

# RAYE SUITE OF TOOLS

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Reflection Guide for the Structural Reflection Tool

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE RAYE SUITE OF TOOLS

The **Readiness for Adolescent and Youth Engagement (RAYE) Suite of Tools** guides organisations that involve—or plan to involve—adolescents and young adults in ways that are safe, meaningful and mutually beneficial. Grounded in current best practice, the suite contains two complementary instruments. The Engagement Checklist evaluates individual opportunities for involving young people, ensuring mutual benefit for both young people and the engaging entities. The Structural Reflection Tool—on which this guidance focuses—invites a deeper examination of the financial, operational and systemic conditions that make genuine youth partnership possible. Together, the two tools help teams and organisations working with, or intending to work with, youth to move beyond good intentions toward measurable readiness for youth participation.

## HOW THE RAYE SUITE OF TOOLS WAS DEVELOPED

Creation of the RAYE Suite followed an evidence-driven, highly participatory journey. Work began with a broad scan of existing readiness frameworks and youth-engagement checklists. That desk research uncovered persistent gaps—particularly around organisational culture, safeguarding, resourcing and policies—which shaped an initial concept note for two interconnected instruments rather than a single assessment tool.

Young people were at the centre of design from day one contributing through interviews, focus groups and co-creation workshops, and ensuring that every draft statement spoke to lived realities rather than abstract ideals. Their insights were then tested and refined in dialogue with safeguarding specialists, operations staff, programme leads and other technical staff, producing wording that was both ambitious and practical.

Field-testing provided the final proving ground. In collaboration with War Child Holland's research and development team, the draft RAYE Suite was piloted in War Child programmes in Jordan and Colombia. Each country ran live workshops that brought together key staff from senior management, operations, finance, HR and programmes. Their feedback was candid and invaluable. Participants in Jordan observed that “the tool is extremely comprehensive; it touches every critical point we need to think about for youth engagement,” and added that “the questions pushed us to talk about the real power we share with young people— that conversation alone was worth the workshop.” A participant in Colombia described

the exercise as “concrete, practical and something I’d like to run every year to track how far we’ve moved.”

Revisions made after the pilots streamlined the flow of statements, removed duplication, clarified terminology and added space for youth-friendly action planning. The version in your hands is the product of that collective effort—grounded in research, shaped by young people, refined by practitioners and proven in real-world settings.

## PURPOSE OF THE STRUCTURAL REFLECTION TOOL

The Structural Reflection Tool serves as a structured conversation starter rather than an audit or scorecard. Its aim is to prompt honest reflection about how well an organisation’s policies, budgets, governance structures and staff capacities facilitate meaningful and safe engagement of young people. Teams walk through a series of statements and decide whether each one is fully in place, partially in place or not yet started, surfacing blind spots rarely captured in routine programme reports. When the discussion ends, the tool yields a set of “areas of growth” and a concise list of quick-win actions that can realistically be resourced in the three to six months following the reflection exercise.

## USING THE STRUCTURAL REFLECTION TOOL

For full functionality—particularly the automated formulas that move data from sheet to sheet—open the workbook in Microsoft Excel rather than Google Sheets. The guide explains the process, presents a glossary of key terms in the annex, and offers step-by-step instructions that walk you from first preparation through to a completed, prioritised action plan.

### 1 | What’s in the pack

- **Reflection guide** (this document)
- **Structural reflection tool** (Excel workbook containing the six-sheet tool)
  - *Important:* to preserve the built-in formulas, open the workbook in **Microsoft Excel**, not Google Sheets.

### 2 | Before you begin

Designate two **Reflection Facilitators (RFs)** with ideal profiles and roles like the youth-engagement focal point, safeguarding lead, or programme manager.

As part of preparations, their task will include:

- Reading this guide end-to-end.
- Walking through every sheet in the workbook.
- Mapping which colleagues (finance, HR, operations, programmes, senior management) and which documents (policies, budgets, strategies) will inform each cluster of statements.

### 3 | Choose an implementation approach

Option	How it works	When to choose it
<b>Workshop</b> ( $\frac{1}{2}$ –1 day or multi-day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share the workbook in advance.</li> <li>• Bring all key departments into one room.</li> </ul>	When schedules allow group discussion and rapid consensus-building.
<b>Rolling consultation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RFs complete statements independently.</li> <li>• Call in specific colleagues only for sections tied to their roles or when their specific expertise is required. (e.g., HR for staff-capacity questions).</li> </ul>	When calendars are tight or teams are geographically dispersed.

### 4 | Complete the four statement sheets

Sheets: **Safeguarding** | **Resource management** | **Staff capacity and training** | **Youth engagement strategy**

- Column A holds statements.
- Column B records **Yes / No / Partially / NA** (NA is valid if a statement truly does not apply to your organisation).
- Column C captures comments, evidence or justification.
- Respond to these statements according to current reality, not past achievements or future hopes.
- If the first question in **Youth Engagement Strategy** is answered **No**, do not be discouraged but rather treat the rest of the statements as a ready-made template for drafting a strategy from scratch.

## 5 | Reflection sheet

As soon as the four statement sheets are complete, move to the sheet entitled Reflection.

- The **Areas of Growth** and **Comment** columns will auto-populate with every statement from the four statement sheets marked **No** or **Partially**.
- Two additional columns—Preliminary Actions and Prioritised?—guide the next phase. RFs—and workshop participants if applicable—brainstorm realistic actions that could close each gap and type them beside the relevant area of growth, then decide which of those actions represent quick wins.
- Questions to spark thinking and help you sketch what actions could close each gap:
  - What is the minimum step that would shift this statement from “No” to “Partially” or “Yes”?
  - Which existing policy, budget or person can we leverage?
  - What risk will we reduce—or opportunity will we unlock—by fixing this gap?
  - How will young people experience a change if we act?
  - Who must approve or support the action, and how long does that normally take?

When **weighing priorities**, remember a few **practical considerations**. Focus on **three to five low-effort, high-return quick wins** and reserve space for at least one **ambitious action** that will stretch the organisation.

### Additional considerations

- Resource reality: do staff, funds and time exist—or can they be mobilised—within six months?
- Dependencies: does this action unlock others, or is it blocked until a policy change occurs?
- Sign-off pathway: which leadership level must approve? how far in advance must papers be submitted?
- Safeguarding or legal implications that add lead-time.
- How young people will stay involved in tracking progress.

## Two simple prioritisation tools you can use depending on the implementation approach

- **Dot voting (workshop approach)** – give each participant three coloured stickers and let them place dots beside the actions they see as most feasible within the next six months; tally to reveal top choices.
- **MoSCoW (rolling consultation approach)** – label each action Must-do, Should-do, Could-do or Won't-do-now, then elevate all the Musts and one or two Shoulds into the Action Plan.

**Draft/preliminary actions** become “**prioritised**” once you select **Yes** in the final drop-down. Every Yes migrates automatically to the Action Plan sheet.

## 6 | Develop the detailed action plan

The **Action plan** sheet expands each priority.

- Begin by writing a short “Why now?” rationale that arms you with a talking point when you brief senior leadership.
- Describe the buy-in steps you will need to complete to secure approval, name a lead person or team, list supporting roles, break the work into two to four milestones, and add start and target-completion dates.
- Estimate the level of effort in days or full-time-equivalent percentage, note any budget requirement, and define a success indicator that will show when the action is complete.
- Use the approval-status column to track whether the action is still a draft, has been submitted for sign-off or is already approved, and leave progress notes as the work unfolds; this running log keeps risks and achievements visible without cluttering the critical data fields.

Column	Title	Contents
<b>A</b>	Prioritized Action	Auto-filled from Reflection sheet
<b>B</b>	Why now?	One-line rationale for leadership
<b>C</b>	Buy-in steps	Tasks needed for formal approval
<b>D</b>	Lead person/team	Primary owner
<b>E</b>	Supporting roles	Staff, youth advisers or partners

<b>F</b>	Key activities & milestones	2–4 checkpoints
<b>G</b>	Start date	Timeline
<b>H</b>	Target completion	Timeline
<b>I</b>	Human resources (LOE)	Staff effort (days or % FTE)
<b>J</b>	Budget required	Amount or “within existing budget”
<b>K</b>	Monitoring & success indicators	How progress will be measured
<b>L</b>	Approval status	Draft / Submitted / Approved
<b>M</b>	Progress notes	Running log of updates, risks, achievements

## 8 | Integrate youth participation

Youth participation should thread through the entire reflection cycle.

- Invite young people to the workshop **or** ask them to review the draft Action Plan; their perspective adds accountability and realism.
- Ensure feedback loops so youth see what changes result from their input.

## 9 | Repeat and track progress

Treat this first exercise as your **baseline**. Repeat the full process every **six to twelve months**, compare new results to the baseline, celebrate progress and surface the next set of growth areas. Over time, the **structural reflection tool** will evolve from a one-off exercise into a living management practice that keeps your organisation on a steady path toward safe, meaningful and mutually beneficial youth engagement.



## ANNEX: GLOSSARY

Term / Phrase	Definition and scope in this tool
<b>Accessibility accommodations</b>	Practical adjustments that make participation possible for all young people—e.g., wheelchair-friendly venues, sign-language interpretation, large-print or screen-reader files, transport stipends, mobile-data bundles.
<b>Annual stress-test</b>	A planned exercise (table-top scenario, simulation or role-play) that walks staff and youth advisors through a mock safeguarding incident or systems failure to check if procedures, decision-lines and contact lists still work.
<b>Child and youth safeguarding</b>	The set of policies, procedures and behaviours that prevent, detect and respond to abuse, exploitation, neglect or harm affecting anyone under 18 and young adults whom the organisation engages.
<b>Co-creation</b>	A process where young people share equal power with adults to design or revise programmes, policies or resources, from concept to evaluation. Distinct from simple consultation.
<b>Conflict resolution</b>	Skills and methods (mediation, negotiation, restorative circles) used to address disagreements among or with young people in a constructive, non-violent way.
<b>Dedicated / ring-fenced budget line</b>	Money set aside exclusively for youth-engagement costs; cannot be moved to other budget headings without formal approval.
<b>Diversity and inclusion</b>	Proactive measures that ensure young people of different genders, abilities, ethnicities, sexual orientations, socioeconomic backgrounds, religions, etc. can participate meaningfully and safely.
<b>Duty of care</b>	The legal and moral obligation to keep young people safe from foreseeable harm while they interact with the organisation online or offline.
<b>Focal point</b>	A staff member (or small team) formally assigned to coordinate a thematic area—in this tool, safeguarding or youth engagement—holding relevant expertise, decision-making authority and visibility.
<b>Governance (youth-inclusive)</b>	Structures (board, steering committee, advisory groups) and rules that allow young people to influence organisational direction, policy and accountability.

<b>Inclusive communication</b>	Language and formats that respect identity, avoid jargon, and are accessible to different literacy levels, impairments or digital-access conditions.
<b>Induction / orientation</b>	A structured introduction for new staff, volunteers or young participants covering key policies, roles, rights and practical processes (e.g., contracting, payment, safeguarding reporting).
<b>Mentor-to-youth ratio</b>	The number of trained adult facilitators or peer mentors available per group of young participants; determines how fully youth voices are heard and supported during activities.
<b>Near-miss (safeguarding)</b>	An incident that could have caused harm to a young person but did not, either by chance or timely intervention; still logged for learning.
<b>Non-financial recognition</b>	Certificates, recommendation letters, public acknowledgements or networking opportunities granted to young people as acknowledgement of their contributions, alongside or instead of monetary payment.
<b>Online and offline risks</b>	Threats to young people's safety that occur on digital platforms (cyber-bullying, grooming, data breaches) or in physical spaces (harassment, travel safety, venue hazards).
<b>Peer-support network</b>	A formal or informal group where staff or volunteers share experiences, resources and emotional support related to youth engagement or safeguarding duties.
<b>Positive Youth Development (PYD)</b>	A strengths-based approach focusing on assets, opportunities and supportive relationships that help young people thrive and contribute to society.
<b>Power sharing</b>	Deliberate transfer of decision-making authority from adults to young people so both parties can shape outcomes on equal footing.
<b>Professional development (CPD)</b>	Continuous learning opportunities—courses, workshops, conferences—through which staff improve their knowledge and skills over time.
<b>Referral pathway</b>	A mapped-out process (with contact details) for directing young people to external services—medical, psychosocial, legal, protection—when internal support is insufficient.
<b>Reporting channel</b>	Any route—face-to-face, phone, encrypted web form, WhatsApp, trusted adult—through which concerns or feedback can be submitted.

<b>Safeguarding survivor-centred response</b>	Handling of reports that prioritises the affected young person's safety, dignity, choices, privacy and informed consent throughout the process.
<b>Stress-tested (see Annual stress-test)</b>	Confirmed through simulation that a system or procedure functions under realistic pressure or crisis conditions.
<b>Supervision (supportive)</b>	Regular check-ins where staff or volunteers discuss cases, emotional load and professional challenges with a senior or peer mentor to maintain quality and wellbeing.
<b>Training curriculum (core modules)</b>	The set of learning units covering, at minimum, positive youth development, inclusive communication, unconscious bias, conflict resolution, safeguarding basics, power sharing and co-creation.
<b>Young people</b>	Used interchangeably with youth and represents adolescents and youth between the ages of 10-24.
<b>Youth advisory board / council</b>	A standing body of young people that provides strategic advice, reviews policies, and may hold voting rights within the organisation's governance structure.
<b>Youth engagement induction pack</b>	A youth-friendly bundle (handbook, slide deck, video) explaining the project or organisational strategy, roles, rights, Code of Conduct, safeguarding contacts and compensation rules.
<b>Youth-friendly formats</b>	Materials designed to be understandable and engaging for young people: plain language, visuals, short text blocks, subtitles, audio versions, interactive digital tools.
<b>Youth-led organisation</b>	An entity in which young people (usually under 30) hold the majority of leadership and decision-making positions and are directly involved in managing programmes and resources.

The **RAYE Suite of Tools** was created under the **Y!Participate Initiative** – a multi-phase initiative led by the [MHPSS Collaborative](#) with funding support from **UNICEF**.



*The initiative was co-developed with young people, with the aim of facilitating an environment where their contributions are not only valued but are instrumental in shaping decisions that impact their lives and wellbeing.*

*For further information, or to share feedback from your own use of the tool, get in touch with us: [info@yparticipate.global](mailto:info@yparticipate.global)*

*To learn more about Y!Participate, visit the website – [www.yparticipate.global](http://www.yparticipate.global)*