

**National Youth
Engagement Policy**
of the
**Barbados Boy Scouts
Association**



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DEFINITIONS

- **Youth**

“Youth” within the Barbados Boy Scouts Association refers to all individuals under the age of thirty (30) registered as members of the Association, categorised as either: “Beaver Scouts”, “Cub Scouts”, “Scouts”, “Venture Scouts”, or “Adult Leaders”. The core of the association’s learning experience focuses on the social development of boys and young men; therefore, its Youth Programme ends at matured adulthood, encapsulating childhood, adolescence and young adulthood only.

- **Beaver Scouts**

“Beaver Scouts” within the Barbados Boy Scouts Association refers to all individuals between the ages of four (4) and seven (7) registered as members of the Association. The Association’s Beaver Scout programme provides an introduction to Scouting for young boys.

- **Cub Scouts**

“Cub Scouts” within the Barbados Boy Scouts Association refers to all individuals between the ages of seven (7) and eleven (11) registered as members of the Association. The Association’s Cub Scout programme provides an introduction to Scouting for preadolescent boys, focusing on the values of teamwork.

- **Scouts**

“Scouts” within the Barbados Boy Scouts Association refers to all individuals between the ages of eleven (11) and sixteen (16) registered as members of the Association. The Association’s Scout programme delivers an in-depth experience in scouting, predicated on the learning of various scoutcraft skills, leadership development and proficiencies.

- **Venture Scouts**

“Venture Scouts” within the Barbados Boy Scouts Association refers to all individuals over the age of sixteen (16) and under the age of twenty-five (25), registered as members of the Association and actively participating in a structured District Venture Unit. The Association’s Venture Programme encapsulates delivering an experience based on leadership development, physical and written proficiencies, and independence.

- **Adults Leaders**

“Adult Leaders” within the Barbados Boy Scouts Association refers to all individuals over the age of eighteen (18), registered as adult members of the Association who have completed the requisite training, including the “Safe from Harm (SfH)” Module, as stipulated by the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM). Adult Leaders are responsible for supporting and facilitating the development and delivery of the Youth Programme, supporting other Adult Leaders or organization structures, as required for efficient operationalization. This policy is duly applicable to Adult Leaders between the ages of eighteen (18) and thirty (30).

- **Youth Participation**

“Youth Participation”, as defined by the World Scout Youth Involvement Policy, is any

process which ensures young people are consulted and given opportunity to contribute to decisions which affect their lives. Within the framework of the Barbados Boy Scouts Association, Youth Participation refers to any process which emphasises and/or facilitates the collection, analysis, and implementation of feedback from the Young Members of the association.

- **Youth Involvement**

“Youth Involvement”, as defined by the World Scout Youth Involvement Policy, is a capacity building process, based on enabling young people to actively share responsibility with adults for making decisions which affect their lives, and the lives of those in the community. Within the framework of the Barbados Boy Scouts Association, it refers to the deliberate inclusion of Young Members of the association in its Executive Bodies, at the Group, District and National Level.

- **Youth Engagement**

“Youth Engagement”, as defined by the World Scout Youth Involvement Policy, is the meaningful participation and sustained involvement of young people in an action in which they use their time, intelligence, talents, skills, and abilities for making a positive change in their own lives, and the lives of others, which results from strong connections to a particular idea, person, activity, place, or outcome. Within the framework of the Barbados Boy Scouts Association, it refers to the sustained efforts on the part of the Adult Leaders of the Association to interact with the Youth Members in thematic, dynamic ways which call on their time, intelligence, talents, skills, and abilities.

- **Youth Empowerment**

“Youth Empowerment”, as defined by the World Scout Youth Involvement Policy, is the attitudinal, structural, and cultural process whereby young people gain the ability, authority, and agency to make decisions and implement change in their own lives and the lives of others. Within the framework of the Barbados Boy Scouts Association, it refers to the consequential shift of the association, attitudinally, structurally, and culturally, overseeing the elevation of Youth to positions of ability, authority and agency within the association’s leadership hierarchy which specifically requires the perspective of the Youth to guide the work in this area and support the development of this policy.

INTRODUCTION

The World Scout Youth Involvement Policy highlights the basic principle that “Scouting is a Movement of young people, supported by adults, not a Movement of young people managed by adults. Scouting therefore, should offer the potential for a community of learning for youth, young people, and adults, working together in a partnership of enthusiasm and experience.” This basic principle “should be reflected both in the Youth Programme of a National Scout Association and in the management structures of the organization.”

The Barbados Boy Scouts Association, in an effort to maintain a standard of operations in accordance with those of the World Association of the Scout Movement (WOSM) and in an appreciation for the increased involvement of its Youth Members in its hierarchy of decision-making, is determined to integrate a Youth Engagement Policy into the framework of the National Scout Association (NSO).

VISION STATEMENT

The Vision for this Policy is to develop the Barbados Boy Scouts Association into the premiere Youth Association for boys and young men in Barbados by creating an environment in which they, through their involvement in the Barbados Boy Scouts Association’s National Programme, are empowered to develop their capacity and abilities for innovation, intelligence, leadership, responsibility, discipline, decision- making, and participation in all aspects of society, so that they may actively contribute to creating a better world.

PURPOSE

This Policy aims to increase youth engagement and involvement in the Barbados Boy Scouts Association by directing aspects of Youth Involvement at the Group, District and National Levels of the Association, through reinforcing existing measures of Youth Involvement and through the implementation of contemporary measures. This policy emphasises the importance of creating and maintaining a collaborative environment where skills, knowledge and experience are passed, shared, and exemplified organically and harmoniously

THE YOUTH ENGAGEMENT POLICY OF THE

BARBADOS BOY SCOUTS ASSOCIATION

POLICY DECLARATION

It shall be the policy of the Barbados Boy Scouts Association to prioritise the involvement, engagement, and empowerment of its Youth Members in all aspects of the Association.

POLICY OBJECTIVES AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Objectives of this Policy are to:

1. **Ensure** that its Youth Programme, Policies and Guidelines place emphasis on Youth Empowerment and Involvement.
2. **Be based on** the World Scout Youth Involvement Policy and will be subject to regular revisions on a biennial basis.
3. **Designate** spaces within the leadership hierarchy specifically for Youth Members of the Association, ensuring that their operation reflects the rights of Youth Members to participate, vote and be appointed, with freedom of forfeiture of eligibility for Awards of the Association.

This objective is not applicable to positions which require appointees to be above the age of eighteen.

4. **Ensure** a thirty percent (30%) quota across all leadership committees, i.e. National Executive Committee, National Subcommittees, Chief Commissioner's Council, District Executive Committees, National Task Forces, Group Executive Committees, etc., is reserved for individuals under the age of 30.
5. **Prioritize** the selection of Youth Members under the age of 30 to attend and participate in national, regional and world conferences, forums or any Scout- based gathering.
6. **Define** and **establish** a system of general inclusion from every age group in the Association's strategic planning, i.e., to regularly assess the opinion of Youth Members on the Association's performance, its Policies, Operational Framework and Leadership.
7. **Require** the Association to act on the results of Youth Members' Assessment and involve Youth Members in its follow-up proceedings.
8. **Define**, develop and implement effective structures and tools to support and maximize youth engagement and involvement.
9. **Commit** a percentage of the Association's resources to support and maximize youth engagement and involvement, whether this be financial, interpersonal or other forms of support at all sections of the organization.
10. **Require** a focus on strategies of youth involvement, engagement, recruitment and retention as a core component of its Adult Training Curriculum, such as in the form of uniform improvement, promotional activities, the Association's curriculum, etc.
11. **Integrate** the Youth Members into the National Training Curriculum as active members

of the National Training Committee to involve them in the contemporary development of training strategies.

12. **Utilize** channels of communication which target Youth Members, depict Youth Members 75% of the time through these channels, and allow for them to offer feedback through these channels.
13. **Promote** and **support** the participation of Youth Members and Young People in general in external environments, including academically, professionally and in other extracurricular activities, such as assisting Youth Members in attaining internships and other employment opportunities.
14. **Establish** clear educational, personal and professional objectives that focus on the development of young people according to their age and corresponding needs.
15. **Place** emphasis on volunteerism activities amongst the Association to instill a sense of citizenship amongst the Association's membership.
16. Commit resources to equip its Youth Members with the necessary skills to act as a spokesperson internally and externally on behalf of the Association at all levels, whether this be financial, interpersonal or other forms of support at all stages of the organization.
17. **Enable** a culture of youth involvement at all levels that fosters young people's participation and intergenerational dialogue.
18. **Ensure** that its Youth Members understand and accept the responsibility to assume an active role in the leadership hierarchy of the Association.

The Key Performance Indicators to assess this policy's effectiveness are:

1. Thirty percent (30%) Involvement Quotas

This quota stipulates that on all decision-making bodies within the association (Group level, District level and National level) shall strive to maintain or exceed at least a thirty-percent complement of young members.

2. Seventy-five percent (75%) Depiction Quotas

This quota stipulates that all internal and external media produced and distributed by the association shall strive to maintain or exceed a seventy-five percent complement depicting young members.

3. Increase of Youth Recruitment

This indicator places emphasis on the continuous and sustained increase of membership among young members, through recruitment drives.

4. Increasing Youth Retention

This indicator places emphasis on the continuous and sustained retention of fully registered young members.

5. Increase in Leaders under the Age of 30

This indicator places emphasis on the continuous and sustained increase of Adult Leaders under the age of thirty, through recruitment of external individuals and elevation of internal members who have completed the Venture Scout programme.

6. Returns of Member Satisfaction from Systems of Youth Inclusion

This indicator relies on the use of practical avenues of assessing membership satisfaction from implemented systems of youth inclusion in the association. This may be assessed through verbal or written feedback, membership surveys and the analysis of quantitative data.

POLICY PREFACE

Young people, by the very nature of their existence, are fundamentally entitled to right of representation, self-determination, and perspective. They, just as any other demographic, have the right to be actively involved in decisions which affect their lives. In a youth-centric association, such as the Barbados Boy Scouts Association, the deliberate inclusion and involvement of young people in decision-making will result in an association reflective of the ideas, beliefs, and visions of its core members.

Youth involvement develops young people wherein they can think critically, argue constructively, form educated opinions, craft aspirations from their own desires, strengthen personal capacity and instil responsibility.

The inclusion of young people stands not only to benefit themselves, but their communities, associations, countries, and the globe. When a shared sense of social responsibility is fostered among adults and youth alike, the groundwork for sustainable development is laid, by ensuring social competence and creating cohesive communities which seamlessly can pass the reigns from generation to generation.

THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN DECISION-MAKING

The aim of Scouting in Barbados is to “develop good citizenship among boys by assisting in the formation and development of character; training them in habits of observation, obedience and self-reliance; inculcating patriotism, courage and thoughtfulness for others; teaching them services useful to the public and handicrafts useful to themselves; promoting their physical, mental; moral and spiritual development.” The Association’s Youth Programme is specifically intended to help young men “grow in a number of personal development areas to ensure that Scouts “learn by doing.” Therefore, the deliberate involvement and inclusion of young people in the decision-making hierarchy of the Association stands to assist the Barbados Boy Scouts in achieving its aim.

Furthermore, the power dynamic within the association is disproportionately skewed. According to the Association’s 2018-2019 census, despite there being an overwhelming ratio of youth members to adult leaders, youth representation on decision-making bodies is almost non-existent. Without input from youth members, the association stands to have its leaders design and implement ineffective and archaic engagement strategies; to adversely affect morale and discourage membership retention; and to fundamentally oppose the aim of the scouting association, by failing to develop core skills and competencies among the ranks of the youth membership.

YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN THE DECISION-MAKING HIERARCHIES

Referencing the objectives and key performance indicators, this policy presents guidelines for

the involvement of young people on three distinct levels: group, district and national. Youth involvement on these levels is complementary; it mutually- reinforces the aims of the Association while considering the capabilities, skill and maturity of the individual involved.

GROUP LEVEL

Youth involvement is the most accessible and most easily implemented at the Group level. From the guidelines detailed by the Scout Method, youth-involvement is observed and practiced through the Patrol / Six system, which assigns Scouts and Cub Scouts to teams within their group. This method, as adopted by the Barbados Boy Scouts Association, should continue to be implemented as the basis for youth involvement, with responsibilities varying by age-appropriateness.

The next step for youth-involvement in decision-making, as outlined by the Scout Method, stems from Group Leadership roles. Each patrol / six is led by a Patrol Leader / Sixer and aided by an Assistant Patrol Leader / Seconder. Each group is headed by a Senior Patrol Leader / Senior Sixer. These roles, as adopted by the Barbados Boy Scouts Association, should continue to be implemented, with the added responsibility of activity planning, information distribution and resource usage. By shifting these responsibilities on Boy Scouts or Cub Scouts in leadership roles, it allows for the increased facilitation of youth involvement within the unit.

At the group level, there must an opportunity for youth representation on the unit's executive body. Within the framework of the Barbados Boy Scouts Association, each group should have an attached governing executive body, complete with a Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Floor Members. It is the recommendation of the Youth Policy to:

1. Create a position on the attached committee for a representative of the Youth Members; and.
2. Strongly encourage Groups to meet or exceed the thirty-percent (30%) youth involvement quotas for executive bodies as outlined in the key performance indicators, through the deliberate recruitment of youth members.

In doing so, the Youth have a direct line of representation at the unit level, and say in what activities are planned, how resources are allocated, and how unit funds are spent. This ensures that youth members are deliberately involved in the decision-making processes of the group, while working in tandem with the Adult Leaders and Executive Personnel.

DISTRICT LEVEL

The Barbados Boy Scouts Association is divided into three districts, the Northern District, the Southern District and the Bridgetown District, all of which have attached executive bodies and whose operations are overseen by the requisite District Commissioners and District Chairs. At this level, youth involvement is less accessible. There must be deliberate opportunity for youth representation within the districts' executive bodies. It is the recommendation of the Youth Policy to:

1. Fill the position of District Youth Commissioner in each of the three Districts, eligible to be filled by any registered uniformed member of the requisite Districts of the Association, between the ages of eighteen (18) and thirty (30), and appointed to the position by the Chief Commissioner on the recommendation of the District Commissioner for a term of

two (2) years; and.

2. Strongly encourage Districts to meet or exceed the thirty percent (30%) youth involvement quotas for executive bodies as outlined in the key performance indicators through the deliberate recruitment of youth members.

In doing so, youth have a direct line of representation at the district level, and say in what activities are planned, how resources are allocated, and how district funds are spent. This ensures that youth members are deliberately involved in the decision-making processes of the District, while working in tandem with the Adult Leaders and Executive Personnel.

NATIONAL LEVEL

The Barbados Boy Scouts Association is managed by the Chief Commissioner, the Chief Commissioner's Council and the National Executive Committee. At this level, youth involvement is least accessible, due to the tenure and experience expected of members of these bodies. As the highest governing authority of a youth-centric association, it is imperative that the Barbados Boy Scouts Association makes deliberate opportunity for youth representation within the national executive bodies. It is the recommendation of the Youth Policy to:

1. Maintain the position of National Youth Commissioner for the Association, eligible to be filled by any registered uniformed member of the Association, between the ages of eighteen (18) and thirty (30), and appointed to the position by the National Executive Committee on the recommendation of the Chief Commissioner for an amended term of three (3) years to allow more frequent rotation of office between youth members; and
2. Create the position of Deputy National Youth Commissioner for the Association, eligible to be filled by any registered uniformed member of the Association, between the ages of eighteen (18) and thirty (30), and appointed to the position by the National Executive Committee on the recommendation of the Chief Commissioner for a term of three (3) years; and
3. Strongly encourage the Association to meet or exceed the thirty percent (30%) youth involvement quotas for executive bodies as outlined in the key performance indicators through the deliberate recruitment of youth members.

POLICY ADOPTION

The implementation of this policy will depend on the collective efforts of the National, District and Group structural governing bodies.

Its efficacy will be evaluated through the achievement of its set objectives and key performance indicator, as well as the analysis of written and verbal feedback, and other qualitative and quantitative data.

This policy, subject to approval by the Chief Commissioner's Council and National Executive Committee, is proposed to come into effect on January 1, 2024, and is subject to set periods of review every two years.

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The full lifespan of this policy, including adoption, implementation, evaluation and update is

indefinite.

The timeframe for implementation is proposed as four years, as follows:

- The first two (2) years, beginning on January 1, 2024 and ending on December 31, 2025, encompasses trial adoption and implementation of the policy, including announcement, explanation, and update of supporting policy documentation within the Barbados Boy Scouts Association. Following this period, the policy will be subject to review in the final quarter of the period, including rudimentary evaluation by Groups and Districts and full evaluation by the National Scouting Association.
- The next two years, beginning on January 1, 2026 and ending on December 31, 2027, encompasses the continuation of the policy, the analysis of the findings of the policy review and the implementation of improvements based thereon. Following this period, the policy will again be subject to review in the final quarter of the period, including rudimentary evaluation by Groups and Districts and full evaluation by the National Scouting Association.
- This Policy will be assessed on an annual basis through preliminary evaluations to track the progress and efficacy of its implementation. At the end of the policy's implementation timeframe, a progress report will be issued internally about the policy's efficacy, accompanied by the results of the evaluations conducted by the Groups, Districts and National Scouting Association. The progress report will recommend what action, if any are deemed necessary, will be taken at the end of the policy's timeframe for implementation.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

This policy is based on and is consistent with World Scout Youth Involvement Policy and its standards, published and ratified by the World Organization of the Scout Movement, 2015.

RESOURCES

This policy was delivered with the support of the WOSM consultant designated to guide the Barbados Boy Scouts Association with this service, Mr. Efriam Acosta.

Barbados Boy Scouts Association

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