

Engaging the youth in the Policymaking Process

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Organisation: Ministry of Gender Equality and Family

Country: Korea

Level of government: Central government

Sector: Social protection

Type: Communication, Organisational Design

Launched in: 1998

Overall development time: 13 years

Link to the innovation's website

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Description

Established in 2005, Youth Participation Organisations (YPOs) have been inviting the youth to engage in the central and local governments' policymaking and to facilitate the participation of the youth in managing various youth centres. YPOs consist of National Youth Congress, Youth Steering Committee, Youth Participation Committee, and Change Community Programme.

Until the late 1990s, the Youth in Korea had been regarded as simply to be protected, and thus they could hardly participate in social issues. Accordingly, the government designed a long-term plan and set up legal grounds to offer them on and off-line platforms for their full-blown participation.

After several years of steady efforts, the direct consumers of youth policies have been empowered to freely express their opinions and special needs, so that their voices have been fully reflected in improving the country's policies for the youth. In addition, close cooperation and support from relevant government bodies and local authorities have generated synergies for further policy development and better governance.

Why the innovation was developed

- In 1998, the 'Basic Plan on National Youth Policy, a blueprint of Korean youth policy, stipulated that youth participation in society is an important policy priority. Consequently, several youth participation bodies were established in the following years under the central government, 46 local governments and a host of private youth organisations. In particular, with the 2002 Korea-Japan FIFA World Cup, interest in youth participation in the society became a matter of supreme importance. In 2005, the Korean government showed its commitment to engaging the youth in the policymaking process by laying the legal grounds for the establishment of the youth participation bodies and started giving its wholehearted support to make them function effectively.
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Objectives

Enhance public trust, Improve access, Improve effectiveness, Improve user satisfaction, Increase citizen engagement

- To develop and implement beneficiary-oriented youth policies which are set from the viewpoint of the youth.
 - To promote the youth's social capacity-building through their vibrant participation in YPOs.
 - To contribute to the mid- and long-term development of the nation by identifying and setting new agenda for future generations.
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Main beneficiaries

Civil Society, Government bodies, Government staff, Students, Young people

- The total number of beneficiaries amounts to approximately 100 000 as of 2014. An evaluation of the achievements made by the National Youth Congress in 2005-2013 shows that the congress proposed a total of 357 policy projects to the central government and 316 (88.5%) of the proposed projects were accepted over the nine years. As of 2014, there are some 500 participatory youth organisations in operation across the country including the youth participation committees in 189 local autonomous entities and the youth steering committees in 305 youth centers.
- Every year, some 10 000 youths of the participation committees and steering committees have proposed diverse and creative ideas from their own perspectives. Their new ideas include a suggestion to create the "Help Call 120" system for the youth in Seoul, a proposal to make a basic-Plan for the Youth in Daegu, and calls for career experience programs in youth facilities. Most suggestions were welcomed and implemented by the central and local governments.

Results

Effectiveness

- The direct participation of the youth transforms the Community, contributing to youth capacity building as well as bringing various social issues to the surface.
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Service quality

Accessibility:

- A portal site (www.withyouth.go.kr), an online forum on daum.net, and SNS page (www.facebook.com/withyouth) are in operation encouraging the youth's active participation through information and opinion sharing as well as other activities.

Development

Design

The need for a better environment for the youth's social participation was raised by academics, experts youth facilities, experts from youth organisations, as well as those involved in youth activities. The inclusion of the youth participation issue in presidential pledges in 2003 ignited full-blown public discussion on the issue.

Design time: 2,5 years

Testing

- The National Youth Congress, which was a pilot project in 2004, began to convene annually in 2005 when the Framework Act on Juveniles was amended to include provisions authorising the creation of the Congress. The operation of the Congress has been steadily enhanced thanks to measures for improvement identified at the annual evaluation sessions. In operations, the roles were divided into three as follows:
 - The central government made the final decisions, prepared the legal grounds, and allocated a budget in support of the master plan.
 - The academia and research institutions conducted research studies on ways to implement the plan effectively.
 - The Korea Youth Work Agency, the National Council of Youth Organisations, and the Korea Association of Youth Centre were in charge of running the participatory youth organisations.

Testing time: 7 months

Implementation

Tools used:

- Youth participation portal (www.withyouth.go.kr) and SNS page (www.facebook.com/withyouth) were built as the platforms for information sharing and idea-gathering for the management of 'National Youth Congress', 'Youth participation Committee', 'Youth Steering Committee', 'Community Change Program', and for organising a variety of events as well.
- Updated manuals and technical sessions have been offered to youth workers and the youth.
- Evaluation sessions and meetings to draw new ideas and measures for improvement have been held periodically.

Resources used:

- The financial stability has been secured with the government's provision of budget and the organisational stability has been solidified by a nationwide network of cooperating entities (e.g. The Korea Youth Work Agency and its 17 regional chapters).
- Budget for the fiscal year of 2014: KRW 2.2 billion (USD 2.16 million)

Implementation time: 5 years

Diffusion

- The Ministry of Gender Equality and Family partnered with local autonomous entities as well as the Korea Youth Work Agency (KYWA) and its network of regional centres in 17 municipalities/provinces to organise nationwide activities for the youth's social participation.
- As a result of cooperation from other related government authorities and the Ministry of Education's support for build collaborative relationship with schools, an extensive nationwide partnership has been formed for the youth's social participation.

Diffusion time: 5 years

Challenges and solutions

- There has been almost no attention paid by the youth to the participatory youth organisations because most of them are caught up in the college entrance exam preparation.
 - To tackle this challenge, full efforts to boost the youth's attention to and participation in the participatory youth organisations were made including the advertisements recruiting the representatives on newspapers, internet portal site, etc., and introduction of the organisations' activities online to the public.
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Partnerships

Scholars

Civil Society

National Youth Policy Institute

Academics and Research Bodies

At the request of the government, the National Youth Policy Institute, a government-financed research institution, jointly with scholars in relevant areas, drew up a master plan for the facilitation of participatory youth organisation and produced/updated a strategy for its execution by analysing the achievements and problems identified in the course of implementation.

Council of Government Agencies

Other Public Sector

The low enthusiasm from the relevant government authorities for the youth-proposed policy projects made the cooperation among the authorities hard to achieve. Accordingly, 'Council of Government Agencies related to Youth Policy' was created in 2011 where higher-ranking officials of relevant authorities discuss ways to ensure the youth-proposed policy projects to be better accepted and implemented.

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

- The Korean model could be a good target for benchmarking with respect to:
 - Nationwide partnership.
 - Mobilisation of resources.
 - Inter-organisational coordination.
 - Budgetary planning.
 - Development of a manual.
 - Other efforts to promote the youth's civil participation.
 - Beneficiaries' willingness to participate in new initiatives.
 - Consistent and constant attention from the government's side.
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Conditions for success

- Beneficiaries' willingness to participate in new initiatives.
- Consistent and constant attention from the government's side.