STRATEGIES
FOR INCREASING
YOUTH CIVIC
ENGAGEMENT
IN NALAIKH

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Abbreviations

CSS	*Citizen Satisfaction Survey*
DFYCD	*Division of Family, Youth, and Child Development*
GMIT	*German Mongolian Institute of Technology*
IDEA	*International Debate Education Network*
UN	*United Nations*
UNDP	*United Nations Development Programme*
UN DESA	*United nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs*
LDF	*Local Development Fund*
MPPGA	*Master of Public Policy and Global Affairs*
YLLI	*Youth Link Leadership Institute*

Disclaimer

This project has been undertaken as a program requirement for the Master of Public Policy and Global Affairs at the University of British Columbia. The research study has obtained Ethics Approval from the Office of Research Ethics at UBC.

The views, opinions, positions and/or recommendations expressed within the report are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or positions of the School of Public Policy and Global Affairs, the University of British Columbia, or the Government of British Columbia.

Images

All images in this report are the property of the authors. They were taken in Nalaikh, Mongolia in December 2019.

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Баярлалаа!

Executive
SUMMARY

Background

This report presents the results of a **comprehensive research project on youth civic engagement in Nalaikh,** a district of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Nalaikh is a peri-urban town on the outskirts of the capital, with a population of just over 37,000. This research was completed by a team of four students from the Master of Public Policy and Global Affairs (MPPGA) program at the University of British Columbia, Canada, and came at the request of the Governor's Office of Nalaikh.[1] The core client is the Office's Division of Family, Youth, and Child Development (DFYCD), as this wing of the organization is most involved in youth programming (youth refers to ages 15-34 in Mongolia). Nalaikh is a town in transition; it was established as a coal mining hub, but has been expanding to new industrial opportunities since the 1990s. The Governor's Office has highlighted youth development as a key element of this transition, and is prepared to invest in youth programming.

Policy Problem

The initial problem presented by the client was consistent low youth participation rates in the annual Citizen Satisfaction Survey (CSS) run by the Governor's Office. The CSS results are used to dictate municipal programs and budgeting in the district. Currently, survey results over-represent the views of Nalaikh's older residents, which means that subsequent programming does not appeal to youth, continuing the cycle of youth disengagement from local

1 The students undertook this research as their Global Policy Project, a graduation requirement for the MPPGA. For more information, see sppga.ubc.ca/master-public-policy-global-affairs/experiential-learning/.

governance. The research team drew a connection between this issue and a broader global decline in youth civic engagement, a topic that has been gaining prominence in academic and public discourses. The client and team agreed to focus the research project on **how the lack of youth civic engagement in the Nalaikh District hinders effective policy creation and implementation.**

The DFCYD is mandated to draft policies that cater to the development needs of youth, but its current efforts to engage youth are not yielding sufficient information about those needs. **The DFYCD must either improve on existing engagement strategies or implement new ones to address this disconnect.** The project was guided by the following research questions:

1) **Why are youth in Nalaikh civically disengaged?**
   a) How do the Nalaikh youth perceive local government?
   b) What are the barriers impeding youth civic engagement in Nalaikh?
   c) What are the cultural, socio-economic, ethnic, and/or generational considerations that may impact youth civic engagement levels in Nalaikh?

2) **What are good practices to increase youth civic engagement in Nalaikh?**
   a) What are the overarching trends found in civic engagement literature?
   b) What are applicable case studies that offer recommendations that would be relevant to Nalaikh's specific situation?

Methods

The research team employed both primary and secondary research to explore answers to these questions. To gather primary data, the team spent two weeks in Mongolia in December 2019. The main purpose of this trip was to conduct nine **focus groups in Nalaikh** (seven with youth [2] and two with teachers and social workers [3] who work with youth). The results of these sessions are the core dataset of this research project. They are qualitative in nature, but the focus groups were designed to include hands-on activities that give quantifiable evidence of youths' priorities and opinions, allowing for informative comparisons. The focus group data is further complemented by qualitative

[2] 47 participants, age range 18-34 years, mean age 25 years. The research team was not able to include participants below age 18 due to Canadian research ethics regulations.

[3] 15 participants, age not recorded. Many of these participants appeared to fall within Mongolia's designated 'youth' age range, but their professions mean that they have a point of view distinct from that of youth in Nalaikh generally.

results from a series of interviews with key stakeholders. In addition to primary data collection, an extensive review of secondary sources (academic literature, government documents, and publications from media outlets and non-governmental organizations) yielded insights on the **Mongolian context,** prominent **theories of youth civic engagement,** and relevant **case studies.**

Findings

Concerns about youth civic disengagement are not unique to Nalaikh; they are echoed in democracies around the world. **However, the nature of the problem may actually be *disconnection* rather than disengagement.** Research suggests that globally, youth are engaged but their engagement is not captured by traditional measures. Academics have developed various frameworks to better understand the nature of youth civic engagement. The three that are most relevant to this project are **The Triangle Model, The Systems Web Framework,** and **The Youth Engagement Continuum.** These secondary research findings are useful for interpreting the results of the team's primary research. For details on the aforementioned engagement theories, please see *7.0 Review of Youth Civic Engagement Literature*.

The focus groups with youth in Nalaikh yielded many interesting insights that supported arguments found in the academic literature. Awareness of the CSS among participants was very low (**only 9%** had heard of it). Youth identified a **lack of information** as their main reason for not filling out the CSS. The adults who work with youth, however, thought that **youths' busy schedules** were the main barrier keeping them from participating in the survey. Youth focus group participants appeared to have an **abstract and theoretical understanding of democracy,** but lacked an understanding of how their actions could impact change in a democratic society. However, they did have **strong opinions about problems facing their community,** which contrast with the opinions of the adults who typically fill out the CSS. What youth were less certain of, however, was **who was responsible for fixing these problems.** This finding suggests that youth can be actively engaged in local governance, if given the right opportunities, and that their contributions would be a novel addition. All of these findings were reinforced by sentiments expressed in key informant interviews.

Interpretation

Focus groups with Nalaikh youth revealed three key problems: (1) **a lack of information** amongst youth, resulting from communication disconnect between youth and the Governor's Office; (2) **a lack of civic efficacy** on the part of youth, who do not appear to grasp their role within democracy; and (3) **a lack of youth-specific measures** by the Governor's Office, which youth cited as one major reason for their civic disengagement.

Recommendations

The research team suggests that the Governor's Office and the DFYCD work together to implement five core recommendations to increase youth civic engagement in Nalaikh: (1) create new and adjusted **CSS distribution methods** to reach youth effectively and conveniently; (2) facilitate bi-annual **youth focus groups** to gather data and build rapport between youth and the Governor's Office; (3) implement a targeted **communications campaign** to repair and strengthen communication between youth and the Governor's Office; (4) create **civic engagement clubs** where youth can build civic efficacy; and (5) develop **leadership opportunities** that allow youth to contribute to decision-making.

Future Research

This research project was constrained by a limited timeframe, and therefore could not pursue some avenues of inquiry that may further contribute to answering the research questions above. The research team recommends that the client consider future research into: (1) the role of Mongolia's **civic education curriculum** and how it may impact civic engagement levels; (2) how an **equity lens approach** could affect representation in its youth civic engagement programming (especially for the district's prominent Kazakh population); and (3) technological and human resources practices from the **Smart UB mobile application,** a successful digital voting pilot project in Ulaanbaatar.

1.0
CLIENT
PROFILE

1.1   Governor's Office of Nalaikh District

The Governor of Nalaikh, Radnaabazar Ch., is the elected representative for the people of Nalaikh District. The Governor's Office, located in downtown Nalaikh, is the hub of the district's municipal governance. The office consists of five core departments: the Administration Department, the Department of Finance and Budget, the Department of Social Development, the Department of City Planning, and the Department of Landscaping and Public Service. Under each department sits several divisions. The Division of Family Child and Youth Development (DFYCD) sits under the Department of Social Development.

The Governor's Office administers several events and initiatives for its people, including an annual Citizen Satisfaction Survey (CSS). This survey measures Nalaikh citizens' opinions on local issues and priorities. Specifically, the CSS is designed to evaluate the involvement of citizens in policy implementation, to gain citizen insight regarding desired programming and activities, and to provide a space for feedback on Nalaikh services. The results of the survey are used to set the following year's policy agenda and budget.

1.2 Division of Family, Youth, and Child Development

The mission of the DFYCD is to organize training and development programs for parents, youth, and children in Nalaikh, and to create and implement legislation for child protection and youth development. The division was originally created to focus on children's development, but families were later added to its mandate when the team realized that solutions for children must involve their families.[4] The focus on youth was added in 2017, when the Mongolian government passed the *Law on Promotion of Youth Development*.[5] This law was prompted by a state assessment of youth development, which found a coordination gap amongst government agencies. The assessment also defined key areas for youth development: unemployment, health, education, and individual development. The objectives behind this law are to increase youth participation in all facets of society, and to find adequate measures to address the coordination of youth services amongst different departments. Today the DFYCD has 22 full-time staff: eight Child Specialists, three Youth Specialists, two Family Specialists, and nine Service Workers.

The DFYCD office is an important public space in Nalaikh. From here, the DFYCD offers lessons and entertainment for children and youth, training and services for adults, and cultural events for the whole community. The DFYCD office also contains the Youth Development Centre, which opened in 2018. The Youth Development Centre is intended to meet a variety of youth needs — social, professional, health-related, etc. — in one easy-to-access location. It also provides co-working space and offers employment training sessions tailored to youth needs.

The primary contact for this project from the Governor's Office was **Khongorzul.B,** *External Relations & Monitoring Specialist.*

The primary contact for this project from the DFYCD was **Odonchimeg B.,** *Officer in charge of Participation and Cooperation.*

4 Naranbayer 2019
5 Ibid.

2.0
BACKGROUND

2.1 Mongolia

Geographically situated between China to the south and Russia to the north, landlocked Mongolia has been heavily influenced by both countries' cultures and political frameworks. Following independence from China in 1921, the Mongolian People's Republic was established as a state-socialist country under Soviet influence. In 1992, following the collapse of the Soviet Bloc, Mongolia created a new constitution and transitioned to a democratic, free-market economy.[6]

Traditional Mongolian culture relies heavily on nomadic herders, and today a significant percentage of their economy centres around wool processing, agriculture, and livestock.[7] According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), pasture or desert comprises 90% of land in Mongolia.[8] Most Mongolians live in rural areas, and about one-third are nomadic or semi-nomadic. The population of Mongolia was roughly three million as of 2016, with half (1.5 million) of the citizens living in or around the capital city, Ulaanbaatar.[9] Ulaanbaatar is divided into nine districts: six in the city centre and three peri-urban districts on the outskirts of town. Nalaikh is one of these per-urban districts (see *2.2 Nalaikh District, Ulaanbaatar* for more on Nalaikh).

6"About Mongolia" n.d.
7Ibid.
8Ibid.
9Ibid.

Mongolia's Economy: The World Bank has touted Mongolia's impressive economic growth in recent years, suggesting further investments in mining, transportation, and trade will encourage GDP growth in the future.[10] Indeed, mineral export continues to be a strong pillar driving the economy, accounting for 20% of GDP.[11] However, Mongolia's economy is vulnerable to frequent changes in global commodity prices, as well as their heavy reliance on economic growth through physical capital accumulation. Another factor that threatens Mongolia's economic stability is its reliance on the Chinese market: 84% of its exports are sent to China.[12] Economic diversification, including investment in human resources and technological development, will help to strengthen Mongolia's economy.[13] Mongolia has implemented a number of public investment programs to address economic vulnerabilities; however, sector decentralization, fragmented decision-making processes, poor investment planning, project selection, and inadequate maintenance funding have impeded project success.[14]

Democracy in Mongolia: Mongolia's democracy may be relatively new, but it is on a bright path toward progressive growth. It joined the community of democratic nations at the tail end of the "third wave of democratization," a term scholars use to describe the period between 1974 and 1990 when over 30 countries became democracies (the first two waves began in the 1800s and the 1950s, respectively).[15] Mongolia's transition to democracy was relatively peaceful. In 1990, street demonstrations forced the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) Politburo to resign, and political parties were legalised.[16] These events marked Mongolia's first opportunity to move toward independence and democracy in 300 years. From 1691 to 1911, the country was ruled by China's Qing dynasty, and from 1921 to 1990 it was dominated by the Soviet Union.[17]

From 1990 to the present, democratic indicators in Mongolia have steadily increased. A desk study on the country by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance characterizes Mongolia as an "unlikely success story."[18] It does not have the traits correlated with most enduring democracies: high economic development, geographic proximity to Western nations, and secular Christianity.[19] Mongolia is a developing economy, surrounded by undemocratic Central Asian neighbour states, and its Buddhist system only secularized from the state in 1921.[20] Yet, its political system meets the procedural standards of democracy. It has a competitive and developed political party system, and it has maintained peaceful and regular transfers of power between parties and leaders.[21] Indeed, Mongolia serves as a "beacon of democracy in a fairly non-democratic part of the world."[22] While the premise of this report is low democratic engagement, this trend is common across democracies of all ages (see *7.0 Review of Youth Civic Engagement Literature*) and does not signify cause for concern about the state of democracy in Mongolia.

10 Nganou et al. 2018
11 Ibid.
12 *The Economist* 2017
13 Nganou et al. 2018
14 Ibid.
15 Huntington 1992
16 Landman, Larizza and McEvoy 2005

17 Rossabi 2005
18 Landman, Larizza and McEvoy 2005
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
22 Ibid.

Case Study

Mainstreaming Youth Participation
*Analysis of Youth Civic Engagement
in Post-Communist Balkan Countries*

Similar to Mongolia, the Balkan countries have undergone a transition towards a market economy and a pluralistic democracy. Some analysts suggest this transition has had an effect on levels of youth civic engagement. Comparatively to the Nalaikh context, youth in the Balkan region also comprise a significant portion of the population, but youth are underrepresented at the voting polls and in civic-based projects more broadly. Moreover, **there is a considerable degree of mistrust amongst youth from Balkan countries towards politics and formal government institutions in general, a sentiment shared by some youth in Nalaikh.** One focus group from our research expressed their frustration towards the local government, suggesting the high political turnover affects job stability in the region.

Similar to Nalaikh, the Balkan region is lacking youth-specific measures designed to understand the opinions, thoughts, and perspectives of youth. Some key strategies outlined in this case study include stimulating public dialogue about youth engagement in the community (i.e. public debates), fostering youth involvement in governance structures and processes (i.e. political youth committees), and supporting the development of spaces dedicated to youth (i.e. clubs, sports teams, student government). One specific program implemented in Albania, the Balkans Youth Link Leadership Institute (YLLI), has proven successful in decreasing youth apathy and increasing youth leadership and interest in civic issues. The 10-day camp program focuses on experiential learning, providing youth with the tools to initiate change in their communities. Many of the youth attendees then went on to participate in debate clubs, mock trial tournaments, or school newspapers. **See *Appendix 12: Youth Civic Engagement Case Studies* for more information and references on this case study.**

2.2   Nalaikh District, Ulaanbaatar

Nalaikh is one of the nine districts of Ulaanbaatar. It is located approximately 44 kilometres south-east of the capital's city centre. Nalaikh is unique among the districts because it is the only one that has been granted municipal status, allotting the Governor's Office of Nalaikh a high degree of autonomy and self-direction in policy.

Coal mining has been the bedrock of Nalaikh's history, beginning in the early 20th century and expanding into the 1950s.[23] The coal mining sector collapsed in the early 1990s, but some Nalaikh locals continue to harvest resources on a smaller scale through dangerous "ninja mining" operations. According to the International Business Times, Nalaikh's abandoned coal pits are notorious for illegal mining.[24] However, Nalaikh also remains a hub for legitimate mineral extraction pursuits. Mongolians interested in the mineral industry travel to Nalaikh to attend the local university, the German Institute for Resources and Technology (GMIT). The Governor's Office of Nalaikh is keen to build on this resource focus, as well as expand their tourism market, invest in the garment sector, and explore technological opportunities.[25]

The District of Nalaikh comprises eight sub-municipal units called "khoroos." Each khoroo is led by an appointed Khoroo Governor, and operates out of a Khoroo Office located in the khoroo itself. Khoroos are further subdivided into units called "khesegs." Typically, each kheseg is led by an assigned Social Worker who is aided by volunteer Kheseg Leaders from the community. A kheseg contains 200-250 households. Authority and information flow vertically within this structure: Kheseg Leaders work with their Social Workers and report to their Khoroo Governor. The Khoroo Governor, in turn, reports to the DFYCD. The DFYCD organizes meetings, training opportunities, and events for the various sub-unit leaders. These positions are considered 'paid volunteer work' - the sub-unit leaders are paid by the Governor's Office of Nalaikh, and can be rewarded for outstanding work by the DFYCD.[26]
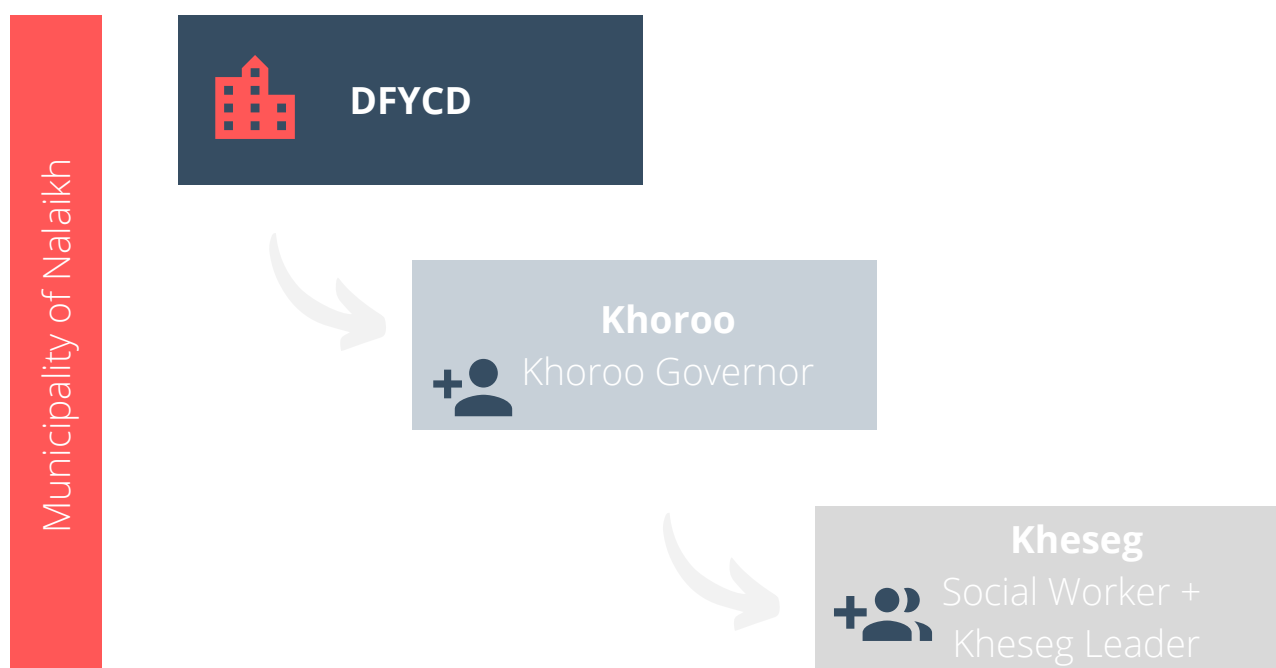
Figure 1: *Nalaikh Municipal Sub-Unit Chain of Command*

23 Dierkes 2018
24 Dettoni 2014
25 "Nalaikh City," n.d.
26 Naranbayer 2019

The District of Nalaikh has a population of just over 37,000, over 12,000 of whom (32%) are youth.[27] Mongolia defines 'youth' as ages 15 to 34. Youth are the largest demographic group in Nalaikh; however, 96% of youth in Nalaikh report that they feel better development programming for their demographic is needed.[28] Educational attainment rates (secondary school minimum) are quite high in Nalaikh, but youth cite employment opportunities as a major barrier to entering the workforce. Not surprisingly, a large proportion of Nalaikh's youth work in the informal sector.[29] In recognition of the need for, and importance of, youth

Figure 2: *Youth as a Percentage of Nalaikh Population*

development, the Governor's Office of Nalaikh has outlined five key areas of interest: youth self-development, youth participation in culture, sports, arts, and science; improvement of youth health initiatives, youth employment initiatives, and safe environment projects.[30]

The community of Nalaikh is also home to a minority Kazakh Muslim population, most of whom migrated to Nalaikh during the mining boom of the early 20th century. The Kazakh community has two separate Kazakh khoroos, as well as a Kazakh secondary school.[31] Through various interviews with regional experts, we were informed that socio-economic barriers disproportionately impact the Kazakh minority. However, due to time constraints (see *6.0 Limitations*) this project specifically focuses on primary research from the Mongol majority, and therefore any substantive claims regarding the Kazakh population are beyond the scope of this report.

27 Governor's Office of Nalaikh n.d.
28 "Nalaikh City" n.d.
29 Governor's Office of Nalaikh n.d.
30 "Nalaikh City" n.d.
31 Dierkes 2018

3.0
POLICY
PROBLEM

3.1 Policy Challenge

The initial problem presented by the DFYCD was the fact that youth were consistently not participating in the CSS. The CSS is distributed door-to-door during business hours and at community events hosted by the Governor's Office. As described above (see *1.1 Governor's Office of Nalaikh District*), the survey results are used to dictate municipal programs and budgeting in the district. On average, 80% of survey respondents each year are ages 50 and above.[32] The needs of this group, many of whom are retired, are different from the needs of youth, who face challenges like unemployment and lack of opportunity. The survey results over-represent the views of Nalaikh's older residents. As a result, the subsequent programming does not appeal to youth, which continues the cycle of disengagement from local governance.

3.1 Civic Engagement

Through further discussions, the DFYCD and the research team agreed to broaden the research scope to focus on increasing overall youth civic engagement in Nalaikh, rather than exclusively increasing youth survey responses. This approach recognizes that there are many potential avenues for acquiring youth input, which must be explored in order to increase the responsiveness of local government programming. Broadening the definition also recognizes that engagement may encourage youth to act as "agents

32 Baaska and Bayarnyam 2019

of social change in their communities, as they use their knowledge, skills, and organizing capacity to transform the world around them." [33] For an overview of the youth civic engagement frameworks and theory used throughout this report, please refer to *7.0 Review of Youth Civic Engagement Literature.*

3.3 Problem Statement

The lack of youth civic engagement in the Nalaikh District hinders effective policy creation and implementation. The DFCYD is mandated to draft policies that cater to the development needs of youth, but its current efforts to engage youth are not yielding sufficient information about those needs. The DFYCD must either improve on existing engagement strategies or implement new ones to address this disconnect.

33 Thorup and Kinkade 2005

4.0

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

& ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORKS

The following two research questions were identified as key elements to an effective solution to this problem. The research project was designed to gather primary and secondary data that contributes to answering these questions to the greatest degree possible, given time and scope limitations (see *6.0 Limitations*).

4.1   First Research Question

1) **Why are youth in Nalaikh civically disengaged?**
   a) How do Nalaikh youth perceive the local government?
   b) What are the barriers impeding youth civic engagement in Nalaikh?
   c) What are the cultural, socio-economic, ethnic, and/or generational considerations that may impact youth civic engagement levels in Nalaikh?*

Figure 3 (next page) illustrates the analytical framework for the first research question: *"Why are youth in Nalaikh civically disengaged?"* The innermost circle represents the problem statement (a lack of youth civic engagement). The surrounding concentric circles represent the sub-research questions 1a, 1b, and 1c; each is a factor that is hypothesized to contribute to this problem. Each factor is influenced by those layered

outside of it. For example, an individual youth's perception of the government can exacerbate the barriers to engagement that they face, and an individual youth's socioeconomic status can influence their perception of the government.

Factor: Cultural, Socioeconomic, & Generational Influences

Factor: Perceptions of Government

Factor: Barriers to Engagement

Result: Nalaikh youth disengaged from civic discourse
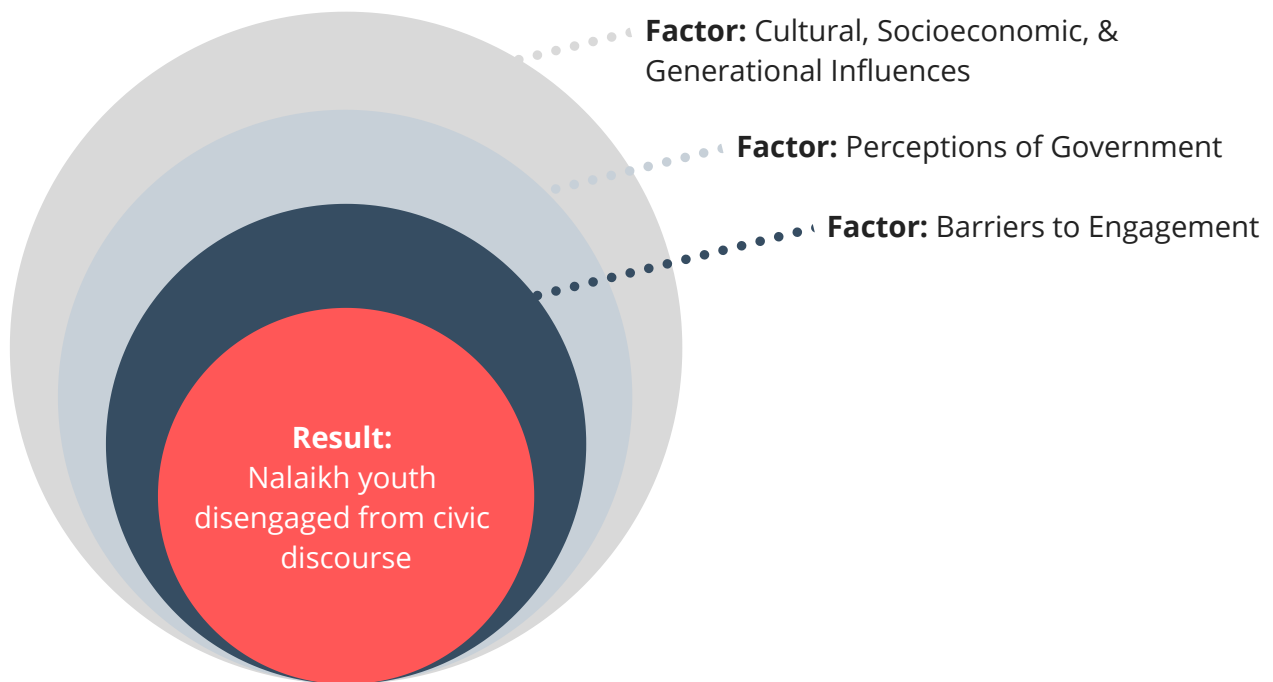
Figure 3: *Analytical Framework for First Research Question*

Due to time and sampling constraints (see 6.0 Limitations*) we did not gather adequate data to answer this question. Therefore, our analysis does not address research question 1c.*

4.2   Second Research Question

2) What are good practices to increase youth civic engagement in Nalaikh?

   a)   What are the overarching trends found in civic engagement literature?

   b)   What are applicable case studies that offer recommendations that would be relevant to Nalaikh's specific situation?

Figure 4 illustrates the analytical framework for the second research question: *"What are good practices to increase youth civic engagement in Nalaikh?"* The box on the left represents the problem statement and current state of affairs. The box on the right represents the desired state of affairs (greater civic engagement by youth). The box in the middle represents mechanisms that would facilitate a transition from the current situation to the desired situation. While there are infinite possibilities for what these mechanisms could be, this project focuses on the direction identified in sub-research questions 2a and 2b: trends in the civic engagement literature and relevant case studies.

Lack of Youth Cvic Engagement   →   Unknown Mechanisms   →   **Increased** Youth Civic Engagement

Figure 4: *Analytical Framework for Second Research Question*

5.0
METHODOLOGY

The timeline of the research process is given in Figure 5 (next page). Details for each stage of the process are provided below.

5.1 Secondary Research

Our secondary research consists of detailed analyses in three key focus areas: information on Mongolia and Nalaikh, youth civic engagement theory, and relevant youth civic engagement case studies.

Mongolia & Nalaikh: To supplement our understanding of the problem, we reviewed a wide variety of documents — academic publications, non-fiction books, and government reports — to gain a better understanding of the cultural and economic context of Mongolia and Nalaikh. This information was relevant to our primary research design and to our final recommendations, mostly contributing to answering research questions 1c and 2b.

Youth Civic Engagement Theory: Before, during, and after our visit to Mongolia, we carried out a review of contemporary theories on youth civic engagement. This review had multiple purposes: it informed our problem statement by helping us specify a working definition of 'civic engagement,' it informed our primary research design by indicating important avenues and methods of inquiry, and it informed our final

		2019 – 2020							
		SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR
Planning	**Set Research Questions**								
Primary Research	**Interviews** (remote)								
	Interviews (in-person)								
	Focus Groups								
	Data Analysis (preliminary)								
Secondary Research	**Literature Review** (Mongolian context)								
	Literature Review (civic engagement)								
	Literature Review (case studies)								
Synthesis	**Data Analysis** (final)								
	Set Policy Recommendations								
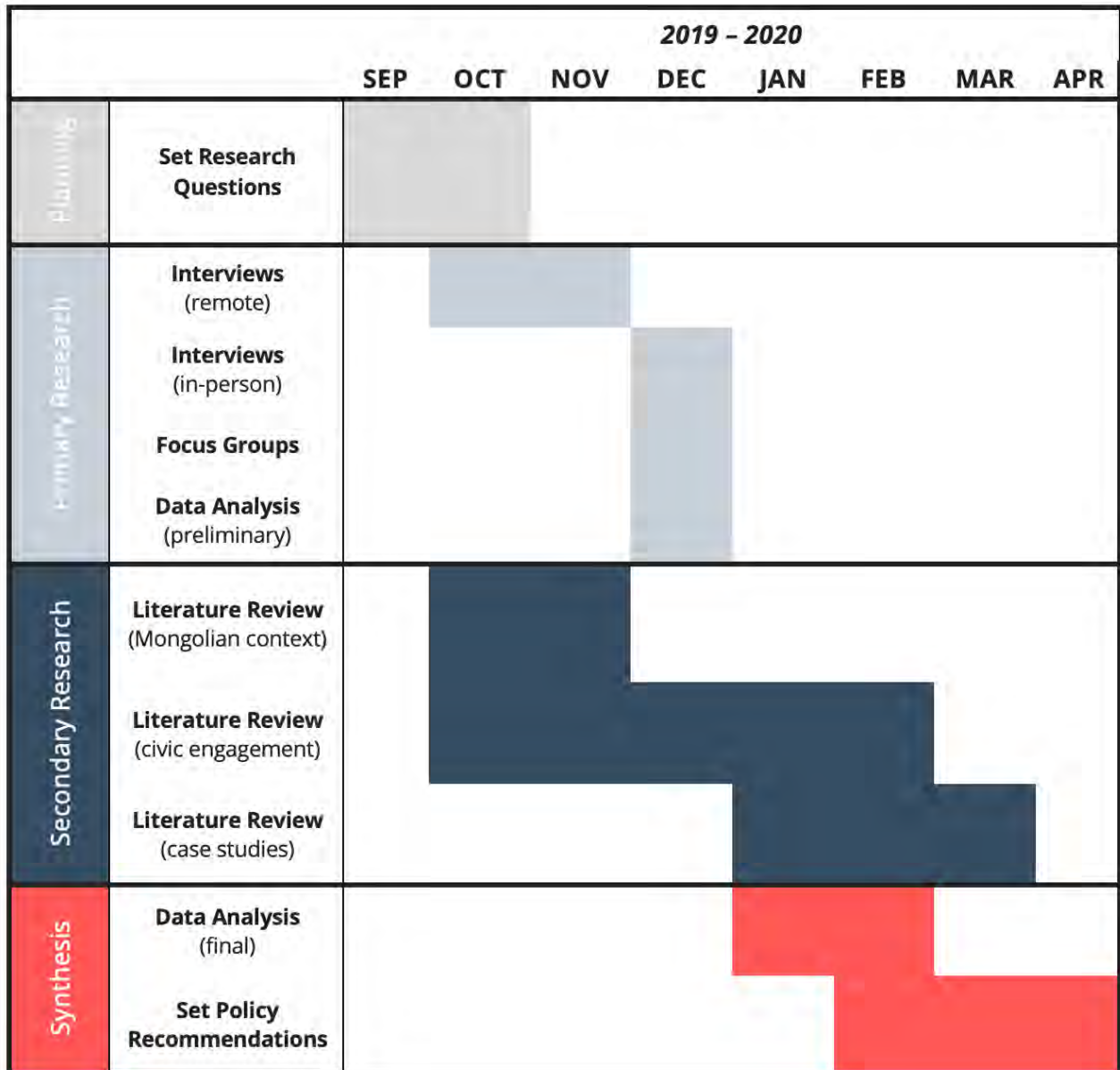
Figure 5: *Research Process Timeline*

recommendations by providing evidence of the efficacy of our suggested interventions. Findings from this focus area contributed to answering research questions 1a, 1b, and 2a. All sources consulted for this review were academic publications.

Youth Civic Engagement Case Studies: After returning from Mongolia, we used our primary research findings to direct a review of relevant case studies involving youth civic engagement. This path of inquiry directly answered research question 2c, and informed our final recommendations. Four specific case studies are presented in this report. We positioned these case studies in areas of the report we felt were most relevant to the specific issue being addressed, not in any particular order. The case

studies are presented throughout the report as a supplementary reference, but a full report of each case study can be found in the Appendices section (see *Appendix 12: Youth Civic Engagement Case Studies*).

5.2   Primary Research

The primary research conducted for this project was two-fold: interviews with key stakeholders and area specialists, as well as the facilitation of several focus groups with our target demographic.

5.2.1   Interviews

The onset of this project required interviews with several area specialists, as a means of understanding Mongolian culture more broadly and the Nalaikh context specifically. Notable interviews include a conversation with a civic education specialist from Mongolia, the Ambassador of Mongolia to Canada, and a PhD candidate specializing in the Mongolian political climate. Such interviews provided our team with a sound knowledge base regarding the socio-economic status of Mongolia and Nalaikh, helping to tailor our research methodology in preparation for the data gathering phase. The interviews during this phase of the project were conducted over Skype and in-person from Vancouver, British Columbia.

While on the ground in Mongolia, our team also conducted a series of interviews with key stakeholders in Ulaanbaatar and Nalaikh. Key stakeholders included youth political parties, democratic youth organizations, civil society organizations, and the Head of the DFYCD in Nalaikh District. Please review *Appendix 1: Interviews* for a full list of interviews conducted, and the standard interview questions used.

5.2.2   Focus Groups

To answer our research questions, given our resources and the problem outlined by the client, we assumed focus groups would elicit the most appropriate information and useful insight. Our team also felt it was important to engage directly with the youth of Nalaikh, as a means of understanding specific key barriers and perceptions regarding civic engagement.

Sampling: Our target demographic consisted of Nalaikh youth, ranging in age from 18-34. Although Mongolia's definition of youth includes ages 15-34, we were only able to work with individuals 18 and above, due to Canadian research ethics standards. Our intention was to discuss youth civic engagement and democracy with Nalaikh youth, and with professionals who work with youth. We facilitated nine different focus groups (with between five and eight participants per session), and drew our sample from one of the unique demographics listed in Table 1.

	Theme	Purpose
Youth *(Ages 18-34)*	High School Students	Understand key barriers to engagement for high school students
	Vocational Training Youth	Understand key barriers to engagement for students in vocational training
	University Students	Understand key barriers to engagement for university students
	Unemployed Youth	Understand key barriers to engagement for unemployed youth
	Public Sector Employees	Understand key barriers to engagement for employed youth
	Private Sector Employees	Understand key barriers to engagement for youth in private sector employment
	"Random" Khoroo Youth	Understand key barriers to engagement for youth from across different Khoroos
Professionals who work with youth *(*Some of these professionals were between ages 18-34)*	Social Workers	Understand key barriers to engagement for social workers; understand perception of youth by social workers
	High School Teachers	Understand perception of civic education curriculum; understand key barriers facing teachers; understand perception of youth

Table 1: *Focus Groups by Theme*

Convenience and snowball sampling were leveraged for this research project, mostly due to time constraints and access to resources. One of our primary contacts, Odonchimeg B. from the DFCYD, arranged focus group participation prior to our arrival in Mongolia.

Design: The focus groups were facilitated in Mongolian, and as such, the client recruited four volunteer youth translators to assist the research team. All four translators are from the Nalaikh community, and therefore have a wealth of insight regarding regional nuances and practices. Considering the language barrier between researchers and participants, the research team also incorporated hands-on activities into the sessions. The activities encouraged conversation, but also produced physical data points, which were translated into English following each session. Each focus group consisted of three activities: a democracy "Mind Map," an activity that analyzed local problems, and an exercise that analyzed barriers to the CSS. The research team also distributed a short questionnaire at the onset of each focus group. All nine focus groups were conducted in Nalaikh, over the span of roughly 10 days. Please review *Appendix 2: Focus Groups* for additional information on the activities and a copy of the questionnaire distributed.

6.0
LIMITATIONS

This research is limited by several factors, which have been outlined in Table 2.

Time	
Explanation:	• This project was a course requirement for the research team, and had to be completed within Canada's academic calendar (September 2019 - April 2020). The eight-month span limited the extent of research and analysis possible (civic engagement is a broad topic that could be explored in much more depth!). • Course requirements also dictated that field work in Mongolia had to be completed within 14 days, and in consideration of a set budget. This constraint limited the number of interviews and focus groups our research team could conduct.
Mitigation:	Neither of these timelines (for the overall project and for fieldwork) could be extended due to external constraints, so we took two steps: 1. We carefully set the scope of our project to what we predicted would be manageable within these timelines. 2. When areas of inquiry arose that we could not pursue due to time, we noted the details in order to recommend that another team (either at the Governor's Office or at UBC) explore them in the future. See *10.2 Future Research* for the final list.

(Table 2 continued next page)

Language Barrier	
Explanation:	• The four core researchers on this project do not speak Mongolian. Therefore, some focus group discussion points may have been lost in translation, despite our assistance from the four Mongolian translators.
Mitigation:	To ensure that we gained as much insight as possible from each focus group, we took multiple steps: 1. We designed our focus groups to centre around writing and drawing responses, so that we would have physical outputs that could be referred to later. 2. We had the translators (unobtrusively) write the English translations onto these outputs in the moment so that the spirit of the discussion was fresh in their minds. 3. We asked the translators assigned to notetaking to record key discussion points and important body language or atmosphere observations. 4. We held a debrief session with the translators immediately after each focus group, during which time we all discussed what the tenor in the room had been during each activity.
Cultural Barrier	
Explanation:	• Cultural nuances may have been overlooked or misinterpreted throughout our research project. • Data analysis required interpretations of the meaning of participants' responses, and it is possible that our interpretations were skewed by our positionality.
Mitigation:	This limitation is inherent to any cross-cultural research study. The steps taken to mitigate for the language barrier also served to address cultural barriers to a degree. For example, during debrief sessions, the translators were able to explain any cultural points that had come to the fore during a focus group. Unfortunately, the translators were not involved in the data analysis performed in Vancouver. However, the report will be received and put to use by the client, who can detect any cultural oversights on our part and account for them moving forwards. We are confident that the vast majority of the information presented will be useful, even if some cultural adaptation is required.

Sampling Biases	
Explanation:	• As stated in *2.2 Nalaikh District*, Mongolia defines youth as individuals ages 15-34, but the research team was only able to work with individuals 18 and above due to Canadian research ethics standards. Therefore, our sample does not include representation of youth ages 15-17. • As stated in *5.2.2 Focus Groups*, the research team was not involved in the recruitment of focus group participants. Recruitment was done by the client, and to our understanding, was done using convenience and snowball sampling methods. Meaning, our sample is not representative of Nalaikh's overall youth population.
Mitigation:	The omission of youth under 18 from our sample was unavoidable, but we believe its impact on our results is minimal because we held a focus group with high school students who *had* turned 18. These participants attend school with peers aged 15-17, and we feel it is reasonable to assume that their views were reasonably representative of the views of younger students as well. While random sampling would have produced a more representative sample of participants, we could not arrange it from Canada, and our client did not have the time or resources necessary for such an operation. We feel that the use of convenience and snowball sampling was a rational choice under these circumstances.

Table 2: Limitations

7.0
REVIEW OF YOUTH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT LITERATURE

7.1 Overview

Global Democratic Trends: Concerns about low levels of civic engagement and democratic discourse are not unique to Mongolia. The "decline of democracy" has been a consistent theme in academic literature and popular media throughout the last few decades. Common indicators of a healthy democracy, like voter turnout and political party membership, have been slipping worldwide — even in many of the well-established democracies in North America and Europe.[34] This decline has garnered serious attention, because "the withdrawal of the citizenry from participation in public life has the potential to reduce the legitimacy of public decision making and to inhibit effective responses to collective problems." [35] The continued prominence of this trend is illustrated in *Democracy Index 2019,* the most recent edition of an annual report put out by The Economist Intelligence Unit to capture the state of democracy worldwide. In 2019, the average global Democracy Index score fell to 5.44 (out of 10), marking the lowest average global score since the first Index was calculated in 2006.[36] In fact, Mongolia's score of 6.5 was notably above average.[37]

34 DeBardeleben and Pammett 2009
35 The Economist Intelligence Unit 2019
36 Ibid.
37 Ibid.

Of course, this Index tabulates several factors beyond civic engagement, including function of government and civil liberties. It should not be interpreted as a description of civic engagement alone; however, it does demonstrate that democracy is volatile. In all of its components — including civic engagement — democracy can increase and decrease over time and in any country.

Figure 6: *Democracy Index 2006-2019*

Youth Civic Engagement Trends: This global decline via democratic indicators provides useful context for considering research on youth civic engagement. Youth are a highly important demographic in any democracy, as they will eventually inherit the results of political decisions made today. Yet, parallel to the democratic decline outlined above, there appears to be a global downward trend in youth civic engagement. Youth are often portrayed as both a symptom of, and a contributor to, declines in democracy.[38] Conventional wisdom within this research is emerging: youth, like adults, are increasingly cynical about electoral politics.[39] A study of youth across five countries (Bulgaria, Chile, Colombia, England, the USA) found that this cynicism about the political process undermined civic participation by youth.[40] There are many conflicting opinions explaining potential reasons for disengagement. Differing opinions also exist regarding the validity of the problem. Some authors suggest that youth are not participating less, they are just participating through non-conventional, less formal avenues that current monitoring does not capture.[41]

38 Saunders 2009
39 Syvertsen et al. 2011
40 Torney-Purta, Richardson, and Barber 2004
41 Barrett 2018, Saunders 2009

The apparent decline has sparked growing interest in youth civic engagement globally, especially among policymakers. In response, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) published the *World Youth Report on Youth Civic Engagement* in 2016. The report is a response to "the perceived decline in the levels of civic and political engagement among young people worldwide," and gathers insights from an array of youth researchers and engagement experts.[42] It aims to "ensure that young people are able to participate fully and effectively in all aspects of the societies in which they live," because youth civic engagement is not just an end in and of itself, but a means to other broader improvements in communities and countries.[43] The Report summarizes its findings in five core recommendations [44] for youth civic engagement policy and programmes:

1) **Be explicit regarding the degree of youth participation**

   Initiatives should define how much ownership and decision-making authority young people will have. Even programs ultimately run by adults can incorporate youth ownership. It should be the norm for youth to also be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of youth programming.

2) **Be relevant to young people's own interests and lived experiences**

   Initiatives will be more successful when youth feel a natural connection to the content, and see its relevance to their own lives.

3) **Be action-oriented**

   Research shows that youth care about social justice but feel they cannot do anything to make a difference. Initiatives to engage youth should be clear about the civic goals they aim to achieve, and offer youth real opportunities to participate in achieving them.

4) **Value and foster analysis and reflection**

   Action should be complemented by reflection. Initiatives can train youth in evaluations, like surveying and interviewing their peers.

5) **Provide opportunities for youth-adult partnership**

   Closer partnerships with adult mentors and motivators are key to youth developing civic engagement skills.

42 United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) 2016
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.

7.2 Frameworks for Thinking About Youth Civic Engagement

The *World Youth Report* is a useful snapshot of the current youth civic engagement discourse within the United Nations. However, behind any publication about youth civic engagement, there are theoretical assumptions about *what* civic engagement *means*. The Report itself notes that "civic engagement is not a neutral concept, but rather encompasses a variety of forms and perspectives surrounding relationships between the individual, the community, and broader society."[45] **Civic engagement is not something binary that youth have or do not have, it is a process.** As one author describes the study of youth civic engagement: "The challenge is to understand how and where youth come to define themselves as citizens and what motivates political interest and action among youth."[46] This section provides three theoretical frameworks for answering these questions. They are not conflicting views, each offers a different but complementary perspective on what civic engagement is and how youth develop it. Different frameworks are useful for different purposes, and can be drawn upon as appropriate. The analysis presented further in this report — *8.0 Data Presentation and Analysis* — was conducted using these frameworks as reference points.

7.2.1 The Triangle Model
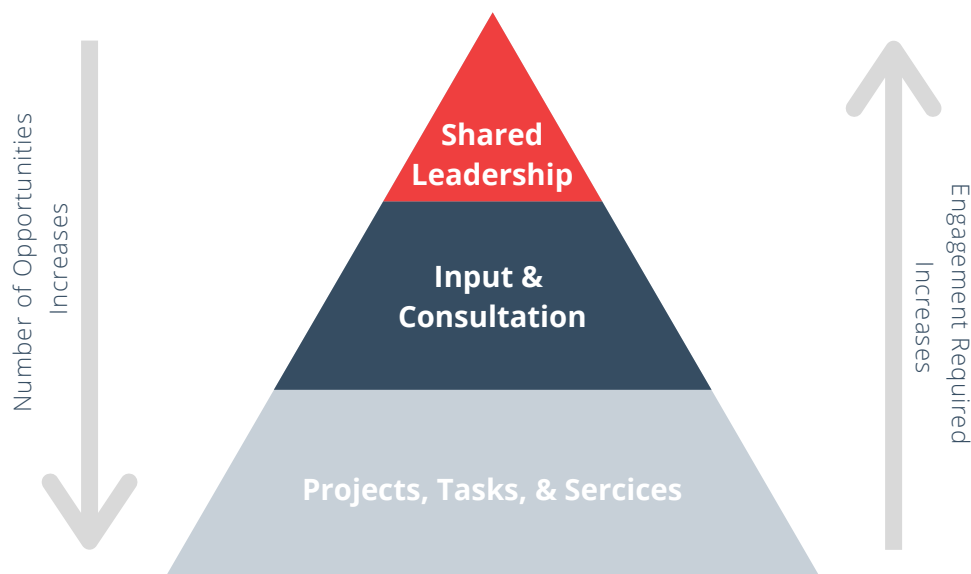
Figure 7: *The Triangle Model*

The term 'civic engagement' encompasses a broad range of activities, from one-time volunteer opportunities to long-term commitments. Within any opportunity for civic engagement, both members of older generations and youth will choose to participate to varying degrees (depending on their interest, availability, skill, or other constraints).

45 United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) 2016
46 Saunders 2009

However, author Cindy Carlson (M.Ed.) expands on these facts in her article *The Hampton Experience as a New Model for Youth Civic Engagement.* During research on youth civic engagement programs in Virginia, USA, Carlson noticed two patterns: **There are multiple pathways to youth civic engagement, and youth appear to naturally progress from simple engagement to deeper involvement over time.** She illustrates her findings with *The Triangle Model*, which is shown above in Figure 7. Each layer of the triangle represents a pathway to youth civic engagement. The arrows show how the number of positions and the level of engagement required vary moving up and down the triangle.

Pathway	Description	Examples
Project Pathway *Projects, Tasks, & Service*	• Low-commitment volunteer activities • Usually short-term or "one time only" activities • Usually requires minimal skills or training	• Community 'clean-ups' (picking up litter in public areas or parks) • Collecting donations for charities • Tutoring programs
Input Pathway *Input & Consultation*	• Medium-commitment volunteer work that allows youth to influence decision-making processes that are usually dominated by an adult perspective • Can be short-term or long-term activities • Usually requires skills like listening, problem solving, and presenting • Older authorities retain ultimate decision-making power, but youth get to advise and feel the satisfaction of contributing to something bigger than themselves	• Youth Focus Groups • Youth Advisory Boards • Youth roles on policy analysis & program development teams
Leadership Pathway *Shared Leadership*	• High-commitment community roles for youth (may be volunteer or paid) • Usually long-term • Usually requires greater skill and commitment • Youth share equal responsibility with other older authorities	• Jobs for youth within local government • Youth Commissions (policy decision groups) • Youth Event Planning Teams

Table 3: *Triangle Model Pathways*

Communities and organizations seeking to increase youth civic engagement should offer all three pathways of activity. This method will attract the greatest possible amount of youth civic engagement by appealing to different levels of skill and commitment. In addition, it allows interested youth to move 'up the triangle' over time, as they grow more confident and develop skills.

Case Study

Diverse Programming for Diverse Youth

Indian Research Addresses Hierarchical Gap Through a Range of Engagement Opportunities

This India-based case study, written by the Pravah NGO, resonates with the Nalaikh context by addressing the hierarchical gap between youth and adults in society. The study attempts to mitigate this gap by encouraging the development of a wide range of opportunities to meet the specific needs of diverse youth.

Although our project does not specifically analyze the hierarchical gap between adults and youth, some evidence from our research suggests a **disconnect between youth and adults in Nalaikh** does indeed exist. During some of our focus groups, Nalaikh youth confided that they often feel ignored by authority figures in their community. Moreover, they expressed appreciation for the focus group sessions simply because the process provided a space to explore new ideas and share opinions without critique.

Drawing on *The Triangle Model*, which suggests that sustained and meaningful civic engagement is a continuum, the Pravah NGO implements **different types of civic engagement opportunities,** as a means of catering to an individual's skill set, socio-economic constraints, and interest level. For example, they facilitated a youth-driven, community-based research project, as well as several theatrical summer programs for youth. Something as comprehensive as a research project may not be possible in Nalaikh at this time, given resource constraints. However, other engagement projects, such as mock debates or the creation of a community youth committee, are great avenues to explore and are intended to engage a diverse range of youth with different skill sets and time constraints. **See *Appendix 12: Youth Civic Engagement Case Studies* for more information and references on this case study.**

7.2.2 The Systems Webs Framework

"Systems thinking" is a philosophy that is often used as a tool by organization management specialists. It involves trying to understand an organization or a process as a 'system,' by examining the links and interactions between its different elements. The practice of systems thinking explores inter-relationships (connections), perspectives (how each actor in the system perceives it), and boundaries (the scope and scale of improvements).[47] Systems thinking is useful for studying youth civic engagement because it can break down "a set of elements that interact to produce behaviour."[48] This approach can lead to more sustainable improvements compared to a narrow view of civic engagement because it accounts for the complexities of youths' real lives. Authors Charmagne Campbell-Patton and Michael Quinn Patton use systems thinking in their chapter of the *Handbook of Research on Civic Engagement in Youth* to show how youth engagement levels are affected by different levels of system relationships. Examples are illustrated in the 'Systems Web' figures below. **Figure 8 shows that youths' interpersonal relationships can affect civic engagement, and Figure 9 shows that organizational systems can do the same.**
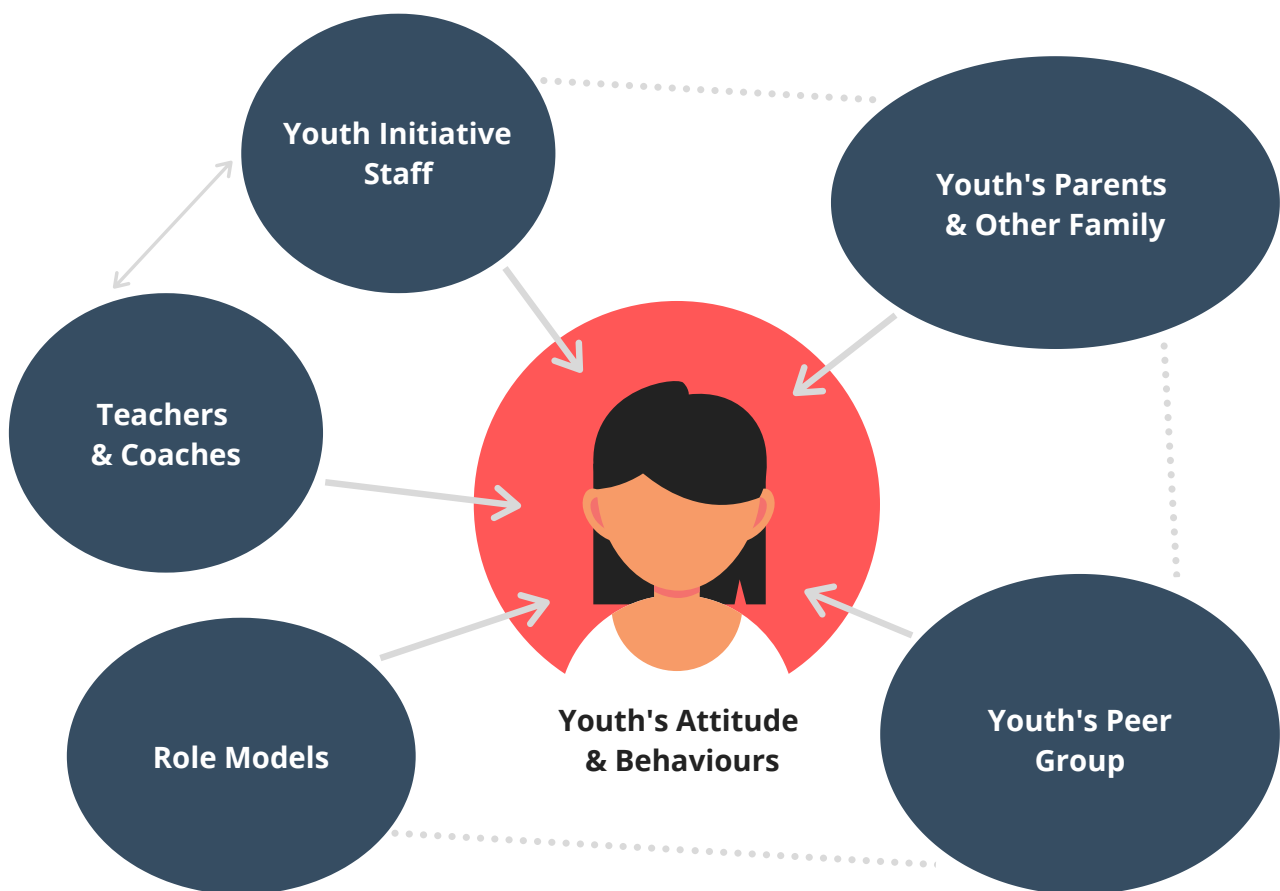
Figure 8: *Interpersonal Systems Web*

47 "Systems Thinking" n.d.
48 Aronson 1996

Figure 8 is a map of some of the important interpersonal relationships in a youth's life. At the centre of the map are the attitudes and behaviours of an individual youth, including their civic engagement activities. The outer circles show other people who influence that individual, and the arrows represent the strength of their influence (heavy lines show strong influence, dotted lines show weak influence.) **The key point of Figure 8 is to show that youth have a multitude of relationships and connections that may influence the level and the nature of their civic engagement.** Understanding which of these connections are the most influential is essential to increasing youth civic engagement. Campbell-Patton and Patton suggest that in many contexts, one of the strongest influences on youth is their peer group. Therefore, targeting a program towards individual youth is unlikely to succeed unless their peers are also involved.
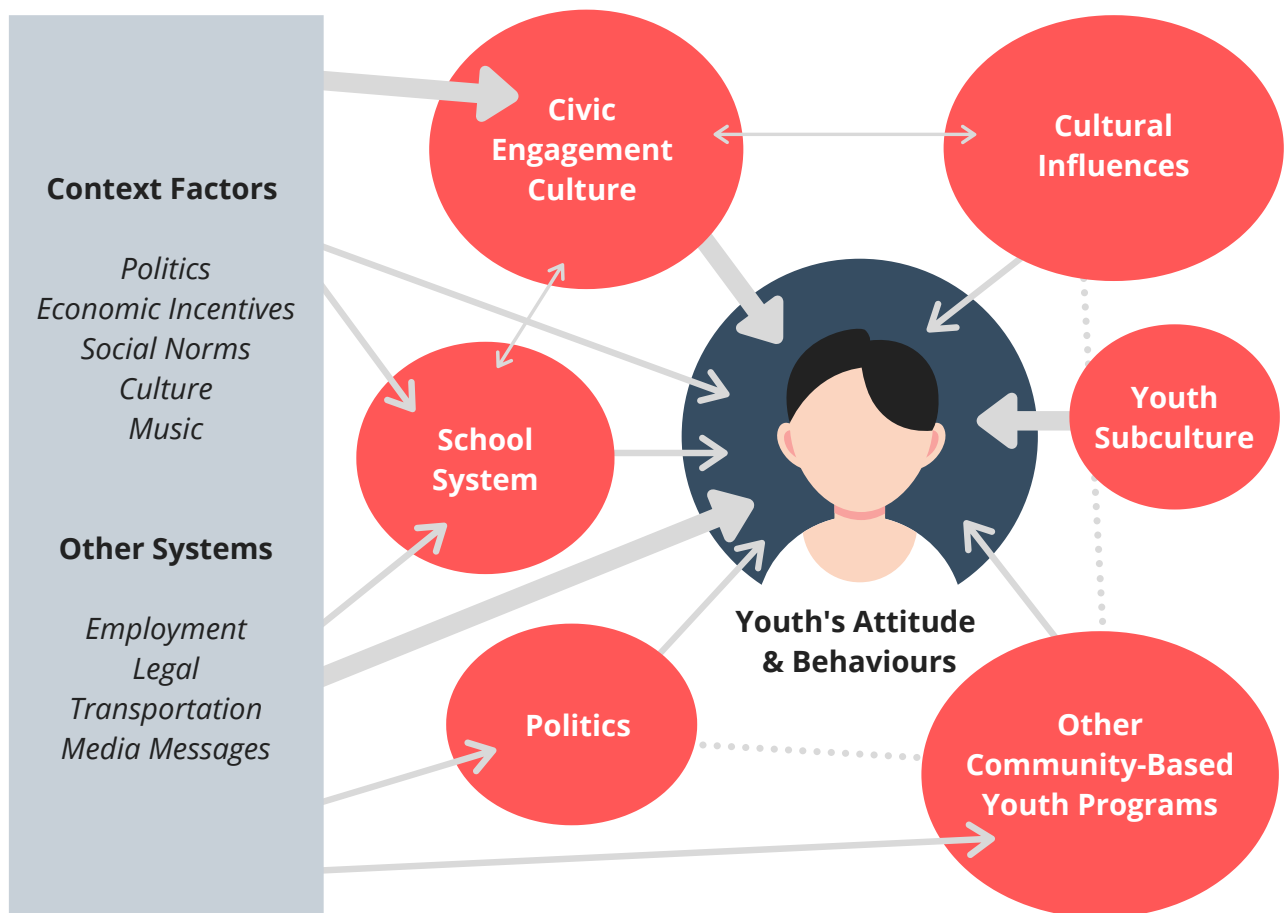
Figure 9: *Institutional Systems Web*

Figure 9 is a map of some of the important institutions in a youth's life. Once again, the attitudes and behaviours of an individual youth (including their civic engagement) are at the centre. The outer circles show the institutions and systems that influence youth.

As in Figure 8, the different kinds of lines represent different types of influence. The box on the left shows broader factors that influence the entire web. For example, 'social norms' determine what level of civic engagement is expected from youth and how society will react to their engagement. **The key point of Figure 9 is to illustrate that youth are influenced by a complex web of institutions and factors, and that youth civic engagement programs do not operate in isolation**. Campbell-Patton and Patton suggest that programs targeting youth civic engagement improvements are much more likely to succeed if they acknowledge and collaborate with other institutions that have an effect on youths' attitudes and behaviours. **Various institutions involved in the lives of youth should identify their common goals and work together towards these goals.**

7.2.3   The Youth Engagement Continuum

Intervention	Development	Collective Empowerment		Systemic Change
Youth Services Approach	Youth Development (YD)	Youth Leadership (YL) YD+...	Civic Engagement (CE) YD+YL+...	Youth Organizing (YO) YD+YL+CE+...
Programs that provide services to address youths' individual problems and needs	Programs that provide opportunities for youth growth and development in safe spaces	Programs that build authentic youth leadership opportunities into projects, organizations	Programs that engage youth in political education and awareness	Programs that involve youth as part of part of an organization's core staff, governing body
Example: a 'hotline' phone number that youth can call for advice	*Example: a community centre for youth that runs clubs and events*	*Example: a Youth Advisory Panel that contributes to the planning of a community event*	*Example: a youth-led research project on community issues*	*Example: political party youth organizations*

Figure 10: *The Youth Engagement Continuum*

Civic engagement is related to, and intertwined with, other aspects of youth development. It can be difficult to specify which youth activities constitute civic engagement, and how they relate to other youth programming. To clarify, the Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing (a non-profit organization from New York, USA) designed *The Youth Engagement Continuum.* Aileen Shaw and colleagues use the Continuum in their article *Understanding Youth Civic Engagement: Debates, Discourses, and Lessons from Practice.* A summary of their visualization of the framework is shown in Figure 10. **The key point of the Continuum is to illustrate that each level of youth engagement builds on the one before it; youth services, development, and leadership are foundational to youth civic engagement and youth organizing.** The latter (youth civic engagement and youth organizing) represent the point at which youth move from participating in community programs to having agency in community outcomes.[49]

7.3 Summary

The perceived "decline of democracy" is a trend that has been observed worldwide, including in the well-established democracies of North America and Europe. Patterns of decreasing democratic engagement are visible in all demographics, but youth disengagement has been highlighted by scholars and commentators as particularly concerning. However, it is possible that the problem is not youth disengagement, so much as a youth *disconnect* — traditional measures of civic engagement do not capture the way today's youth are participating.

Theoretical frameworks are useful for visualizing this gap, as a means of working towards closing it. Civic engagement is not something binary that youth have or do not have, it is a process. Programs that aim to increase youth civic engagement must take this reality into account. This review presented three of the leading frameworks in the study of youth civic engagement:

- **The Triangle Model,** which shows that there are multiple pathways to youth civic engagement, and that youth appear to naturally progress from simple engagement to deeper involvement over time, if a range of opportunities are available.
- **The Systems Webs Framework,** which shows that youths' behaviour (including civic engagement) is a result of their interpersonal and institutional relationships, as well as the broader systems they function within.
- **The Youth Engagement Continuum,** which shows that civic engagement is part of a continuum of youth behaviours, and that programs can help to increase youth civic engagement by first offering youth services and development opportunities.

These three frameworks form the basis of the analysis presented in the next section, *8.0 Data Presentation & Analysis.*

49 Shaw et al. 2014

8.0
DATA PRESENTATION &
ANALYSIS

8.1   Demographic Profile of Youth

There were a total of 47 participants in the seven youth focus groups conducted. These participants were 52% female and 48% male, as illustrated in Figure 11. The mean age in the sample was 25.[50] The distribution of participant ages is illustrated in Figure 12 (next page).

Among the 47 youth focus group participants, 43% were currently in school (secondary, vocational, or university) and 47% were currently working (full-time or part-time). Being in school and working are not mutually exclusive: there was some

Male
48%

Female
52%

Figure 11: Youth Focus Group Participant Gender Distribution

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50 One participant in the focus group of Youth from "Random" Khoroos was 37 years old, which is outside Mongolia's officially defined 'youth' age bracket of 18-34. This was not discovered until after the focus group was completed. Another participant in the focus group of Unemployed Youth did not disclose their age on the questionnaire. The maximum age among the other 45 participants was 34. It was not possible to remove the input and responses of these two participants from the focus group results because of the communal nature of the activities. However, their responses were not included in summaries of questionnaire data (Figures 11-12).
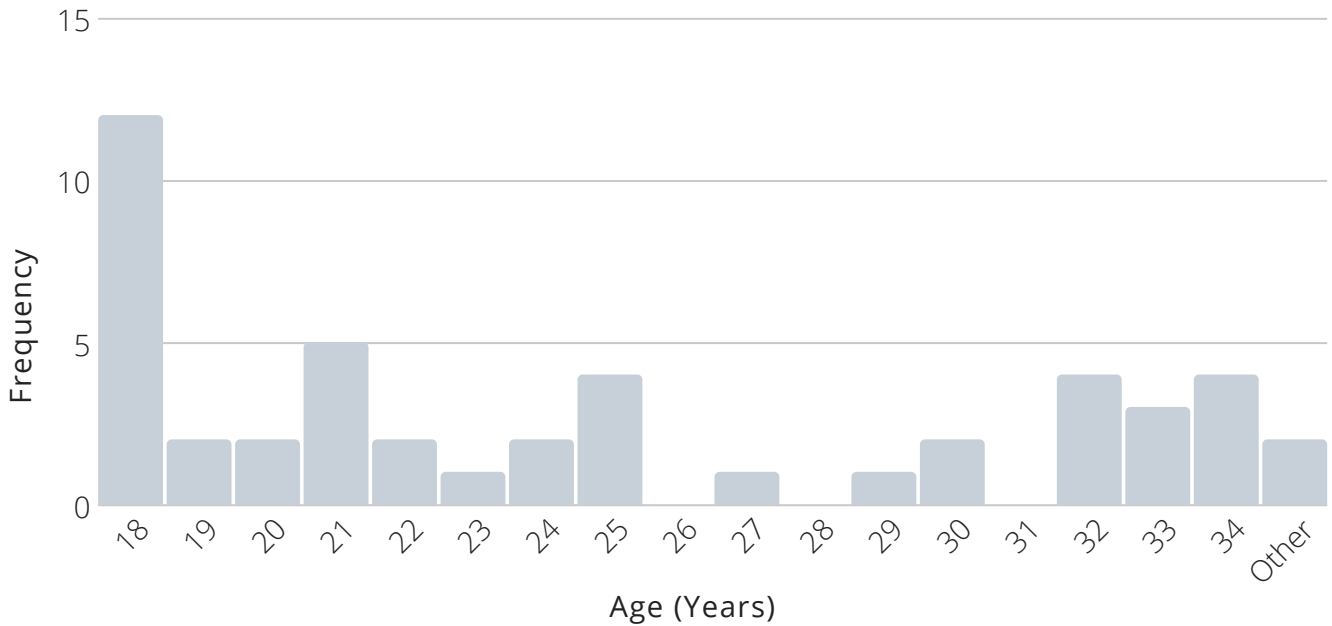
Figure 12: *Youth Focus Group Participant Age Distribution*

overlap between these groups, as 9% of students worked part-time (see Figure 13). About 20% of participants were unemployed and not studying, which is not reflective of Nalaikh's overall unemployment rate of 6.5%. [51]During 'ice-breaker' activities, participants shared that they enjoyed playing sports (such as volleyball and basketball), dancing, and reading in their leisure time.

In School + Works PT
9%

Works Part-Time
13%

Not In School
55%

In School
43%

Works Full-Time
34%

In School + No Work
30%

Doesn't Work
49%

No Work + No School
19%
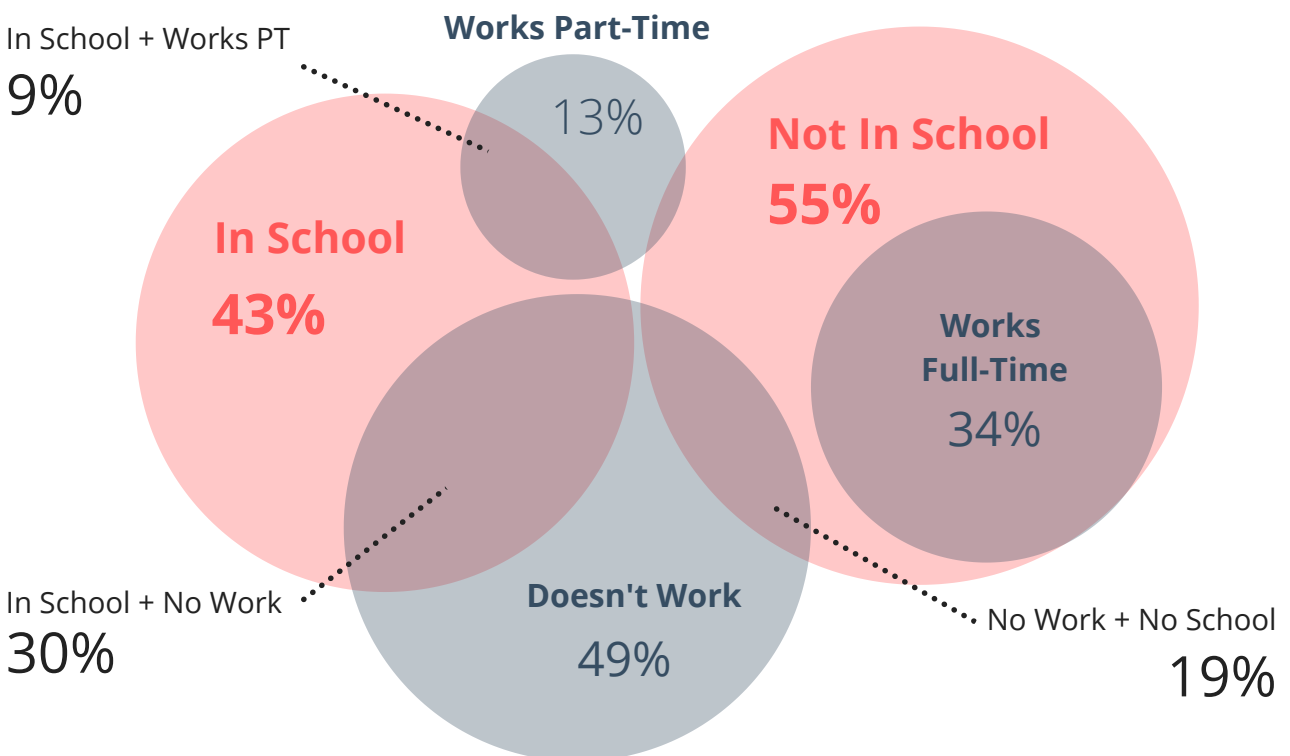
Figure 13: *Youth Focus Group Participant Occupation Venn Diagram*

51 Xopoo n.d.

8.2   Demographic Profile of Teachers & Social Workers

A total of 15 social workers and teachers participated in focus groups, 13 females and two males. The majority (60%) of participants in this category did not know about the CSS. It is important to note that most teachers and social workers fall into the youth category (18-34). Therefore, their personal experiences and insights are relevant when discussing youth civic engagement, and at times overlap with other focus group participants. However, given their positions in the Nalaikh community, their points of view are different. We have included insights from social workers and teachers in this report to facilitate a comparative analysis regarding these different points of view. Interpretations from the focus groups with teachers and social workers are outlined below, following an analysis of the information gathered from

Male
13%

Female
87%

Figure 14: *Teacher & Social Worker Gender Distribution*

the youth focus. Preceding each analysis is an overall Key Insights section, which outlines pertinent information from **all of the focus groups.**

8.3 Perceptions of Democracy

8.3.1 Key Insights

- Participants in **all groups hesitated** when asked to do the Democracy Mind Map activity (see *Appendix 2: Focus Groups* for activity details), and most required further guidance to complete it.
- Some youth participants' understanding of democracy was **abstract** and **theoretical.**
- Most youth participants focused on concepts and structures associated with democracy, more so than on the **actions of participating** in a democracy, i.e. **voting was not mentioned.**
- Participants, specifically social workers and teachers, **conflated democracy with capitalism,** and attributed the outcomes of either system to both systems. Presumably, this association occurs because both systems were implemented in Mongolia at the same time.

8.3.2 Interpretations

Figure 15 (next page) illustrates the results of the Democracy Mind Map activity. The size of each term reflects its prominence in the dataset: larger words reflect a higher frequency of mention by youth. Note that in some cases, terms deemed to be synonymous were combined to concisely reflect the frequency of words cited by youth. For example, the terms *'give your opinion freely'* and *'freedom of expression'* were both attributed to the more common term *'freedom of speech.'* See *Appendix 3: Democracy Mind Map Categories & Terms* for a full list of the assumptions made about synonyms. Based on our interpretation of this Mind Map, we believe there may be a disconnect between theoretical concepts of democracy and understanding how democracy plays out in a democratic society. We made this inference based on the words used to describe democracy: i.e. *'freedom,' 'free market,' 'freedom of speech.'* We believe these descriptors suggest participants are drawing from their civic education knowledge base, rather than their personal experiences living in a democracy. This observation was also made by the student translators.

Figure 15: *Democracy Mind Map Activity Word Cloud*

Reflections on Youth Perceptions of Democracy: Participants' overall feelings about democracy cannot be gauged definitively with this data, as they were not asked to categorize each term as *'positive'* or *'negative.'* However, we have attempted to estimate these sentiments out of interest. Each term listed was assigned a value: *'Positive,' 'Neutral,'* or *'Negative:'*

- **'Positive'** was ascribed to terms that indicated increased standards of living, such as *'human rights.'*
- **'Neutral'** was ascribed to terms that described a system, such as *'elections.'*
- **'Negative'** was ascribed to terms that indicated decreased standards of living, such as *'alcoholism.'*
- For a full list of terms and assigned values, see *Appendix 4: Democracy Mind Map Sentiment Groupings.*

Figure 16 (next page) illustrates the distribution of these sentiments; the higher the percentage, the more frequently a term fitting that description was used. Nearly half of the terms listed by participants were positive, or associated with increased standards of living. However, nearly one in five terms were decidedly negative, or associated with decreased standards of living, indicating that significant skepticism towards democracy also exists within the sample group. Although sentiments toward democracy do not directly influence our recommendations, we do believe this

information may be helpful when drafting youth civic engagement projects. Specifically, understanding youth perceptions on democracy may aid in developing initiatives that improve civic efficacy.
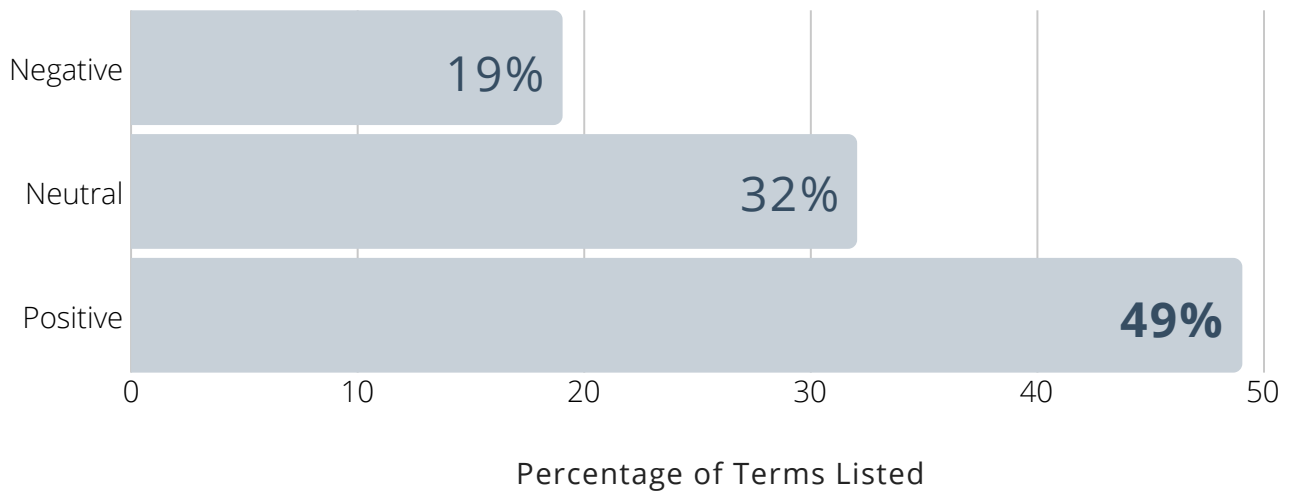

Figure 16: *Estimated Distribution of Youth Sentiment Towards Democracy*

As mentioned above, hesitancy towards this exercise was a common theme across focus groups, and the translators indicated that participants seemed to be trying to remember the theoretical definition of democracy they had been taught in school, rather than drawing from personal experience. Participants in the focus group with High School Students specifically said that they had learned about democracy in grades seven and eight, but had not covered the subject in school since then and had forgotten the details. Some younger participants said they did not know what democracy was. The outlier to this pattern was the focus group with University Students. These participants took to the exercise easily and demonstrated more critical thinking about democracy. One participant spoke at length about democracy's association with populism, and the ways that individuals abuse democratic systems for their own benefit.

Another participant in the same group pointed out that democracy was an improvement over communism because the latter denied individual freedoms. However, they felt that Mongolia's current democracy was not a "true democracy." This finding suggests perceptions of democracy become more nuanced as one's level of education increases. Participants who were in earlier stages of education, or had left the education system at an earlier point, had a more rote understanding of democracy (this was backed by the fact that these participants demonstrated much greater comfort with more rote methods of participation, like the questionnaire). Participants with higher education were able to articulate strengths and weaknesses of democracy and assess Mongolia's current level of democracy.

Case Study

Empowering Youth

*Canadian Research Suggests Practical
Applications to Encourage Youth Civic Engagement*

Findings from a research study out of British Columbia, Canada, parallels some of our findings from Nalaikh. **Lack of civic efficacy among British Columbian youth has been found to be a significant barrier to meaningful engagement.** Although this issue is complex, the B.C. study suggests gaps in the civic education curriculum may impact the quality of youth civic engagement. This sentiment resonates with our primary research. In Nalaikh, youth we spoke to felt as though democracy was an important component of society, but failed to understand democracy beyond a theoretical framework (i.e. most suggested democracy is about equal rights, but failed to connect the action of voting to the democratic process).

Although analyzing the educational curriculum in Mongolia is beyond the scope of this research paper, we believe there are different mechanisms that may narrow the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application. A key theme emerging from our project is the importance of **empowering youth,** as a mechanism to encourage civic engagement. The B.C. case study reiterates this message, suggesting youth may benefit from more experience-based learning in the political sphere, i.e. connecting schools with local political activities, venues and people, such as visiting City Hall or getting involved in a civic issue. Moreover, fostering a welcoming and safe environment for youth to interact with community projects helps to facilitate dialogue and skill development. Lastly, participation in social-based projects supports a broader understanding of issues facing the community and encourages youth to take a greater degree of responsibility for project tasks. **See *Appendix 12: Youth Civic Engagement Case Studies* for more information and references on this case study.**

The findings from this section resonate with the theory outlined in *The Youth Engagement Continuum* (see *7.2.3*). Activities and programs that effectively engage youth build on foundational initiatives, such as a well-rounded civic education. A well-rounded civic education develops a more nuanced understanding of democracy by incorporating applicable, "real-life" lessons that illustrate to youth the many avenues of participating in a democracy. Youth with higher levels of education may have more experience with such applicable lessons. However, incorporating these "real-life"

lessons in various capacities throughout the education curriculum may help to comprehensively address the disconnect between democracy in theory and participating in a democracy.
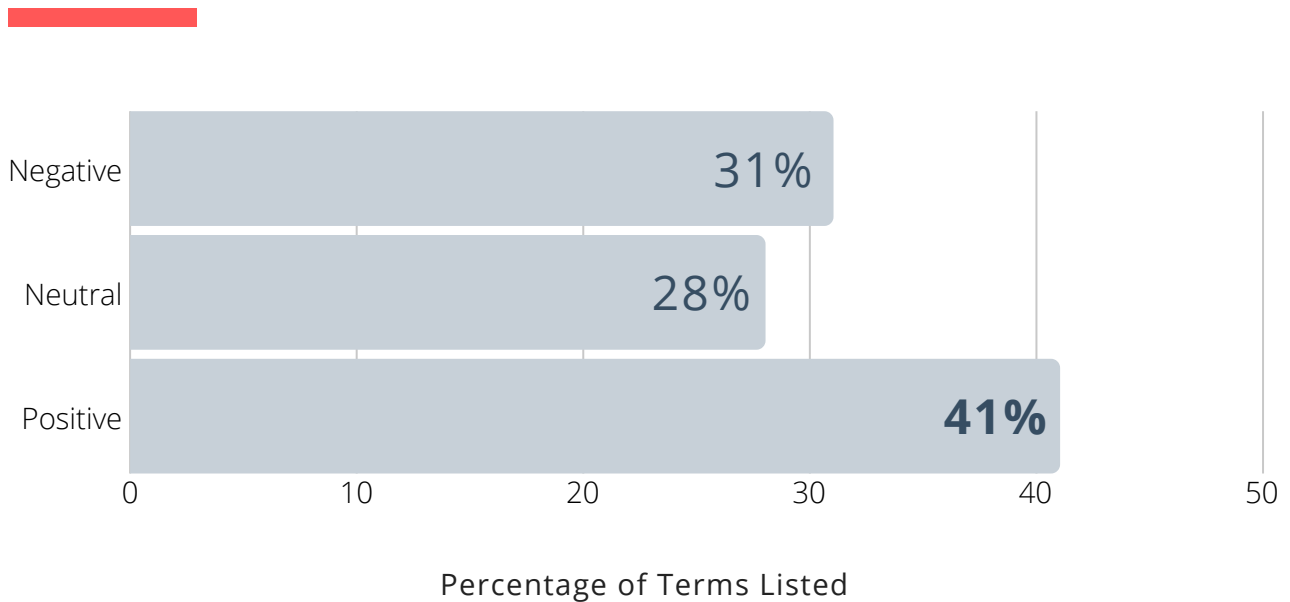
Figure 17: *Estimated Distribution of Teacher & Social Worker Sentiment Towards Democracy*

Reflections on Teacher & Social Worker Perceptions of Democracy: We conducted this sentiment exercise again for the terms submitted by teachers and social workers during the Mind Map activity, as illustrated above. Although Figure 17 is again limited by our personal interpretations of sentiments towards democracy, we do believe it reveals an interesting pattern. The majority (41%) of responses by teachers and social workers were positive, or associated with increased standards of living. However, these groups also submitted considerably more negative responses (those associated with decreased standards of living) than youth — 31%, vs. 19%. This difference could be attributed to the fact that their professional roles afford them more insight into government bureaucracy.

During the activity, social workers were more focused on what we have termed 'negative' sentiments, relative to other focus groups. They appeared to have a difficult time finding anything positive to say. However, it is important to note that social workers did not necessarily view the entire democratic system in a negative light, but rather voiced their criticism of the government for what they perceived was taking advantage of democratic principles.

Teachers, on the other hand, focused on the importance of adequate civic education in schools, as a mechanism for understanding democracy. They too held what we refer to

as 'negative' sentiments on democracy, but suggested that the issue lies in part in Mongolia's civic education curriculum, which they see as flawed (see next page). One teacher mentioned that it is important for teachers to influence youth, helping to adjust their mindset regarding democracy and encourage community-driven solutions to community problems. However, this participant was an anomaly, as most teachers suggested it was the government's responsibility to help address problems facing Nalaikh, including the gaps in civic education curriculum.

Although some teachers suggested it was not their responsibility to influence youth, the Systems Webs Framework (see *7.2.2*) indicates that schools and teachers are an integral part of youths' lives, and therefore, should be a part of a holistic solution to support youth. Specifically, the theory illustrates that youth are influenced by a complex web of institutions and factors, including schools and extracurricular activities. As such, effective and sustainable youth civic engagement requires that the various institutions involved in the lives of youth work together to identify and pursue common goals.

Civic Education & Democracy: It should be noted that a new version of the civic education curriculum has been introduced in Mongolia. Teachers we spoke to said they knew about the new curriculum but are not teaching the material in their classrooms. According to area specialist, Byambajav D., the new civic education curriculum was implemented in 2018. Civic education is taught from grade six up until grade nine, but it is not a part of the core subject matter. Depending on individual schools, teachers, and resources, they may or may not teach civic education. Moreover, the core principles emphasized in this curriculum centred around cultural traditions and Mongolian customs. Civic education as a subject is a new concept, explained Byambajav. First introduced in the 1990s, following the fall of Communism in Mongolia, the primary sentiment around civic education is one of moral civilian education. "It promotes skills and knowledge around what it means to be Mongolian," added Byambajav. An interview with the head English teacher at Golomt High School in Nalaikh reiterated these observations from the teacher focus group and the interview with Byambajav. Specifically, she expressed that **Mongolia's civic education curriculum needed improvements.** For example, she discussed expanding the civic education curriculum to include practical lessons on participating in the community, i.e. how to vote, how and where to volunteer, etc.

Analyzing the civic education curriculum is beyond the scope of this research project, but we have outlined a few relevant areas that may be worth considering for future research projects — see *10.2 Future Research* for more information.

8.4   Perceptions of Government

8.4.1   Key Insights

- Participants in all groups found the first part of the Problem Chart activity (see *Appendix 2: Focus Groups* for activity details) easy to answer and had **many suggestions** for the problems facing Nalaikh — multiple groups asked for more paper, so that they could write more problems down.
- However, some youth focus groups had difficulty with the second part of the activity, which involved assigning responsibility for solving the problems they had listed — they were **unsure who was accountable.**
- When participants did assign responsibility for solving problems, the bodies selected most often by all focus groups were:
    - The three levels of government given as options (Nalaikh Governor's Office, Ulaanbaatar Governor's Office, and National Assembly)
    - The DFYCD
    - Khoroo Leaders

8.4.2   Interpretations

In general, the conversations were lively, and participants were highly engaged, suggesting youth care about their community and are keen to find solutions to the problems they identified. This demonstrates that Nalaikh's youth are not uninterested in civic engagement. As *The Triangle Model* suggests (see *7.2.1*), if more pathways to participation were provided in Nalaikh, overall youth civic engagement would likely increase. Participants demonstrated advanced critical thinking about local problems, and therefore would be able to contribute significantly in a "Shared Leadership" capacity. In the focus group with Vocational Students, participants expressed enthusiasm in sharing their thoughts and opinions. Some students suggested they would be happy to participate in youth-based focus groups in the future.

Reflections on Youth Perceptions of Government: The problems facing Nalaikh, as perceived by youth, are quite diverse, ranging from small-scale issues such as a lack of streetlights, to large-scale problems such as air pollution and unemployment. To consolidate and organize participant responses, our team categorized each problem into one of 17 categories (see *Appendix 5: Problem Chart Categories* for a full list of categories and the problems attributed to them). The **largest categorical barrier** facing Nalaikh's youth is **urban planning and infrastructure.** Examples of problems within this category include: lack of lighting and road signs, lack of parking, and poor
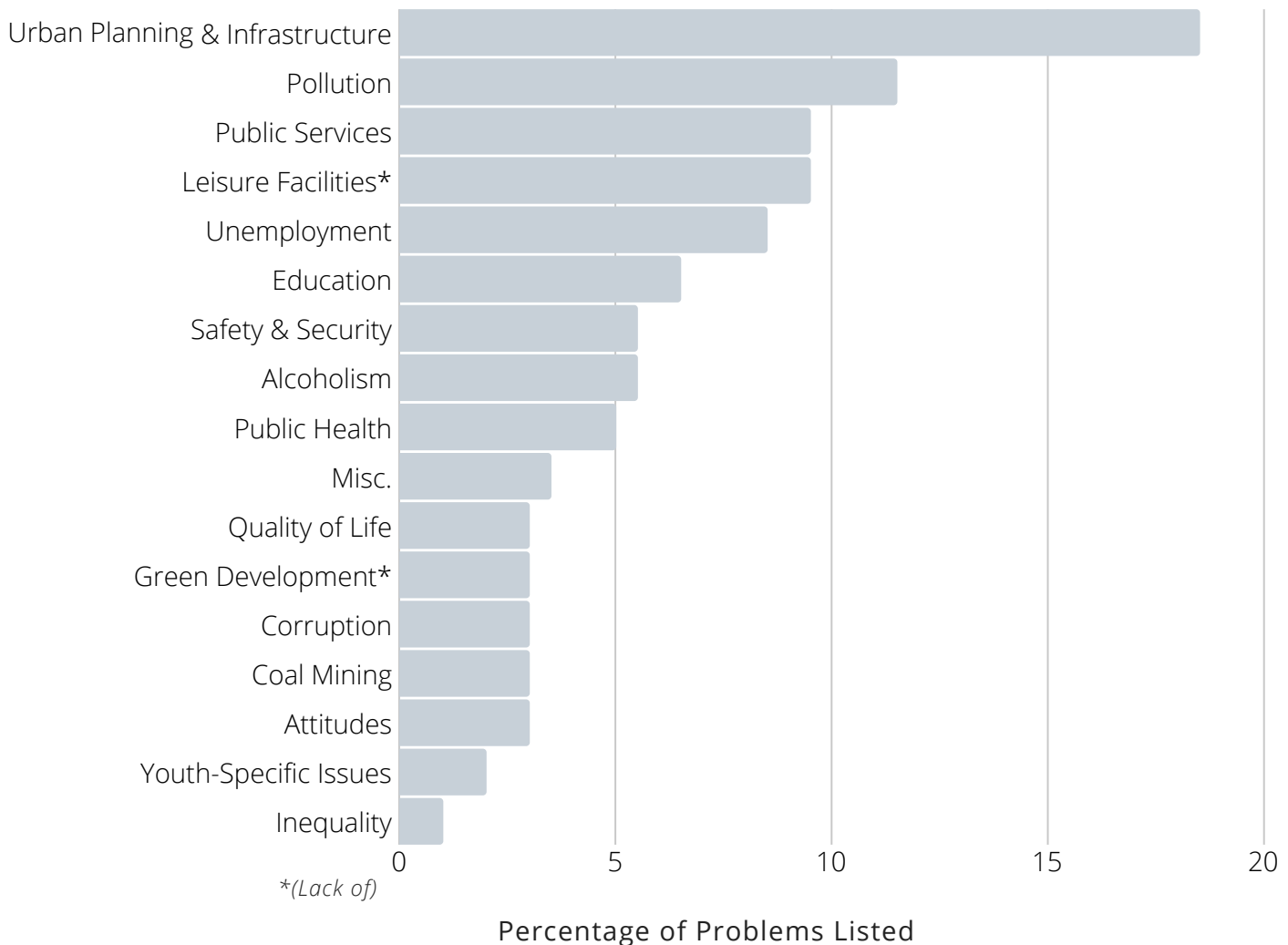
Figure 18: Nalaikh Problems, as Perceived by Youth

urban planning. The second most cited problem facing Nalaikh, pollution, included specific concerns regarding air quality from excessive coal burning and garbage. Some youth cited lack of leisure facilities for youth as a severe detriment to civic engagement in Nalaikh, suggesting that young people do not have a place to congregate and discuss new ideas.

Overwhelmingly, youth appeared eager to write down and discuss the problems facing Nalaikh. However, some groups had a difficult time assigning responsibility to problems in their community. The majority of participants assigned accountability to the local and national governments. For example, the biggest concerns facing study participants fell within the realm of urban planning and infrastructure, with the municipal, provincial, and national governments cited as responsible for addressing this problem. One group expressed their frustration towards the local government, suggesting the high political turnover affects job stability in the region. One individual

was quoted saying "only good brothers and sisters of the political parties can be employed." On the other hand, one participant from the University Student focus group suggested there are steps citizens can take to engage with local government and help address Nalaikh's problems. This discrepancy may indicate an overall misunderstanding regarding the roles and responsibilities of the local government. Perhaps through providing information on the specific areas that are within the local government's control, youth may direct their grievances and concerns more effectively.

Lastly, it is important to note that there is also a discrepancy between the problems cited by Nalaikh youth during the focus groups, and those cited in the 2019 CSS results.[52] The 2019 CSS results, which largely reflect Nalaikh's older demographic, identified the following policy concerns as most pressing:

1. Increasing the number of schools and kindergartens
2. Improving healthcare services
3. Improving infrastructure

Furthermore, CSS respondents reported low satisfaction with the current mining condition, the tax and custom service agency, and the agriculture agency. This comparison further illustrates the disconnect between the issues prioritized by adults versus those identified by youth. While adults seem to be more concerned with improving and increasing public services and the current mining condition, youth overwhelmingly cite infrastructure and pollution as their primary concerns. This difference highlights the need for improved youth outreach mechanisms, as their views do not necessarily align with those of adults.

Reflections on Teacher & Social Worker Perceptions of Government: Teachers and social workers were enthusiastic and thoughtful when discussing some of the biggest problems facing Nalaikh. During the focus group with teachers, the participants were eager to write down all of the perceived problems facing their community. In fact, they requested more paper to write down everything they were discussing. Although the teachers were quick to write down many problems, they did not feel that it was the schools' (or the teachers') responsibility to help address any of these problems.

The social workers were skeptical when discussing community problems. They expressed their distress regarding the DFYCD, suggesting the organization is not accessible to the public and does not run enough activities to engage with the community. This perspective may indicate a disconnect between the DFYCD and the general public, as the DFYCD and the Governor's Office have recently created a variety of new social growth activities and initiatives. These initiatives are open to the public,
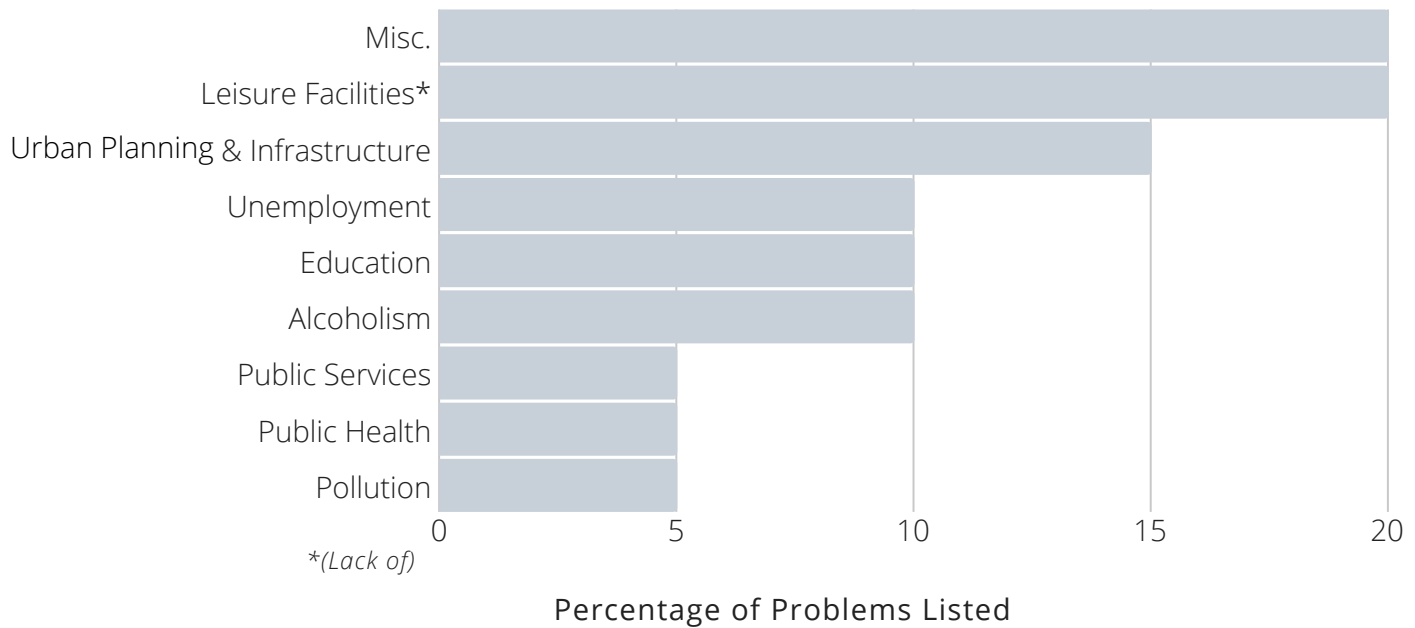
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Percentage of Problems Listed

(Lack of)

Figure 19: *Nalaikh Problems, as Perceived by Teachers & Social Workers*

and include activities such as resume building and job guidance for citizens. Therefore, we believe the issue lies in communicating the DFYCD role and mandate, rather than within the organization itself. We also feel there is opportunity for strategic engagement between DFYCD and social workers. This relationship could improve coordination and respect between the two bodies, as well as help to leverage the relationships between social workers and their communities to improve the DFYCD's public accessibility.

Another key problem highlighted by teachers and social workers in Nalaikh was quality of education. In their collective opinion, additional funding is required to improve the quality of education in Nalaikh. This observation from social workers and teachers resonates with our previous findings on shortcomings in the civic education curriculum (see *8.3 Perceptions of Democracy*). This finding also echoes sentiments from the 2019 CSS results, as the primary issue of interest from that survey centred around increasing the number of schools and kindergartens. The variety of perspectives derived from teachers and social workers helps to illustrate the difference in priorities between youth and adults in Nalaikh, regardless of the fact that some of the participants in these focus groups were also between the ages of 18-34, and thus technically classified as a youth. This interpretation reiterates the notion that professionals working within or close to government bureaucracy may interpret Nalaikh's most pressing problems differently than other youth demographics, regardless of age.

8.5   Barriers to Youth Civic Engagement

8.5.1   Key Insights

- There is very **little awareness about the CSS** and its intended purpose.
- **Lack of information** is the largest barrier impeding access to the CSS, as suggested by youth.
- Another barrier is **how busy youth are.** Specifically, youth believe the distribution of CSS must accommodate students' schedules.

8.5.2   Interpretations

CSS Awareness: The questionnaire distributed during focus groups asked specifically, "Did you know about the Citizen Satisfaction Survey?" Only 9% of youth participants answered 'Yes' to this question. The questionnaire also asked if participants had filled out any other type of government survey at some point in time. Over 40% of participants answered 'Yes.' This finding suggests that low youth participation in the CSS is due to a lack of information of the survey itself, rather than a lack of interest. In general, **youth are not necessarily opposed** to filling out government-issued surveys.

For those who did fill out the survey, a follow-up question asked participants how they may have heard about the

"Have you heard of the CSS?"

Figure 20: Breakdown of Youth Participant Knowledge of CSS

CSS. The most common responses (in order) were (1) from their Kheseg Leader, (2) from their Khoroo Social Worker, (3) from social media, and (4) from the Mobile Room Event (a community outreach event run every few months by the Governor's Office of Nalaikh.)
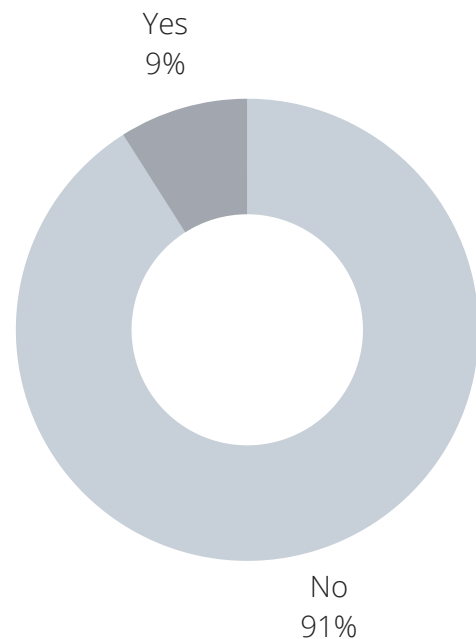
"Have you ever filled out a government survey?"
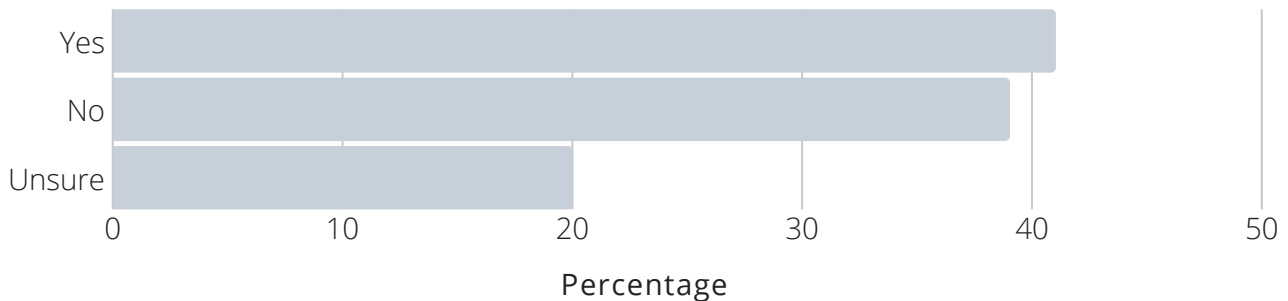
Figure 21: *Breakdown of Youth Participant Government Survey History*

Reflections on Youth Perceptions of Barriers: At the beginning of the Barrier Breakout activity (see *Appendix 2: Focus Groups* for activity details) our facilitators prompted participants by posing the following questions: *"Why didn't you fill out the Citizen Satisfaction Survey?"* and *"Why do you think other youth did not fill out the Citizen Satisfaction Survey?"* Participants were generally slow to suggest answers to these questions. We believe slow participation may be due to a lack of awareness of the CSS, a sentiment echoed by our student translators during a debriefing session. Momentum tended to build after the first few ideas, however, and most focus groups produced 10-15 barriers (Post-It notes).

The suggestions that participants listed on Post-It notes were sorted into categories to clarify patterns. For example, the following comments (each is taken from a single Post-It note) were all included in the 'Lack of Information' category:

- *"Haven't ever heard about it"*
- *"There is a lack of information for youth"*
- *"Don't know about purpose of survey"*

For a list of quotes from all categories, see *Appendix 6: Barrier Breakout Quotes.* The results of this sorting are illustrated in Figure 22 (next page). The most frequently cited category, by far, was **'Lack of Information.'** This finding is consistent with the questionnaire results, which showed that only 9% of focus group participants knew about the survey. Comments for this category focused on the fact that youth do not have information about the CSS, largely because information sharing is not youth-friendly or is unavailable. Interestingly, this issue of 'lack of information' is also a problem experienced by the greater Nalaikh population. The 2019 CSS results

"Why didn't you/other youth fill out the CSS?"

(Lack of)
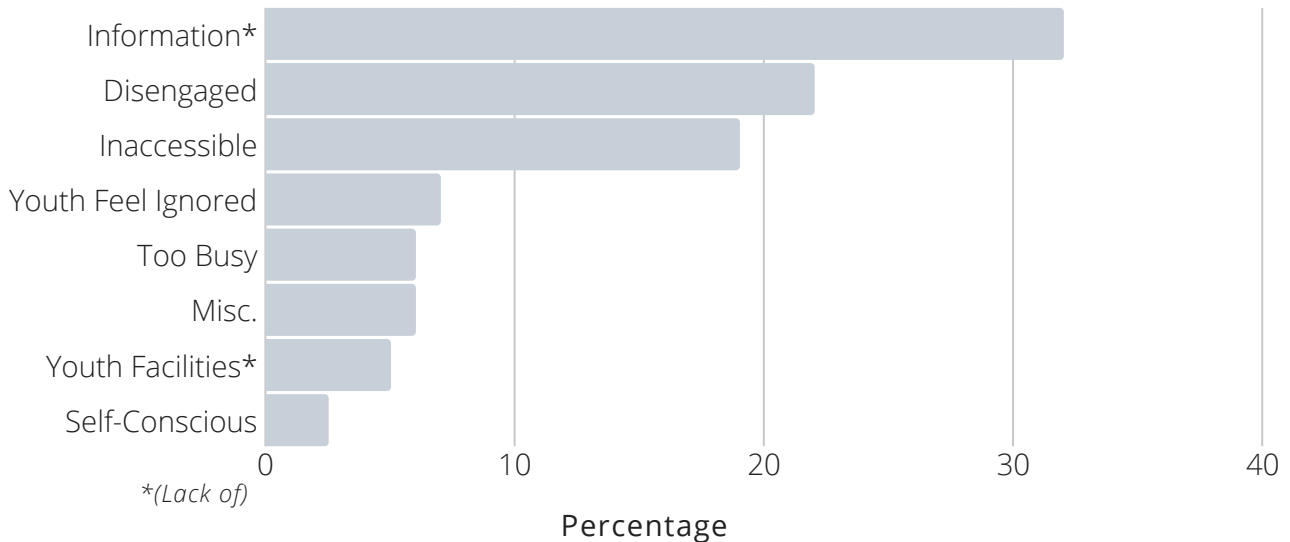
Figure 22: *Most Common Barriers to CSS, as Perceived by Youth*

indicated that 45% of respondents claimed that they were not receiving information about the Governor's Office's Actions.[53]

The second-most common category was **'Disengaged.'** The quotes within this category varied. Some seem to imply that youth are simply not interested in the CSS (*"Youth don't want to participate in any survey,"* or *"Youth don't spend their time properly - should try to get information"*). In other cases, however, participants expressed that youths' apparent apathy may stem from unsuccessful attempts at engagement:

- *"Youth cannot express themselves, so they disengage"*
- *"Youth are not confident enough to participate in the community"*
- *"Youth are not engaged because Governor's Office thinks only of themselves"*

Several focus group participants noted that *"it would be more effective to distribute the survey on social media.''* This finding is not surprising, considering 95.7% of respondents in our study use Facebook. We believe this comment resonates with the third-most cited barrier to CSS participation, **'Inaccessible.'** As previously mentioned, the CSS is distributed door-to-door to Nalaikh households by Kheseg Leaders, and at community events run by the Governor's Office. As shared by participants, youth are not home during the day (most are in school or working) and therefore, youth tend to miss out on filling out the CSS.

These sentiments reiterate the importance of offering multiple pathways for engagement (see *7.2.1 The Triangle Model*). Based on the analysis above, the current

Case Study

Innovations in Engagement

*Mongolian Voting App Helps to
Encourage Greater Youth Civic Engagement*

Smart UB is an e-voting mobile phone application that provides innovative ways for Mongolians to participate in the voting process. The app was designed and developed by the Asia Foundation in partnership with Mongolia's Local Development Fund (LDF), an initiative that funds infrastructure improvements based on community feedback.

Traditionally, Mongolian voting opportunities have been limited to typical working hours, making it difficult for segments of the population (including youth) to actively participate in the process. Smart UB is hoping to fill this gap by providing voting access to all eligible voters with a smartphone. Unlike its paper counterpart, the process through Smart UB would be seamless and quick. The app offers voting 24 hours per day, for a window of one month.

The application was initially piloted in 2019 and deployed throughout 42 khoroos in Ulaanbaatar. According to the Asia Foundation, initial trials reported successful results. Since its launch, Smart UB has been able to generate a larger response rate from previously underrepresented demographics, including youth.

While Smart UB was successful in the 42 khoroos, it has experienced particular triumph in Nalaikh. **The Asia Foundation reported a 100% voting participation rate in the seven Nalaikh khoroos targeted. Smart UB attributes some of its high voting rates to a thorough communications campaign rolled out along with its pilot program.** The organization partnered with professional journalists to generate media coverage raising awareness about the app itself, and about the importance of voting in the LDF process. Smart UB's focus on communications has continued beyond the pilot phase; they monitor all voting results and upload key information back to the app so that citizens can see the results of their participation. **See *Appendix 12: Youth Civic Engagement Case Studies* for more information and references on this case study.**

way the CSS is being distributed, and the ways that the Governor's Office attempts to gather youth opinions, are clearly not the best possible methods to encourage youth engagement.

"Why do you think youth do not fill out the CSS?"

(Lack of)
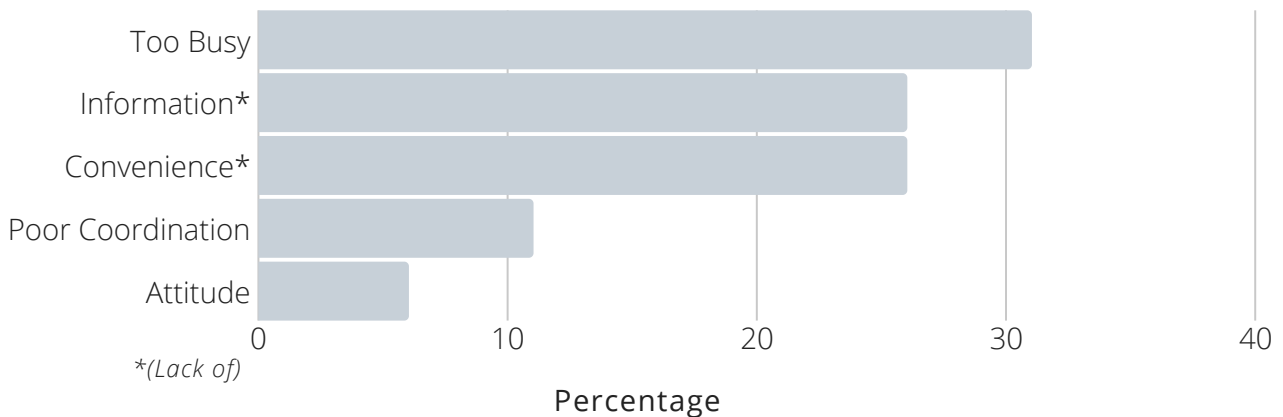
Figure 23: *Most Common Barriers to CSS, as Perceived by Teachers & Social Workers*

Reflections on Teacher & Social Worker Perceptions of Barriers: Teachers and social workers completed the same activity as youth, but from an external perspective. They were asked *"Why do you think youth do not fill out the Citizen Satisfaction Survey?"* **Like youth, teachers and social workers were confused about the CSS.** The social workers were not aware of the survey's purpose, they assumed it was a state-level survey. For both teachers and social workers, writing down barriers to survey participation did not come as naturally as brainstorming problems facing the Nalaikh community. The student translators indicated that discussion during this activity was negative in tone. The social workers expressed the opinion that the CSS focused too much on irrelevant knowledge like ability to name government officials. However, given their confusion about the nature and purpose of the survey these criticisms may not be rooted in fact. Nevertheless, with prompting, both groups did produce between 10-15 Post-It notes identifying barriers that youth face.

The most frequently cited category for teachers and social workers was **'Too Busy.'** Over 30% of responses from these groups focused on this theme, compared to only 7% of youth responses. Presumably youth themselves would have the best understanding of how busy they are, but perhaps teachers and social workers have a broad perspective and are able to compare youth-time-use to other groups more effectively. One participant noted: *"Youth 15-18 are typically pupils, youth between 18-25 are typically students, and those between 26-34 are typically married and working..."*

Therefore, they are busy." Considering surveys are typically distributed throughout the day, the above mentioned comment resonates with our findings that youth in Nalaikh lead busy lives.

The next two categories in frequency, **'Lack of Information'** and **'Convenience,'** were nearly tied. One participant suggested *"Survey must come at work. Because they have not enough time for activities."* Overall, teachers and social worker responses related to *The Systems Webs Framework* (see *7.2.2*). These groups focused almost exclusively on contextual factors that prevent youth engagement. Teachers and social workers would be well-placed to advise on how future programs could better meet youth needs, given their familiarity with youths' schedules.

9.0
SUMMARY
& RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1   Problems Identified

Based on our data analysis, three key problems have been identified. We will provide a brief overview of each problem in the proceeding section, before outlining our recommendations in subsequent sections.

9.1.1   Lack of Information

Our research indicates that communication, in various capacities, impedes youth civic engagement in Nalaikh. The primary issue lies in the communication disconnect between the Governor's Office and the youth population. Specifically, three key subcategories comprise this disconnect: a lack of information about the CSS, a lack of information regarding the role of the Governor's Office in Nalaikh, and a lack of information about youth-based events and resources available in the community.

Citizen Satisfaction Survey: Our analysis suggests information about the CSS is not distributed in a way that effectively targets youth in Nalaikh. Furthermore, no information about the survey and its intended purpose is given prior to or during distribution. Although survey completion rates are not the sole focus of this report, we believe improving distribution methods, and providing additional information about the CSS and its benefits, will help to encourage more survey responses by youth.

Improving the feedback process, through adequate information about the survey's purpose, may also help to address youth concerns regarding communication. Some youth have expressed that they are reluctant to fill out the survey because they do not feel as though their opinions are valued by the local government. Addressing this disconnect is a step in the right direction towards repairing a fractured relationship.

Governor's Office: The District Governor's Office of Nalaikh provides a wide variety of programs dedicated to youth wellbeing, but many of the youth we spoke to were not aware of these programs. Most participants were also not aware of the specific departments within the Governor's Office. Lack of awareness regarding the role of the Governor's Office discourages youth from participating in programs that may directly benefit their wellbeing. Therefore, fostering a more transparent and open line of communication between the Governor's Office and youth may improve civic engagement in Nalaikh.

Youth Events and Resources: The Governor's Office is currently implementing a number of projects aimed at encouraging youth engagement. A public library and sports complex were under construction at the time this report was written, and the Governor's Office has organized youth-specific resources, such as the Joy Centre (a centre providing training for individual social development, specifically targeting youth who might be exposed to domestic violence.)

Regardless of their efforts, our research suggests youth are not aware of the resources and events available to them. Some youth we spoke to were aware of a few community events, but could not attend because they were held during school hours. Improving the quality and quantity of information on youth events and resources, as well as adjusting event schedules to reflect the needs of youth, may encourage active participation by youth in Nalaikh.

9.1.2 Lack of Civic Efficacy

Civic efficacy in youth can be defined as the belief that "change is possible and that we [as youth] have the capacity to contribute to it."[54] Our research indicates that youth in Nalaikh understand democracy from a theoretical perspective, but struggle in understanding how their actions in a democratic society can facilitate change. In many of our focus group sessions, participants seemed to be trying to regurgitate the definition of democracy taught in school, rather than drawing from personal experience or citing democratic actions, i.e. voting, filling out a survey, providing feedback to the Governor's Office, etc. Although views toward democracy are generally perceived as positive, there is a disconnect between the civic education curriculum and

applying lessons learned outside the classroom. We believe bridging this gap will help to advance youth civic engagement in Nalaikh, as described in *The Youth Engagement Continuum* (see *7.2.3*).

9.1.3   Lack of Youth-Specific Measures

Lastly, the data gathered in Nalaikh suggests the Governor's Office does not address problems through a youth lens. Simply put, youth civic engagement in Nalaikh is low because current outreach methods do not consider the direct needs of youth. For example, the CSS may not entice youth to respond because it does not include questions deemed important or relevant to youth. Overwhelmingly, our research indicates that youth are eager and willing to participate in various areas of community development, but they do not feel as though current community outreach tactics are suitable in garnering youth-specific ideas and opinions. Therefore, more applicable outreach tactics will aid in gathering these ideas and opinions, and will sequentially foster more effective youth civic engagement in Nalaikh.
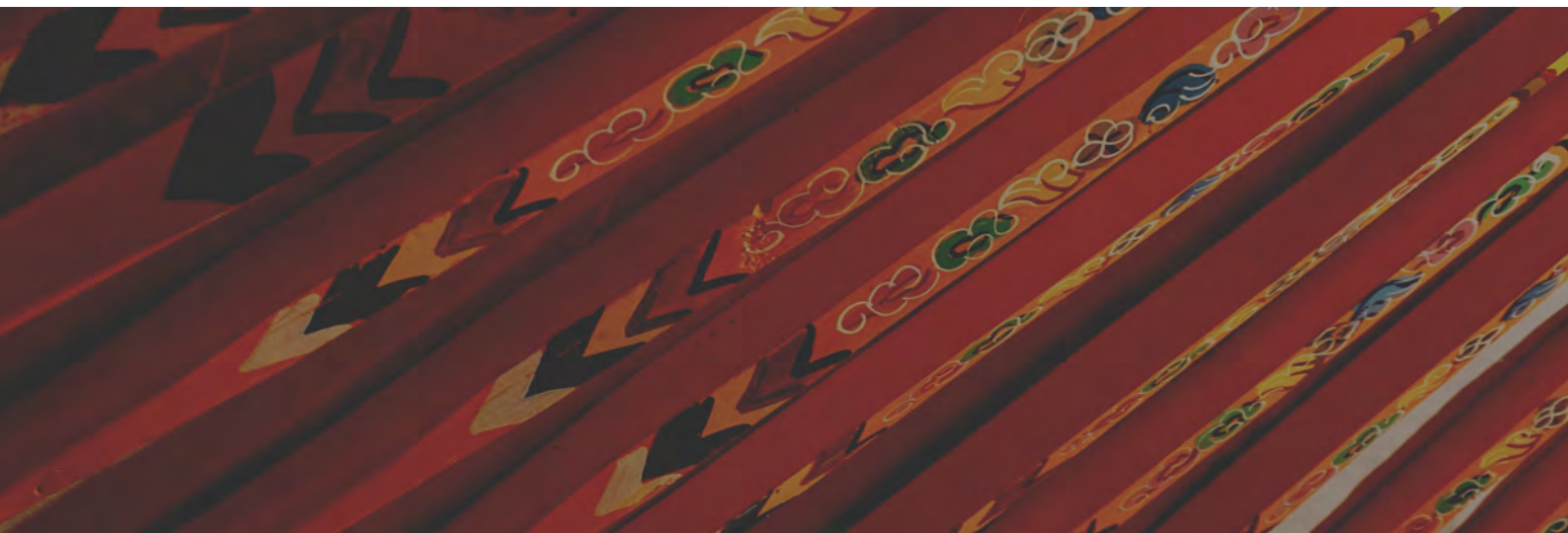
9.2 Recommendations

In light of our findings outlined in this report, we recommend five tools that the DFYCD and the Governor's Office can implement to increase youth civic engagement in Nalaikh. They are presented below in the order that we recommend they be pursued. Our suggested flow of implementation is based primarily on ease of development and deployment, and theoretical logic from *The Youth Engagement Continuum* (see *7.2.3*).

Multiple recommendations can be acted on simultaneously, and we feel it would be beneficial to implement all five tools as soon as possible; however, as referenced in the Continuum, it is imperative that high-commitment youth engagement opportunities build on essential youth-based services and projects. Therefore, our most immediate recommendation centres around a youth-specific service or project, while the final recommendation details long-term engagement opportunities. This section offers an overview of each recommendation; more detailed suggested steps for implementation of each tool are provided in the Appendices.

Timeline	Recommendation	Problem Addressed
Short Term *(Implement immediately)*	1) **Changes to CSS Distribution**	Lack of Civic Efficacy Lack of Youth-Specific Measures
	2) **Youth Focus Groups**	Lack of Information Lack of Civic Efficacy Lack of Youth-Specific Measures
Medium Term *(Begin preparations now, implement within 6-12 months)*	3) **Communications Campaign**	Lack of Information
	4) **Civic Engagement Clubs**	Lack of Civic Efficacy
Long Term *(Implement as a final step, building on the first four recommendations)*	5) **Youth Leadership Roles**	Lack of Information Lack of Civic Efficacy Lack of Youth-Specific Measures

Table 4: *Recommendations*

Incentives for Youth

The goal of all five recommendations is to increase meaningful youth civic engagement. However, it may be difficult to encourage youth to participate in some of these recommendations, given potential social or financial costs (i.e. time or travel costs). As reiterated by *The Triangle Model* (see *7.2.1*), youth are expected to become more engaged over time. Indeed, the long-term benefits to youth will be immense: skill development, volunteer experience, networking opportunities, social interactions, and meaningful community engagement. But, in the immediate future, it may be worthwhile to explore short-term incentives to encourage participation.

To start, we recommend **consulting with youth** to learn what incentives may be a strong motivating factor. For example, are youth interested in reference letters, official certificates, appreciation events, drinks and snacks during events, tokens of appreciation and gifts, or contest prizes?

Lastly, we would like to reiterate that focus group participants were very enthusiastic about engaging with the activities. Most appeared to **value the opportunity** to share their views and opinions. Some of the remarks left on comments cards reflects this interpretation:

- *"Thank you for organizing this research survey. I am happy that I represent youth and share opinions."*
- *"Thank you for giving us the opportunity to share our opinions freely."*
- *"Satisfied. I am so happy because I attended this kind of survey for the first time. 100% :)"*
- *"I like this research. I wish this kind of research/survey was held once a week. It activates people. We exchanged/shared our opinions. Thank you!"*

Considering these remarks, and our primary and secondary research, we are confident that the subsequent recommendations will help to increase youth civic engagement in Nalaikh. Moving forward, please consider what short-term incentives are applicable for each recommendation.

First Recommendation:
IMPROVE CSS DISTRIBUTION

We recommend that the Governor's Office revise how the CSS is distributed, in order to increase youth participation in the survey. While we advocate offering a range of pathways to civic engagement for youth, **the CSS remains an important tool** that guides policymaking in Nalaikh. Therefore, **youth deserve to be represented in the results.** As indicated in our findings (see *8.0 Data Presentation & Analysis*), youth in Nalaikh are open to taking government surveys generally but are unaware of the CSS. The main barriers to their participation are a lack of information and a lack of access. The Governor's Office should incorporate new distribution methods for the CSS that specifically target youth.

We suggest two types of distribution methods be implemented: (1) Extended Practices and (2) New Practices. Extensions of existing practices involve **adjusting CSS distribution to accommodate youths' schedules.** For example, the survey can be distributed door-to-door as usual, but during hours youth are usually at home. If distributing the survey at public events, the Governor's Office can consult with youth to find out what events they plan to attend. **New outreach practices** are additional methods to add to the CSS distribution plan. For example, the pervasiveness of mobile phones can be leveraged to reach youth through calls and apps and offer them **convenient opportunities to participate** in the CSS. More details on all of these suggested methods are provided in *Appendix 7: Suggested Steps for CSS Distribution Implementation.*

These modifications to CSS distribution would address two of the key problems identified by this project: lack of information and lack of youth-specific measures. As summarized above (see *9.1 Problems Identified* and *8.5 Barriers to Youth Civic Engagement*), focus group participants were **largely unaware** of the existence and purpose of the CSS. When given details about it, they pointed out many ways that it is **inaccessible** to youth. With some relatively simple adjustments ('Extended Practices'), the Governor's Office can **address both of the problems.** Over time, adding methods ('New Practices') can provide more avenues for youth to share their views on community issues. This opportunity resonates with The Triangle Model (see 7.2.1), as it presents layered engagement pathways for youth. These pathways are essential to a healthy democratic society, which makes this a perfect **starting point** for increasing youth civic engagement in Nalaikh. For more information on the benefits of a revised CSS distribution model, and detailed suggestions for implementation, see *Appendix 7: Suggested Steps for CSS Distribution Implementation.*

Second Recommendation:
BIANNUAL FOCUS GROUPS

We recommend that the DFYCD and/or the Governor's Office host biannual youth focus groups, as a tool to **gather youth opinions** and facilitate a **strong sense of community** amongst youth in Nalaikh. Based on the positive feedback we received during our research, it is clear that youth generally **enjoyed participating** in focus groups. Specifically, they appreciated the opportunity to share their opinions with their peers, and expressed interest in participating in future focus groups. The data we gathered was also valuable, and provided insight into various youth-specific problems at relatively low cost. Biannual focus groups would provide the DFYCD and the Governor's Office with additional information on issues that are important to youth.

Running youth focus groups would address two of the key problems identified by this project: lack of civic efficacy and lack of youth-specific measures. As *The Triangle Model* (see *7.2.1*) illustrates, offering youth varied opportunities to engage is an important factor in **building up their engagement over time.** Focus groups fit into the second layer of the triangle, the "Input Pathway." They provide youth a short-term, medium-commitment opportunity to engage with their community. Youth who enjoy focus group experience (as the vast majority of our participants reported they did) will be motivated to continue engaging. Focus groups can act as a stepping-stone to the "Leadership Pathway" (like the long-term, high-commitment opportunities suggested in our fourth and fifth recommendations).

This recommendation is second on our list; we recommend that focus groups be implemented only after adjusting the CSS distribution methodology. Focus groups will provide a complementary research tool to the survey, but youth representation in the CSS results is still a priority. Focus groups would give the DFYCD and/or Governor's Office an opportunity to **expand on the CSS results** by asking more in-depth, youth-specific questions that may not have been suitable to include in the survey. For more detailed information on how to run a focus group, see *Appendix 8: Suggested Steps for Focus Group Implementation.*

Third Recommendation:
COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN

We recommend that the Governor's Office and the DFYCD run a variety of communication campaigns that specifically target youth in Nalaikh. These campaigns should be conducted collaboratively between the DFYCD and the Governor's Office to avoid repetition of content and theme. The creation and implementation of campaigns should be an on-going initiative that is broadcasted through a variety of mediums; however, we recommend beginning by leveraging Facebook — a staggering **95.7%** of our focus group participants reported that they are active on this platform.

As it stands today, the DFYCD maintains a relatively active Facebook page. Shared content ranges from informative videos to community updates, practices which are steps in the right direction and should be continued. However, to increase youth awareness and to stimulate a community of engagement with and amongst youth in Nalaikh, we recommend drafting a **targeted, thematic, and integrated social media campaign, with a distinct emphasis on Facebook.** We also recommend **incorporating youth involvement** in the creation of this strategy. The youth-specific social media campaign should incorporate relevant and interactive content that youth will find interesting and informative. Although relevant content is contextual, some marketing specialists suggest short, shareable, and participation-based content works especially well amongst youth.[55] Further best practices are provided in *Appendix 9: Suggested Steps for Communications Campaign Implementation.*

This solution primarily addresses youths' lack of information (about the CSS and its intended purpose, the role of the Governor's Office and the DFYCD, and community events and projects). A targeted communications campaign will enable the Governor's Office and the DFYCD to better inform youth. *The Triangle Model* (see *7.2.1*) suggests that youth naturally progress from simple engagement to deeper involvement over time, and a Facebook campaign may provide a **'point of entry'** for youth in Nalaikh. Further campaigns can also address youths' lack of civic efficacy by employing tools like Facebook opinion polls or Facebook Groups.

This recommendation is placed third on our list because it is a relatively easy and effective measure to increase communication between the Governor's Office, DFYCD, and youth in Nalaikh, but, in contrast to the first two recommendations, this method does not directly or independently address youth civic engagement. This recommendation should be treated as a supplementary tool. For a detailed overview on how to create and market an effective communications campaign, please refer to *Appendix 9: Suggested Steps for Communications Campaign Implementation.*

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Fourth Recommendation:
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT CLUBS

We recommend that the DFYCD create and facilitate a wide range of civic engagement clubs for youth. The DFYCD already runs a range of clubs for youth out of the Youth Development Centre. This is good and should continue; *The Youth Engagement Continuum* (see *7.2.3*) shows that youth who have access to safe spaces in which to grow and develop civic awareness are more likely to become more civically engaged over time. We recommend that in addition, the DFYCD should **add additional clubs that specifically focus on civic engagement.** Examples like Debate Club, Model United Nations, and Service Club, are popular with youth in other parts of the world.

These clubs would address one of the key problems identified by this project: lack of civic efficacy. As summarized above (see *8.3 Perceptions of Democracy*), focus group participants appeared to have an abstract and theoretical understanding of democracy, but were unable to connect how their own actions could lead to democratic outcomes in Nalaikh. **Direct application is an essential element of civic education.** In her article *"Political Agency and Empowerment: Pathways for Developing a Sense of Political Efficacy in Young Adults,"* author Elisabeth Beaumont notes that the fields of political science and psychology both consider active learning and learning through experience to be necessary for building a robust sense of political efficacy in youth.[56] We believe that clubs that allow youth to apply the democratic concepts they learn about in school will **close the gap between theory and practice,** leading to higher youth civic engagement in Nalaikh.

Although they were abstract in nature, the terms that focus groups participants associated with democracy were largely positive, therefore we believe that there would be **significant youth interest** in democracy-related clubs. Furthermore, clubs are likely to have a significant influence on youths' attitudes and behaviours, given the importance of their peer groups and role models, as demonstrated in *The Systems Webs Framework* (see *7.2.2*).

This recommendation is placed fourth on the list because it is a longer-term investment than the recommendations above. The benefits of increasing civic efficacy in entire cohorts of youth club participants would be significant, but these benefits would be realized in the medium- to long-term. For a detailed description of what types of clubs we recommend, and suggestions for how to implement them, see *Appendix 10: Suggested Steps for Civic Engagement Club Implementation.*

56 Beaumont 2010

Fifth Recommendation:
LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

We recommend that the Governor's Office create leadership opportunities for youth within its organization. All existing programs, committees, and operational teams should be **audited to identify opportunities for youth involvement.** These opportunities could include designated 'Youth Representative' positions on committees, 'Youth Engagement Advisors' for programs and events, and 'Youth Internships' on operational teams.

This type of opportunity represents the 'Collective Empowerment' section of *The Youth Engagement Continuum* (see *7.2.3*), which includes 'Youth Leadership' and 'Civic Engagement.' These are the types of roles that youth **grow into** after beginning with services and development programs earlier in the Continuum. It is important to have these opportunities available as a complement to the four recommendations offered above, so that once youth are engaged through those measures they have room to further expand their involvement in Nalaikh. Based on the enthusiasm of the youth we met in Nalaikh, and the largely positive views of democracy shared during focus groups, we believe there would be significant interest in opportunities of this kind.[57]

This measure has the potential to address all three of the key problems identified by this project: lack of information, lack of civic efficacy, and lack of youth-specific measures. The youth in these leadership positions would serve as a **bridge between the Governor's Office and their peers:** they would provide insight into youth preferences at all stages of policy planning and implementation, and they would disseminate what they learn at the Office to other youth. However, this is our final recommendation because it will have the greatest chance of success if the other four recommendations are implemented first. Building the foundations of civic engagement in Nalaikh's youth through better CSS distribution, focus groups, communication campaigns, and clubs will prepare them to make the most of these leadership opportunities.

One important caveat is that these leadership opportunities **must be meaningful to be effective.** Youth must be truly incorporated into decision making. If they are invited to contribute but their contributions are not acted on, this will worsen the existing lack of civic efficacy. For a detailed description of what types of leadership opportunities we recommend, and suggestions for how to implement them, see Appendix 10: Suggested Steps for Civic Engagement Club Implementation.

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57 Many focus group participants commented that they enjoyed participating and would like to contribute more often. Also, the volunteer work of the four student translators involved in this project demonstrates the potential of this model. Their contributions to this project and to their community were immense and highly valuable. All four students also reported that the experience was highly rewarding.

10.0
CONCLUSION

10.1   Final Thoughts

Overwhelmingly, our research indicates that the primary issue in Nalaikh is not one of youth disengagement, rather one of misaligned outreach tactics and fractured communication. Youth, from our perspective, are ready and willing to help develop Nalaikh; however, they must be provided with an appropriate outlet to actualize these desires. Further, the opinions and ideas expressed by youth must be validated, as a means of encouraging more substantial civic engagement in the future. As mentioned in our report, some youth feel ignored by authority figures in the community, an issue that may discourage youth from participating in future community-based activities, programs, and events. Validating youth contributions could encompass relatively costless interventions, such as facilitating focus groups and sharing key findings/proposed solutions throughout the wider community.

Additionally, our research indicates that lack of communication between the Governor's Office and the community more broadly impedes youth civic engagement. Youth are keen to share their ideas, but they are also interested in learning about the local government and the services they offer the community. From a purely logistical standpoint, fostering a more transparent line of communication between the local government and the community may ameliorate grievances held by youth regarding what is perceived to be inaction from the Governor's Office. As mentioned in this report, our research suggests youth are unclear about what services the Governor's Office and the DFCYD provide, and sequentially, what their capacities are in terms of

efinding solutions to community problems. With a clear understanding of how the government functions, youth will be able to engage with problems and potential solutions in a more effective manner.

Lastly, we would like to reiterate that low levels of youth civic engagement are a growing concern in many countries around the world. The problems outlined in this report are not necessarily unique to the Nalaikh context. Although, potential solutions to community problems could leverage original ideas from Nalaikh's youth. Indeed, the youth in Nalaikh are an invaluable asset, brimming with bright ideas and unabated potential. Finding the right mechanisms to foster and cultivate this potential will surely aid in propelling Nalaikh toward a more sustainable and inclusive future.
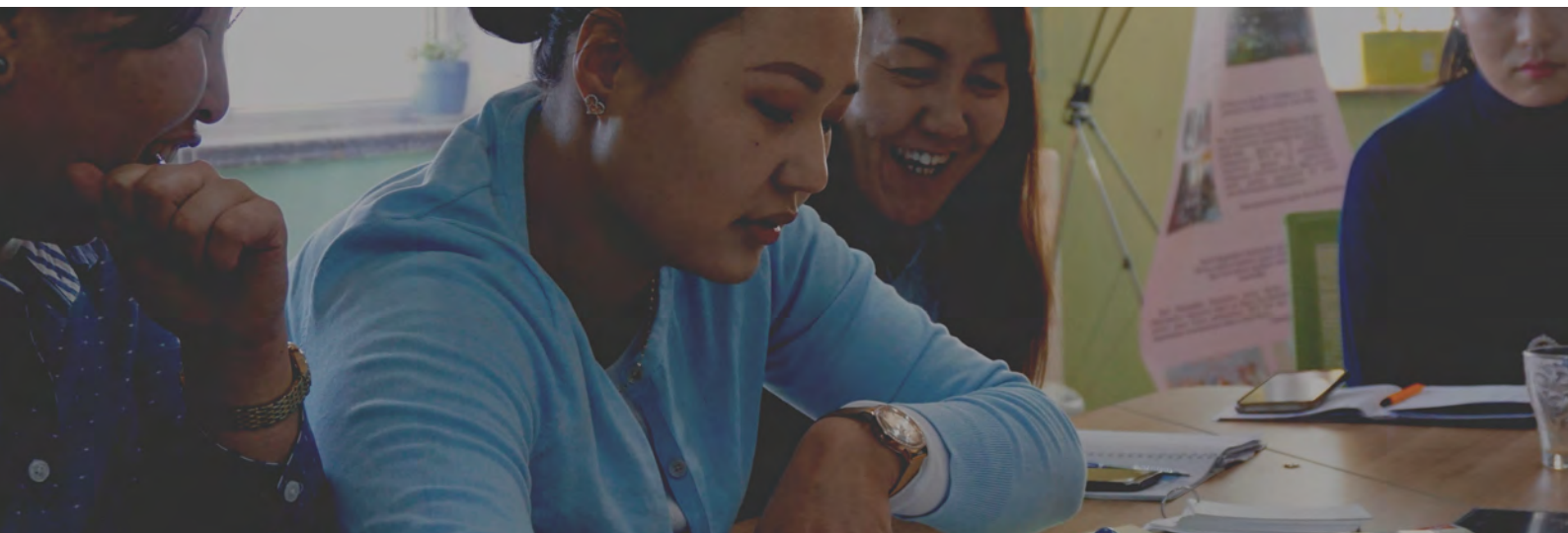
10.2 Future Research

Due to time constraints, our research was limited in scope. Therefore, there are three key areas we did not manage to evaluate thoroughly. However, we believe the below mentioned research areas would provide key insights to further the client's understanding of youth civic engagement in Nalaikh, and should be considered for future research projects.

Civic Education Curriculum: The first area to consider for future research is the importance of a strong civic education foundation. Research has shown a positive relationship between one's education and political participation.[58] There is a link between civic knowledge and civic engagement that is enhanced with hands-on or active learning opportunities.[59] This report outlined evidence that youth in Nalaikh have a theoretical understanding of democracy, but struggle to see its relevance in their daily lives (see *8.3 Perceptions of Democracy* for more details). This finding presents a unique opportunity for growth in Mongolian schools, where a new core civic education curriculum has recently been implemented (again, see *8.3*). We recommend further research on the role of civic education in youth participation and engagement, including a specific analysis of Mongolia's new curriculum.

Youth Engagement Through an Equity Lens: Another area to consider for future research is Nalaikh's diversity, and how it interacts with youth civic engagement. An individual's socio-economic status has been linked with youth engagement and participation rates.[60] Understanding how postionality influences an individual's ability to be civically engaged may open up doors to re-evaluate engagement tactics to be more inclusive to marginalized groups.[61] Therefore, it is important to apply an equity lens when researching youth civic engagement rates. Citing a specific example to the Nalaikh context, it would be worthwhile to research youth civic engagement rates among the Kazakh minority population.

Smart UB Partnership: Lastly, it may be worthwhile to consider a future collaboration with Smart UB (see *Appendix 12: Youth Civic Engagement Studies*). This mobile voting application directly applies to the Nalaikh context, and the technology may provide an insightful engagement opportunity for the District Governor's Office. Beyond partnership opportunities, the distribution methodology and human resources strategies used by Smart UB may provide administrative staff at the Governor's Office with helpful key lessons learned.

58 Kassimir and Flanagan 2010
59 Astuto and Ruck 2010
60 McLeod et al. 2010
61 Finlay, Wray-Lake, and Flanagan 2010

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APPENDICES

INTERVIEWS

Standard Interview Questions

1. Do you work with youth in a professional capacity? If yes, how so?
2. How do you perceive youth civic engagement in Mongolia and in Nalaikh?
3. What are the barriers impeding youth civic engagement in Mongolia?
4. What other issues do you think relate to the problem of poor youth civic engagement? (i.e. unemployment, alcoholism, etc).
5. How do you believe youth perceive/understand democracy in Mongolia?

Note: this list was used as a foundation; the questions above were adapted and new questions were added based on the context of each interview.

List of All Interviews Conducted from Canada

Ambassador Ariunbold, *Ambassador of Mongolia to Canada*
Government of Mongolia

Byambajav D., *Youth Civic Engagement Specialist*

Eric Franzo, *Founder*
Purposely (civic engagement mobile application)

Jade Richards, *PhD Candidate, Social Anthropology*
University of Kent

List of All Interviews Conducted in Mongolia

Badamchimeg D., *Public Sector Specialist*
World Bank Group

Batmunk N., *Head Teacher*
Golomt High School

Battur J., PhD, *Associate Professor*
National University of Mongolia, School of International Relations and Public Administration

Craig Castagna, *Resident Program Director*
International Republican Institute

Erdenebold S., *President*
Democratic Youth Union

Khaliungoo G., *Urban Governance Project Manager*
The Asia Foundation

Khongorzul B., *External Relations and Monitoring Specialist*
District Governor's Office of Nalaikh

Munkh-ulzii B., PhD, *Senior Lecturer*
National University of Mongolia, School of International Relations and Public Administration

Namuun T., *Specialist, International and Public Affairs Department*
Confederation of Mongolian Trade Unions

Naranbayer B., *Head of Division*
Division of Family, Youth, and Child Development

Odonchimeg B., *Officer in Charge of Participation and Cooperation*
Division of Family, Youth, and Child Development

Tamir E., *Head*
Confederation of Mongolian Trade Unions

Tungalag C., *Senior Social Protection Specialist*
World Bank Group

(Multiple leadership figures)
Social Democratic Youth Organization from the Mongolian People's Party

(Multiple leadership figures)
Democratic Party Youth Organization

(Multiple leadership figures)
Academy of Political Education

Appendix 2

FOCUS GROUPS

Each focus group session consisted of three activities, a questionnaire, and an opportunity to give feedback.

Focus Group Activities

Activity: Democracy Mind Map

Description: Participants were divided into small groups of three-to-four. Each small group was given a piece of chart paper that said 'Democracy' in the middle, in Mongolian (see photo below). They were asked to write down all the terms or ideas they associated with 'democracy.'

Purpose: To understand how the youth perceived democracy.
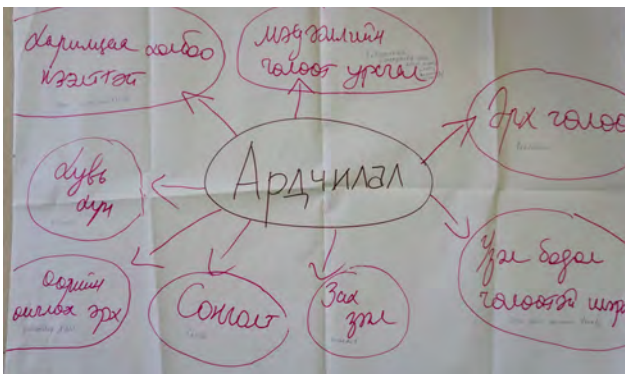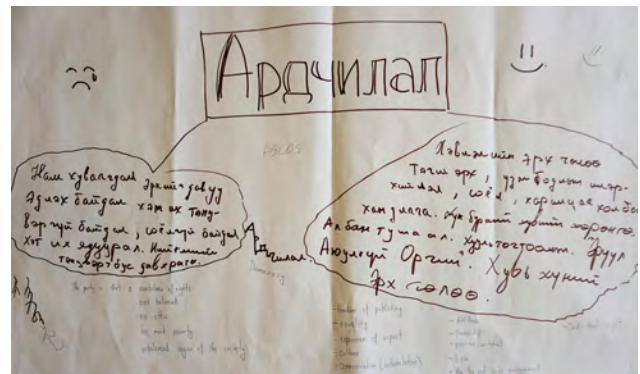
Clockwise from Top Left: *Blank Democracy Mind Map; Completed Democracy Mind Map - example 1; Youth Focus Group participant shares his group's Democracy Mind Map with the other groups; Completed Democracy Mind Map - example 2*

Activity: Barrier Breakout

Description: Participants were asked: ***"What are some reasons you did not fill out the CSS? If you did not know about it, what do you think are reasons that other youth did not fill it out?"*** and instructed to write down their responses on Post-It notes. The focus group facilitators collected the Post-It notes and grouped them by theme. Then, participants were divided into smaller groups (three-to-four people) and given the Post-It notes from one of the most frequent themes. They were asked to brainstorm possible solutions to the barriers indicated on the Post-It Notes, and write them on a blank piece of chart paper.

Purpose: To understand potential barriers youth face in responding to, or accessing, the CSS. To learn how they think these problems could be solved.
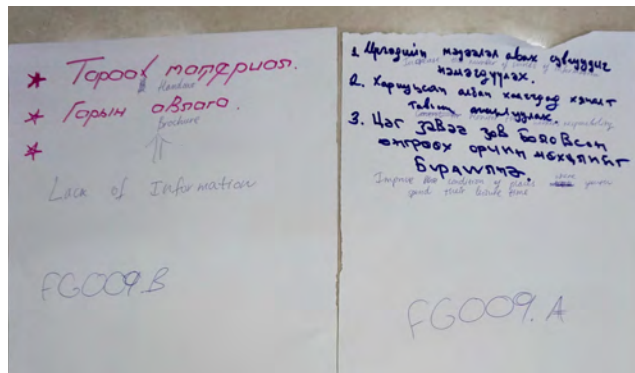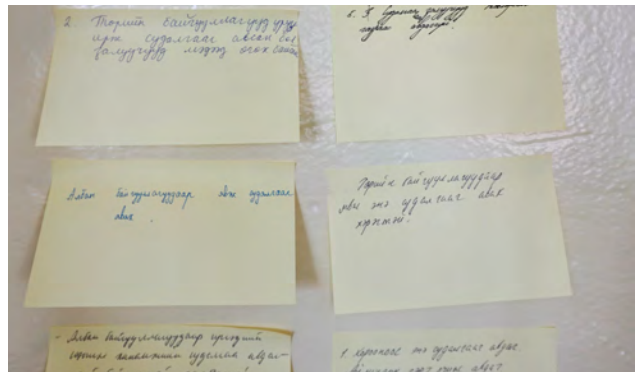
Clockwise from Top Left: *Youth focus group participants fill out Post-It notes; Examples of completed Post-It notes (each with a barrier); Examples of brainstormed solutions to barriers identified; Facilitators sort Post-It notes by theme*

Activity: Problems of Nalaikh ("Problem Chart")

Description: Youth were given a long sheet of paper folded down the middle. The title of the paper read, *"What are the biggest problems facing Nalaikh?"* Youth were instructed to write down as many answers as possible. Afterwards, the sheet of paper was opened-up to reveal a second question, *"Who do you think is responsible for addressing these problems?"* This question had a pre-set number of answers, including options such as, *"myself,"* or *"the government."* Youth were then asked to connect each problem with a potential stakeholder, and could add any additional stakeholders they felt were relevant.

Purpose: Understand potential barriers impacting youth and Nalaikh community more broadly; gauge understanding of key community stakeholders, as perceived by youth.
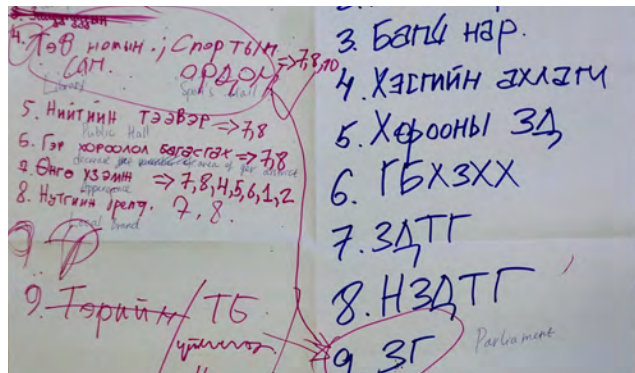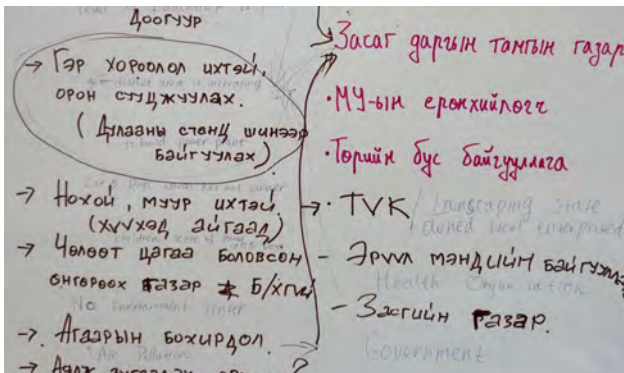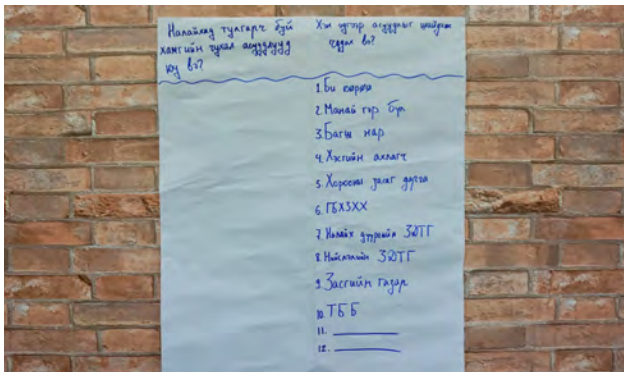
Clockwise from Top Left: Blank Problem Chart; Translators reviewing a Problem Chart; Completed Problem Chart - example 1; Completed Problem Chart - example 2

Youth Questionnaire

General

1) Age: _____

2) Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other

3a) Are you currently in school or in vocational training? ☐ Yes ☐ No

3b) If yes, what level are you currently studying?
☐ Secondary
☐ University
☐ Vocational Training
☐ Other: _____

3c) If no, what is your highest level of education COMPLETED to date?
☐ Primary
☐ Secondary
☐ University
☐ Vocational Training
☐ Other: _____

4a) Do you work?
☐ Yes - Full Time
☐ Yes - Part Time
☐ No

4b) If yes, Occupation/Position: _____Employer/Organization: _____

5a) Do you volunteer? ☐ Yes ☐ No

5b) If yes, Volunteer Organization: _____ Responsibilities/Position: _____

Nalaikh Citizen Satisfaction Survey

6a) Did you know about Citizens' Satisfaction survey? ☐ Yes ☐ No

6b) If yes, how did you hear about it? Check all that apply:
- ☐ Mobile Room Event
- ☐ Coordinator of sub-khoroo
- ☐ Social Worker
- ☐ From friends
- ☐ From family
- ☐ School
- ☐ Social Media
- ☐ Work
- ☐ Other: _____

7) Did you fill out the survey? ☐ Yes ☐ No

8) Have you ever filled out any government survey? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Communication

9) What social media platforms do you use? Check all that apply:
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ I don't use social media
- ☐ Other: _____

10) How would you prefer to get updates from the Governor's Office? (Please rank your top three choices, in order)

1st choice: _____
2nd choice: _____
3rd choice: _____

Options:
- Television
- Social Media
- Newspaper
- Magazines and brochures
- Website
- School
- Government events
- In-person (i.e. coordinator of sub-khoroo)
- Text message/SMS
- I don't want to receive updates
- Other (please specify): _____

Social Worker Questionnaire

General

1) Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other

2) What is your highest level of education COMPLETED to date?
☐ Primary
☐ Secondary
☐ University
☐ Vocational Training
☐ Other: _____

3) How long have you been a social worker? ____ years

4) How long have you been a social worker in Nalaikh? ____ years

5a) Do you volunteer in the community? ☐ Yes ☐ No

5b) If yes,
Volunteer Organization: _____
Responsibilities/Position: _____

Nalaikh Citizen Satisfaction Survey

6a) Did you know about Citizens' Satisfaction survey? ☐ Yes ☐ No

6b) If yes, how did you hear about it? Check all that apply:
☐ Mobile Room Event
☐ Coordinator of sub-khoroo
☐ Social Worker
☐ From friends
☐ From family
☐ School
☐ Social Media
☐ Work
☐ Other: _____

7) Did you fill out the survey? ☐ Yes ☐ No

8) Have you ever filled out any government survey? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Teacher Questionnaire

General

1) Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other

2) What is your highest level of education COMPLETED to date?
☐ Primary
☐ Secondary
☐ University
☐ Vocational Training
☐ Other: _____

3) How long have you been teaching? ____ years

4a) Do you lead any extracurricular activities in the school? ☐ Yes ☐ No

4b) If yes, what? _____

5a) Do you volunteer in the community? ☐ Yes ☐ No

5b) If yes, Volunteer Organization: _____ Responsibilities/Position: _____

Nalaikh Citizen Satisfaction Survey

6a) Did you know about Citizens' Satisfaction survey? ☐ Yes ☐ No

6b) If yes, how did you hear about it? Check all that apply:
☐ Mobile Room Event
☐ Coordinator of sub-khoroo
☐ Social Worker
☐ From friends
☐ From family
☐ School
☐ Social Media
☐ Work
☐ Other: _____

7) Did you fill out the survey? ☐ Yes ☐ No

8) Have you ever filled out any government survey? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Comment Cards

To conclude each focus group session, we provided participants with comment cards and encouraged them to write down their feedback.

All Photos: *Comment Card examples (some translated into English by translators)*

Appendix 3

DEMOCRACY MIND MAP
Categories & Terms

Category
"Terms included"

Anarchism
"Anarchism"
"Anarchy"
"Anarchists came up with democracy"
"Chaos"

Choice
"Choice"
"Free choice"
"Variety of choice"
"Ability"
"Dreams and goals"
"Independent"
"Personal"
"Private interest"

Citizen Participation
"Citizen participation"
"Participation of people"

Communication
"Communication"
"Open communication"
"Freedom of social media"

Community
"Social activities"
"Open activities"
"Clubs (music, sports, etc.)"
"Closeness of population"

Corruption
"Corruption"
"Fake democracy"
"Illegitimacy"

Corruption ctnd.
"Using rights improperly"
"Not ethics"
"Only about party members"

Development
"Development of country"
"Community development"
"Development of technology"
"Reconstruction"

Discrimination
"Discrimination"
"Judging"

Diversity
"Differences of culture and language"

Education
"Good training"
"Educated workers"
"Lecture"
"Educational freedom"

Election
"Election"
"Elections"

Environment
"Safe environment"
"Healthy environment"
"To save the land"

Equality
"Equality"
"Equity"
"Equal rights"
"No difference"

Free Market
"Free market"
"Market"
"Independent economics"
"Money (can be self made/rich in democracy)"
"Self-employed business"
"Stocks"
"Compete"

Freedom
"Freedom"
"Freedom of mentality"

Freedom of Religion
"Freedom of religion"
"Religious freedom"

Freedom of Speech
"Freedom of speech"
"Freedom of expression"
"Freedom of opinion"
"Expression of opinion"
"Give your opinion freely"
"To have your voice heard"
"We can express our opinions freely"

Free Press
"Free press"
"Free media"

Globalization
"Globalization"
"International communication"

Inequality
"Inequality of wealth"
"Not balanced"
"The difference between rich and poor"
"Too much poverty"
"Overbalanced of rights"
"Layers of society"
"Unbalanced layers of society"
"Classism"
"Discrimination in difference between property"
"Difference between poor and rich"

Law
"Law"
"Constitution"
"To follow Governor's Office law"
"Enforcement"
"Justice"
"Authority"

Meritocracy
"Workplace status"
"Fair work (your work is assessed and you are paid accordingly)"

Political Parties
"Political party"
"Political party constitution"
"76 members of parliament"

Private Property
"Private property"
"Private property rights"
"Property rights"
"Ownership"
"Ownership rights"
"Own capital (private property)"
"We have our own property"

Rights
"Individual rights"
"Full rights"
"Human rights"
"Personal right increases"

Transparency
"Transparency"
"Information"
"Right to information"
"Access to information"

Unemployment
"Unemployment"
"Unemployment increased"

Appendix 4

DEMOCRACY MIND MAP
Sentiment Groupings

Note that the words used for grouping by sentiment are the 'categories' created in analysis of the Democracy Mind Map results (see *Appendix 3: Democracy Mind Map Categories & Terms*), not the terms listed in the raw data.

Positive

Attitude	Education	Freedom of speech
Choice	Employment	Meritocracy
Citizen participation	Environment	Positive attitude
Communication	Equality	Rights
Community	For the people	Transparency
Creative thinking	Free press	Traveling
Culture	Freedom	
Development	Freedom of religion	

Neutral

Change	Law	Revolution
Choice	Mel Gibson	Social network
Elections	Nothing	Taxes
Equality	Political parties	Transparency
Free market	Populism	USA
Globalization	Private property	

Negative

Alcoholism	Drugs	Laziness
Anarchism	Free market	Prostitution
Corruption	Inequality	Unemployment
Crime	Inflation	Violence

PROBLEM CHART
Categories

Below is an image of the chart used for the Problem Chart Activity (see *Appendix 2: Focus Groups* for activity details). This appendix provides the problems that participants listed in Column A, the groups that participants assigned responsibility to in Column B, and the groupings that the research team created for analysis.
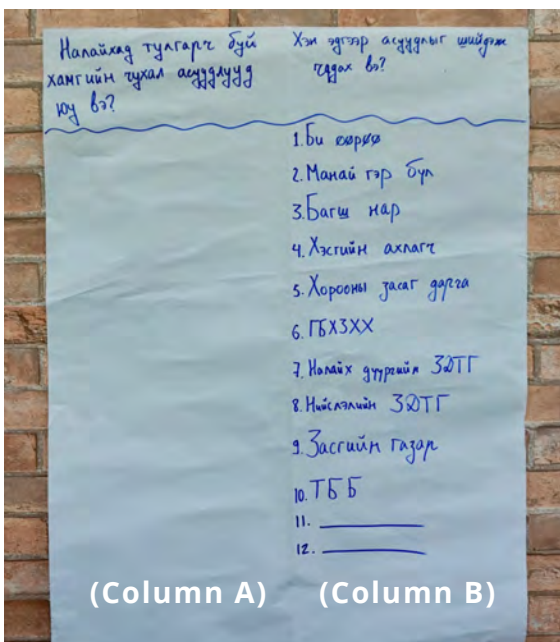
(Column A)   **(Column B)**

Column B translations:
1. Myself
2. My Family
3. Teachers
4. Coordinator of Khoroo
5. Leader of Khoroo
6. DFYCD
7. Nalaikh Governor's Office
8. Ulaanbaatar (UB) Governor's Office
9. Mongolia National Government (Govt.)
10. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
11. Other (_____)
12. Other (_____)

Youth Focus Group Problems

Category	Problems	"Who is responsible for addressing this problem?"
Groupings created by research team (# of times listed)	"Terms listed in Column A" (# of times listed)	Answers selected from Column B (# of times selected)
Alcoholism (8)	"Alcohol use" (3) "Use of alcohol" (2) "Drinking alcohol" (1) "Alcoholism" (1) "Alcohol" (1)	- Myself (4) - My Family (2) - Leader of Khoroo (2) - Nalaikh Governor's Office (1) *Other:* "Central Police Station" (1) *Other:* "Employer" (1)

(Table continued next page)

Category	Problems	"Who is responsible for addressing this problem?"
Groupings created by research team (# of times listed)	"Terms listed in Column A" (# of times listed)	Answers selected from Column B (# of times selected)
Attitudes (4)	• "No ethics (the people have)" (1) • "No etiquette"(1) • "Individual responsibility is low" (1) • "Youth attitude" (1)	• Myself (3) • DFYCD (3) • Leader of Khoroo (2) • Ulaanbaatar Governor's Office (2) • NGOs (2) • My Family (1) • Teachers (1) • Coordinator of Khoroo (1) • Nalaikh Governor's Office (1) • Mongolia National Govt. (1) • *Other:* "State-Owned Nalaikh Landscaping Service" (1) • *Other:* "Entire Community" (1)
Coal Mining (4)	• "Coal mining problem" (2) • "Unsafe mining areas (left over from legal/illegal mining projects)" (1) • "Mining rehabilitation" (1)	• Nalaikh Governor's Office (3) • UB Governor's Office (2) • Leader of Khoroo (1) • Mongolia National Govt (1)
Corruption (4)	• "Corruption" (1) • "Procurement transparency" (1) • "Unequal authority system" (1) • "Political parties" (1)	• Nalaikh Governor's Office (4) • UB Governor's Office (4) • Mongolia National Govt. (4) • Leader of Khoroo (2) • Coordinator of Khoroo (1) • NGOs (1) • Myself (1) • *Other:* "Citizens" (1)
Education (9)	• "Kindergarten" (1) • "Kindergarten (not enough)" (1) • "Lack of kindergarten programs" (1) • "Not enough kindergartens and schools" (1) • "Lack of public schools/universities" (1) • "Poor primary education (quality)" (1) • "Level of education is poor" (1) • "Not enough educated supervisors" (1) • "Youth cannot develop and educate themselves" (1)	• UB Governor's Office (5) • Nalaikh Governor's Office (3) • My Family (2) • Teachers (2) • Leader of Khoroo (1) • DFYCD (1) • NGOs (1)

(Table continued next page)

Category	Problems	"Who is responsible for addressing this problem?"
Groupings created by research team (# of times listed)	"Terms listed in Column A" (# of times listed)	Answers selected from Column B (# of times selected)
Inequality (1)	• "Poverty" (1)	• Nalaikh Governor's Office (1)
Lack of Green Development (4)	• "Not enough green development" (2) • "Gardening, green areas" (1) • "Green plant" (1)	• Nalaikh Governor's Office (3) • Myself (2) • NGOs (2) • My Family (1) • Leader of Khoroo (1) • UB Governor's Office (1) • *Other:* "Green Development Organization" (1)
Lack of Leisure Facilities (14)	• "No place to spend leisure time" (2) • "Entertainment centre" (1) • "No entertainment centre" (1) • "No youth entertainment centre" (1) • "No sports hall" (1) • "Lack of sports halls/ fields" (1) • "Lack of library and sports hall" (1) • "Lack of entertainment places (sports hall, library)" (1) • "No public hall" (1) • "Playground" (1) • "Not enough playgrounds" (1) • "Need national park to spend leisure time" (1) • "Entertainment places for youths" (1)	• Nalaikh Governor's Office (9) • UB Governor's Office (6) • NGOs (4) • Leader of Khoroo (4) • DFYCD (3) • Coordinator of Khoroo (3) • Mongolia National Govt. (2) • Myself (1) • *Other:* "Public Transport Association of the city (UB)" (1)
Misc. (5)	• "Lots of Chinese workers" (1) • "Not enough markets and services" (1) • "Economics (inflation)" (1) • "Poor communication" (1) • "No brand of city (outside of coal mining)" (1)	• Nalaikh Governor's Office (2) • UB Governor's Office (2) • Myself (1) • My Family (1) • Leader of Khoroo (1) • Mongolia National Govt. (1) • Other: "Nalaikh landscaping service" (1)

Category	Problems	"Who is responsible for addressing this problem?"
Groupings created by research team (# of times listed)	"Terms listed in Column A" (# of times listed)	Answers selected from Column B (# of times selected)
Pollution (17)	"Air pollution" (10) "Garbage" (4) "General pollution" (2) "Environmental pollution" (1)	- Nalaikh Governor's Office (10) - My Family (6) - Myself (5) - Coordinator of Khoroo (3) - UB Governor's Office (2) - Mongolia National Govt. (2) - Leader of Khoroo (1) - NGOs (1) *Other:* "Citizens" (2) *Other:* "Ministry of Health" (1)
Public Health (7)	"Employee/human resource issue in health organization" (1) "Bad health services" (1) "Services of Health Centre" (1) "Improve health services" (1) "Poor health centre services" (1) "Lack of hospital equipment" (1) "Disease" (1)	- Nalaikh Governor's Office (4) - UB Governor's Office (1) - Myself (1) - Other: "Prime Minister" (1)
Public Services (14)	"Lack of hospital" (1) "Food safety" (1) "Sanatorium for seniors" (1) "Place for disabled people" (1) "Bus for students (children)" (1) "Government organizations don't work well" (1) "Activities of the central police station are poor" (1) "Icy/slippery streets" (1) "Slippery roads" (1) "Lack of public service" (1) "Lack of support from government" (1) "Human resources" (1) "Lack of support for young families" (1) "Poor attitude by state organizations" (1)	- Nalaikh Governor's Office (10) - UB Governor's Office (5) - Leader of Khoroo (3) - Mongolian National Govt. (3) - Myself (2) - My Family (2) - Coordinator of Khoroo (2) - DFYCD (2) *Other:* "Road police" (1) *Other:* " Central Police Station" (1) *Other:* "State-owned Nalaikh landscaping service" (1) *Other:* "Landscaping service centre" (1)

Category	Problems	"Who is responsible for addressing this problem?"
Groupings created by research team (# of times listed)	"Terms listed in Column A" (# of times listed)	Answers selected from Column B (# of times selected)
Quality of Life (4)	"Not happy" (1) "Poor living conditions" (1) "Happiness Index is low" (1) "Quality of Life Index" (1)	- Mongolia National Govt. (3) - UB Governor's Office (1) - Other: "Entire community" (1)
Safety & Security (8)	"Wild dogs" (1) "Stray dogs and cats of which children are afraid" (1) "Stray dogs and cats" (1) "Lots of dogs without owners" (1) "Family violence" (1) "Safety (violence against girls)" (1) "Placing cameras (put more up)" (1) "Theft" (1)	- Nalaikh Governor's Office (9) - UB Governor's Office (6) - NGOs (4) - Leader of Khoroo (4) - DFYCD (3) - Coordinator of Khoroo (3) - Mongolia National Govt. (2) - Myself (1) *Other:* "Public Transport Association of the city (UB)" (1)
Unemployment (12)	"Unemployment" (5) "Lack of workplace" (2) "Lack of employers" (1) "Limited public sector work outside of politics" (1) "Working place (employers)" (1) "Workforce" (1) "No Facebook group for news about work vacancy" (1)	- Nalaikh Governor's Office (7) - Mongolia National Govt. (3) - UB Governor's Office (2) - Myself (2) - Teachers (2) - Leader of Khoroo (2) - My Family (1) - Coordinator of Khoroo (1) - DFYCD (1) NGOs (1) *Other:* "Employer" (1) *Other:* "Social Welfare Division" (1)
Urban Planning & Infrastructure (26)	"Poor urban planning" (1) "City planning" (1) "Poor infrastructure" (2) "Infrastructure" (1) "Old buildings" (1) "New development" (1) "Lack of housing (apartments)" (1) "Re-planning of apartments" (1) "Ger district" (1) "Ger district area is increasing (to build power plant)" (1) "Too much ger district area (bad condition of construction)" (1) "Road signs" (1) "Road problems" (1) "Parking" (1) "Not enough parking" (1)	- Nalaikh Governor's Office (16) - UB Governor's Office (8) - Leader of Khoroo (6) - Mongolia National Govt. (4) - My Family (3) - Coordinator of Khoroo (3) - Myself (2) - NGOs (2) *Other:* "Road Police" (2) - DFYCD (1) *Other:* "Health organizations" (1)Other: "Citizens" (1) *Other:* "Public Transport Association of the city (UB)" (1)

(Table continued next page)

Category	Problems	"Who is responsible for addressing this problem?"
Groupings created by research team (# of times listed)	"Terms listed in Column A" (# of times listed)	Answers selected from Column B (# of times selected)
Urban Planning & Infrastructure, ctnd. (26)	"Lack of place where people can charge U-Money card (bus card)" (1) "No place where students can print their documents" (1) "No special place for smoking" (1) "Lack of public transport" (1) "Not enough public transportation" (1) "Transportation for children" (1) "Not enough city toilets" (1) "Not enough trash bins" (1) "Not enough cleaning tools for landscaping service of Nalaikh" (1) "Lighting (more lighting needed in community" (1) "Appearance of city" (1)	- Nalaikh Governor's Office (16) - UB Governor's Office (8) - Leader of Khoroo (6) - Mongolia National Govt. (4) - My Family (3) - Coordinator of Khoroo (3) - Myself (2) - NGOs (2) *Other:* "Road Police" (2) - DFYCD (1) *Other:* "Health organizations" (1)Other: "Citizens" (1) *Other:* "Public Transport Association of the city (UB)" (1)
Youth-Specific Issues (3)	"Youth status in society is low" (1) "Youth cannot express their opinions" (1) "Lack of support for young entrepreneurs" (1)	- Myself (2) - DFYCD (1) - Nalaikh Governor's Office (1) *Other:* "Social Welfare Division" (1)

Social Worker Focus Group Problems

Category	Problems	"Who is responsible for addressing this problem?"
Groupings created by research team (# of times listed)	"Terms listed in Column A" (# of times listed)	Answers selected from Column B (# of times selected)
Alcoholism (1)	"Alcoholism" (1)	- Myself (1) - My Family (1) - Coordinator of Khoroo (1)
Education (2)	"Poor quality of education" (1) "Lack of international exchange programs" (1)	- Nalaikh Governor's Office (2) - UB Governor's Office (1) - Teachers (1) - DFYCD (1) - NGOs (1)

(Table continued next page)

Category	Problems	"Who is responsible for addressing this problem?"
Groupings created by research team (# of times listed)	"Terms listed in Column A" (# of times listed)	Answers selected from Column B (# of times selected)
Lack of Leisure Facilities (2)	• "Development places for youth" (1) • "Lack of sports/community spaces" (1)	• Nalaikh Governor's Office (1) • UB Governor's Office (1) • Mongolia National Govt. (1)
Misc. (1)	• "Lack of international projects/funding" (1)	• Nalaikh Governor's Office (1) • UB Governor's Office (1) • Mongolia National Govt. (1) • NGOs (1)
Public Health (1)	• "Health" (1)	• Myself (1) • My Family (1) • Leader of Khoroo (1) • Nalaikh Governor's Office (1)
Unemployment (1)	• "Lack of employers" (1)	• Mongolia National Govt. (1)

Teacher Focus Group Problems

During the Teacher focus group, this activity was slightly altered to adjust to dynamics in the room. Instead of answering *"Who is responsible for fixing this problem?,"* teachers were asked to **brainstorm solutions to the problem.** These responses are provided in the column on the right, but are not comparable to the youth and social worker response tables above.

Category	Problems	Solutions
Groupings created by research team (# of times listed)	"Terms listed in Column A" (# of times listed)	Phrases written by participants during brainstorming
Alcoholism (1)	• "Lots of people use alcohol" (1)	n/a
Lack of Leisure Facilities (2)	• "No place to spend free time for youth and children" (1) • "Lack of cultural activities" (1)	• "Build more sports and training centres" • "Social activities for youth"

Category	Problems	"Who is responsible for addressing this problem?"
Groupings created by research team (# of times listed)	"Terms listed in Column A" (# of times listed)	Answers selected from Column B (# of times selected)
Misc. (3)	• "Located far from UB" (1) • "Development is slow and bad" (1) • "Lack of market expansion and access" (1)	• "Expand market places, encourage small/medium enterprise growth, so Nalaikh doesn't have to rely on UB"
Pollution (1)	• "Water and air pollution" (1)	• "Use repurposed coal, because it produces less smoke"
Public Services (1)	• "Lack of information" (1)	n/a
Unemployment (1)	• "Unemployment" (1)	n/a
Urban Planning & Infrastucture (3)	• "Not enough transportation" (1) • "Infrastructure (bad roads and environment)" (1) • "Lighting" (1)	• "To have new public transportation for kids" • "Internal public transportation" • "Build new pedestrian roads, including walkways and bike paths"

Appendix 6

BARRIER BREAKOUT
Quotes

This is not a complete list of all quotes written during the Focus Groups. To use our translators' time expediently, we asked them to choose the quotes in Mongolian that best exemplified that sessoin's sentiments, and translate only those into English.

Category (Number of Barriers given)
- *"Select quotes"*

Disengaged (22)
- *"Youth cannot express themselves, so they disengage"*
- *"Youth are not engaged because Governor's Office only thinks of themselves"*
- *"Youth are not confident enough to participate in the community"*
- *"Even though youth already know about the survey, they do not fill it out"*
- *"Youths might not be interested in the survey"*
- *"Youth don't spend their time properly; youth should try to get information"*
- *"Youth think it's unnecessary for themselves"*
- *"Youth don't want to participate in any survey"*
- *"Youth are not active for any activities"*

Inaccessible (19)
- *"Poorly timed events, students cannot attend, events not convenient for students"*
- *"Lack of organization deters students from attending"*
- *"Live in another place (and work) "Don't live in district for the certain period of time"*
- *"Going to khoroo or somewhere specific is difficult for youth, and they don't like the attitudes of Social Workers"*
- *"Elderly people participate more in surveys because they're distributed in the khoroo"*
- *"Some of them have trouble with language"*
- *"State organizations cannot reach the youth"*

Lack of Information (32)
- *"Governor's Office doesn't give information totally"*
- *"Haven't ever heard about it"*
- *"It would be more effective to distribute the survey on social media, easier for respondents"*
- *"Don't know about purpose of survey"*
- *"Don't know about results"*
- *"There is a lack of information for youth"*
- *"Youth don't talk to each other about the survey"*

Lack of Information, ctnd. (32)
- *"Youth don't talk to each other about the survey"*
- *"No information about it"*
- *"Announcing news is not enough for youth"*
- *"I don't know about this survey"*
- *"They think the survey is unnecessary or not useful, so they ignore it"*

Lack of Youth Facilities (5)
- *"It is hard to meet and discuss"*
- *"There are not enough entertainment centres"*
- *"Lack of workplace for students"*
- *"Not enough training centres for students and that should be advertised at schools"*

Self-Conscious (2)
- *"They worry about what others think about them"*

Too Busy (6)
- *"Busy" (x3)*
- *"Often students live in Ulaanbaatar"*
- *"They have a lot of work to do, therefore they do not have time to focus on surveys or other research from the Governor's Office"*

Youth Feel Ignored (7)
- *"Survey conducted among the people who are in the political party (political concerns)"*
- *"Students can't get full rights, some rights are broken by someone (forcing)"*
- *"The Governor's Office only meets with reputable people and just ignores others"*

Misc. (4)
- *"Governor's Office not active enough"*
- *"Don't visit government office to receive services"*

Appendix 7

Suggested Steps for **CSS Distribution**
IMPLEMENTATION

Improving the CSS distribution method to more accurately target youth in Nalaikh will directly address the original issue presented by our client: lack of survey responses from youth (see *3.0 Policy Problem* for more information). Considering the relevancy of this proposed solution, we have outlined specific measures to enhance CSS distribution methods, both immediately and in the future. **Successfully targeting youth through CSS distribution will also help to build a foundation for youth to share their opinions;** such a foundation will aid in propelling youth toward more meaningful civic engagement opportunities in the future (see *7.2.3 The Youth Engagement Continuum*). Suggested steps for CSS distribution implementation consists of two specific methods: extending current distribution methods and creating new distribution methods.

Extending Existing Practices

The following recommendations act as extensions to the methods that are currently being used when distributing the CSS. Please note that additional resources, and therefore costs, may be required to implement these distribution extension recommendations; however, some suggestions require only minor adjustments and can be implemented with relative ease.

Household Visitations

Our first suggestion would be to **change the time** that the CSS is distributed in Khoroos. Currently, the CSS is primarily distributed by Khoroo Leaders during the daytime and during weekdays. This current method is not effective, as the vast majority of youth are either working or attending school during these times. An easy solution to this conflict may be to suggest CSS distribution take place in the **evenings** or on **weekends**. Although this suggestion may be inconvenient for some, changing the time of door-to-door CSS distribution will increase the sample size of youth participants. Throughout our research, we learned that Khoroo Leaders and social workers (professionals who also distribute the CSS door-to-door) are currently over-burdened with their workload. To ease the added responsibility of CSS distribution, and to increase the effectiveness of this measure, it may be worthwhile to consider acquiring additional assistance, if feasible.

School and Youth Events

Another relatively easy suggestion is to target youth in **places and spaces where they spend most of their extracurricular time.** The DFYCD and the Governor's Office are currently distributing the CSS during some community events, such as the Mobile Room Event. To complement this practice, we recommend expanding distribution to cover other youth-specific areas and events, such as schools, the library, sports halls, community events, etc. Targeting youth-based extracurriculars may also help to foster stronger collaboration between the Governor's Office and other community leaders who work with youth. For example, the Governor's Office can work together with teachers in Nalaikh to help distribute the CSS during school hours.

Public Transportation

The DFYCD and the Governor's Office should consider leveraging public transportation to reach Nalaikh youth and distribute the CSS. Our research indicates that many Nalaikh youth travel to Ulaanbaatar city centre for work on a daily basis, many of whom use public transportation. Considering the amount of people using public transportation, it may be worthwhile to try distributing the CSS either on the bus, or at the bust stop while citizens wait for the bus. This suggestion was not ours alone; one **common suggestion reiterated during focus group activities** was that the CSS could be distributed on the public bus.

Social Media

One final suggestion to extend current CSS distribution methods is to share a survey link on social media. We understand that there may be some privacy concerns when it comes to sharing the survey itself on Facebook, or on other forms of social media, but it may be worthwhile to consider sharing a **link to the survey** on the appropriate channels. This link would be publicized as part of a broader communications campaign (see *Appendix 9: Suggested Steps for Communications Campaign Implementation*), and shared with the community on a regular basis. When participants click on the link, it will bring them to an electronic version of the survey posted on the Governor's Office website. Next, potential respondents will be required to confirm their identity as a Nalaikh resident to fill out the CSS (this step could be verified using an address and a cross-reference check to the District's central database).

Alongside this recommendation, however, there are two key elements to keep in mind: **connectivity** and **privacy.** Today's youth spend much of their free time on or near an electronic device, often using social media to stay connected to friends and family. Leveraging this connectivity will effectively aid in increasing the youth sample size of CSS respondents. However, at the same time, it is important to maintain strict ethical standards when it comes to privacy and data collection. Conducting an electronic

survey is possible, a process pursued in many communities around the world, but it is important to take the proper precautions to ensure all data collected is assessed and stored appropriately. As such, if the Governor's Office of Nalaikh is not currently collecting survey data online, we would recommend exploring this option. However, before creating an online survey portal on the Governor's Office website, we recommend conducting a thorough review of the privacy rules, regulations, and standards associated with collecting and storing data online.

Post review, there are hundreds of different types of survey software and data collection tools available online. Most require a small subscription fee, but tend to be affordable. An effective online survey tool will also outline their privacy standards in simple and plain terms. The company Pollfish, for example, has an exhaustive list of large organizations using their software, and clearly articulates how the data collection process works. Before choosing a software that works best for your organization, conduct some research on handling sensitive data. The blog post below may shed some light on this subject matter.

Pollfish Link: https://try.pollfish.com/
Blog Post Link: https://www.snapsurveys.com/blog/practice-handling-sensitive-data/

New Outreach Methods

The second component of this recommendation, new outreach methods, incorporates suggestions for new CSS distribution ideas. These methods may be leveraged by the Governor's Office and the DFYCD to increase youth CSS responses. Please note that these methods are in addition to the existing measures already being used to distribute the CSS; therefore, these extra methods may require supplementary resources to actualize implementation.

Mobile Phone Outreach

To complement the CSS distribution extensions mentioned in the previous section, we recommend exploring mobile phone outreach. **Calling individuals,** as opposed to physically delivering the CSS, may be more effective in reaching youth. One of our key findings indicated that youth are **very busy,** and are often not at home to receive a physical copy of the CSS. Therefore, pursuing their participation via phone may increase the chances of initial contact, and subsequently, of survey completion. In addition, CSS distribution by phone allows for busy youth to complete the survey at a time that best suits their schedules. For example, should a youth not be available to complete the CSS during the initial phone call, the distributor can set up

a call-back time or leave a voicemail. CSS distribution by phone may also be a more **inclusive** option for Nalaikh youth with visual impairments, a learning disability, or other individuals with unique circumstances.

Although there are several benefits to using this method, it is also important to consider the limitations. Conducting surveys over the phone requires additional time, and does not guarantee a 100% participation rate. Some estimates suggest that, on average, about 43% of targeted participants fully comply when contacted for a telephone survey.[62] There will surely be some residents who do not wish to participate in the survey, or who may be unreachable. Moreover, not all target respondents may have a registered telephone number or phone. Distribution via phone may also exclude some residents, including those with a hearing impairment. Considering these drawbacks, we suggest using this method in conjunction with other methods to ensure the largest number of youth successfully complete the CSS.

Methodology

To reach youth via their mobile – or in some cases, landline – phones, the DFYCD and the Governor's Office can **leverage government databases.** These databases may have registered phone numbers already collected and stored. However, before moving forward, be sure to **review any privacy regulations** to seek confirmation that using registered numbers to distribute the CSS is ethical and legal. To bolster any existing database, telephone numbers should also be collected at community events, such as the Mobile Room Event. Please keep in mind that full disclosure regarding the purpose of collecting phone numbers must be clearly communicated to residents at such events.

By leveraging these phone numbers, survey distributors can randomly call youth and request CSS participation over the phone. Below, we have outlined a reference guide for CSS distributors to use when calling youth and requesting CSS participation. Please note that **this guide is to be used as a reference only**, and does not include any specific ethical, cultural or legal considerations that may be applicable to the Nalaikh context. Prior to beginning, we recommend drafting your own outreach methodology, using this guide as an example, while also considering the specific elements that are unique to Nalaikh, i.e. social norms regarding greetings, District legal parameters, etc.

Suggested Steps

1. Collect an initial sample of youth telephone numbers from a government database (or any other source that is deemed appropriate).
2. Organize potential respondents (in any way that collectively best suits the distributors) in a fashion that allows for easy cross-reference, but maintains privacy.

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3. Call each telephone number one-by-one.

4. When a given participant answers:

- Introduce yourself, provide credentials, and briefly state why you are calling
- Ask for permission to continue explaining the purpose of your call and the CSS
- If permission is granted, briefly and clearly explain the purpose of the CSS and request their participation
- Communicate the logistics to the participant, i.e. how long it will take, what sort of questions will be asked, etc.
- Conduct the survey, recording each of the answers carefully

5. Repeat the process until you have reached your desired target sample.

Note: Should participants request another time to fill out the CSS, the distributor should take down the appropriate information and organize another time; should participants not answer the initial phone call, distributors should leave a voicemail detailing the reason for calling and provide a callback number.

Mobile App Technology

Lastly, we recommend exploring a partnership with SmartUB (see *Appendix 12: Case Studies – Innovations in Mongolia*). A partnership between the DFYCD and SmartUB may help to distribute the CSS to a larger pool of youth in Nalaikh, and thus increase the sample size of survey respondents. SmartUB, an e-voting application, has experienced significant success when targeting youth in Mongolia, including some Nalaikh youth. This application also has the capacity to integrate a survey feature, and may be able to function as a dual-purpose tool.

Appendix 8

Suggested Steps for **Focus Group**
IMPLEMENTATION

In our experience, focus groups are a great way to elicit nuanced information from a particular target audience. Focus groups are designed to facilitate an intimate setting, one where participants may feel more inclined to share their ideas and opinions openly. This process is invaluable, as it fosters a deeper connection and a greater level of understanding between participants and facilitators. Considering our success in facilitating youth focus groups while in Nalaikh, we recommend that the Governor's Office and the DFYCD host biannual focus groups with youth. During these focus groups, participants will be encouraged to discuss relevant topics, while facilitators observe these discussions and identify any consistent themes that may present themselves. Below, we have outlined key steps and components to facilitating focus groups. These suggestions should be used as a reference guide, but are open to modification, based on individual project specifications and any contextual circumstances that may arise.

1. Setting Up a Focus Group

To prepare for a focus group, the facilitators should start by outlining key themes, discussion topics, and potential activities. For example, facilitators should ask themselves the following questions:

- What **problem** are we trying to address with this focus group?
- What type of **information or answers** are we looking to elicit from our target audience?
- How will we **evoke** this information?
    - *What sort of activities or discussion topics can we introduce throughout the focus group to generate discussion?*
- What does our ideal **target audience** look like? I.e. age, occupation, gender...
    - *How many participants will be included in the focus group?*
- Based on our experience, we would recommend **8-10 people** per focus group. Too few participants may inhibit a lively discussion, while too many participants may prevent everyone from contributing to the conversation.
- How will we **review and revise** our focus group to improve discussions with each iteration?

- How should we **organize** the focus group?
    - *What materials (if any) will be required to facilitate the focus group? I.e. Coffee, tea, snacks, paper, pens, notepads, nametags, etc.*
    - *Will we have post-focus group debriefing sessions?*
    - *Will we assign specific roles to each facilitator?*
    - *How will we track, record, and store the collected focus group data?*
- **Where** will we host our focus group? And for **how long** will our focus group run? We would recommend choosing a neutral, but inviting location. The atmosphere should feel comfortable to all participants, and to avoid interview fatigue, focus groups should not exceed **1.5 hours** in length.

2. Recruiting Focus Group Participants

Now that your team has established a vision for a focus group, it's time to start recruiting participants. There is no right way to recruit participants, but there are some strategies that may work well in the Nalaikh context.

- ***Leverage Past Participants:*** To start, the Governor's Office team could contact the citizens who participated in the December 2019 Youth Civic Engagement Focus Group. These individuals may be interested in participating a second time, and may be able to recruit an additional 1-3 friends. However, please note that caution should be exercised when leveraging past participants, as it is important to have as diverse a sample set as possible.
- ***Partner with Schools:*** Another recruiting idea includes asking teachers and educational professionals to advertise upcoming focus groups. For example, teachers and professionals could explain the benefits of participating in a youth focus group briefly during class time. It may also be worthwhile to host focus groups directly after class, and on or near school property. Arranging a convenient time and location for youth will make it easier for participants to attend focus groups. Potential partnerships include Nalaikh high schools, vocational centres, and GMIT. Utilizing the built-in network from these institutions will make focus group opportunities more accessible for youth.
- ***Advertise:*** Promoting the opportunity on social media or other communications methods will likely increase recruitment rates. A communications campaign (see Appendix 9) can be created solely for the recruitment of focus group participants, and it can include past-participant testimonials.
- ***Offer Incentives:*** Offering incentives that are appealing to youth will likely motivate participation. Some examples of incentives include, offering a prize through a lottery, free food and coffee during focus groups, or monetary compensation. Incentives can motivate youth to participate, but also require additional organization and financial resources to implement. If incentives are

offered, they should be communicated via the same medium the recruitment advertisement was published on.

3. Running a Focus Group

With your focus group theme defined and your participants ready to go, it's time to run your focus group. Here are some of the key things to keep in mind while facilitating a discussion.

- ***Introductory Remarks.*** While participants are waiting for the focus group to begin, consider serving coffee and tea. This small act will likely encourage participants to feel relaxed and at ease. Once everyone has settled in, the moderator should begin by discussing the logistics and rationale of the focus group, while another team member distributes the consent forms. If you are using a recorder, be sure to notify the focus group participants prior to starting the session.
- ***Keep the Questions Broad and Open Ended.*** A set of well-thought-out questions should be drafted ahead of time, and used to facilitate discussion during focus groups. These questions should not be leading; it should not be obvious what answer researchers are anticipating. We recommend using around 7-10 questions, allowing ample time to thoroughly discuss each one. Start with an easy "ice-breaker," or introduction question, such as, "What is your favourite pastime?" Easing into the focus group will help to ensure all participants feel comfortable sharing their ideas. Following the "ice-breaker" question, we would recommend organizing your questions in order of importance. This method will guarantee that all of your most essential questions are discussed within the allotted time frame. If you decide to run some activities during the focus group, be sure to watch the clock and moderate the discussion effectively.
- ***Moderating the Focus Group.*** One team member should moderate the focus group session. At the beginning of the session, moderators should emphasize that all answers will be anonymous, and field any questions participants may have before starting. Moderators should be cognizant of their tone of voice and facial expressions; it is important to remain neutral at all times, so as to avoid guiding the discussion in any way or revealing their own personal views. We suggest that at least two researchers are present at each focus group, one to moderate, and one to take notes and record answers. Moderators should also encourage conversation from all participants, while trying to prevent any one single person from dominating the conversation. The choice of who will moderate the focus group is an important one, as they will set the overall tone and control the discussion.

- ***Taking Notes and Recording Data.*** While individual answers may be helpful to record, it is more important to see the patterns and themes that emerge from the various focus groups. For example, are there consistent differences in answers between men and women? Are there answers that draw general agreement from the majority of participants? It is also important to take note of things like body language and tone of voice. Are there certain topics that generate more excitement from participants? Are there topics that participants seem more hesitant to discuss? Finally, be careful of false positives: when participants are saying what they think the moderator or other participants may want to hear.
- ***Analyzing Data.*** When analyzing results, be sure to identify themes and note differences in opinions. Also, it is important to note any limitations that may exist regarding the demographic of participants. These limitations may not accurately represent the broader target population, so it is always a good idea to reflect on data collected after each session.
- ***Consider the Limitations.*** While focus groups are a great qualitative tool for gathering data, there are some limitations to using them. Firstly, the answers provided are subjective and open to the researchers' interpretation. Secondly, the small number of participants in each focus group means that responses and findings may not accurately represent the opinions of the target population.

Appendix 9

Suggested Steps for
Communications Campaign
IMPLEMENTATION

A comprehensive and integrated communications campaign is an essential component to any business in today's online, social media driven world, and political public institutions are no exception to this rule. In fact, it is arguably more important for public facing departments to have an active and meaningful presence online. Using social media to engage with your audience is a great way to develop your brand, share important information, and receive feedback on public service offerings.

Social media use is growing around the world, making it an easy way to interact with your target audience. In 2017 alone, nearly 1 million people joined a social network every single day. This growth is predicted to continue, as more and more individuals acquire smart devices, namely cell phones.[63] In Nalaikh, it is fair to assume that most community members are also online, with Facebook being the primary platform of choice. A staggering 95.7% of survey respondents in our survey reported that they use Facebook on a regular basis.

In the proceeding sections, you will find resources, best-practices, and examples of social media marketing tactics. It is important to remember that content shared in Nalaikh will be unique to the community context; what may work in Vancouver, may not work in Nalaikh and vice versa. Therefore, this how-to-guide does not include a tailored, ready-made campaign, but it does outline key steps and suggestions to help your communications department create successful campaigns.

Social Media Foundations: What to Do Before Starting Your Campaign

There are a few things one should consider before beginning to create a communications campaign. These considerations may seem trivial, but if addressed adequately, will set your campaign up for success.

1. Designate Specific Roles for Specific Tasks

Depending on the size of your communications team (and your budget), a designated social media marketing role should be created. This role will entail specific responsibilities, which include but are not limited to, content creation, scheduling and posting, platform maintenance, and engagement strategies.

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Designating one person to this role will ensure content remains consistent and on-brand, and will ensure regular engagement between the Governor's Office and the target audience (youth). While we are aware that a communications role already exists within the Governor's Office, it may be worthwhile to **create a youth internship role** to assist and learn from this individual. This internship would allow youth from the community to play a larger role in creating and disseminating content that is relevant and engaging to youth.

2. Build a Brand

A company's brand is an important part of a successful communications campaign. The online world is saturated, making it difficult for brands to stand out. To help engage with youth in a competitive market, each department in the Governor's Office should build their own distinct brand, as a means of differentiating their services and mandates. For example, the DFYCD should create a brand that centres around the public services provided, while the Governor's Office brand should reflect the diverse range of divisions under the Office's umbrella. Building a brand may sound intimidating, but with time and the right messaging, it is certainly possible. Most marketing experts today suggest using open and honest messaging to communicate the company mandate, while maintaining meaningful engagement channels. **There is no clear-cut way to build a brand, but there are a couple of key questions you can ask yourself while designing a branding strategy.** Questions include, but are not limited to, "Who are my customers?" "What customers do I want to have?" "What problem does my department solve?" "What is my value proposition? Is it distinctive? Is it relevant to my customers?" "What kind of personality will my brand have?" For more information on key questions, see: https://www.chiefoutsiders.com/blog/bid/91492/10-questions-you-need-to-ask-when-building-a-brand.

3. Build a Youth Profile(s)

Similar to building your brand, marketing and communication experts find it helpful to build a profile of their ideal "customer." In this case, the DFYCD and the Governor's Office are targeting youth in Nalaikh. **By drafting these youth profiles, the communications department will have a better understanding of youth wants, needs, and interests, and as a result, will be in a better position to tailor content accordingly.** Multiple youth profiles should be created, depending on the demographics of interest. For example, a profile of a Nalaikh youth in high school will look different than a profile of an unemployed Nalaikh youth. These profiles are not designed to be rigid reflections of youth in Nalaikh, but rather they will act as a guiding

framework to create engaging content that appeals to youth. For more information on building a customer profile, see: https://blog.hubspot.com/service/customer-profiling.

4. Conduct a Social Media Audit

Auditing your social media platforms is a crucial step in growing your online presence and encouraging meaningful engagement with your audience. It may sound complicated, but a **social media audit simply means reviewing and assessing your platform to gauge the current effectiveness of your channel.** In this case, we will consider the DFYCD's Facebook channel. To audit the Facebook page, we simply account for the number of followers, the amount and level of engagement (i.e. number of likes, shares, and comments), the amount and type of content being shared on a consistent basis, and the completeness of a profile (i.e. is all of the company information published, or are there missing areas that need to be filled? Are the profile photos up-to-date and relevant?). **Recording all of this information will provide a benchmark from which to evaluate future social media growth and campaign success.** For more information on social media auditing, see: https://medium.com/@JBBC/how-to-conduct-a-social-media-audit-a104e67ac1a9.

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Best Practices: A Few Social Media Tips When Strategizing Content

1. Meaningful Engagement is More Important than Increasing Your Followers

A social media platform could have thousands of followers, but without interactive and authentic engagement, the platform will appear hollow. **The goal in this context is to build collaborative and immersive communities for youth in Nalaikh. This goal can be met by creating and publishing intriguing, relevant, and consistent content that will get people talking and sharing ideas.** Content can be versatile, but content must be relevant to youth. Commentary videos, blogs, and funny memes are all ideas worth considering in this context. Another idea may include the use of Facebook Groups, a private offshoot page where youth can discuss an issue relevant to the DFYCD, but one that is also important to youth. In this group, youth can share ideas and potential solutions to problems that are directly impacting their demographic.

2. Make Sure to Have a Content Checklist

Remembering everything you may want to share on Facebook can be difficult, which is why maintaining a content checklist is advised. Moreover, **a content checklist allows the communications team to keep track of the many events, projects, and initiatives currently on the go** at the DFYCD and under the Governor's Office umbrella, too. Some content ideas include, but are not limited to, **information about the Governor's Office** (incorporating a breakdown of the different divisions under the Governor's Office and what each division is responsible for), **community events and updates, opinion polls on community projects, Focus Group recruitment announcements, information from Ulaanbaatar, an advertisement of the Ulaanbaatar ERP** (the Districts official complaints channel), **and any available FAQ website pages**. The content checklist should also include any relevant news outlets, FB channels, or community bulletins. These channels should be viewed on a regular basis, with any applicable content being shared on the DFYCD or Governor's Office Facebook channels.

3. Be Organized and Be Prepared

Once you have an idea of what type of content you would like to share on Facebook, it is important to draft relevant messaging, and schedule social posts in advance. **Using a content calendar will make scheduling and posting information easy. Content calendars layout intended social posts day-by-day, providing a breakdown of the copy you will use to share the post, and the relevant information you would like to share** (i.e. the catchy subtitle with a relevant blog). It is recommended to **draft enough content for three-to-five posts per week, for up to one month in advance. Consistency is key.** The content must be relevant, but avoid time sensitive material. Timeless "how-to" blogs and infographics on the history of Nalaikh, for example, are content options that can be easily shared at any time. To post content, you may either schedule the content in advance on the Facebook platform, or you may copy and paste the post from the content calendar and post on the corresponding days. Several software programs exist to help marketing teams plan and publish social content, but basic content calendars can also be created using Excel. For more information on content calendars, see: https://blog.hootsuite.com/how-to-create-a-social-media-content-calendar/.

Creating a content calendar will also free up time for marketing teams to research and share more time sensitive pieces, which can be published alongside content that has been scheduled from your content calendar. Citing a timely example, the DFYCD marketing team may post a few stories on how to protect the community from COVID-19, in addition to the timeless content already scheduled.

4. Ensure Social Media Campaigns are Integrated into a Broader Communications Strategy

A successful Facebook marketing campaign will create a specific theme and mandate, while drawing from the company's overarching communications strategy. In this context, a youth-specific Facebook campaign must incorporate tailored tactics that will encourage youth engagement, while simultaneously considering the DFCYD division mandate and the wide-range of other projects on the go. Perhaps one of your campaign themes focuses on youth debates as promoting civic discourse in Nalaikh. All of your campaign content will revolve around this theme, but the campaign itself will fit into a larger communications goal to improve youth civic engagement and promote the DFCYD. **Simply said, there must be a clear and transparent tie between the campaign and the DFCYD's overarching mandate.** It can be difficult to remember and to balance the different types and phases of projects and media campaigns on the go at any given time, which is why many marketing specialists use gnatt charts to keep track of current and upcoming campaigns. There are several free gnatt chart software programs available online, click here for more information on one of the many options.

5. Stay Relevant and Forward-Looking

A total of 56% of internet users watch videos on Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat or Instagram each month, and video sharing platform, TikTok, has gained immense global popularity amongst youth.[64] Clearly, sharing content over video is a preferred medium of communication and discourse. **In order for the DFYCD's social media standing to remain relevant and engaging, it is essential to conduct consistent research on emerging social media trends, and sequentially learn how to integrate such trends into communication and social media marketing strategies.** Given the information above, it may be worthwhile to explore youth-specific video content creation for Facebook. The DFYCD may also want to conduct an assessment on any other relevant social media platforms being used by youth in Nalaikh. Tik Tok might be something youth in Nalaikh are using, but if that is not the case, it is important to consider other potential platforms that may be emerging in popularity amongst youth. This sort of research task could be assigned to the youth social media internship, an individual who will likely have more up-to-date knowledge on trending platforms amongst youth.

6. Consider Ethical Compliance and Security Risks

Social media has allowed our world to become more globalized, encouraging intimate connections like never before. **But, with added online connectivity comes additional risks that must be considered.** It is advised that the Governor's Office and the DFYCD create, if they have not done so already, a plan to ensure ethical social media compliance, data security, and communication surrounding data breaches.

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Through opinion polls and surveys, the DFYCD will, theoretically, be collecting and storing sensitive data. As such, it is important to think through a plan to safeguard data, and a contingency campaign, should the data be compromised in any way. Unfortunately, data hacks are a part of our online world in today's society and mitigating risks can be challenging. But, at the very least, every institution should be prepared to respond to that risk if and when it happens.

7. Don't Get Discouraged

Last but not least, remember that a successful social media marketing campaign is a process of trial and error. If a campaign does not meet the intended expectations, then try to analyze what may have worked well and what may need to be tweaked, and then, try again. The point is to encourage quality engagement, not to pump out as much content as possible. **So, set realistic goals, revise when required, and track your progress.**

Resources, Tools, & Services

Google Analytics
A free online analytics software that allows users to track website traffic, and analyze sources of engagement and engagement levels.
Link: https://analytics.google.com/analytics/web/provision/#/provision

Hootsuite
A subscription-based social media organizing, scheduling, and publishing software. It basically manages all of your social posts across multiple platforms.
Link: https://signup.hootsuite.com/

Social Media Trends by Keyhole Marketing
Emerging marketing trends to look out for in 2020.
Link: https://www.keyholemarketing.us/2020-social-media-trends/

Social Media Trends by Influencer Marketing Hub
"15 Step Social Media Marketing Strategy for Businesses in 2020."
Link: https://influencermarketinghub.com/social-media-marketing-strategy/

Tips on Building a Brand
Chief Outsiders, a marketing and consulting firm, outlines a few key questions to ask yourself when creating a company brand.
Link: https://www.chiefoutsiders.com/blog/bid/91492/10-questions-you-need-to-ask-when-building-a-brand

Tips on Building a Customer Profile
Hubspot, a suite of software products for inbound marketing, sales, and customer service, writes a "how-to-guide" on drafting customer profiles.
Link: https://blog.hubspot.com/service/customer-profiling

Gantt Chart Software Programs
An article outlining the "10-best" gantt chart software programs available.
Link: https://www.top10.com/project-management/gantt-comparison

Content Calendar Software
Planable, a content calendar program, illustrates how easy and effective an organized social calendar can be.
Link: https://planable.io/features/

Tips for Writing Effective Social Media Copy
There are countless how-to-guides, blogs, and video explainers sharing tips and tricks to curating unique, effective, and relevant social media copy. However, every community and context will require a tailored and relevant approach. See below for a couple of other blogs that might help, but our advice regarding social media copy is to figure out what youth in Nalaikh will find catchy and interesting, and create social media copy accordingly. Integrating youth opinions will undoubtedly help in creating successful content. There are a number of ways you can integrate youth opinions, which include hosting a social media youth focus group, and/or hiring a youth intern to join the DFYCD marketing team.

Link: https://www.socialmediatoday.com/news/4-super-effective-strategies-for-writing-copy-for-social-media/550681/
Link: https://medium.com/better-marketing/how-to-write-effective-social-media-copy-3a729768a583
Link: https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/social-media-copywriting

Appendix 10

Suggested Steps for
Civic Engagement Clubs
IMPLEMENTATION

Our research indicates that youth who have access to **safe spaces** in which to grow and develop civic awareness are more likely to become civically engaged over time. Providing these types of spaces in Nalaikh will undoubtedly increase youth civic engagement. We are aware that the DFYCD and the Governor's Office currently run several youth-based events and services. In addition to these events, the DFYCD should organize additional clubs that specifically focus on civic engagement. A primary aim of civic engagement clubs is to **encourage personal growth** in club members and **improve a wide range of skills.** Examples of skill development and personal growth include, but are not limited to: enhanced critical thinking, improved communication, bolstered confidence, and conflict resolution capabilities.

The guide below is designed to serve as a reference when crafting and implementing civic engagement clubs.

Basic Steps

1. Identify the club's objectives

Determine what kind of club you want to start and what you want it to achieve (see next section for some ideas). Define what will happen during club meetings, and set short-term and long-term goals for the club. Consult with youth during this stage to find out if these ideas appeal to them!

2. Determine the club's funding

Most clubs need at least a small budget to operate. Try to predict what the club's expenses will be (i.e. what materials and resources will be needed to fulfill its goals), and create a simple budget. Confirm that the DFYCD can fund the club. Some clubs are funded by membership fees, but we strongly advocate avoiding this route if possible because it will create a financial barrier and discourage participation by some youth.

3. Choose a meeting location

The location must be easy for youth to get to and large enough to hold all club members. If necessary, get permission to use the space from the group that administers it. We recommend the Youth Development Centre in the DFYCD building as a club meeting space – the brand new facility has great amenities, and holding clubs in this building will increase youth awareness of other programs.

4. Select a meeting day and time

A common club schedule is weekly meetings, but this may vary depending on the type of club. The day and time must be convenient for youth, so it is very important to consult with youth at this stage to find out what will work best in their schedules.

5. Recruit club members

Recruiting is an important step, because the club does not really exist until it has members! Recruitment methods include, but are not limited to:

- ***Advertising:*** promote the club online and with posters in popular areas (see *Appendix 9* for communication recommendations). This option is a traditional recruitment method that is important to include, but sometimes youth will not see or pay attention to advertisements. You should complement this approach with other methods, such as the ones listed below, for optimal reach and effectiveness.
- ***"Snowballing":*** use existing connections to find one-to-three youth who are interested in the club, and ask each of them to recruit friends. Ask those friends to recruit more friends. This method is a convenient way to recruit youth, and it's also effective because the numbers can grow exponentially. However, it may be unfair if there are certain individuals who never hear about the club because they are not connected to the first few members. To ensure all youth are provided with similar opportunities to join clubs, be sure to deploy more than one recruit method.
- ***Leverage existing groups:*** identify events and groups that already have high youth attendance (i.e. after-school events at schools, sports competitions, entertainment events) – consult with youth to find out what these are! Go directly to them to promote your club in-person with your advertising materials. Try to have as many conversations with potential club members as possible.

6. Host the first meeting

At the first meeting, be sure to learn from the members what they hope to get out of the club and confirm with them that the day, time, and location are convenient. Ask club members how they prefer to communicate (i.e. social media, SMS, email, etc.) and collect their contact information so you can share club updates in the future. Some guidance and administrative assistance may be required from a DFYCD or Governor's Office representative in proceeding meetings; however, it is important to remember that these meetings and clubs should be youth-led. The DFYCD or Governor's Office representative should be available to answer questions and offer guidance when requested to do so, but the representative should not position themselves as an authority figure. We also suggest appointing one or two representatives to guide each club, helping to maintain consistency and build rapport between youth clubs and the DFYCD/Governor's Office.

7. Determine club logistics

This step will vary depending on what type of club you are running. Things to consider include:

- **Rules and Procedures:** Some types of clubs have rules and procedures for members to follow. If this applies, be sure that club members are aware of them. If the club is informal, this may not apply.
- **Executive Positions:** Some clubs elect or appoint a leadership team of club members to run the club. Positions could include a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. The DFYCD should determine whether it will fulfill these duties itself, or have the club members do so. If an Executive is formed, the responsibilities of each position must be specified and shared.

8. Ongoing club administration

Once the club is established and meeting regularly, continue to advertise and recruit new members. The current club members should actively participate in this process. Communicate regularly with club members to keep them informed. Create opportunities for members to give feedback about what they do and don't like about the club.

Examples of Clubs that Promote Civic Engagement

Debate Club

Description

Debate Clubs offer youth the opportunity to practice several democratic skills: sharing and defending a point of view, collectively discussing the pros and cons of an idea, and critically thinking about arguments that they hear. At Debate Club meetings, members usually do verbal games and exercises to sharpen their debate skills. Many Debate Clubs also participate in competitions against other clubs in the area. Debate Clubs tend to be fairly formal organizations with rules for how debate is conducted (clubs follow the same rules in practices that will be used at competitions).

Resources

IDEA
The International Debate Education Network (IDEA) is a global network of organizations using debate to empower youth to be active citizens. It offers debate resources, training, and events (see the online 'Debatabase' for interactive debate resources). IDEA works with member organizations in the Netherlands, USA, United Kingdom, Balkans, and Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan). The DFYCD should pursue IDEA membership if it decides to run a Debate Club.

Link: https://idebate.org/about-idea-nw

Ulaanbaatar Debate Association Facebook Page
This page was active from 2013-2018. During that time the Association appears to have hosted debate workshops and competitions for youth in Ulaanbaatar. The DFYCD should try to contact the organizers to determine if the group is still active, or could be reactivated.

Link: https://www.facebook.com/UBDebating/

'Debate Clubs' on The Noisy Classroom
The Noisy Classroom is a resource website for teachers that want to incorporate civic engagement practice in their classrooms. The link below outlines how to start a Debate Club. It also has ideas for debate topics and practice exercises to do during club meetings.

Link: https://noisyclassroom.com/debate-clubs/

Blog Post: "Complete Guide to Debating"
This blog post outlines the basics of debating, including roles and procedures.

Link: https://virtualspeech.com/blog/guide-to-debating

Mock Trial

Description

Mock Trial, also known as Model Court, is an extracurricular activity that lets youth act out the process of a trial in order to learn more about the law and the legal system. Participants develop public speaking, advocacy, and critical thinking skills. Participants are given the details of a fictional case and then play roles such as lawyer, witness, reporter, and jury member in a simulation. The trial is also a competition; a judge decides which side won at the end of the trial. Mock Trial clubs spend their meetings doing research for their cases, practicing arguments, and acting out simulations (a "trial" could take place over several weeks). Some Mock Trial clubs also use these practices as training, and compete in Mock Trial competitions against other clubs in the area.

Resources

Note: these resources reflect the legal systems of the countries they come from. A Mock Trial club in Nalaikh would need to develop procedures that reflect the Mongolian legal system. We suggest that the DFYCD begin by investigating whether any Mock Trial activities exist in Ulaanbaatar that could be adopted in Nalaikh. If not, we recommend working with a Mongolian lawyer to adjust a foreign program to fit the local context.

Blog Post: "Everything You Need to Know About Mock Trial"
This blog post outlines the basics of what a Mock Trial is and why it is beneficial for youth.

Link: https://blog.collegevine.com/everything-you-need-to-know-about-mock-trial/

Mock Trial Scripts from Law Lessons
This webpage has PDFs of a variety of Mock Trial templates. The 'scripted' options are easier as participants only have to act them out. The 'unscripted' options require participants to make their own arguments.

Link: https://www.lawlessons.ca/teaching-resources/mock-trial-scripts

Canadian Mock Trial Documents
These are official documents from Canada's national Mock Trial competition. The Teacher's Guide offers step-by-step instructions for teachers coaching student participants. It could be modified by the DFYCD to use as instructions for running a club. The Tournament Guide outlines the rules of the Mock Trial competition, and the roles participants can play. The rules and roles could be modified to fit the Mongolian context.

Teacher's Guide: https://www.cbasask.org/CBAMediaLibrary/cba_sk/PDFs/For-The-Public/Law-Day/Mock%20Trial/2020-Teacher-s-Guide.pdf

Tournament Guide: https://www.cbasask.org/CBAMediaLibrary/cba_sk/PDFs/For-The-Public/Law-Day/Mock%20Trial/2020-Tournament-Guide.pdf

Model United Nations

Description

Model United Nations, also known as Model UN or MUN, is an extracurricular activity that lets youth simulate a meeting of the United Nations. Each participant, known as a delegate, represents a different country at the meeting. Country assignments and discussion topics are given to delegates beforehand, so that they can prepare their country's 'position' (based on real history and politics). During the meeting, delegates work together to propose and debate 'resolutions' (policies). Model United Nations involves public speaking, debating, writing, critical thinking, teamwork, and leadership. Clubs practice these skills during their meetings, usually with practice cases and exercises. Most Model United Nations clubs also attend conferences where they participate in larger simulations with other clubs. Model United Nations is a popular activity at high schools and universities in many parts of the world.

Resources

Note: There are two active Model United Nations conferences in Ulaanbaatar. We recommend that the DFYCD connect with the organizers of these events to learn more about how to run a Model United Nations Club and how Nalaikh youth can get involved in their events.

Ulaanbaatar Model United Nations (UBMUN) Facebook Page
UBMUN runs an annual Model United Nations conference in Ulaanbaatar.

Link: https://www.facebook.com/UlaanbaatarMUN/

Mongolia Model United Nations
Mongolia Model United Nations runs an annual Model United Nations conference in Ulaanbaatar.

Link: https://www.facebook.com/MongoliaMUN/

The UN's 'Model United Nations' Page
The United Nations is very supportive of Model United Nations clubs. This page is a collection of resources that they offer for clubs.

Link: https://www.un.org/en/mun

The UN's 'Model United Nations' Guidebook
This online guide includes information on the real UN, instructions for preparing for Model United Nations, and instructions for running a Model United Nations event.

Link: https://www.un.org/node/44556

Conference Archives from National Model United Nations
This is the website of a global Model United Nations conference. This page has links to the documents used at all of its past events. The 'Background Guides' can be used as practice materials for any Model United Nations club.

Link: https://www.nmun.org/about-nmun/conference-archives.html

Service Club

Description

A Service Club is a club that meets regularly to volunteer and perform charitable works in the community. There are many other names for this type of club, like Volunteer Club or Community Outreach Club. The common feature of all these variations is that members meet to help others, and are not paid for their efforts. Service Clubs can help others by raising money for causes, volunteering their time, or other acts as needed. Service Club participants gain skills and experience for their resume, broaden their network, and develop a closer connection with their community. Service Clubs exist around the world; some are made up of students and some are open to all citizens of a community.

Resources

Lava-Volunteer Club at GMIT
GMIT runs a Volunteer Club in Nalaikh that helps those in need and encourages others to do volunteer work.

Link: http://www.gmit.edu.mn/eng/p/34

Rotary
Rotary is one of world's largest network of Service Clubs – there are over 35,000 Rotary Clubs worldwide, with 1.2 million members. Rotaract is the program at Rotary specifically for youth (ages 18-30). The 'Rotaract' link below offers more information on what a Service Club involves. The 'Guide' link below includes a downloadable copy of the Rotaract Handbook, which gives detailed instructions for how to start and operate a Service Club.

'Rotaract' Link: https://www.rotary.org/en/get-involved/rotaract-clubs
'Guide' Link: https://www.rotary.org/en/get-involved/rotaract-clubs/details

Kiwanis
Kiwanis is another major network of Service Clubs – it has more than 550,000 members in 80 countries. Key Club is Kiwanis' program for youth (high school students). The 'Key Club' link below includes links to resources and service project ideas. The 'Documents' link below has files that you can download and use to run a Service Club – the 'Guides' are especially useful.

''Key Club' Link: https://www.keyclub.org/
''Documents' Link: https://www.keyclub.org/grouping/documents/

Opportunity: GMIT Collaboration

Through staying at the GMIT campus while in Nalaikh, we learned that GMIT has a very active network of student clubs – **60% of GMIT students are members of at least one student club.** The clubs are listed on the school's "Student Clubs" webpage (*link:* http://www.gmit.edu.mn/eng/p/34). We suggest that the DFYCD meet with the coordinators of the GMIT student clubs (both adults and youth) to learn how they have achieved such a high level of participation.

There is also potential for the DFYCD and GMIT to **jointly run clubs for youth.** Each organization would also retain its own clubs, but in areas where their interests overlap, the two organizations could cooperate to offer clubs open to both GMIT students and Nalaikh residents. Some of the benefits of this collaboration include:

- *Larger clubs:* By drawing on two populations (GMIT students and Nalaikh youth), the clubs would have more members, creating a more rewarding social experience for youth.
- *Relationship building:* Most GMIT students are not originally from Nalaikh, so they do not have relationships with the youth in the town. Creating opportunities for these two groups of youth to interact would increase the students' sense of belonging in the town and expose Nalaikh youth to academically successful peers.
- *Efficiencies:* DFYCD can benefit from GMIT's existing strong practices for club recruitment and operations, and GMIT can benefit from DFYCD's broad reach in the community and connection to the Governor's Office.

Appendix 11

Suggested Steps for
Youth Leadership Position
IMPLEMENTATION

Incorporating youth leadership positions into the Governor's Office will stimulate invaluable learning opportunities for youth in Nalaikh, while simultaneously helping to build a meaningful relationship between the local government and youth. These types of high-commitment civic engagement opportunities are important because they help to translate youth-driven ideas and opinions into sustainable community solutions. These opportunities are complementary to the four recommendations mentioned above, as they provide an avenue for youth to move through foundational measures and expand their involvement efforts. Based on the enthusiasm of the youth we met in Nalaikh, and the largely positive views of democracy shared during focus groups, we believe there would be significant interest in opportunities of this kind.

Basic Steps

1. Assign a DFYCD staff member to manage this program

It is important to have one central authority who can coordinate all aspects of the program and is accountable for it.

2. Audit Governor's Office for potential Youth Leadership Positions

All existing programs, committees, and operational teams run out of the Office should be audited to **identify opportunities for youth involvement.** These opportunities could include designated 'Youth Representative' positions on committees, 'Youth Engagement Advisors' for program and event planning processes, and 'Youth Internships' on operational teams. The audit should be conducted by a team with representation from the Governor's Office (who knows its structure well), and the DFYCD program coordinator.

The team should produce a list of potential Youth Leadership Positions. The team may wish to begin by implementing 1-5 positions from the list as a pilot program, but the list itself should be aspirational and include as many positions as possible.

3. Create Youth Leadership Position job descriptions

For the positions to be filled, create job descriptions outlining:

- What the youth is expected to **contribute**
- What the youth will **receive** in return (see below for suggested incentives)
- The **impact** of the role (what the youth will help to achieve through the position)
- The expected **time commitment,** in hours/week (including meeting date and time, if applicable, i.e. if the youth will be joining a committee that already has a meeting time)
- The **length** of the position, in months
- Any **candidate requirements** (these should be attainable for the majority of youth – attitude is more important than skills, which can be learned through experience)

4. Recruit youth to fill Youth Leadership Positions

Given the importance of these Youth Leadership Positions, it is essential that recruitment be conducted fairly and thoroughly, so that the youth chosen are representative of their peers. Recruitment methods include:

- *Advertising:* promote the Youth Leadership Positions online and with posters in popular areas and on job notice boards (see *Appendix 9* for communication recommendations). This is a traditional recruitment method that is important to include, but sometimes youth will not see your advertisements. You should complement this approach with other methods.
- *Leverage existing groups:* identify events and groups that already have high youth attendance (i.e. after-school events at schools, sports competitions, entertainment events) – consult with youth to find out what these are! Go directly to them to promote the Youth Leadership Positions in-person with your advertising materials.

Another frequently-used recruitment method is "Snowball Sampling," or using existing connections to find youth who are interested. We do not recommend that method for Youth Leadership Position recruitment, because it may create the perception that these esteemed positions are unfairly given to friends and family of Governor's Office staff, without equal opportunity for other youth.

5. Choose youth to fill Youth Leadership Positions

The team should determine a process to assess applications and choose youth. Possibilities include:

- Interviews
- Application essays
- Reference letters

Youth who are not chosen for the position they applied to should be offered other opportunities whenever possible, in order to maintain their enthusiasm.

6. Monitor youths' experience in Leadership Positions

Once youth have been assigned to Leadership Positions, the DFYCD program manager should regularly check in with them and the Governor's Office staff they work with to ensure that:

- Youth are **satisfied** with the experience
- The Governor's Office is **satisfied** with the experience
- Youth are **completing the duties** of their job description
- The Governor's Office is **using the youth's input** in meaningful ways
- Positions are **renewed or re-filled** when youth finish their terms

7. Share the impact of the program

Once this program is running, it is important to share the results widely on channels that youth engage with! Seeing the impact these roles have will encourage more youth to apply for future postings. This can be incorporated into the Communications Campaign that is also recommended in this report.

Incentives for Youth

The Youth Leadership Positions can be voluntary (unpaid), but youth should receive some form of **compensation in recognition of their service.** We recommend consulting with youth to learn what incentive would be most motivating for them. Options include:

- A reference letter at the completion of their term
- An official certificate
- A 'thank you' letter
- An appreciation event
- A token or gift

It should also be emphasized that youth will receive many intangible benefits from this experience, including:

- Valuable experience that reflects well on a resume
- Skills development (public speaking, advocacy, problem solving, etc.)
- Networking opportunities
- Increased connection to their community

Examples

Job Posting for a 'Youth City Council Representative' (Fernie)
This posting is on the municipal website for Fernie, a small town in British Columbia, Canada. In this example, one youth will sit on the adult City Council.

Link: https://www.fernie.ca/EN/meta/whats-new/news-archives/2019-archive/youth-council-representative-volunteer-opportunity.html

Job Postings for a 'Mayor's Youth Advisory Council' (Niagara Falls)
This posting is on the municipal website for Niagara Falls, a city in Ontario, Canada. In this example, a group of youth will form their own council that officially advises the adult City Council. This page includes job postings and council procedures.

Link: https://niagarafalls.ca/city-hall/committees/myac/about.aspx

Building Effective Youth Councils: A Practical Guide to Engaging Youth in Policy Making
This report by the Forum for Youth Investment outlines six key steps to establishing municipal youth leadership positions. It includes examples from Boston, San Francisco, Nashville, and other American cities.

Link: http://med-fom-learningcircle.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2010/09/Building-Effective-Youth-Councils.pdf

Toronto Youth Cabinet
The Toronto Youth Cabinet (TYC) is a youth-led organization that promotes youth participation in civic affairs and policy development. TYC is an official advisory body to the City of Toronto. TYC membership is open to youth ages 13 to 24 who live, work, or study in Toronto. This is an example of a very large and successful municipal youth leadership opportunity.

Link: http://thetyc.ca/

Appendix 12

Youth Civic Engagement
CASE STUDIES

Empowering Youth: British Columbia

- **The University of British Columbia**
- ***Exploring Youth Civic Engagement and Disengagement in British Columbia, Canada* (2016)**

Published in the Journal of International Social Studies, the research article, *Exploring Youth Civic Engagement and Disengagement in British Columbia, Canada*, investigates youth beliefs about, and actions towards, civic life and the connections between these factors and youths' personal conditions and surrounding contexts.[65] Although the research project was focused on university youth from British Columbia, we believe there are some applicable findings and insightful recommendations worth considering for the Nalaikh context. Specifically, the study discusses civic engagement methods designed to facilitate a more relevant, memorable, and empowering experience for youth. Moreover, the study presents possible research opportunities that may be applicable to the Nalaikh context in the future, such as analyzing and revising the civic education curriculum in Nalaikh and analyzing youth engagement barriers through an equity and diversity lens.

Similar to our findings in Nalaikh, this research project found a **lack of civic efficacy** among British Columbian youth to be a significant barrier to meaningful engagement. Youth in British Columbia cited a lack of interest and time as primary reasons for disengagement. Youth also expressed feelings of powerlessness and disbelief in their ability to affect change, which directly impeded their interest in seeking meaningful engagement in their communities.[66] Regardless, in both cases, youth expressed what we perceived to be positive or neutral views towards democracy in general. Indeed, most Nalaikh youth we spoke to felt as though democracy was an important component of society, but failed to understand democracy beyond a theoretical framework (i.e. most suggested democracy is about equal rights, but failed to connect the action of voting to the democratic process).

A key theme that emerged from our project is the importance of **empowering youth,** as a mechanism to encourage civic engagement. This research study reiterates this message, suggesting youth may benefit from more experience-based learning in the

65 Broom 2016
66 Ibid.

political sphere. The case study specifically recommends connecting schools with local political activities, venues and people, such as visiting city hall or getting involved in a civic issue.[67] Fostering a welcoming and safe environment for youth to interact with community projects helps to facilitate dialogue and skill development. Further, participation in social-based projects supports a broader understanding of issues facing the community and encourages youth to take a greater degree of responsibility for project tasks.[68]

As initially mentioned, two additional parallels drawn from the British Columbian case study involve civic education curricula and diversity-focused research. Similar to youth in Nalaikh, British Columbian youth suggested the civic education curriculum was not useful for translating learned knowledge into actionable civic participation.[69] The researchers from British Columbia recommend re-evaluating the curriculum to consider what kind of democratic society we are aiming for and what type of education will fit this aim.[70] Although providing curriculum recommendations is beyond the scope of this paper, we would encourage the client to explore civic education as a research topic in future projects (see *10.2 Future Research*).

Lastly, the British Columbia case study recommends exploring ethnically diverse youth within pluralistic nations, as a proxy to constructing their citizenship and encouraging engagement in civic life.[71] As mentioned in this report, the minority Kazakh population comprises a vibrant portion of the Nalaikh community. Our research does not consider youth civic engagement from their perspective, and as such, applying a diversity and equity lens to this project is a worthwhile area to explore in the future (see *10.2 Future Research*).

Diverse Programming for Diverse Youth: India

- **Pavah NGO**
- *Youth Participation in Programs and Organizations* (2002)

The book "What Works in Youth Participation: Case Studies from Around the World," showcases several successful youth civic engagement initiatives, led by different types of organizations. One particular case study, written by Jaya Iyer from the Pravah NGO, provides a variety of strategies to mediate the **hierarchical gap** between youth and adults in Indian society, as well as some ideas to encourage a diverse range of youth

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67 Broom 2016
68 Ibid.
69 Ibid.
70 Ibid.
71 Ibid.

civic engagement opportunities. Specifically, strategies focus on challenging principles and values to inevitably resolve underlying and conflicting beliefs on the allocation of authority. Such strategies aim to develop new skills for youth, especially in the areas of communication, teamwork, and coaching, and emphasize comparative rather than competitive behaviour.[72] Through working with young people, rather than on young people, Pravah's goal is to enable **youth to become leaders** for social change by facilitating their participation in effective decision making.[73]

Although our project does not specifically analyze this hierarchical gap between adults and youth, some evidence from our research suggests a disconnect between youth and adults in Nalaikh indeed exists. When asked what barriers exist that may impede youths' ability to fill out the CSS, the fourth most cited answer was, "youth feel ignored." Moreover, some youth expressed their appreciation for these focus group sessions simply because the process provided a space for youth to discuss ideas openly, void of critique. One participant provided this feedback following one of our sessions, "I like this research. I wish this kind of research/survey was held once a week. It activates people. We exchanged/shared our opinions." This type of feedback suggests youth may feel uncomfortable expressing ideas with adults, and that youth-dedicated spaces may help to bridge this gap.

To mitigate this gap in India, Pravah facilitates a range of programs that focus on the development of social skills, encourages sensitization to social issues, and stimulates volunteer opportunities. Most importantly, they address generational stereotypes to help encourage cooperation between young people and adults. For example, they challenge the idea that youth lack commitment by actively involving young adults in the process of decision-making. Every year, Pravah facilitates a research project on an issue of social concern. The adults share research options, but youth group members make the final decisions regarding the issue and methodology. Taking a more **hands-off approach,** while still providing guidance when applicable, Pravah provides space for youth to develop and actualize their own ideas.

The Pravah approach draws upon methodology illustrated in *The Triangle Model* (see *7.2.1 The Triangle Model*), suggesting sustained and meaningful civic engagement is a continuous process. By creating multiple pathways to youth civic engagement programs, Pravah cultivates a level of engagement that will most appropriately meet the needs of any one individual youth. The research project outlined above is intended to foster high levels of youth engagement while encouraging social change; however, this level of dedication may not be applicable for every individual. Therefore, additional opportunities that require a different set of skills and commitment level are provided to encourage a well-rounded pathway to youth civic engagement. Pravah attempts to give space and opportunities to young people by applying a democratic and flexible format, a method proven (see *7.2.1 The Triangle Model*) to attract the greatest possible

72 Golombek and Little 2002
73 Ibid.

amount of youth civic engagement. Considering the Nalaikh context specifically, we believe it may be worthwhile to explore some of these pathways to youth civic engagement. Although something as comprehensive as a social-based research project may not be possible in Nalaikh at this time – given resource constraints – other engagement projects, such as mock debates or the creation of a community youth committee, are great avenues to engage a diverse range of youth with different skill sets and time constraints.

Innovations in Engagement: Mongolia

- **Smart UB**
- ***Mobile Application Around E-Voting* (2019)**

Smart UB is an e-voting mobile phone application that provides innovative ways for Mongolians to participate in the voting process. The app was designed and developed by the Asia Foundation in partnership with Mongolia's Local Development Fund (LDF), an initiative that funds infrastructure improvements based on community feedback. Smart UB's main goals are to address problems associated with paper voting systems, and to mitigate concerns regarding representation in the decision-making process.[74]

Traditionally, Mongolian voting opportunities have been limited to typical working hours, making it difficult for segments of the population (including youth) to actively participate in the process. Smart UB is hoping to fill this gap by providing voting access to all eligible voters with a smartphone. Unlike its paper counterpart, the process through Smart UB would be convenient and quick. The app offers voting 24 hours per day, for a window of one month.

The application was initially piloted in 2019 and deployed throughout 42 khoroos in Ulaanbaatar. According to the Asia Foundation, initial trials reported successful results. Evidence from aimag data suggested that Mongolian elections have primarily been dominated by older and female voters, for whom door-to-door paper voting is convenient, while male and youth voters have been underrepresented in the democratic voting process.[75] However since its launch, Smart UB has been able to generate a larger response rate from those previously underrepresented demographics. The Smart UB application process was communicated to Mongolians by their Kheseg Leaders (Smart UB ran detailed training sessions for these individuals). Kheseg Leaders visited each household to walk citizens through the new e-voting process (and to share phones with any citizens who did not have access to one). The process is relatively straightforward: A voter enters their identification information (gender, age, address, and phone number), and then voters are directed to the main

74 Ganbat 2019
75 Dierkes 2018

screen to cast their vote.

While Smart UB was successful in the 42 khoroos, it has experienced particular triumph in Nalaikh. The Asia Foundation reported a 100% voting participation rate in the seven Nalaikh khoroos targeted. In the future, Smart UB is hoping to extend beyond voting on predetermined options, and also collect voter opinions on community problems. The designing and testing phase for this function was already well underway at the time this report was written. However, there may be some obstacles on the horizon for Smart UB. The app is owned by the City of Ulaanbaatar (through the LDF), and electoral turnover has created hurdles for the project, including opposition from new administrative teams during election cycles.

Regardless, the LDF has announced an official launch date for the app in 2021. At this time, Smart UB information will be distributed to all 173 Ulaanbaatar khoroos, a move that has been supported by the District Governor's Office of Nalaikh.[76] In the future, there may be additional opportunities for strategic partnerships between the DFYCD and Smart UB.

Lastly, it's worthwhile to point out that Smart UB attributes some of its high voting rates to a thorough communications campaign rolled out alongside its pilot program. The organization partnered with professional journalists to generate media coverage raising awareness about the app itself, and about the importance of voting in the LDF process. Smart UB's focus on communications has continued beyond the pilot phase; they monitor all voting results and upload key information back to the app so that citizens can see the results of their participation.

Mainstreaming Youth Participation:
Balkan Countries

- **Analysis of Youth Civic Engagement in Post-Communist Countries**
- *Youth Participation in the Balkans: Wishful Thinking or Long-term Reality? (2002)*

This case study was written by Agon Demjaha and discusses the importance of mainstreaming youth civic engagement in a post-communist context. Similar to Mongolia, the Balkan countries have undergone a transition towards a market economy and a pluralistic democracy.[77] Indeed, this case study does not shy away from the complications post-soviet societies face when transitioning to democracy. However, the author emphasizes the role youth can play in addressing some of these

76 Baljmaa 2020
77 Golombek and Little 2002

barriers, a move driven by cohesive, regionally focused youth civic engagement strategies.[78]

The Balkan region continues to struggle with low levels of youth participation. Youth participation in this context refers to the active participation of young people in program decisions, design, and implementation.[79] Similar to the Nalaikh context, youth in the Balkan region comprise a significant portion of the population, but youth are underrepresented at the voting polls and in civic-based projects more broadly. Moreover, there is a considerable degree of mistrust among youth from Balkan countries towards politics and formal government institutions in general.[80] Some Nalaikh youth hold similar sentiments towards government and politics. For example, the majority of participants we spoke to held local and national governments solely accountable for community problems. One group in particular expressed their frustration towards the local government, suggesting the high political turnover affects job stability in the region. This case study also emphasizes high unemployment as a barrier impeding youth civic engagement,[81] an issue contextualizing the broader nuances impacting the Balkan region. Although macro in view, this broader issue can be compared to the Nalaikh context; unemployment was the fifth most cited problem facing Nalaikh, as perceived by youth.

Similar to Nalaikh, the Balkan region is lacking youth-specific measures designed to understand the opinions, thoughts, and perspectives of youth. Mainstreaming youth participation means incorporating youth voices into all decisions, while also engaging with youth through different avenues.[82] Some key strategies outlined in this case study, which may be applicable in the Nalaikh context, include stimulating public dialogue about youth engagement in the community (i.e. public debates), fostering youth involvement in governance structures and processes (i.e. political youth committees), and supporting the development of spaces dedicated to youth (i.e. clubs, sports teams, student government).[83] Comparatively, many of our recommendations for Nalaikh consider the above-mentioned suggestions, specifically encompassing mechanisms aimed at fostering dialogue between youth and the Governor's Office.

One specific program, Balkans YouthLink Leadership Institute (YLLI), implemented in Albania has proven to be successful in decreasing youth apathy, and increasing youth leadership and interest in civic issues. The program is a 10-day camp that focuses on experiential learning, as a means of showing youth the value of civic engagement and providing them with the tools to initiate change in their communities. As noted in the *What Works series, What Works in Youth Engagement in the Balkans,* about "70% of the Institute's 150 graduates have gone on to start a debate club, mock trial tournament, or newspaper in their high schools."[84] For an in-depth description of similar programs implemented in the Balkan region, refer to the What Works in Youth Engagement in the Balkans report linked in the Reference Section.[85]

78 Golombek and Little 2002
79 Ibid.
80 Ibid.
81 Ibid.

82 Ibid.
83 Ibid.
84 Thorup and Kinkade 2005
85 Ibid,

Strategies for Increasing Youth Civic Engagement in Nalaikh
Claire Casher, Samantha Coronel, Rasmus Dilling-Hansen, Cassandra Jeffery
20 April 2020