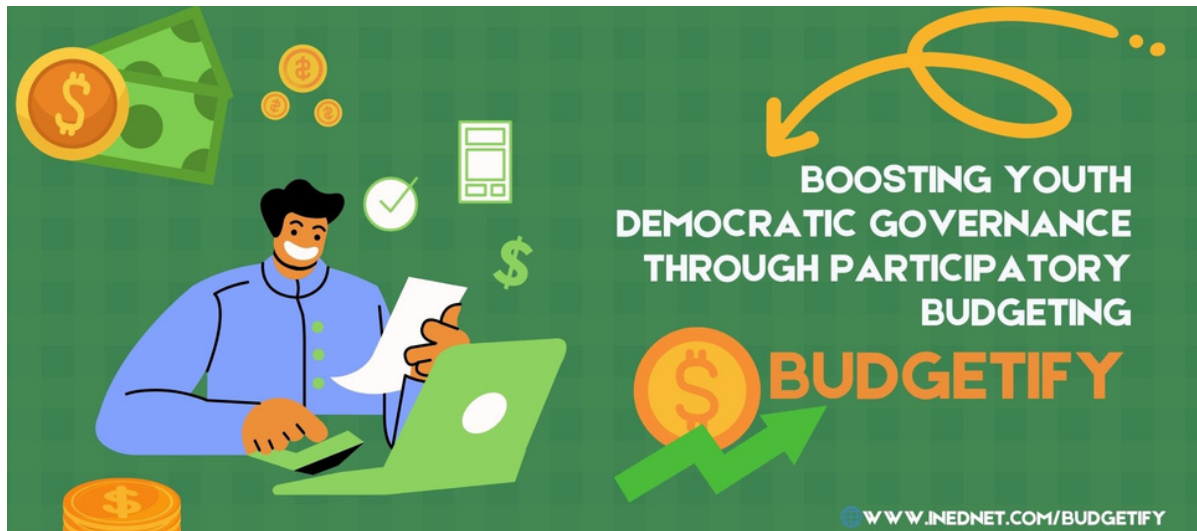


A YOUTH WORKBOOK ON PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING



MY FIRST PB PROJECT

This workbook belongs to:

WWW.INEDNET.COM/BUDGETIFY 2026



ALL ABOUT THIS WORKBOOK

Ever wondered how you could help decide how money gets spent in your community? That's exactly what Participatory Budgeting (PB) is about.

PB is a process that lets residents, including you, help decide how part of a public budget is spent. This guide, created by the Information and Education Development Network NGO, is your step-by-step, youth-friendly companion to understanding how PB works, why it matters, and how you can get involved.

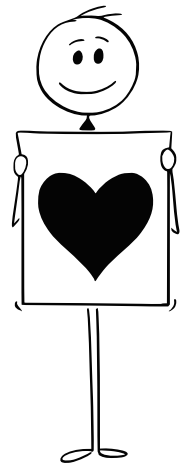
In this guide, we walk you through the general PB cycle, and along the way, we share real examples from Armenia, where PB already has its own legal framework, government decisions, and local guidelines.

Keep in mind: PB rules and procedures can look different from country to country, even from one municipality or district to another. So while this guide lays out the overall stages, logic, and steps of the PB process, we'll also invite you to dig into the specific rules and opportunities in your own city, town, or community.

Each stage of PB in this workbook includes three parts:

-  Explanation – what happens at this stage,
-  Armenia Example – how it plays out in real life,
-  Activity – try it yourself, guided by your facilitator during the Training Course

This workbook is yours. Customize it, jot down notes and reflections, write, draw, erase, start over, and eventually, come up with an innovative idea to submit for PB. We're here to support and guide you every step of the way.

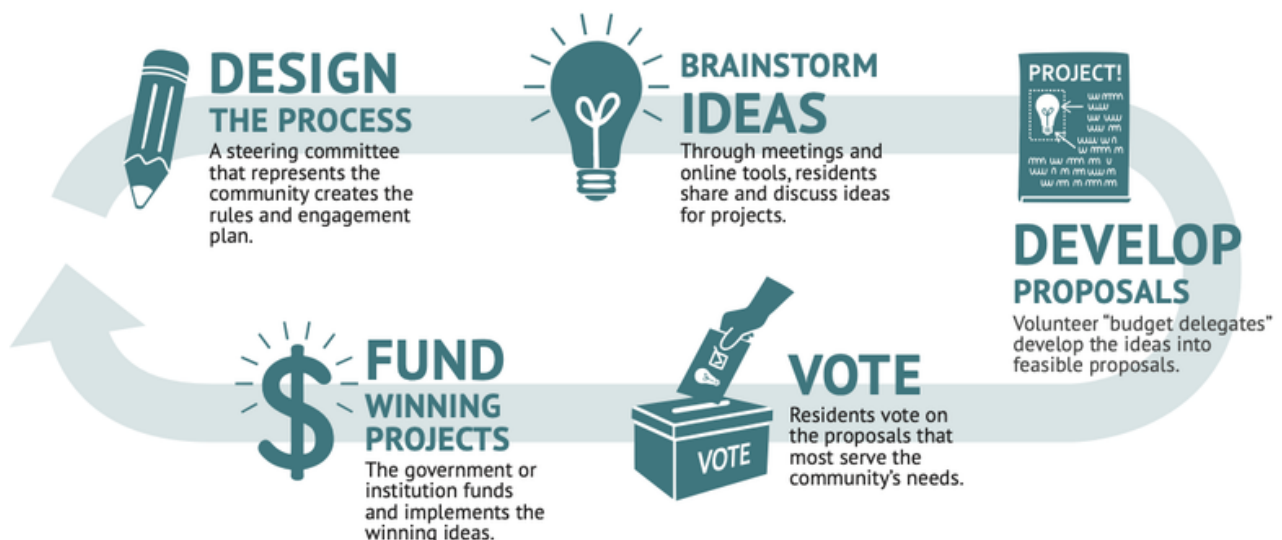


Participatory Budgeting PB Cycle involves the following stages:

1. Preparation → 2. Information and Outreach → 3. Idea Submission → 4. Preliminary Evaluation of Ideas → 5. Public Hearings and Discussions → 6. Public Voting → 7. Implementation & Monitoring → 8. Reporting.

How PB Works

PB is an annual cycle of engagement that is integrated into a regular budgeting process. A typical PB process follows these steps:





STEP 1: PREPARATION

Before anyone can submit ideas or vote, there's a first, and often invisible, step: getting everything ready. That's **Preparation**.

At this stage, the municipality or local authority prepares the entire process before opening it up to the public. Skip this step, or do it poorly, and people get confused, lose trust, or simply don't show up.

During this phase, the municipality usually makes decisions about the process itself:

- decides whether a PB process will take place
- defines the amount of money available for PB
- decides the timeline of the process
- sets the rules and criteria
- determines who can participate
- clarifies what kind of projects can be submitted
- assigns a responsible staff or a working group
- prepares communication and outreach plans



COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT: ARMENIA



Scan me!



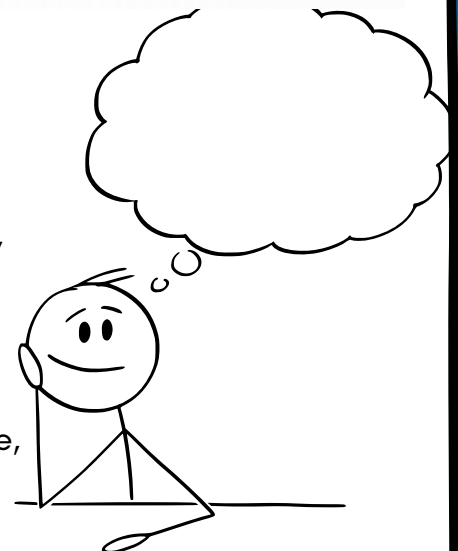
What Can Young People Do at This Stage?

- ask whether PB exists in their community
- find out who (or which body) is responsible for it
- check whether youth are included in the process
- ask what kinds of projects are eligible
- encourage the municipality to make PB more youth-friendly
- push for clear information and transparency



Key Message

If young people are not considered in the preparation phase, they may be excluded later without anyone noticing.



Individual reflection

- Does Participatory Budgeting exist in my community?
- If yes, who prepared the process?
- If no, who could start it?
- Are young people considered from the beginning?

Question

1. Does PB exist in my community?
2. Who organizes or coordinates it?
3. Is there a specific budget allocated for PB?
4. Are the rules publicly available?
5. Are young people included from the beginning?
6. What is one thing that could improve the preparation phase?

Answer

Pair Work Discussion:

- What makes a PB preparation phase transparent?
- What makes it youth-friendly?
- What risks appear if rules are unclear or not transparent?

Write or draw 3 ingredients of a good PB preparation phase.





STEP 2: AWARENESS & OUTREACH

Now that the process is prepared, it's time to let people know about it. Without proper information, residents may never hear about the opportunity, misunderstand how it works, or feel like it's not meant for them.

👉 *In simple words: This stage is about spreading the word and inviting people to take part.*

This is usually led by the municipality, sometimes together with local organizations, schools, or community groups, so keep an eye out for announcements from more than one source.



Main Goals of the Outreach Phase

- Inform residents about their right to participate in the process
- Provide clear, detailed information about how it works, the procedures, criteria, and timeline
- Encourage residents to actively get involved and submit their own project ideas



COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT: ARMENIA



What Can Young People Do at This Stage?

Young people can play an important role in spreading information, e.g.:

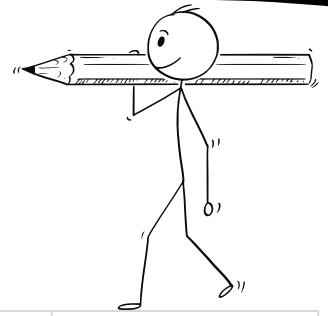
- share PB information on social media,
- explain PB to friends, classmates, and neighbours,
- organize small discussions or presentations in their youth club/school
- help municipalities create youth-friendly communication (they usually need your help and resources)
- encourage others and yourself to submit ideas.



YOUTH can become PB ambassadors in their communities.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Imagine your group is the municipality responsible for informing residents about Participatory Budgeting. Your task is to design a public awareness strategy.





STEP 3: PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

This is the stage where community members actively contribute their ideas for improving their community. Eligible residents (age requirements vary by location) are invited to submit project proposals that address local needs and priorities. Proposals can be submitted individually or as part of a group, organization, or initiative.

👉 *In simple words: This is your chance to turn an idea into a real proposal, and submit it for consideration.*

Each proposal should clearly describe:

- the problem it aims to solve,
- the proposed solution,
- the expected impact,
- and the resources required for implementation.

💡 *Tip: Think of your proposal like a mini action plan, what's the problem, what's your fix, and what would it take to make it happen?*

Submissions are made within a defined timeframe and according to a standard format provided by the municipality. Proposals can typically be submitted through online platforms or in paper form. At the end of this phase, all submitted proposals are collected and prepared for the next stage, where they'll be reviewed and evaluated.

COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT: ARMENIA



🧑🏫 👥 What Can and Should Young People Do at This Stage

- Identify issues that affect their daily lives (e.g. youth spaces, education, environment, mental health)
- Develop ideas and solutions that respond to these challenges
- Work in teams with peers, youth groups, or organizations to strengthen their proposals
- Collect feedback from other young people to ensure their idea reflects real needs
- Prepare and submit proposals using the official format
- Raise awareness among peers and encourage others to participate



Reflection Task

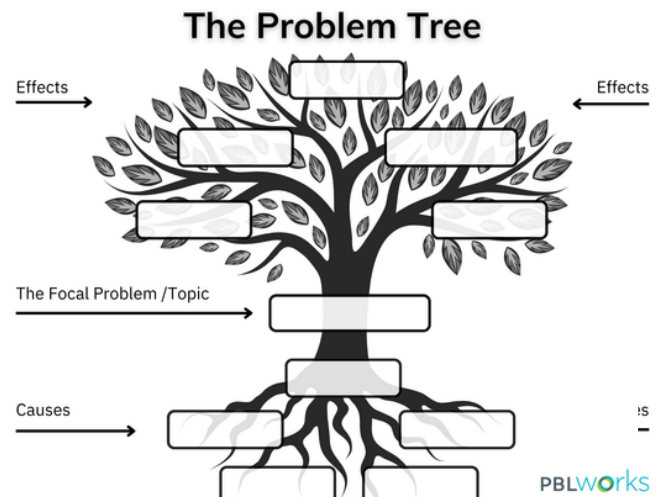
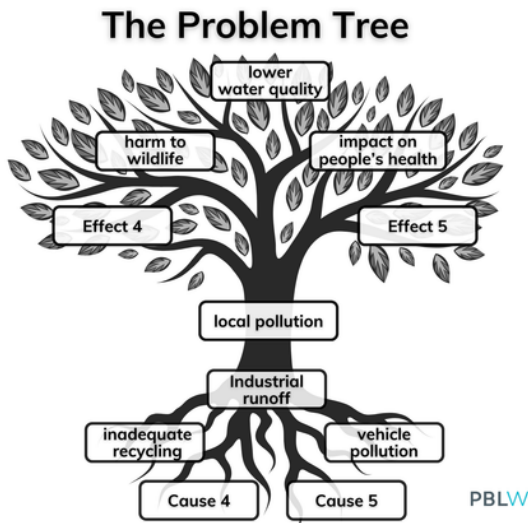
- What issue in your community would you like to address?

-
- What is your idea for solving it?

-
- Who will benefit from your proposal?
-



STEP 1: PROBLEM TREE ANALYSIS

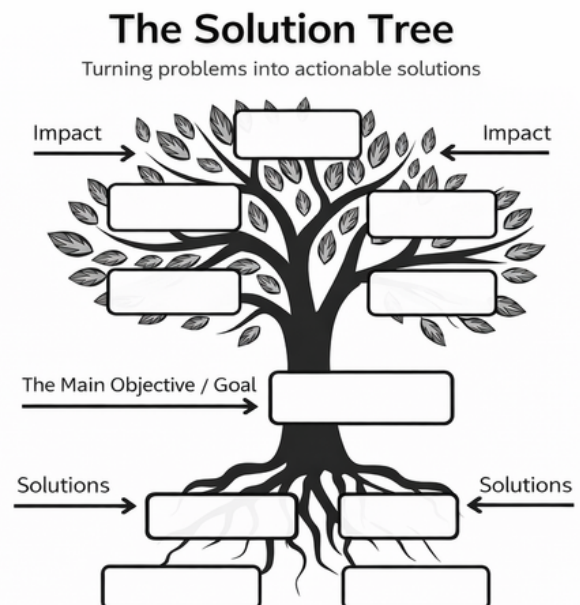
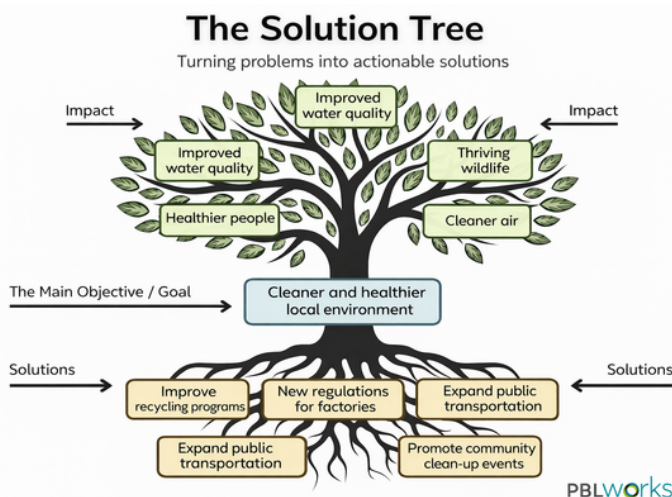


Instructions

1. Choose one key problem identified in your community/city/region.
2. In the tree above, identify:
 - 🌳 Trunk (Core Problem) → What is the main problem?
 - 🌱 Roots (Causes) → Why does this problem exist? (root causes)
 - 🌿 Branches (Effects) → What are the consequences of this problem?



Step 2: Solutions Tree



Now transform your problem tree into a solutions tree:

- 🌳 Trunk → Objective → What do we want to achieve?
- 🌱 Roots → Solutions/Actions → What can we do to solve the causes?
- 🌿 Branches → Results/Impact → What positive changes will happen?



STEP 4: PRELIMINARY EVALUATION

This phase takes place after all proposals have been submitted. A review committee (municipal staff with outside experts) checks each proposal to make sure it meets the established criteria and is ready for further consideration.

👉 *In simple words: Experts check whether each idea is realistic and ready to move forward, or needs to be turned down, with an explanation why.*

The evaluation focuses on whether proposals:

- are feasible and realistic,
- fall within the responsibilities of local authorities,
- fit within the allocated budget,
- address real community needs,
- align with community priorities,
- are inclusive and beneficial for different groups.

Based on this review, proposals are either:

- accepted and moved to the public discussion phase, or
- rejected, with clear feedback explaining why – so the idea can potentially be improved and resubmitted next time.

This phase ensures that only relevant, achievable, and impactful ideas move forward in the participatory budgeting process.

COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT: ARMENIA



🧑 What Can Young People Do at This Stage?

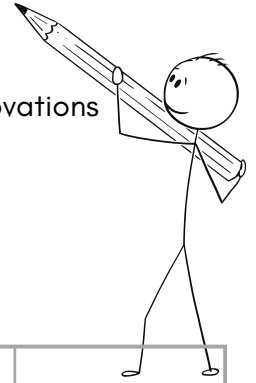
Even though evaluation is done by the committee, young people can still actively contribute:

- Follow the evaluation process → Stay informed about which proposals move forward and why, as this is usually published openly
- Advocate for their ideas → Explain and promote their proposals to decision-makers and the community
- Engage with feedback → Learn from comments and improve their ideas for future opportunities
- Support transparency → Encourage fair and clear evaluation processes
- Collaborate with others → Join efforts with peers or groups whose ideas are similar
- Prepare for the next phase → Get ready to present and defend their proposals during public discussions

💡 Key Message

This phase is about quality and feasibility—strong, realistic ideas have the best chance to move forward.

DRAW THE FUTURE - THEN INNOVATE



Let's think long-term and move beyond "basic" solutions, such as simple renovations or fixes. Imagine your community in 5-10 years and draw:

- What does your community look like?
- How do young people live?
- What problems exist?
- What has improved or worsened?



STEP 5: PUBLIC HEARINGS

Proposals that meet the established criteria are presented to the community. The goal is to discuss the proposals, their benefits, and their expected outcomes, and to help the public prepare for the voting phase.

👉 *In simple words: Before voting happens, everyone gets a chance to hear about the ideas, ask questions, and discuss them.*

These discussions are organized through the official community website, social media, television, community meetings, and other channels, and take place across all settlements in the community.

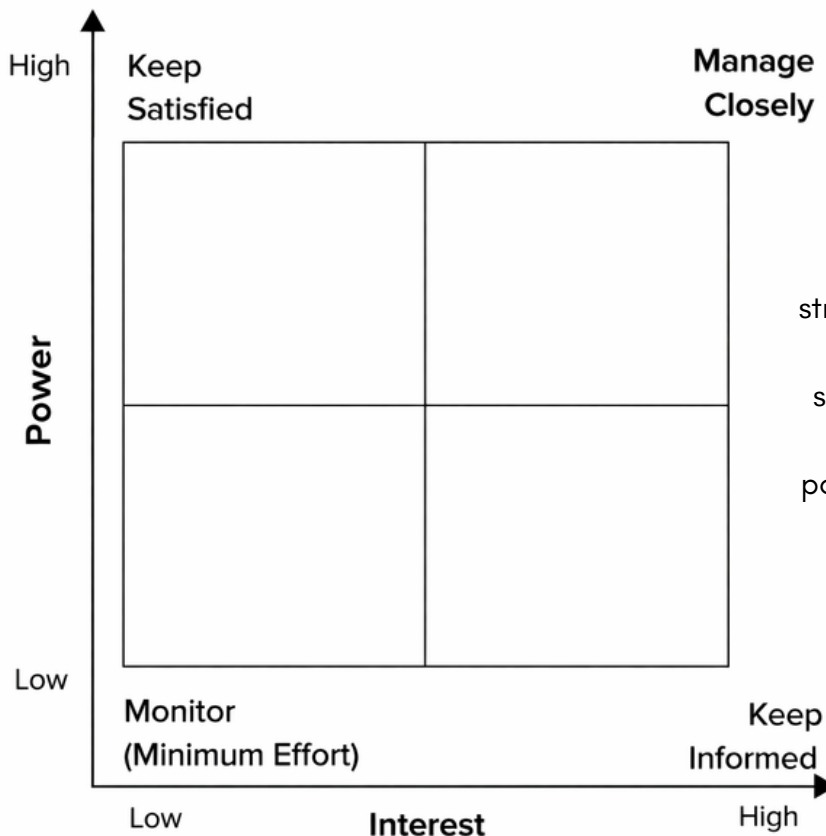
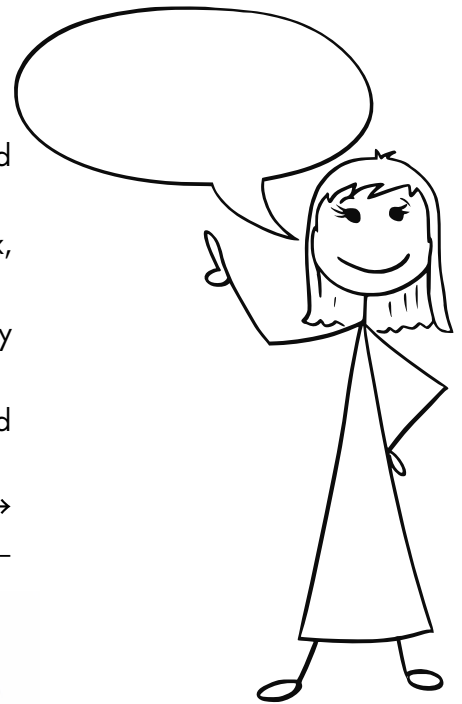
Authors of proposals that advanced to the voting phase are also invited to join, to present their ideas directly.



What Can Young People Do at This Stage?

Young people can actively engage and make their voices heard:

- Present their ideas confidently → Explain their proposals and why they matter
- Participate in discussions → Ask questions, give feedback, and share opinions
- Promote their proposals → Encourage peers and community members to support their ideas
- Listen to others → Understand different perspectives and improve their ideas, ask questions
- Build support and partnerships in this stage already → Connect with other participants, organizations, and decision-makers during the city council meetings



Stakeholder analysis is a structured process to identify, assess, and prioritize stakeholders based on their influence, interest, and potential impact on a project or PB process in our case. Let's think together.



STEP 6: VOTING

The voting phase is a key stage of participatory budgeting, where community members choose which proposals should be funded and implemented. After ideas have been developed, reviewed, and publicly discussed, they're presented for a vote, allowing residents to directly influence how part of the community budget is spent.

👉 *In simple words: This is where the community picks the winning ideas – and your vote counts.*

Eligible residents (age requirements vary by location) can vote for one or several proposals, depending on the rules. Voting can take place online, in person, or through alternative methods to ensure inclusiveness. The process is designed to be transparent, fair, and accessible, so that as many people as possible can take part.

The results determine which projects receive funding. Typically, proposals that receive the highest number or percentage of votes, while meeting minimum thresholds (a minimum number of votes required to qualify), are selected. The voting phase is where ideas become decisions, and decisions become real change in the community.



Why this phase is important?

- It gives decision-making power directly to citizens
- It ensures that funded projects reflect real community needs
- It strengthens democratic participation and trust



COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT: ARMENIA



What Can Young People Do at This Stage?

- Vote actively → Choose the projects that best address community needs
- Encourage others to vote → Mobilize friends, peers, and family, explain why it is important
- Promote your proposal → Share ideas through social media, schools, and local networks
- Ensure fair participation → Support inclusion of people who may face barriers (e.g. help others vote online)
- Stay informed → Follow voting results and understand how decisions are made

"WIN THE VOTE!" – PB CAMPAIGN CHALLENGE

 You will understand the voting phase by creating a real campaign strategy to obilise support of your community and win votes for your proposal

1. Our Proposal // What is your idea?

 _____

2. Campaign Goal // What do you want to achieve?

 _____

(e.g. number of votes, awareness, engagement)

3. Target Groups // Who should vote for your idea?

 _____

 _____

4. Why should they care? // What problem are you solving for them?

 _____

5. Key Message (1 sentence) // Why should people vote for your proposal?

 _____

6. Slogan / Hashtag Make it catchy and memorable:

 _____

7. Communication Channels //How will you reach people? (✓)

- ☐ Social media
- ☐ Schools / universities
- ☐ Youth groups
- ☐ Community meetings
- ☐ Posters / flyers
- ☐ Word of mouth
- ☐ Other: _____

8. Campaign Actions // What will you actually do?

9. Team Roles // Who is responsible for what?

10. Timeline // When will you act?

Before voting: _____

During voting: _____

✨ 11. Creative Idea // What makes your campaign stand out?

 _____

12. How Will You Mobilise Votes? How will you encourage people to actually vote?

 _____

Reflection // What will make your campaign successful?

 _____

 Key Reminder

 People vote for ideas they understand, trust, and feel connected to.



STEP 7: IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING

The implementation phase is where the winning proposals are turned into real projects. After the voting results are finalized, the selected ideas are developed into detailed plans and carried out by the municipality.

👉 *In simple words: This is where winning ideas actually get built, and where the community keeps watch to make sure that happens properly.*

Local authorities prepare the necessary paperwork and technical plans (such as permits, designs, and contracts), allocate resources, and begin implementation in line with legal and procurement requirements. The projects are carried out by relevant departments or external contractors, depending on the type of proposal.

At the same time, the process is monitored, by the municipality, and often residents too, to make sure implementation stays on track, transparent, and true to the original idea. Regular updates are shared with the public, often through official websites or other communication channels.

This phase is crucial because it transforms community ideas into tangible improvements, new spaces, services, or initiatives, that directly benefit residents.

👉 Participatory budgeting doesn't end with voting, real impact depends on successful implementation and active monitoring.



 COUNTRY
SPOTLIGHT:
ARMENIA

What Can Young People Do at This Stage?

- Follow project progress → Stay informed about how winning ideas are being implemented
- Monitor transparency → Check if information is shared clearly and regularly
- Provide feedback → Share opinions on implementation quality and impact
- Stay engaged → Participate in discussions and community updates
- Promote accountability → Encourage responsible use of public resources



STEP 8: REPORTING

The reporting stage is the final phase of the participatory budgeting process, where all activities and results are documented, analyzed, and shared with the public.

👉 *In simple words: This is where everyone looks back, what happened, what worked, and what to do better next time.*

The responsible committee prepares reports covering each phase of the process – from awareness and proposal submission to voting and implementation. These reports typically include:

- what was done
- how it was done
- the resources used
- timelines
- the results achieved

Reporting also includes reflection and evaluation. It highlights successes, identifies challenges, and provides lessons learned for improving future participatory budgeting cycles.

All reports are made publicly available, ensuring transparency and accountability. This helps build trust between citizens and local authorities, and lets the community clearly see the impact of their participation.

👉 And then the cycle begins again, reporting from one round often shapes and improves the next.

COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT: ARMENIA

🧑 What Can Young People Do at This Stage?

- Review and learn from the results of the process
- Reflect on what worked well and what could be improved
- Share feedback and suggestions for future cycles
- Stay engaged and prepare for the next round of participatory budgeting
- Promote transparency and accountability



💡 Key Message

👉 Reporting closes the loop of participatory budgeting, it shows what was achieved and helps make the next cycle even better.

FOR NOTES

Handwriting practice lines consisting of solid blue top and bottom lines with a dashed red midline. The page contains 10 sets of these lines for writing practice.



About

BUDGETIFY PROJECT

BUDGETIFY – Boosting Youth Democratic Governance through Participatory Budgeting (www.inednet.com/budgetify) is an international capacity-building project implemented by the Information and Education Development Network (INEDNET) Armenia and its international partners MENQ e.V. Germany, European Dialogue Slovakia, KEKS Sweden, DevYou Hungary, Aequelitas Portugal, RNCLTM Moldova with the support of the European Union's Erasmus+ programme, H. Hovnanian Family Foundation and the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe.

The project was created in response to a persistent democratic challenge: although decisions about public resources directly affect young people's lives, they often have limited opportunities and capacities to influence how those resources are allocated. Participatory Budgeting offers a practical way to address this gap. It enables residents to identify community priorities, develop proposals and participate in deciding how a portion of public funding should be used.

BUDGETIFY aimed to strengthen young people's understanding of Participatory Budgeting and equip them with the knowledge, confidence and practical tools required to engage in local decision-making. It brought together young leaders from seven countries, Armenia, Germany, Hungary, the Republic of Moldova, Portugal, Slovakia and Sweden, for a seven-day international training course in Tsaghkadzor, Armenia in April 2026, which was the first step of the long-term project. Through non-formal education, collaborative research, practical exercises and peer learning, participants explored:

- **the principles and stages of Participatory Budgeting (for participants with no prior background in PB);**
- **the connection between public budgets, local democracy and youth participation;**
- **different models of Participatory Budgeting used by communities;**
- **barriers that prevent young people from participating in public decisions;**
- **inclusive and youth-friendly approaches to Participatory Budgeting;**
- **methods for researching, communicating and promoting PB practices;**
- **possibilities for transferring successful approaches between different local contexts.**

Participants were not only learners. They became researchers, contributors and multipliers who connected the project's learning with the realities of their own communities.

Meet THE PARTNERS



MENO E.V.
GERMANY



EUROPEAN
DIALOGUE
SLOVAKIA



INEDNET
ARMENIA



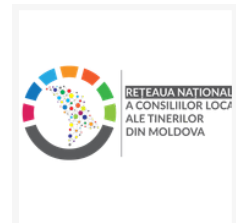
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RNCLT
MOLDOVA

Meet THE SUPPORTERS



Erasmus+

Supported by
European
Youth
Foundation



Co-funded by
the European Union

CONTRIBUTORS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“A Youth Workbook on Participatory Budgeting: My FIRST PB Project” is a practical learning resource developed within the BUDGETIFY project to make Participatory Budgeting more accessible and hands-on for young people. Designed for use in non-formal education, it combines learning with practice, guiding participants step by step from understanding the basics of PB to developing their own first PB project idea. The workbook can be used by both young learners and educators/youth workers as a flexible tool for workshops, training programmes, and other participatory learning activities.

The workbook was developed through the collaborative work of the BUDGETIFY team, bringing together project coordination, training and facilitation experience, and editorial support:

Project coordination: Diana Yeghiazaryan

Training and facilitation: Diana Yeghiazaryan, Harutyun Tsatryan, Aida Vardanyan

Editing: Syuzanna Avetisyan, Aida Vardanyan

IN ADDITION

The project participants also contributed to the development of **“Mapping Participatory Budgeting: A Comparative Research and Mapping Study Across Communities in Armenia, Germany, Hungary, Moldova, Portugal, Slovakia and Sweden”**—a compilation of eight community-level Participatory Budgeting practices researched and mapped by participants across the seven countries. The collected cases were further elaborated, reviewed, and edited by the INEDNET team to bring them together into a coherent publication that showcases different approaches to PB and enables comparison and learning across communities.

The publication is available for free download from the [BUDGETIFY project website](http://www.inednet.com/budgetify): www.inednet.com/budgetify.

DISCLAIMER

BUDGETIFY was implemented by INEDNET and its partners with the support of the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union, the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe and H. Hovnanian Family Foundation. The views expressed in this publication are those of its authors and contributors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the European Union, Council of Europe or H. Hovnanian Family Foundation.



Get In Touch

CONTACT US

Website

WWW.INEDNET.COM

Email Address

INEDNET@GMAIL.COM

Facebook

**INEDNET - INFORMATION AND EDUCATION
DEVELOPMENT NETWORK**

instagram

@INEDNETNGO

Linkedin

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