

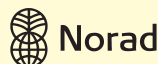
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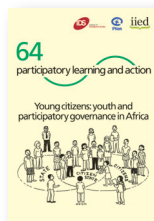
Young citizens: youth and participatory governance in Africa



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Guest editors: Rosemary McGee and Jessica Greenhalf
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All over the world citizens are starting to demand accountability from those in power. We are seeing exciting experiments in participatory governance. But are they working for young people? What spaces are most promising for the participation of children and young people in governance?

Across Africa youth (particularly boys and young men) are seen as a frustrated and excluded 'lost generation' who are marginalised from decision-making processes. Contributors to this special issue demonstrate how this is changing. Young people in Africa are challenging the norms and structures that exclude them, engaging with the state and demanding accountability.

This special issue describes how young people are exercising their right to participate and developing the knowledge, skills and confidence to affect to change. It explores some of the methods of communication, appraisal, monitoring and research which are involving these young people in decision-making spaces. It asks how can we re-shape how young people perceive and exercise citizenship? How can we redefine and deepen the interfaces between young citizens and the state?

This special issue demonstrates the persistence, passion and enthusiasm that youth bring to governance processes – and how they are driving change in creative and unexpected ways. It highlights how young Africans are doing this: addressing the documentation gap that surrounds youth and governance in Africa and enabling other participatory practitioners – young and old – to learn from their experiences.

Participatory Learning and Action is the world's leading informal journal on participatory approaches and methods. It draws on the expertise of guest editors to provide up-to-the minute accounts of participatory approaches in specific fields. Since 1987, *PLA* has provided a forum for participatory practitioners – community workers, activists and researchers – to share experiences, conceptual reflections and methodological innovations with others, providing a genuine 'voice from the field'. A vital resource for those working to enhance the participation of ordinary people in local, regional, national and international decision-making, in both South and North.

About the guest editors Rosemary McGee is a research fellow in the Participation, Power and Social Change Team at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), University of Sussex, UK. Jessica Greenhalf is a former member of Plan UK's governance team and now works with Restless Development Uganda, a youth-led development NGO.

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