3 youth communities that actively contribute to social issues which is not enough to address various urban social issues.

From some of the discussions we had, there are several obstacles faced by the youth community. Among them are:

❖ Lack of access to media and platforms that can help Young Leaders to engage their team members and partners to create a more significant impact in supporting their social projects. For example, related to the use of information technology (Website and Social Media) and the use of existing communication

platforms (digital democracy platform, volunteer management platform, and other free resources available);

❖ Lack of access to obtain information or contact with funding providers that can help sustain their projects; and

❖ Lack of community or youth group knowledge to maximize their potential or common interest in taking economic advantage through social enterprise.

Youth Engagement Program is a **program to increase youth participation through training for leaders of youth community organisations (YCO) and youth communities organised** by **Citizen OS Indonesia** in collaboration with the **Youth and Sports Department (Dispora)** of Banda Aceh City and **Australia Awards Indonesia.** This program targets leaders of Youth Organizations (OKP) and youth communities that will be implemented online and offline and is specifically for young people in Banda Aceh City.
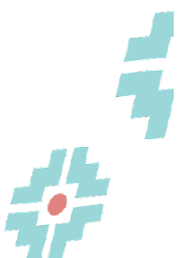
Objectives

The Youth Engagement Program aims to:

❖ Empower young leaders by utilising media and information technology platforms that can help them develop organisational management, recruiting members, engage various stakeholders, and run activities;

❖ Build connections and networks between OKPs or communities with potential donors or funders; and

❖ Encouraging young leaders to be self-reliant in financing their organisations or activities through the practice of social entrepreneurship.

Output

- ❖ **50 young leaders** from various communities and youth organizations in Banda Aceh attended the YEP training.

- ❖ **At least 10 social projects** will be implemented by YEP participants after the training.

- ❖ **At least 3 social projects** are selected and receive funding for their programs.

Youth Engagement Program 2023
Ideas Gathering

Before the training activities were held, the YEP committee published information on the Banda Aceh youth **idea gathering on the Citizen OS platform**. This idea gathering was aimed to the people of Banda Aceh in general aged 16-40 years, and specifically to community activists or youth organisations in Banda Aceh, which included the YEP committee and participants. The purpose of this collection of ideas is to **raise aspirations related to the dynamics of the community or youth organisations in Banda Aceh**. Furthermore, by opening the collection of ideas, YEP becomes a form of collaborative program by involving input from the beneficiary group, namely YEP participants in the design of its activities.

The YEP idea collection page on the Citizen OS platform can be accessed at the link link bit.ly/topikyep23 .
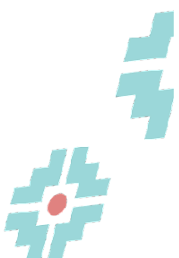
The ideas and aspirations collected will be further curated by the YEP committee, to:

1. Provide insight into the relevance of the background of the Youth Engagement Program problem to the conditions of the community or youth organisations in Banda Aceh,
2. As input for the committee in designing Youth Engagement Program training to be more targeted to the needs of communities or youth organisations in Banda Aceh,
3. As a form of aspiration from the community or youth organisations in Banda Aceh to the government, to be followed up in the plans or programs that have been owned.

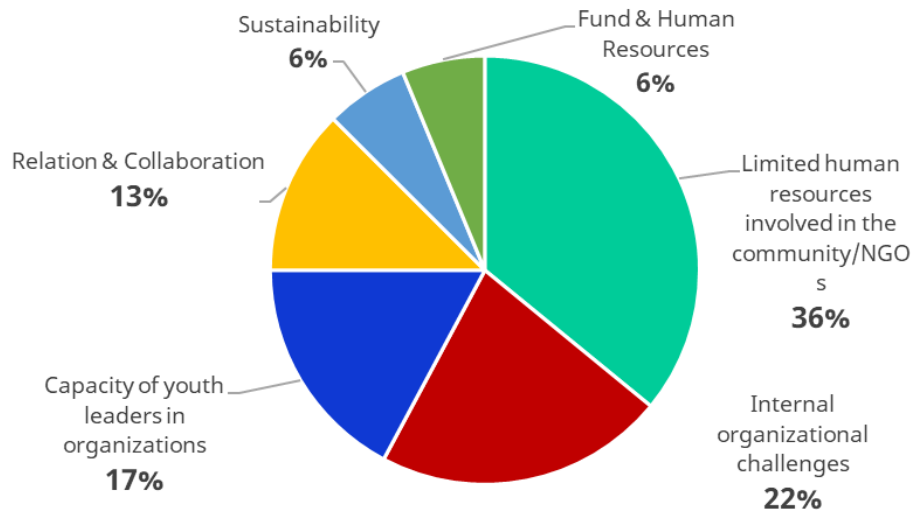There are **three (3) points of questions in this YEP 2023 idea gathering**:

1. What are **the challenges faced by young people** (specifically Banda Aceh), **especially in leading communities or youth organisations (YCOs)**?
2. **What do young people** (specifically Banda Aceh) need in youth **capacity building to create more impactful programs** in the community or beneficiary groups?
3. **What are your suggestions** to make youth community/OCP activities in Banda Aceh more **sustainable?**

The collection of ideas for the Youth Engagement Program ran from March to June 2023. From the 34 respondents who have given their opinions, we have curated and grouped the ideas per each question point sorted by the most proposed ideas as follows.

Challenges faced by youth in Banda Aceh, especially in leading communities or YCOs

(36%) Limited human resources involved in the community/YCO

This challenge point is generally applicable to both youth who have not joined organisational activities and those who are already part of a youth community / YCO.

Respondents felt that there was a limited number of human resources, young people of Banda Aceh City who were involved in the activities of the youth community / YCO. An **internal factor** mentioned by respondents was the **lack of interest or motivation for youth participation in participating in social community or volunteer-based activities.** This can be caused by:

1. Differences in interests and needs,
2. Differences in area of interest,
3. Unwillingness to socialise, or already comfortable with the craze in cyberspace,
4. Different backgrounds, values, and goals,
5. Money-oriented/choosing to do business instead.

In addition, some **external factors** that influence this challenge are:

1. Influence from culture and tradition,
2. Lack of environmental support, e.g. not allowed by parents,
3. Time constraints both on holidays and school/college days,
4. Other obstacles to activities such as no transportation, difficult permit applications for schools and campuses.

(22%) Internal organisational challenges

The challenges that youth, especially community leaders, tend to face within their internal organisations are:

1. **Motivation of each member** - There are members who are active or passive in carrying out their duties in the community, varying levels of commitment and consistency in participating in community activities, the dynamics of managing time and personal business with community activities, and some members choose to move based on rewards rather than their own initiative.
2. **Internal culture and ethics,** such as adherence or commitment to organisational rules, the tendency for seniority, the lack of a culture of deliberation, as well as discipline and awareness of being on time**.**
3. **Differences of opinion,** especially in uniting minds in one vision and mission in a team or program.
4. **Emotional maturity,** in interacting with fellow members with various backgrounds and in managing conflict.
5. **The need to build effective communication practices with team members,** including determining when it is appropriate to use technology or discuss in person so that all parties have the same understanding.
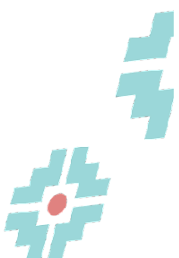
(17%) Capacity of youth leaders in the organisation

In addition to facing challenges in managing the organisation and its members, the challenges faced personally by youth leaders of the community /OKP can include their capacity which is still in process, namely:

1. **Experience,** knowledge, skills and leadership mentality that still need to be honed, especially for those in leadership positions. This includes overcoming self-confidence, communication skills to manage differences in ideas and opinions.
2. **Adaptation to the development of thinking and social changes** that are happening
3. **Minimal utilisation of technology and digital platforms** for community activities.
4. **The art of managing an organisation,** which includes:
   o Exploring the identity, principles and programs of the community well
   o Balancing freedom with the direction of the organisation, especially volunteerism, with obligations for each member and consistent rules
   o Managing members
   o Building networks
   o Problem solving skills.

(13%) Relationship & Collaboration

Respondents have difficulty in building networks or relationships among YCO and with local governments in efforts to develop and introduce the community. Most volunteer-based community programs in Banda Aceh operate independently, for

example, on crucial issues such as disabilities, education, economics, environment, and others, because they are not aware of the parties involved in similar issues. The difficulty in building these relationships affects the limited collaboration among YCO.
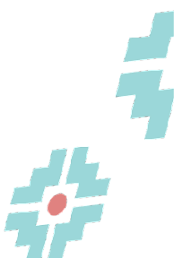
(6%) Sustainability

Sustainability also poses a challenge in running YCSO due to the following reasons:

1. Organisations design programs that are **short-term and do not consider sustainability**.
2. Current young leaders **do not understand the importance of and how to maintain organisational sustainability**,
3. One respondent mentioned that the **fear of failure and the discontinuation of the community** are factors contributing to this sustainability challenge.
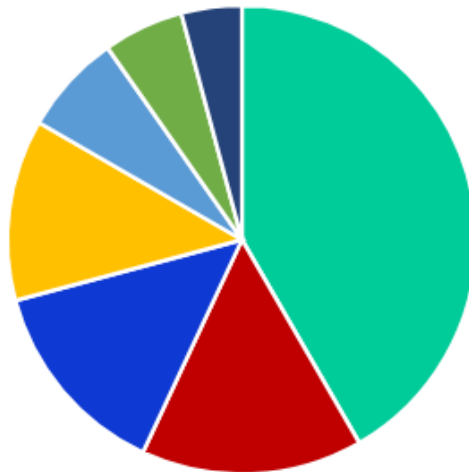
(6%) Funding and Resources

Limited funding and other resources are also challenges for community organisations (YCO) in their activities. One respondent mentioned that the majority of youth (especially students) in Banda Aceh are migrants, so community activists (YCO) have financial limitations in carrying out their activities.

On one hand, young community leaders (YCO) in the city of Banda Aceh are still **highly focused on social activities and do not consider economic factors in community activities**. They are also not fully capable of seeing various opportunities or access to obtain financial support for their community. However, on the other hand, **YCO leaders feel that access to funding for community activities in Banda Aceh is still limited or difficult to obtain information about.**

The needs of communities/YCOs in Banda Aceh in developing the capacity of youth to create more impactful programmes in the community or beneficiary groups.
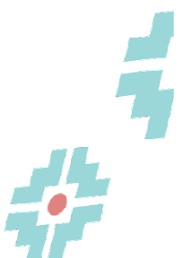

(42%) Training

Training is one of the needs most suggested by respondents. The expected forms of training include:

Training to **develop personal and organisational capacity**, with topics:

1. Leadership within the scope of managing change and critical thinking
2. How to build and manage an organisation
3. Entrepreneurial skills to create a community / YCO that is financially independent in running programmes.
4. Communication such as public speaking, lobbying techniques, and digital communication
5. Time management
6. Interpersonal skills
7. Education about humanity, especially related to the importance of social activities

Training to **manage programmes**, with topics included but not limited to:

1. How to design and develop programmes
2. Project management

3. The importance of a good understanding of the needs of the community or beneficiary groups
4. How to manage programmes in a sustainable way
5. Other topics related to the pressing issues in Banda Aceh.

In relation to the challenge of limited human resources involved in the community, the government or other stakeholders can also **promote the importance of participating in social-oriented activities among youth,** such as organising seminars.

It is hoped that the training information created can also be accessed or reached out by communities / YCOs, for example by promoting activities through social media or communication groups of the Banda Aceh community / YCO network.

(15%) Collaboration

Networking and collaborating with other communities or stakeholders can make a programme for the community more impactful. According to respondents, collaboration is important for:

1. Exchange diverse perspectives, ideas and insights,
2. Share resources to be utilised together,
3. Magnify the impact and reach of activities,
4. Establish a support system as agencies working in the same field.

(14%) Financial support

Funding support to run programmes is also a need for community activists, such as **grants or budgets that have been allocated for community programmes related to regional priority issues**. In addition, **access to information on the availability of funds to support programmes is very important**, so that every youth community has the same opportunity to access these resources - not just certain parties.

(12%) Facilitation

As young people, youth leaders and community activists need assistance and guidance so that they can develop impactful programmes in a more optimal and purposeful way.

Mentors, organisational coaches, experts or professionals in a particular field, experienced community leaders, or even government representatives working in the youth sector can provide this guidance.

The assistance can take the form of mentor-mentee relationships or mentorship programmes, programme guidance and monitoring, providing resources or experience, and opportunities to collaborate on issues related to community activities. For example, an Anti-Corruption community is mentored by experts from the

Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK). Access to mentors or experts who can provide guidance and support in programme development is also included in the needs at this point.

(7%) Facility support

Facility support for running youth community/YCO programmes or activities is expected to be **easily accessible and suitable for use**, this includes uncomplicated licensing - e.g. easy approval and clear rental terms.

Facilities mentioned by respondents include workspaces, public locations for activity venues, or other forms of field-specific facilities such as theatre spaces and creative studios.
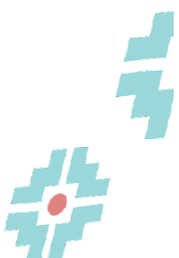
(6%) Access to Information

As a starting point for the direction of social community activities, information is an important element in creating impactful programmes in the community. Access to information needed by the youth community is in the form of a **benchmark of the Banda Aceh city area, in the form of a platform / data bank that is transparent, accessible and has accurate information**. This is so that any programme development can be planned based on real problems and relevant data so that it is right on target and has an impact on the community. Communities can also be involved, both in determining social impact indicators and feedback processes that also involve the community as beneficiaries.

In addition, the government can also create a **public database** of active communities / YCO in order to increase collaboration efforts and open up opportunities for communities to contribute in developing the area where they live.
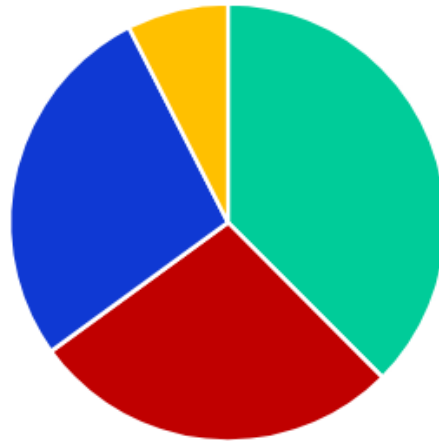
(4%) Reciprocal relationship: Government involving YCOs

The youth community/OCP expects **synergies and reciprocal relationships between the community and the government** - such as **being involved in a programme or being given the opportunity to work together in important events in Banda Aceh**. By doing so, the communities/OCPs will feel that their existence is valued and their contributions are meaningful, thus becoming more committed to maintaining the sustainability of their communities.
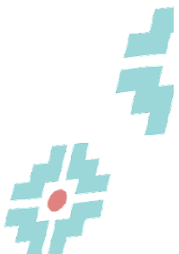
Suggestions and lessons learned from communities or YCOs in Banda Aceh to achieve a more sustainable organisation

(37%) Improving capacity in organisational management

Organising is a process that goes hand in hand with increasing the capacity and experience of each member of the team running it. Some important points in increasing the capacity of community/YCO members to be more sustainable are:

1. **Building a strong organisational structure** - from defining the mission, organisational goals and values, and a clear division of roles and responsibilities. Involving members in participatory planning and decision-making is essential to foster a sense of ownership and commitment to community/YCO activities.
2. **Having and maintaining a healthy interpersonal communication** within the community/YCO. For example, arguing with a solution-oriented approach, avoiding culture of seniority, and so on.
3. Integrating local culture or context in organisations, e.g. communities/YCOs in Banda Aceh can incorporate religious values as motivation for team members to work in the community.
4. **Create an annual plan for the community/YCO** with short, medium and long term programmes. Programmes should also have concrete impacts and goals.
5. **Increase team capacity** by encouraging them to join workshops, trainings, or other skills development programmes relevant to the community's goals and activities.

(28%) Improving capacity in programme management

As activities are designed in line with the organisation's mission, youth communities/NGOs also need to consider the following in managing the programme to make it more sustainable:
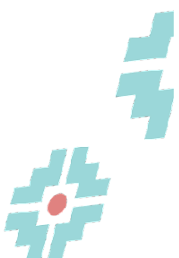
1. **Create a long-term focused programme**, which is not merely ceremonial or ends after being implemented once. The programme objectives can be designed using the SMART framework (specific, measureable, achievable, relevant and time bound). In addition, the community needs to consider how the programme can continue if faced with situations such as member turnover.
2. **Innovate in developing programmes**. This may include trying to find solutions that are different or have not been done before, but are determined to be relevant to the issue at hand.
3. **Involve the programme's relevant stakeholders, i.e. the beneficiary groups**. By empathising with their needs and aspirations, communities/Youth Community Organisation (YCO) can develop more relevant, targeted and successful programmes. In addition, the community / YCO can also find out if there are local cultures or traditions that need to be considered so that the activities are better perceived. Beneficiary groups can be involved from programme planning, programme implementation, to programme evaluation.
4. **Monitoring and evaluating the programme on a regular basis**, and making improvements where necessary. This ensures that the programme remains relevant to the problem and has the desired impact.

(27%) Collaborate

Youth communities / YCOs need to **consider cross-party collaboration in supporting their activities to become more sustainable**, as they have limited capabilities and reach if they only operate on their own. Collaboration can be done with fellow YCOs or communities, as well as with other entities such as the government, private sector, regional agencies, community leaders, educational institutions and others.

(8%) Seeking funding for community / YCO activities

As one of the resources that support sustainability, communities/YCOs need to also **seek funding in running the operations of their organisations and programs, not only oriented towards social activities**. Community/YCO members can be trained to be able to identify economic opportunities, such as actively seeking grants, donor or sponsorship information, or selling goods where the income is used for programme needs. In addition, it is important to diversify funding sources to minimise the risk of relying on only one source of funding.

About the Organizing Committees

Citizen OS Foundation-Indonesia

Citizen OS is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation that provides a collaborative platform for public discussion and decision-making. We endeavour to raise awareness about online civic engagement through our e-democracy platform. The Citizen OS platform aims to empower people and communities to make smarter and more impactful decisions in a collaborative and democratic way. Citizen OS Foundation is headquartered in Estonia with a branch organisation in Indonesia.
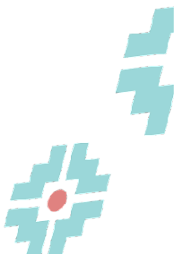
Dispora Banda Aceh

The Banda Aceh Youth and Sports Office (Dispora) is an office under the Ministry of Youth and Sports that is tasked with assisting the Mayor of Banda Aceh in carrying out government affairs and assistance tasks in the field of Youth and Sports.

Australia Awards Alumni

Australia Awards Alumni is an alumni network of scholarship recipients from the Australian government, one of which is the Australia Awards Short Course. Youth Participation In Social Justice Issue is one of the short courses held by the Australian Government in 2022-2023. Alumni who are awarded scholarships from this short course programme are required to develop a social project after

completing the short course. The Youth Engagement Programme is one of the projects held by alumni of the short course and is a form of collaboration between the NGO network and the government.
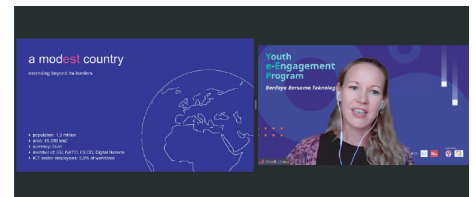
About
Youth e-Engagement Program 2021

Past YEP Programme and its Impact

Youth e-Engagement Program (YEEP) is a programme similar to YEP in which the entire programme was conducted online during the 2021 pandemic, and was attended by participants from various regions in Indonesia. YEEP is organised by Citizen OS Indonesia together with the organising committee organisations Indorelawan and One Click Democracy, and supported by the Ministry of Youth and Sports. The following is the documentation and impact of YEEP 2021.
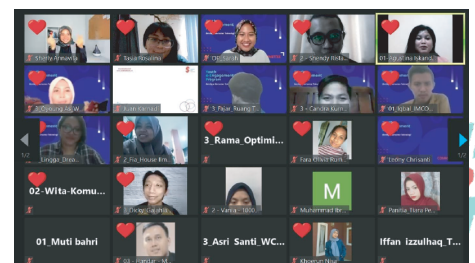
Accomplishments

❖ **24 participants** were selected from representatives of their respective communities through a selection process.

❖ **10 social projects** were implemented following the mentoring process.

❖ **5 social projects** received appreciation funds with a total value of IDR 10 million.

❖ **3 social projects** received funding from the Ministry of Youth and Sports with a total value of IDR 105 million.

Our New Government Partnership for Youth E-engagement in Indonesia.

17 January 2022 - Indianna Knight, Becca Melhuish

Our Youth E-engagement Programme (YEEP) will be scaled up across Indonesia, thanks to a new partnership between Citizen OS Indonesia and the Indonesian government. Find out more about YEEP and how this innovative partnership will work.

Closing

This activity was carried out by the nonprofit organisation Citizen OS in collaboration with the Banda Aceh Youth and Sports Office and Australia Awards Indonesia Alumni, who are particularly concerned with the issue of youth involvement in developing their regions through local youth start-up social projects. We are driven to facilitate empowered youth to make a real impact in the community and encourage the participation of other young people to take part in the activities that they will carry out. Hopefully this summary will provide an overview of the dynamics of the community or youth organisations in Banda Aceh, so that various parties can help the youth to work and contribute in developing the city of Banda Aceh.

Thank You!