

EVALUATION OF YOUTH PARTICIPATORY GRANT-MAKING PILOT INITIATIVE IN **SIERRA LEONE**



About the Tar Kura Initiative

The Tar Kura initiative is a **collaboration** between The Fund for Global Human Rights and Purposeful that puts together a panel of 10 young people to decide on grants for **10 youth-led groups** across Sierra Leone. To learn more about this initiative, an external evaluation was done with the participation of 4 local young women as part of the team of evaluators.

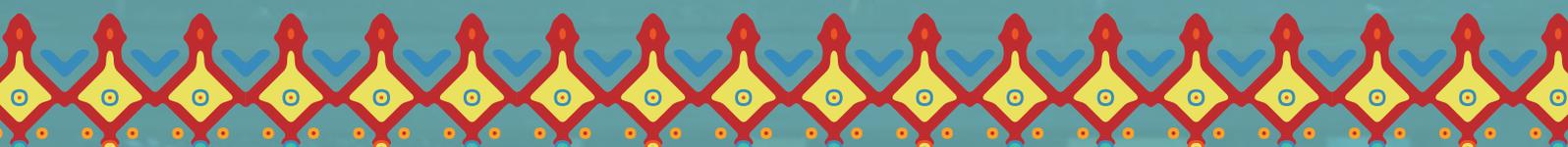
The evaluation found that Tar Kura had **supported young people in making their voices heard, increasing their self-confidence and strengthening their leadership skills**. It also contributed to communities changing their perceptions of young people and recognizing their strength, value and potential. It gave the opportunity to groups and organizations led by young people to realize some of their dreams to improve their communities.



How did Tar Kura give power to young people?

Through Tar Kura, Purposeful and The Fund made sure that youth had the power. They **adapted** the initiative so that **young people could fully participate**. For example, they gave phones to those who didn't have them, they coordinated activities around school calendars, and they made sure applications to be panellists and to receive funding were simple and accessible.

They listened to and trusted young people and their decisions.



Participation and support

Purposeful and The Fund supported young people not only with money but with **training and learning opportunities**. They made sure that panellists and organizations had the support and skills necessary to succeed in the Tar Kura process and beyond.

There were no requirements to participate that would be difficult for young people to meet. For example, organizations did not need to be registered, or have previous experience. They just needed to have a good idea, a clear plan, and the **desire to make a change** in their communities!

Where did the young participants come from?

Tar Kura was open to all young people in Sierra Leone and wanted to include youth from all around the country. In fact, the 10 panellists and 10 organisations selected came from every province in Sierra Leone.





What did young people gain from this experience?

Participating in the Tar Kura initiative helped youth **strengthen their leadership skills**. This allowed them to be leaders in their communities. And it changed the way their communities saw young people.

Tar Kura **put young people in charge** of decision-making and helped them make their dreams and those of other young people in the country come true.



Challenges faced by young people

Although the grantmaking process was designed together with young people and adapted to them, some of them still faced some challenges in participating.

For example, phones were given to panellists that were selected. But for the application process, it was a challenge for some people to get access to one so they could apply.

Youth have a lot going on in their lives with school, work, family responsibilities, hobbies, activism, etc. For some it was difficult to make time to participate in the process.

Some also had some difficulty paying for travel to Freetown for meetings and training and learning opportunities even though they would be reimbursed for what they spent.

Recommendations

- Keep young people engaged after the process has finished
- Provide more training and learning opportunities and non-financial support
- Get back to those not selected and tell them why they weren't chosen
- Put young people in touch with other donors who can support their work
- Encourage groups and young people to have a social media presence or a permanent phone number when possible so they can be reached for other opportunities
- Promote exchanges between youth-led groups

Some testimonies

“ “ Yeah! Imagine me [being] a young girl making decisions about my colleagues, youths who are even older than I [am], just to decide who should receive funds. So, I really felt very proud of myself. ” ”

- Panellist

“ “ The traditional process is so archaic but this participatory [process] is just excellent because [as] young people, we know our problems, we know the challenges we face in our community. So they gave us [a] chance to decide and implement our ideas and also make decisions. Seriously, participatory grant-making process is the best and I think they should continue and involve all youth. ” ”

- Grantee partner

“ “ Really a lesson learned is that we can trust these young people and then we get good results. ” ”

– Purposeful Staff

To find out more about purposeful and its work with young people in sierra leone visit:

www.wearepurposeful.org



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