

BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS FOR PEACE

VOL. 1



mensen
met een
missie



DMJ

**DYNAMIQUE MONDIALE DES JEUNES
MENSEN MET EEN MISSIE**



GENERAL INFORMATION

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Project Name | Behavioural Insights and Marketing for Peace | |
| Case | Active Citizenship in Cameroon | |
| Organisations involved | Mensen met een Missie, The Netherlands Dynamique Mondiale des Jeunes, Cameroon | |
| Contact Mensen met een Missie www.mensenmeteenmissie.nl | Mr. Tjeerd Rienstra Programme Officer tjeerdrienstra@mensenmeteenmissie.nl +31 6 3075 1013 Bezuidenhoutseweg 225, 2594 AL The Hague, The Netherlands | Ms. Floor Schuiling Programme Manager floorschuiling@mensenmeteenmissie.nl +31 6 3061 3648 Bezuidenhoutseweg 225, 2594 AL The Hague, The Netherlands |
| Contact DMJ www.dmjcm.org | dmj@dmjcm.org +237 242 04 51 64 / +237 222 31 01 45 | |



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INTRODUCTION

Mensen met een Missie¹ supports people with a mission in 13 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. People who work against exploitation, suppression and exclusion. Our approach is locally-led and faith-based. We believe that real change starts at the grassroots and religion can be a powerful source for social transformation. We specifically focus on interfaith peacebuilding, gender equality and inclusive peacebuilding.

We have a long track record in **peacebuilding** at grassroots level. We support locally-led efforts to bridge divides between communities. In supporting our partners we draw from the knowledge and experience from our staff, other local partners, other NGOs and academic research from conflict studies.

However, we have found that we have a blind spot. There is a vast array of knowledge, research and experience in other sectors that we could potentially apply to peacebuilding. Behavioural sciences, psychology, sociology, marketing... just to name a few. To tackle this blind spot, the **BIM for Peace** team was erected: Behavioural Insights and Marketing for Peace. This team opens the shutters to let other insights flow into our organisation.

This document depicts the key findings from one of the BIM for Peace Initiatives: **the expert dinners**.

We want to take this opportunity to give a shout-out to everyone involved in this initiative. Mats, Willem, Joost, Julia, Kees, Caroline Claire Yankep, Arnaud Jr Tonga E. Virginie Mvemie, Michel Fokou and Duplex Kuenzob (the brain behind the scenes).

Thank you all so much for your time, flexibility and interesting insights!

Tjeerd Rienstra & Floor Schuiling

www.mensenmeteenmissie.nl



1. BIM FOR PEACE

Through its programme 'BIM for Peace' Mensen met een Missie applies insights from behavioural sciences, psychology and marketing to further local peacebuilding efforts.

In conflict situations we are confronted with severe problems, and in line with this we also hope and aim for big solutions. We need to get from daydreaming about peace to actual change. Well, how precisely?

People are not rational beings, nor calculating automatons. Rather, people are malleable and emotional actors whose decision making and behaviour is influenced by complex and mysterious internal workings.

However, many peacebuilding interventions are based on the assumption that people are rational decision makers. Hence, interventions are tailored as such.

To increase the effectiveness and impact of peacebuilding interventions we need to complement existing peacebuilding approaches with new tools to factor in the primary dynamics in human behaviour.

For this, we need to open our shutters for insights in other sectors who have mastered the art of including the human factor in their strategies: behavioural sciences; marketing; social psychology.

Through this initiative *Behavioural Insights and Marketing for Peace* we aim to understand and influence behaviour in relation to peace. To further this, we study ways in which human behaviour is influenced by individual factors and by social-contextual factors.

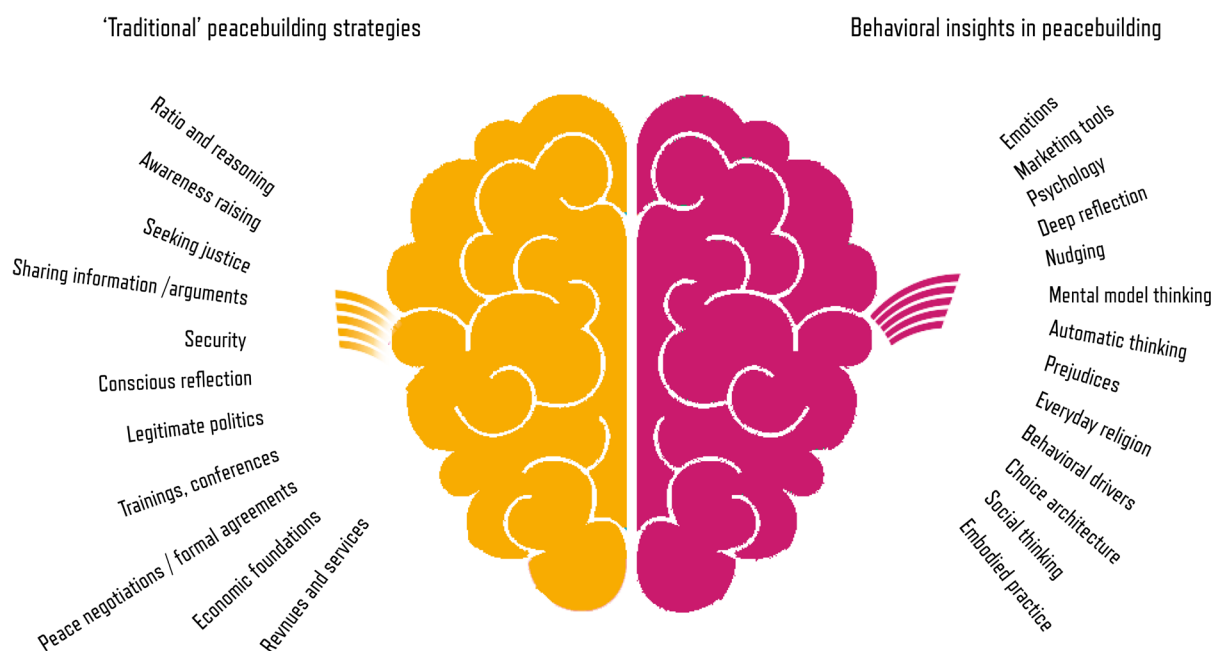
In our thinking, we will seek advice and work with marketing experts, behavioural scientists, psychologists, behavioural economists, and neuroscientists. We will employ an integrated two-tier approach:

Knowledge level - we will build knowledge as an organization by engaging with experts: academics, professionals, other institutes. Practical application of these insights to local peacebuilding efforts will always be an important filter.

Bottom-up - we will table dilemma's that partner organizations face in their work. With a multi-disciplinary expert group we will explore ways to optimise the strategy in order to generate real change.

Societal impact

Our mission in this BIM for Peace project is to generate top-level knowledge on human behaviour and apply this to peacebuilding efforts at grassroots level. By doing this we will improve intervention strategies and deliver positive results for people and communities who are faced with conflict and divide.



BIM for Peace - a new way of looking at peacebuilding interventions

Expert dinners

Food and brains. For us that would have been the ideal set-up. The best ideas do not come in an office setting, and the best conversations do not occur behind a laptop. Meeting someone in the hallway or having a teabreak together are when real conversations happen. Riding a bicycle, enjoying a drink, or right before you really wake up... those moments are the moments when the brain starts to make waves. Or when having dinner with a bunch of inspiring people. That is what we had in mind.

The BIM for Peace team at Mensen met een Missie wanted various experts to shed light on a real case put forward by one of our partner organisations. We did not only want to seek their advice, but also to make use of the potential effect of a real conversation, which can make small ideas and suggestions grow and bloom by chewing it over (*pun intended*) together.

We wanted our local partner to be digitally present during the dinner to present its case, its dilemmas and to indulge itself in the wisdoms shared across the dinner table.

So that is what we prepared for. Our local partner Dynamique Mondiale des Jeunes (DMJ) from Cameroon, through its Executive Secretary Duplex Kuenzob, and the BIM for Peace team went back and forth to get as much details on the case, on the context and on the challenges faced. On paper we were ready for the next step, ready for dinner.

But then COVID-19 happened.

Everything closed: offices, schools, restaurants and entire countries. We were advised to go outside as little as possible and preferably only have dinner with those you share a household with. No BIM expert dinner, that much was clear.

We still found a way to get input from experts on the Cameroon case. We also found a way to have experts bounce ideas of one another. Admittedly, not as lively and informal as a dinner would have been, but nevertheless inspirational.

We organised conversations in a circle, starting with expert 1, Mr. Mats Postema. He studied the case and prepared thorough feedback. Expert 2, Mr. Willem van Sermondt shared his own thoughts and insights and responded to the inputs from expert 1. Expert 3 and expert 4 - Mr. Joost Knuppe and Julia Matser respectively - gave their insights and responded to the previous experts as well. We finished with expert 1 again, which made the circle round again.

This method provided us with the opportunity to get the individual inputs, as well as generating new ideas by the experts' additions to the ideas of one another.

This document shows the outcomes of this alternative expert dinner.



2. CASE - ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP IN CAMEROON

Dynamique Mondiale des Jeunes (DMJ), a valued long-time partner of Mensen met een Missie, is based in Cameroon and puts youth in the center of their organisation and strategies. In different target areas in Cameroon they foster active citizenship among youth. The case spotlighted here revolves around their strategies and methodologies to create and empower active young citizens.

Introduction

Land conflicts in Cameroon are increasing. Not just in rural settings, but also in (peri-)urban areas. Land is scarce and expensive. Conflict can arise over several square meters of land. With this project, we aim to avoid conflict or mediate before the situation escalates. The judicial system is of little help, so we try to avoid having to go the formal route.

Together with the organisation Dynamique Mondiale des Jeunes (DMJ), Mensen met een Missie (MM) encourages active citizenship in 6 cities in Cameroon; to initiate cohorts of young people who are committed to society and political participation. These young active citizens will then be suited to act against land conflicts.

DMJ's vision on conflict

DMJ sees conflict as an opportunity for each party to better communicate with the other so as to clarify their thoughts, opinions, interests, desires, expectations and needs. The conflict must therefore call for a process of re-establishing reasoned communication. To do this, preventing conflict means allowing young people (giving them a permanent opportunity) to express themselves on subjects that concern or preoccupy them, or even simply on events that are taking place around them.

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Where: | in 6 urban locations in Cameroon – Yaoundé, Ngoumou, Bikok, Eséka, Belabo, Ebolowa |
| Who: | both Christian and Muslim youths. Women. |
| How many: | about 200 youths per year. |

Active citizenship to counter land conflicts

Active citizenship is about taking responsibility, for society and for the world. Active citizens engage in activities that promote and maintain democracy. These activities include petitions, voting, campaigning, as well as community-oriented activities such as volunteering or neighbourhood clean-ups. It is about active participation in democratic society. In addition, an active citizen does not violate human rights and democratic values. An active citizen does no harm to another.

In Cameroon, MM and DMJ want to combat land conflicts by promoting active citizenship among youths. DMJ wants to equip the committed young citizens to be better able to deal with land conflicts.

The **change** that the young active citizens strive for:

- Officially register land ownership at the cadastre
- Prevent new land conflicts or promote reconciliation in conflict
- Raising land conflicts with local authorities
- Traditional chiefs agree with their community to stop selling land
- Opinion leaders draw attention to the land conflicts



Questions for the experts

Stimulating active citizenship – how is it done?

DMJ aims to promote active citizenship among their young target group in different ways. They cultivate in young people the will, wish and desire to serve the society. In their strategy, they incorporate various elements that are important for behavioural change.

SELECTION of Changemakers

Leaders in youth organisations, women organisations, and traditional leaders

QUESTION TO EXPERTS

What are the characteristics of a changemaker?

OWNERSHIP

The youths raise the issue (land conflict) and come up with solutions themselves

Through moments of reflection, DMJ raises awareness on land issues and potential solutions

Youths are motivated and enthused to take part: they are the key to change

Giving responsibility to youths and who thereby become more confident of their own ability to act

Giving youths the sense that they matter and that they can actually bring about change

QUESTION TO EXPERTS

What other factors contribute to the sense of ownership?

EXEMPLARY ROLE

DMJ puts the spotlight on good examples of changemakers (through audiovisual tools, the monthly magazine and exchanges).

Other youths are hereby motivated to act as well.

QUESTION TO EXPERTS

Does it work like that? What conditions should an example meet in order for others to follow it?

SELF-EFFICACY

Coming up with a chain of responsibilities (and reflection: what is my role in this chain).

Every individual has his or her own responsibility and should take into account others' wishes.

Discussions within the target group and roleplay.

QUESTION TO EXPERTS

How can self-efficacy be enhanced; the extent to which youths have the idea that they can actually show the desired behaviour?

GENERAL

QUESTION TO EXPERTS

What motivates someone to commit to the larger community?

AND BEYOND

QUESTIONS TO EXPERTS

What else is required for a long-term commitment from youth?

Promoting active citizenship among young people: what are real no-go's?

Reflection on DMJ's strategy: what are strong points? What is missing?

Dynamique Mondiale des Jeunes (DMJ)

World Dynamics of Young People (WDYP) - **Dynamique Mondiale des Jeunes (DMJ)** is a registered NGO with headquarters in Yaoundé, in the sixth district. Through their Integrated Program of Participation in the Socio Political Influence Process (I.2.P.S.P.I), WDYP/DMJ prepares young people to understand and assume public responsibilities in compliance with good governance, democratization and decentralization of society. As such, DMJ mobilizes young people to raise youth awareness on the development of their full potential at the local level, the promotion of integrity and the development of national sentiment based on civic values and the law.

Its field of intervention covers four areas of action:

- democracy and governance;
- human rights and citizenship;
- human security and civil service for peace; and
- migration and immigration.

These areas are translated into 7 components:

- young people's legal and political culture;
- operational partnership among urban and rural young people;
- promotion of volunteer service and search for vocational experience;
- communication for national integration and the fight against tribalism;
- a diaspora support initiative to young innovative technicians;
- socio-political leadership of urban and rural young people; and
- bringing back the brain.

The implementation of these components are made through action research, fact-finding tours, lobbying and advocacy, support and counselling, trainings, capacity-building and coaching, seminars, conference, sensitization, campaigns, social activities and development affordance and placement of volunteers.

<https://www.dmjcm.org/en/home-en/>



3. THE EXPERTS



Mats Postema

Mats is co-founder of Changing Ways¹, a research and consultancy agency that helps organizations and businesses map out motives behind the behaviour of their target groups and designs interventions. He is an expert on social nudging.

<https://en.changingways.nl>



Julia Matser

Joost finished the same master studies as Mats (Behavioural Change and Social Influence at Nijmegen University) and went on to create awareness and social nudging campaigns for Voedingscentrum to help people create a more healthy diet.



Joost Knuppe

As former president of DWARS, the youth wing of the Dutch Green Left political party, Julia has first-hand experience in keeping youths engaged. She now recruits and trains informal leaders for workers union FNV to stand up for a better work environment.

A former youth changemaker himself, Willem gladly shares his expertise on getting and keeping young people committed to activities for the greater society. He currently works as a project advisor at Kansfonds.



Willem van Sermondtt

What is Behavioural Change?

Behavioural change is the field of psychology, communication science and behavioural science, and helps predict and change behaviour.

People have all kinds of "buttons" in their heads. Our behaviour stems from "pressing these buttons". The situation we are in, determines which buttons are pressed. And so the situation we find ourselves in determines our behaviour.

With our expertise and experience we can predict which buttons will be pressed, and thus predict what behaviour a situation will lead to.

Then, with a good behavioural strategy and the right techniques, we create a situation in such a way that the right buttons are pressed to change or optimize behaviour.

Changing Ways (<https://en.changingways.nl>)

4. EXPERT PERSPECTIVES



DRIVE

What drives a person (and youths in particular) to be an active citizen and commit to improving the wider community?

Mats

Through thousands of years of evolution, people have been pre-programmed with all kinds of motives. Depending on which of these motives has the most influence, people show certain behaviour. Ten thousand years ago, that was very useful because it helped us survive. Nowadays we no longer have to survive in the same way, but the old motives still influence us. That is why we sometimes show behaviour that does not seem logical or is even unwanted. Therefore, if you want to change behaviour, you first need to know which motives are important in your situation.

But what determines the influence that our motives have? The influence of motives, and thus the behaviour we show, is a result of the interaction between the characteristics of a person, his or her environment and possibly the form of communication about behaviour. So it is the interaction between people, environment and communication that ultimately leads to desired or undesired behaviour.

We (of Changing Ways, ed.) believe that you can only really let people do something different if you understand the interaction between people, environment and communication. We therefore always take a step back first to properly investigate a situation, so that we can then take two steps forward and in the right direction with certainty. Based on your input, we made a preliminary behavioural map (see below).

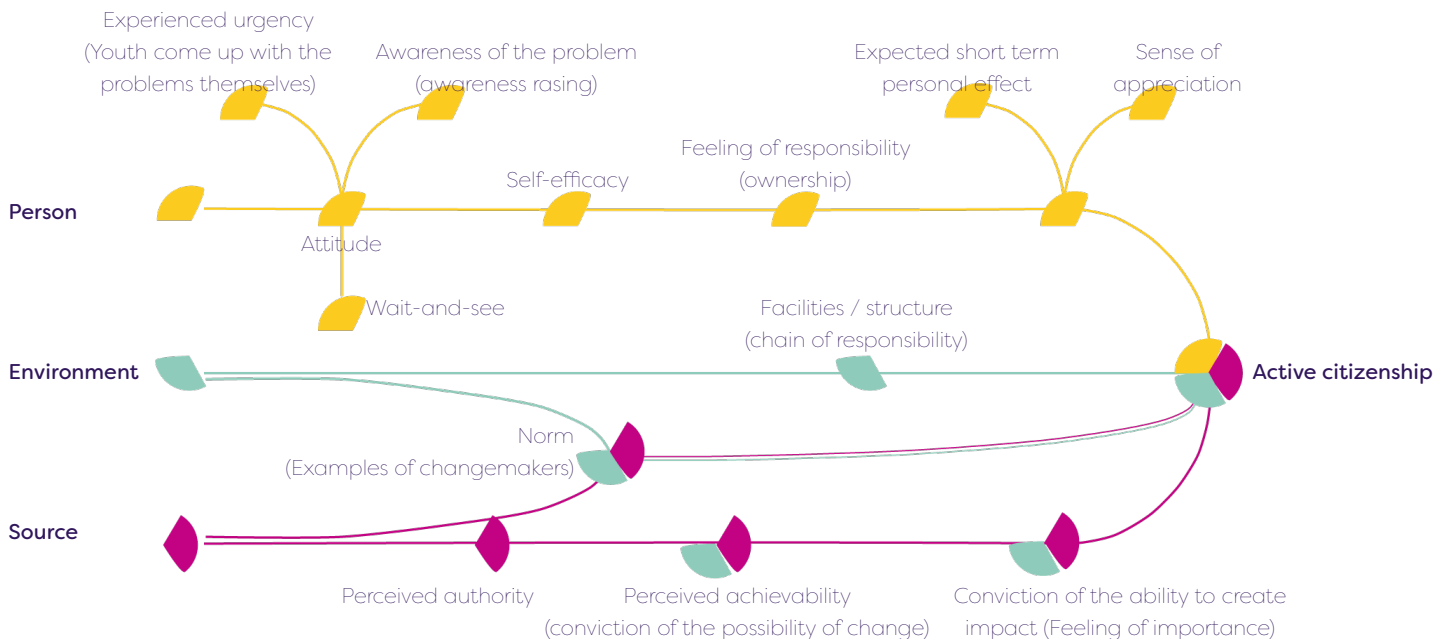
In order to incite commitment long-term of youths, it is necessary that the motives behind commitment are touched in the right way. This probably means making the expected short-term personal effect more positive and realizing a sense of appreciation among the young people. Incidentally, increasing commitment does not mean that all young people show active citizenship equally. If the commitment is good, but the other motives are not correctly affected, then the chance of inciting active citizenship is small.

Willem

If you organize some meetings and involve a few young people who help and think along, then that is already an accomplishment. You should not expect that six months later you have young leaders who organize cool actions on their own. Eventually, the idea is to get as many people as possible there. However, if you look at voluntary commitment to organizations, only about 10% of people feel that they are co-owners of the project or cause.

I think that Mats is correct in saying that you should continue to look how you can involve various people at different moments in a project; when to touch on the different motives of an intervention. A good youth worker is in touch with many youths and knows when to ask which youth to conduct a specific task. Maybe a youngster does not enjoy organizing activities, but instead likes to welcome people at the entrance... You should not have the illusion that you will get everyone to the end station. It is already an accomplishment when they leave with a certain level of awareness.

A preliminary behavioural map, showing the motives and direction that seem relevant in guiding youths in Cameroon towards active citizenship. Composed by Mats Postema (Changing Ways) for Mensen met een Missie (MM) and Dynamique Mondiale des Jeunes (DMJ), edited by MM.



Fun or urgency?

What is the balance between making something fun for young people and continuing to emphasize the urgency of the problem?

Willem

I think that urgency is a very important motivation. Compare it with the global climate protests. There is a certain group of young people who have watched documentaries about the climate on Netflix and think “We are headed in the wrong direction, we have to stand up against this.” But not all young people who were demonstrating for the climate feel that urgency. Some also enjoyed creating the signs people walked with, enjoyed getting creative and having fun doing something together with their peers. So, if you only focus on the urgency, you will reach a certain group of young people, but this group will stay limited.

You can find something fun and important and take action. But those climate protests might also be attractive to young people because they did it together. Is that often the case with active citizenship?

Yes, that is the essence of active citizenship, that you do not work alone. It is so much fun to work towards a common goal with likeminded people. This jointness can also be emphasized by DMJ when talking about land conflicts so youths start thinking: “This is a problem for my family, but also for the family on the corner.”

Joost

Faith and passion that you can make the world a better place. But it varies greatly per person why people do what they do. There is no magic formula. For some it is status, for others it is a form of care for their family or the possibility of having a career. This is how you should treat the target group: they are all individuals with their own motivations. What you can do is distinguish groups within the group of young people and see which motivation is most widely shared among them. Then you can create an intervention around that specific motivation, aimed at the youths who feel that motivation.

The youths who do not participate in that intervention are not a lost cause, but simply do not feel addressed. So you can think of a different approach for them.



It is so much fun to work towards a common goal with likeminded people. This jointness can also be emphasized by DMJ when talking about land conflicts so youths start thinking: “This is a problem for my family, but also for the family on the corner.”

APPROACHING YOUTH

How would you advise DMJ to approach youths and activate them to display certain behaviour?

Joost

That is a broad question. Because activating youth is a challenge in itself and it will be different for each desired behaviour. In addition, it is not just any target group. What you ask of them is something that they can only reap the benefits in the long term, which is an issue for youths' brains as they are not yet fully developed. Simply put: their reward centre is fully grown, but their inhibition centre is not. This means that they are more impulsive and usually less likely to look at the long-term consequences of their behaviour. So it would be wise to focus on taking small steps for the short term which eventually lead to a larger, long term goal.

In addition, young people are just like people in the sense that every youth is different. Some are already very much concerned with the future, others not at all. It is best to approach each of these profiles differently and at a different time. Some groups you approach before the planning phase. They want to actively participate and be involved immediately. For other groups participating in the event may be sufficient. It all depends on which youths are your target group. All youths? Only the highly educated youths? **And if you look at the "examples" (changemakers, ed.), what kind of youth are they? Are they relatable or rather exceptional success stories that the majority of the target audience cannot identify with?**

Question
for DMJ

DMJ: The level of education does not matter. We have had changemakers of different levels and statute. The only difference is at the level of action. Usually, an educated young person can more easily translate his/her analysis into action because he/she has the intellectual means to do so. Young people with little educational background usually need a guide to accompany him/her in his/her action. At this level, an additional action on the part of DMJ is required: coaching and guiding. Otherwise, the person will face an institution or stakeholder without the intellectual resources and knowledge required. In such cases, DMJ will function as a facilitator and mediator during the first exchanges to create trust in the young person and consequently reduce vulnerability. **We manage to use all levels of language in order to be understood by each category of young people in his or her level.**

Citizen participation as target behaviour is quite a broad focus. It is a nice abstract dot on the horizon but consists of various forms of behaviour. If you would work with the model Mats made, you should actually fill that in for all the small behaviours mentioned (such as registering in the land register, ed.) that contribute to the larger goal. Do not just look at citizen participation and the solutions you have come up with but treat everything - every behaviour - as a separate case.

Julia

I think you start because of a certain motivation; at DWARS (a Dutch political youth organization that Julia chaired) because you want to save the environment or find it important that money is better distributed. You stay because being with a group of peers is fun and you see that you achieve something. Only that is a bit difficult with something as big as climate change. I have been with DWARS for 5 years and in the meantime little has changed. But achieving small goals did contribute to me staying involved with the organisation so long. Ultimately, you get pleasure out of it by doing it with friends. Reasons for youths to drop out (besides being too busy with study or work) include not being completely welcomed by the type of people at DWARS and our language use. Our language shows that we are mainly highly educated young people from the big Dutch cities. But we want to be more inclusive, and this requires culture change.

What kind of youths do you currently bind to your goal and organization – could it be that others do not feel welcome or at home at DMJ because of the language you use?

Question
for DMJ

DMJ: Both in the access to land project and in our organization in general, we target all categories of young people between the ages of 18 and 35. All school and educational levels combined. This combination is made possible by our animation approach which favors open discussions rather than lectures or presentations. It is here that the playful aspects find all their importance. We always start from the experienced lived or heard by the young person to build up collective knowledge, allowing each person involved in the facilitation strategy to be an informant.

NO-GO'S

To promote active citizenship among youth: what are definite no-go's?

Mats

Immediately jumping to solutions is a no go. As good as it feels and as logical it sometimes seems to focus on the solution, if you want to achieve sustainable behavioural change you must first have a good idea of the situation. This requires research and time. Only then can you confidently respond to the right motives and incite active citizenship in the longer term. Moreover, youths should be addressed in their own (youth) language, through their own (youth) channels and with media expressions that are recognizable to them.

Willem

People often think that activities for youths should be different from those for 'older' volunteers, but young people are similar to other people. In the Humanitas' buddy project, we asked young people what they see as success factors and the things they are fed up with in their voluntary work. 90% of their wishes were about the way a volunteer project is organized: a nice welcome conversation in which mutual expectations become clear, carefully selected buddy pairs, the possibility to take part in a training beforehand so you know what to expect, guidance from someone with experience, having an idea of what you can achieve, evaluations, and appreciation from their buddies, peers and mentor. When you become active for the first time, people become much more nervous, for example when you organize a weekend for the first time or stand on a stage to speak to others. Then it is important to closely supervise the youths. But when that first threshold is gone, they are just like other people.

Joost

Keep in mind that I don't know the target group. But for youths in general, focusing on long term goals does not work. It would be best to not outline an entire trajectory, tell them what their role will be and then assume that their confidence automatically grows. The youths will experience much less autonomy (depending on their role), which has an important influence on their motivation.

Julia

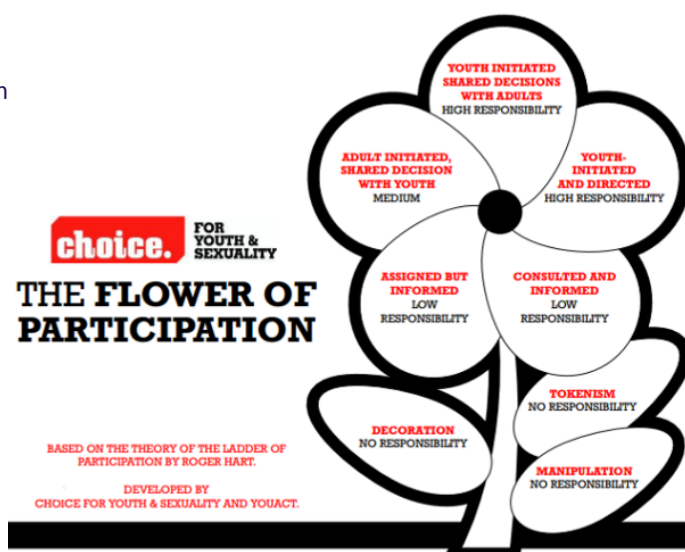
points us to The Flower of Participation (see below). The most important thing is that youths are able to do things themselves, not that adults organise everything. This phenomenon is known as either tokenism (youths seem to have a voice, but in reality adults determine everything), manipulation (youths are only allowed to follow the strategy of adults, but the adults indicate that the strategy has been created with help of youth) or decoration (youth are only allowed to follow the strategy of adults, and the adults do not give the impression that the strategy is inspired by youths).

Youths are known for going after quick wins. That is a bit contrary to participation in climate protests or active citizenship. But how do you ensure that so many youths work on such a long-term problem?

It should be fun, there should be cookies, there should be laughter. Otherwise, you will not be able to continue. If none of your friends go to such a climate protest, then the threshold to go becomes very high. People usually do not join in such activities on their own.

Dynamique Mondiale des Jeunes

Involving finance directly in the actions of young people totally diverts young people, divides them and weakens their motivation. Money must be invested differently on the young person. For example, take him or her on a trip through which he or she will talk about his/her experience. Motivate the person to speak to the media or write about him in a newsletter. All is preferred over giving money or materials as a reward.



The Flower of Participation, as presented by CHOICE. (<https://www.choiceforyouth.org>)

OWNERSHIP

What factors contribute to a sense of ownership?

Mats

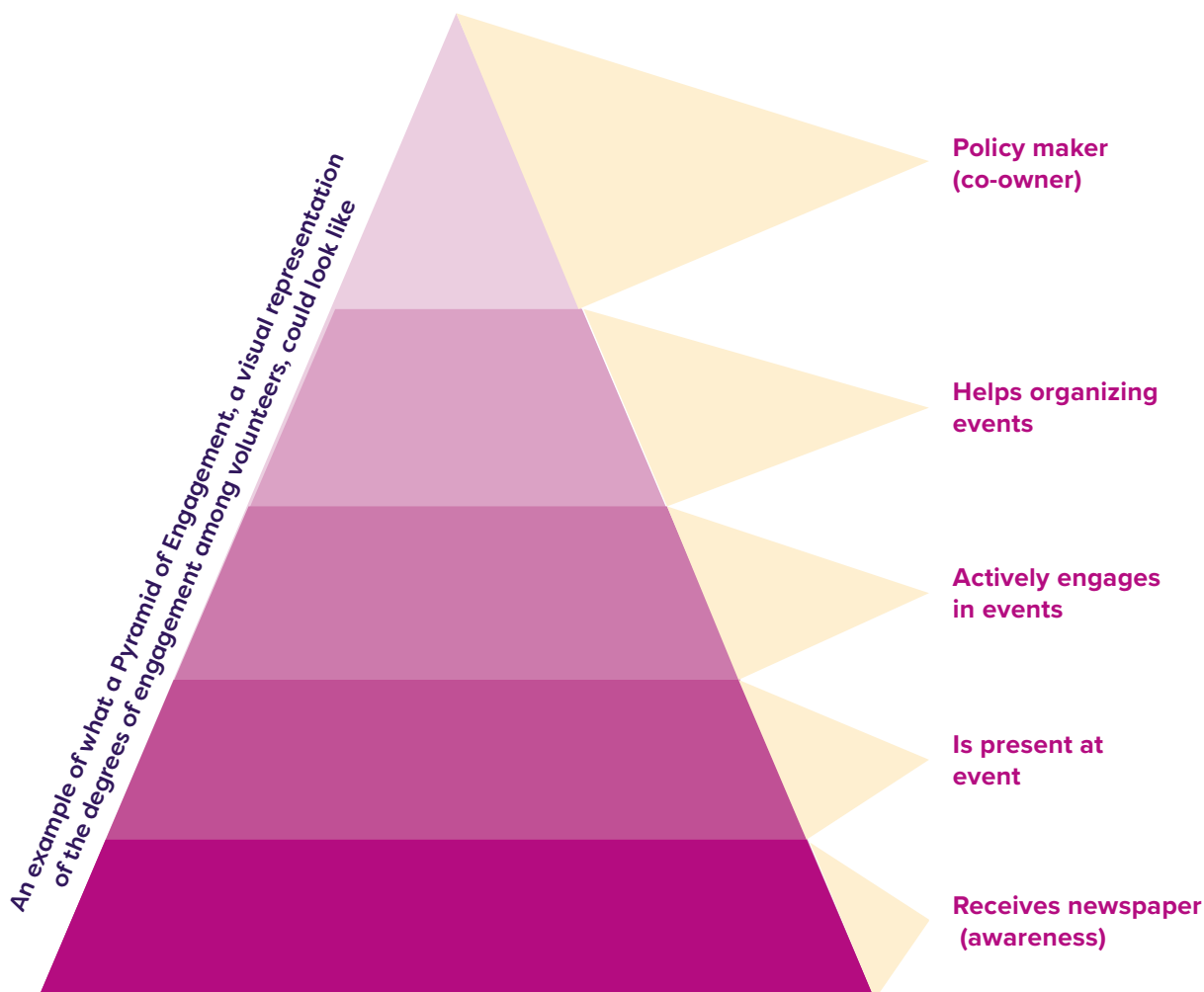
This differs per situation. If we assume that sense of ownership stems from motivation, we need to look at the following motives: the expected short-term personal effect and the sense of appreciation. People who expect a positive short-term personal effect often also seem motivated to do something (i.e., bring about change). The same goes for people who experience a sense of appreciation.

Willem

I would map out several degrees of ownership and engagement that correspond with particular roles and tasks among the volunteers and paid youths in your organisation. For this, I like to use the shape of a pyramid (see below). At the bottom of the pyramid are the people with a certain awareness of your organisation and goal. Organising fun activities is usually a good way to have new people engage with your organization ('s goal). Examples of these activities are roleplays, interactive discussion sessions about issues raised by the youths... Some participants may be selected to help organize the next activity (potentially for a new group). You could ask some of these youths to help evaluate the entire project. Allow them to think of the change they can help bring about. This should increase their sense of ownership.

Dynamique Mondiale des Jeunes

Always render the results collective and if possible by highlighting even the least significant contributions. We have our internal newsletter *Transfer* which values the small individual achievements of the youth. Assigning responsibilities, having young people accompany actions, preparing them to speak even for very little time to talk about their experience. The young person should not immediately realise that he or she is being prepared to speak one day. Surprising him or her that day by giving the opportunity to speak is a sign of trust. When the persons realise that they are trusted and valued, they become integral part of the action. Creating a sense of ownership also means being accountable to young people. It makes them important, further motivates them and strengthens their inclusion.



CHANGEMAKERS

DMJ shows examples of what is considered active citizens through examples, local ambassadors: changemakers. Other youths are encouraged to follow the example of these changemakers and change their own behaviour. Does it work like that? What is required for youths to follow in the footsteps of these changemakers?

Mats

This could – in theory – work. If showing good examples to the target group hits the right motives (for example the ‘norm that it is normal to help out others’, the ‘perceived authority’ or the ‘sense of appreciation’ mentioned above) then this intervention may make the target group act. In reality it is probably a lot more complex. Having youths lead by example can be a good way to activate other youths when the changemaker touches the right motives in the right way. My advice is to investigate that first. An alternative is to work with the motives mentioned in the provisional behaviour map.

It differs per individual who they think is a changemaker. With the examples (leaders in youth and women’s organisations, and traditional leaders; as mentioned in the introduction of this report, ed.), perceived authority is an important motive. I also think that the feeling that a person has whether change is actually possible contributes to whether that person may see another person as a changemaker. The more someone feels that change is possible and the supposed changemaker (a youth leader, for example) is in a position where he or she also seems to have the power to make that change, the more the person will consider the youth leader to be a changemaker.

Willem

The effectiveness of the changemaker depends on relatability.

If you put the changemaker on a pedestal too much, as if they are extraordinary, the target group may be able to relate less.

Also, changemakers who speak in front of another community than their own are not as relatable. The great thing about when I volunteered for Samen was that I was a participant at first and could then get involved in the project from within the organization. As I went on a weekend of training, I could see that there was the possibility to eventually supervise such a weekend, because people in the organization committee had also been participants themselves.

Joost

It is important to define what a changemaker is first. Of course, every changemaker is different. The person who inspires you does not have to inspire me. And, whereas some changemakers inspire with their actions in silence, others mainly talk and encourage others to take action. Changemakers are everywhere and - you will hear this more often - there is probably no single magic formula for it.

Research does show that influencers can actually influence behaviour, provided they meet a number of conditions. Two that stand out are relatability and credibility (does it make sense for that person to spread that particular message or do you immediately feel that something is not right?). DMJ seems to meet these conditions with the changemakers. The question now is to what extent the tools with which the message of the changemakers are spread, such as social media and online bulletins, are viewed and have an effect.

More important than sending information about good examples is the fact that we encounter all sorts of examples in society - including negative ones. Youths in the drug circuit do sometimes see success stories of people who have left that sort of life, something the Dutch approach is geared towards, with newsletters and a lecture here and there. But those youths are also exposed to the success stories of the drug circuit every day, where people drive around in beautiful cars and receive respect in their respective neighbourhoods. So how prominent is your role model?

Because as long as youths encounter many wrong examples, the effect of the good example will remain limited. **What do you currently do to make bad but successful examples less visible or appealing to the youths?**

Question
for DMJ

DMJ: When there is a noticeable presence of bad examples, it is always very difficult to value the good example. But that does not mean we let it go. Even if proceeding with a comparative approach is very risky. In such a context, where many bad examples rub shoulders with good examples, we associate the exposure of the good example with the dimension of its relationship with the environment, because the good example has the advantage of being a better connector than the bad example. In this case, we do not avoid discussion or avoid putting it on the table. We must open frank discussions with tools such as the historical profile in order to revisit the path taken by the bad example. The following analysis demonstrates the points and levels of deviation and shows the violations and sanctions. Values are an important part of the messages, which calls on the spiritual dimension of our work.

Julia

Let me ask a question first: how did the number of 200 youths and women leaders come about? Given the time it takes to train only a limited portion of that number it will also affect the quality of the result. In my job as a recruiter/trainer for a workers union, finding the first people to train can easily take months, even when the total population (of a company or factory, ed.) is 500. That is a different approach to work with a very large group of 200 within one year. Would it therefore be an idea for DMJ to reach those 200 young people by first finding five “perfect” leaders who can then train and guide the rest?

I tell the potential leaders the following: “It is very difficult to accomplish system or culture change on your own. But you are not alone in this. Do you know any other people who have the same issues you have? If you are with a large group or an entire department, you may be able to go to the director directly, instead of first having to deal with your immediate boss.” The next step is to form a group that can change the existing system or culture. I tell them: “Talk to colleagues, see if they are interested in having a conversation with me such as the one we are having right now.” If that person can get people to talk with me, they show clear signs of leadership.

At our office we are constantly being reminded that you should have no idea what a leader looks like.

**Someone who is quiet can also be a good leader.
A leader is someone who other people call a leader.**

We ask people: who do you go to if you have a problem or question? If several people mention the same person, you can invite them for a conversation.

To respond to the Pyramid of Engagement that Willem mentioned: a good leader also ensures that others can step up. Furthermore, there is a difference between organisers and leaders. The organiser wants to pull the strings and look for leaders; he/she connects the dots. A leader does things in a more direct way: they get people around them moving. And where the organiser takes a step back when leaders are found, a leader likes to be at the forefront.

However you contribute to broader societal change, it should be fun. If someone I train to become leader manages to recruit one colleague, I emphasise that as being a great success. The trainee then immediately has the idea that they can contribute and that they are important in the process. To keep things fun, we also prepare our trainees for potential disappointment, when colleagues do not want to listen to their story, or respond in a negative way. **Do you at DMJ have talks with the changemakers to prepare them for this?**

Question
for DMJ

DMJ: We don't just prepare them, we accompany them for a certain period of time and help them prepare their speech, tools for analysing contradiction and ways to respond to an adversary. During some of our community events,, we give them a sense of responsibility to evaluate their performance and their ability to deal with contractions or oppositions, and then we challenge their weaknesses. Within the framework of the land project , we have identified the changemakers that engage with the authorities in relation to land registry and land affairs. They are prepared to defend an idea. This moral rearmament enables the changemakers not to be discouraged.



SELF-EFFICACY

How to increase self-efficacy; the idea that youths are capable of showing the desired behaviour?

Mats

The feeling of one's own effectiveness, or self-efficacy, is best increased by increasing confidence. DMJ is already touching upon this motive with discussions and role plays. Whether a discussion or role play actually increases confidence depends of course on the interpretation of youths of those discussions and role plays.

Increasing a sense of responsibility probably contributes to active citizenship, but at first glance has less to do with confidence. A permanent and working structure, such as the chain of responsibilities, can also influence people's trust. Again, this depends on the youths' interpretation of that chain. If the chain is extremely bureaucratic or corrupt, I expect confidence to drop rather than increase.

Willem, as you progressed to the top of the Pyramid of Engagement as a volunteer, did you have the feeling that you were capable of the work required for each new step? Or does it help to be thrown into the deep so you just have to do it? "You go ahead and organize that weekend filled with activities!"

Willem

It is good to give young people the space to make mistakes and discover it for themselves, but also give them the feeling that it will be okay. That you, as a youth worker, will always be there in the background for when things do not go as planned.

Joost

I wonder how effective focusing on self-efficacy is in this case, as DMJ is already working on it a lot. Regardless, there are several techniques with which you can stimulate self-efficacy. A good role play can certainly contribute. The beauty of role play is that it also encourages self-persuasion (based on a theory that assumes that the recipient plays an active role in persuading oneself to change his or her attitude or behaviour, ed.). Other techniques you can use are:

- Have youths reminisce memories of previous - own - success stories
- Boosting: make someone good at doing something and build on the confidence in one's own ability that has been built
- Give frequent feedback

Julia, you emphasise successes, giving recruits training to be leaders a boost. "I can do that!" Are there any other things you pay attention to?

Julia

I listen to the problems they come up with, then link the personal problem to something that is relatable to the larger bigger group (how would the others think about that?). It has to be a problem that we can solve (unlike new national legislation, for example). You start small (change the type of coffee, or the opening hours of the canteen). Then you can also show: we managed to achieve this with a small group of people, imagine what we can do with a large group. And acting on the issue must be relevant now. There is nothing we can do about something that has already happened.



STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

Reflection on DMJ's strategy: what is a strong approach? What is missing?

Mats

DMJ's strategy appears to address some of the motives behind active citizenship. A critical note with regard to the preliminary behaviour model is that these motives have been mapped out on the basis of the input from DMJ itself, not including input from the target group. But the people at DMJ also seem to be full of commitment and enthusiasm. In addition, the engagement with the target group appears to be very good.

A point for improvement could be to jump less towards solutions and take a step back first. A lot of energy can be lost when the intervention responds to motives that are not as salient. Then all the input and hard work seems to be in vain. Which motives are important for the desired behaviour to be incited? Do not let yourself be guided too much by an attractive theory or model but allow yourself a fresh look at the situation in front of you.

Willem

My first analysis of this case is that the bar is set high. Assisting youths in registering at the cadastre, reconciling with perpetrators after conflicts... Young people are capable of many things, but since the bar is set this high, it might scare the youths.

You mentioned organizing fun activities as a way to enhance awareness. What are good methods to convey a message or a need to act on something?

The best method for me is always a dinner. When thinking about working methods, it is also important that it mainly concerns different types of working methods. That is how you can make it more fun. I still find a meeting at work boring. But if post-it notes are added or you can argue with each other, for the most people it will start to get fun. Some people just like to create mood boards while others like role play. Yet another group might like to give a presentation or build a decor. The image I of changemakers is that of young people standing on a soapbox to proclaiming the true word and walking around with a megaphone. But not everyone will enjoy doing this. So, I think it is good to be able to involve many more people in the intended change through different working methods.

In the past, you worked for the PvdA political party's campaign during election time. This concerns a different type of mobilization: very short and super intensive. Are you focusing on completely different triggers there?

It does not get more concrete than an election campaign: you have an election campaign and after that date you can still organize activities, but it is no use for that election. You immediately have a common goal. What DMJ could do to try and mimic such a concrete dot on the horizon is to communicate a clear goal to the youths: "We have this meeting planned for date X of month Y, and this and that has yet to be arranged." That ensures a certain type of involvement. "Before that date, we want to have distributed an x number

of folders or collected so many signatures." It works even better when it is a goal that the youths have put forward themselves. One important note is that this kind of large scale, short term involvement is that it works very well in election campaigns, but that it is not possible to hold that attention without yet another concrete goal.

Joost

I think it is great that you have involved behavioural change experts in your work. That you are open to reflect on your work. But, and Mats has said it too, take a step back every now and then and observe closely. You have come up with ways to increase self-efficacy and boost ownership, but when you find that the degree of ownership is already very high you can shift the focus of your intervention to stimulating another motivation.

In response to Mats' behavioural model, there could be a (more prominent) place for competing motivations. I can well imagine that young people must also give up certain behaviour for active citizenship. For example, 'chilling' with friends versus active citizenship. Whereas the first has a direct reward, the second has a long-term reward. We know that the first behaviour often 'win'. We often just put extra weight on one side of the scales – stimulating certain behaviour – without taking away weight on the negative side.

What is the social norm? What do the ambitious young people see around them? Things like ambivalent legislation and corruption? Bad, but successful examples of youths becoming drug lords? How do you deal with that environment – over which you have much less influence than the psyche of those young people?

Question
for DMJ

DMJ: A young person is generally considered a social junior. The ambition and dreams of young people are unfortunately shattered by a lack of affirmative policies. A context of nepotism, patronage, favoritism and co-option give young people a cynical perspective. Their perceived options are migration or work in the informal economic sector. Our response is to create spaces for expression, dialogue, visibility and lobby opportunities. We strategically communicate and focus on personal development.

Julia

Keeping alumni involved in the organization is also very effective at DWARS. Then youths can see that there are opportunities for growth. This also entails the danger that youths will hang around for too long and there will be no more flux of people. In addition, I would advise DMJ to not give people an assignment that they cannot actually perform. But, fortunately, youths – contrary to what other experts have said – are capable of a great deal! I also think that in order to achieve a long-term goal, it is best to build in and emphasize to youths the short-term successes: your network is growing, it is good for your CV and skills.



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DMJ