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USAID BUREAU FOR RESILIENCE AND FOOD SECURITY

YOUTH IN AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS LEARNING ACTIVITY INVENTORY REPORT

November 2020

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The USAID YouthPower2: Learning and Evaluation (YP2LE) activity is the follow-on to YouthPower Learning, and includes a flexible buy-in mechanism that generates and disseminates knowledge about the implementation and impact of positive youth development (PYD) and cross-sectoral approaches in international development. YP2LE also manages and grows a PYD learning network to connect and inform the global community around how to successfully help young people develop into productive, healthy adults. PYD is defined by USAID as:

> Positive Youth Development (PYD) engages youth along with their families, communities, and/or governments so that youth are empowered to reach their full potential. PYD approaches build skills, assets, and competencies; foster healthy relationships; strengthen the environment; and transform systems.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACDI/VOCA	Agricultural Cooperative Development International/Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance
ADVANCE II	Agricultural Development and Value Chain Enhancement Feed the Future Activity
AECOM	Architecture, Engineering, Construction, Operations, and Management
AGP-AMDe	Ethiopia Agricultural Growth Program-Agribusiness and Market Development
AK2	Rwanda Huguka Dukore Akazi Kanoze
AVANSE	Haiti Appui a la Valorisation du potentiel Agricole du Nord, pour la Securite Economique et Environnementale
AVCD	Kenya Feed the Future Accelerated Value Chain Development
AVENIR	Guinea Apprenticeship in Extension Entrepreneurism, and Rural Innovation/Apprentissage en Vulgarisation, Entreprenariat et Innovation Rurale
AY	FTF Tanzania Advancing Youth
BDS	Business development services
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CBSP	Community-based service provider
CNFA	Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture
CSO	Civil society organization
DAI	Development Alternatives Incorporated
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EAS	Extension and advisory services
EDC	Education Development Center
FI	Financial institution
FTF	Feed the Future
FTFE VCA	FTF Ethiopia Value Chain Activity
GBV	Gender-based violence
GFSS	U.S. Global Food Security Strategy
GIRL	Kenya Girls Improving Resilience through Livelihoods
IBTCI	International Business and Technical Consultants, Inc.
ICT	Information and communication technology
IIF	Innovation Investment Fund
LEAD II	Feed the Future Building Capacity for African Agricultural Transformation
LEO	Leveraging Economic Opportunities
LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex

LWA	Leader with associate
MEL	Monitoring, learning and evaluation
MFI	Multilateral financial institution
MSD	Market system development
NCBA CLUSA	National Cooperative Business Association CLUSA International
OSYP	Mali Out-of-School Youth "Paje Nieta" Program
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
POTENTIAL	Ethiopia Building the Potential of Youth
PPP	Public-private partnership
PSE	Private sector engagement
PYD	Positive Youth Development
RDC	Bangladesh Rice and Diversified Crops Activity
REGIS-ER	Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel – Enhanced Resiliency
RFA	Request for application
RFI	Request for information
RFP	Request for proposal
RFS	Bureau for Resilience and Food Security
RISE II	Resilience in the Sahel Enhanced II
SAVY	Guinea Strengthening Agriculture Value Chains and Youth
SMARTE	Guinea
SVC	DRC Strengthening Value Chains Activity
SRH	Sexual and reproductive health
TA	Technical assistance
TOC	Theory of change
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VC	Venture capital
VSLA	Village and savings loan association
WFD	Workforce development
YALI	Young African Leaders Initiative
YP2LE	YouthPower2: Learning and Evaluation

Executive Summary

USAID's Bureau for Resilience and Food Security (USAID/RFS) works with a wide range of partners to advance inclusive agriculture-led growth, resilience, nutrition, water security, and sanitation and hygiene in priority countries, including to achieve objectives of the U.S. Water for the World Act; U.S. Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act; U.S. Global Food Security Strategy (GFSS), in particular, cross-cutting Intermediate Result 4 focused on Youth Empowerment and Livelihoods; USAID Multi-sectoral Nutrition Strategy; USAID Digital Strategy; USAID Private-sector Engagement Strategy; and RFS Functional Strategy cross-cutting Intermediate Result on Analytics and Learning. A growing body of evidence demonstrates that an inclusive development approach leads to better development outcomes and is a requirement for self-reliance. As such, USAID/RFS recognizes the central importance of strengthening youth engagement, particularly that of girls and young women, in its activities in each of these sectors and expanding the evidence for effective approaches to this work.

The United States has made substantial investments in programs and policies supporting youth contributions to food security, nutrition, resilience, and water security and sanitation and hygiene, but significant gaps in evidence and learning remain. Evidence is further limited on ways in which Positive Youth Development (PYD) approaches are applied to programs and policies in these areas, and more broadly regarding agri-food systems, and their impacts, including with gender-responsive, private-sector engagement. As an initial step to closing this gap, the Youth in Agri-Food Systems Learning Activity compiled an inventory of current and recent USAID programming in the aforementioned areas.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to summarize the results of the compiled inventory of relevant USAID programming. The intended audience for this report is USAID's Resilience and Food Security Bureau, relevant Mission and Bureau focal points, and USAID implementing partners, including youth among them, who may find it useful in understanding the range of approaches that have been utilized to date and the limitations of the data based on current knowledge management practices. This document builds on prior information gathering activities funded by USAID/RFS and will serve as a building block for future research and knowledge-management activities.

Methodology

The first task undertaken by the Youth in Agri-Food Systems Learning Activity team was to compile an inventory of USAID-funded investments in agri-food systems, nutrition, resilience, water security, and sanitation and hygiene in the 28 focus countries[1] with 156 activities identified for inclusion. This inventory was compiled utilizing publicly available documents from a wide range of sources, including solicitation documents, reports, evaluations, assessments, and other documents.

The design of this activity and the limitations of the data sources themselves introduce the possibility for both over- and understating the extent of and impact of USAID's engagement with youth in its agri-food systems, nutrition, resilience, water security, and sanitation and hygiene activities given the limited number of countries included and the limited perspective that documents provide on activities' impacts. Another limiting factor was the team's inability to access relevant documents for many of the activities, particularly for cooperative agreements and associate awards.

[1] Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, West Bank Gaza, and Zimbabwe

Overarching Summary of Inventory Results

Of the 156 activities identified in this review, 22 were youth-targeted (14.1 percent), while the remaining 134 were adult-focused, youth-inclusive (131) or child-focused, youth-inclusive (3). Budget information was not available for 16 of the activities (all adult-focused, youth-inclusive, 15 agri-food systems and one water security), but the 140 activities for which it was available represent just over $4.4 billion in investment in agri-food systems, nutrition, resilience, water security, and sanitation and hygiene. Of that, $423 million (9.6 percent) was dedicated to youth-targeted activities, while $4.0 billion was expended on youth-inclusive activities (excluding the 16 activities for which information on obligations or expenses was not available). More than one third of that ($1.8 billion), however, was expended on activities that, according to their solicitation documents, should have some youth component to them, but for which the team was unable to identify specific youth strategies or activities.

Tables E1 through E5 show the numbers of activities included by focus area, geographic region, and contract or award status. **The largest numbers of youth-targeted and youth-inclusive activities were in agri-food systems and resilience**, which also represent the largest total expenditures. **Average activity budgets are considerably higher, however, for nutrition** than the other areas. Activities are concentrated in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, reflecting the geographic distribution of priority countries included in the inventory. Finally, 68, or 44 percent of the activities included in the inventory are active as of November 2020.

Table E1. Inventory Activities by Focus Area

Programmatic Area	Primary Focus	Secondary Focus	Tertiary Focus
Agri-food Systems	92	27	3
Nutrition	14	27	8
Resilience	35	24	11
Water Security	8	4	4
Sanitation and Hygiene	7	6	6
Totals	156	88	32

Table E2. Inventory Activities by Degree of Engagement with Youth

Primary Focus Area	Youth-targeted	Youth-inclusive	Insufficient Information
Agri-food Systems	7	63	22
Nutrition	0	11	3
Resilience	15	14	6
Water Security	0	0	8
Sanitation and Hygiene	0	0	7
Totals	22	91	43

Table E3. Funding for Inventory Activities by Degree of Engagement with Youth

Primary Focus Area	Youth-targeted	Youth-inclusive	Insufficient Information	Average Activity Budget
Agri-food Systems	$108,238,102	$1,481,217,025	$435,715,688	$26,300,920
Nutrition	$0	$476,300,000	$362,449,681	$59,910,692
Resilience	$314,281,675	$555,700,736	$435,715,688	$26,967,705
Water Security	$0	$0	$289,769,524	$41,395,646
Sanitation and Hygiene	$0	$0	$264,912,942	$37,844,706
Totals	$422,519,777	$2,513,217,761	$1,788,563,523	$31,481,947

Table E4. Inventory Activities by Geographic Region

Primary Focus Area	Asia	Latin America and Caribbean	Middle East and North Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	Global
Agri-food Systems	6	14	1	62	10
Nutrition	0	2	0	12	0
Resilience	2	7	1	25	0
Water Security	0	4	1	3	0
Sanitation and Hygiene	0	0	0	7	0
Totals	8	27	2	109	10

Table E5. Inventory Activities by Status of Contract or Award

Primary Focus Area	Active (as of November 2020)	Closed	Data Not Available
Agri-food Systems	38	43	11
Nutrition	7	7	0
Resilience	12	20	3
Water Security	5	3	0
Sanitation and Hygiene	6	1	0
Totals	68	74	14

Key Actors

USAID worked with a wide range of partners to conduct these activities. The partners that captured the most contracts and awards (as primes and subs) across these five areas included: ACDI/VOCA (17), DAI (17), CNFA (14), Catholic Relief Services (10), Winrock (10), Fintrac (9), CARE (8), Mercy Corps (8), NCBA-CLUSA (7), and Save the Children (6). Across these activities, the team identified only five youth-led partners, and none of these were prime implementers.

The activities included in the inventory addressed the gamut of development challenges and programmatic approaches in RFS' portfolio. Most of the theories of change (TOCs) reviewed did not reflect the ways in which activities engaged youth (see next section for full discussion). These activities targeted a wide range of youth. Nutrition activities typically targeted pregnant and lactating young women and reproductive aged women more generally. Agri-food and resilience activities often targeted youth who were out of school, unemployed, or under-employed, and many of them intentionally targeted female participants. None of the water security or sanitation and hygiene activities identified specific youth populations for inclusion. The age ranges for the youth targeted ranged from 10 to 35 years old, with some activities focusing on the younger youth (ages 10-24) and others focusing on the youth who had reached the age of majority (ages 18-35).

Patterns Among Theories of Change

Theories of change are tools for reflecting on the process of change within a specific context, recognizing that change is a dynamic process involving interrelated contextual factors, of which USAID programming is only one. The TOC is "part of a critical and evidence-based attempt to unpack the black box of causality between what (in aid jargon) are termed inputs, outputs, and outcomes."[2] The TOC therefore should include an analysis of how change occurs factoring in a wide range of contextual factors that interact with the actions of individuals and organizations.

The team was only able to identify or construct TOCs for 67 of the 156 activities (13 for youth-targeted activities and 54 for youth-inclusive activities). **Overall, few of the TOCs examined specifically how the intervention will interact with the context and target populations to achieve the changes expected. Most fail to identify critical assumptions as well.**

While most TOCs outline only the intended result, others illustrate the fundamental approaches employed to reach outcomes and link them to the specific barriers or needs identified in the analysis of the context and the target population. In its review of the most robust TOCs, however, the team identified two key weaknesses in the specification of approaches. First, **TOCs for youth-targeted activities were supply-side oriented**, generally focusing on building capacity but less so on facilitating the actual outcomes desired. They frequently lacked viable value chain or economic entry points for youth employment or entrepreneurship. Second, among the youth-inclusive activities, while several TOCs identify the need to connect small-scale farmers to markets and to provide supports that enable them to increase their incomes (supporting a market systems approach), **only one TOCs specifically identified supports youth may need that differ from those their elders might need**.

While an activity's TOC cannot encompass all the nuances of its potential target population, the limited references to youth within most of the recent and current TOCs indicates that the particular needs and strengths of this group may not be fully accounted for in planned interventions. This lack of emphasis within the TOC flows into program design and results measurement. While the caveats regarding the under-reporting of USAID's efforts are relevant here, **USAID programming can be more effective**

[2] Valters, C. (2015). Theories of change: Time for a radical approach to learning in development. London: Overseas Development Institute. p. 5. Retrieved from: https://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/theories_of_change_odi_2015.pdf.

in some cases through stronger, systematic integration of youth in the development of TOCs and also in the measurement of progress towards the Agency's development goals.

Integration of PYD Approaches

Overall, 37.8 percent of the activities reviewed (59) employed one element of PYD, and 25.0 percent (39) employed integrated PYD approaches, which incorporate three or four of the PYD domains described below. More than half of those using integrated PYD approaches were youth-targeted activities (22), one was a youth-inclusive nutrition activity and the remainder were youth-inclusive agri-food systems and resilience activities.

Table E6. Number of Activities Using PYD Approaches by PYD Domain

PYD Domains	Assets	Agency	Contribution	Enabling Environment
Number of Activities	59 (37.8%)	39 (25.0%)	37 (23.7%)	37 (23.7%)
Approaches	Training Capacity building Access to finance Access to other assets Support for entrepreneurship Value chain entry points	Advocacy Social and behavior change	Advocacy Social and behavior change Value chain entry points	Staff support Access to finance Access to other assets

Only 19 activities' programs reported information about youth targets between 2010 and 2024, which totaled 4,764,654. Across the 11 that reported actual participants (2011-2020), USAID programs assisted more than 465,000 youth. **Given the very limited numbers of activities included here, and the fact that at least another 40 activities have some youth component for which no disaggregated figures were available, USAID is serving many more youth in RFS areas of work than has been documented.**

Integration of Private-Sector Engagement Approaches

Private-sector engagement (PSE) is a critical part of RFS' portfolio of projects that engage youth, with 90 percent of projects reviewed having varying elements of private-sector engagement. The majority of examples of private-sector linkages and PPPs are found in the agri-food sector activities (126), followed by resilience activities (13), and nutrition (1).

PSE Models and Approaches

Adult-focused/youth-targeted and youth-inclusive projects both used similar PSE approaches to incentivize private-sector partnerships to co-create development solutions, leverage resources, and address market failures. Available project documents suggested, however, that youth-inclusive projects not only integrated a greater number of PSE approaches and private-sector partners in a given program but also used PSE as a tool to solve a broader spectrum of youth-targeted and general challenges, as well as a greater variety of value-chain nodes.

Projects leveraged their convening power to facilitate and to broker "win-win" models that both solved development challenges related specifically to youth or the general population inclusive of youth and satisfied the private sector goal of increasing its customer base and improving returns through productivity, quality gains, or cost reductions. Engagement also afforded both the private sector and

projects an opportunity to better understand the market—different actors, market distortions, incentives, challenges, and opportunities.

There were three main models through which the private sector market actors worked with projects to increase youth inclusion: (1) financial incentives, (2) technical assistance, (3) public private sector dialogue and collective action.

Objectives of PSE Approaches

In addition to the obvious benefit of stretching development funding through cost-share and leverage to have greater development impact, projects used PSE strategies to achieve a spectrum of different development goals, including:

- Resilient and inclusive markets that support agri-food system productivity and youth inclusion, improved nutrition, food security, natural resource management among others; drive price stability and reduce prices through competition; meet consumer preferences in order to increase uptake of user-friendly development solutions; and stimulate innovation through competition.
- Development, transfer and scaling of innovation through competition and co-financing of innovative technologies, business models, and products and services designed to reach underserved geographic markets and underserved consumer segments including youth and others.
- Youth employment generation, including formal, informal and self-employment opportunities for youth in different value chain nodes and industries.
- Improved enabling environment through public-private-sector dialogues on policy and regulatory issues and societal norms impacting inclusion.
- Market-driven workforce development programs to address "skill gaps" or a labor market mismatch based on labor market scans and value chain assessments.

Conclusions

Conclusion #1: USAID activity impacts on youth and youth contributions to self-reliance in their communities and countries is under-reported.

Given the preponderance of youth in the population pyramids in the majority of USAID partner countries as well as high percentages of youth in the agricultural workforce, ranging from 20 percent in Haiti to 44 percent in Ethiopia, USAID programs must include a larger number of youth participants than has been reported by implementing partners. USAID's new requirement to disaggregate reporting on participants by age group should improve understanding of USAID's impact and youth contributions in coming years, but currently, it is difficult to confidently state the impact or contribution.

Conclusion #2: USAID invests significantly in youth in its RFS activities, but youth may not be included as broadly as intended.

Despite the requirement for inclusion of youth in their solicitations, the team was unable to identify youth strategies or activities for 28 percent of the activities in the inventory. In addition, youth-targeted activities accounted for less than 15 percent of the activities and 10 percent of the funding included in this inventory.

Conclusion #3: Most TOCs do not provide sufficient details to describe how the intervention will interact with the context and target populations to achieve the changes expected to guide the activities.

Most TOCs reviewed fail to provide details about the context, the intended participants, and critical assumptions. Youth-targeted activities' TOCs often fail to identify expected labor market or value chain

entry points, while most youth-inclusive activities' TOCs fail to segment their participants and account for the varying needs of youth and adult participants.

Conclusion #4: Indicators and targets drive activities.

Only 25 percent of the activities reviewed documented how they incorporated integrated PYD approaches, and fewer than 40 percent of the activities used any PYD approach, despite the fact that many programs' solicitation documents require addressing youth needs. The lack of youth-centered reporting requirements until recently provided little incentive for implementing partners to segment their youth participants or tailor programs to youth needs. An additional analysis of how indicators and metrics were utilized is forthcoming in a complementary report.

Conclusion #5: Youth are a secondary consideration in program design in non-youth-focused programs.

Despite USAID's investments in several different sets of guidelines and frameworks that outline successful ways of engaging youth in livelihoods and employability over the past decade, recent programming reflects that these approaches have not been widely adopted in agri-food systems project designs. USAID programs are not making a convincing argument for the win-win approach of targeted youth engagement. Where youth are incorporated, they are often included in one discrete activity, and typically in production where labor is often most easily absorbed in the value chain. One shift in the last few years, however, is an emerging pattern of a stronger youth-focus in project cost extensions. This youth-focused approach should be incorporated at the project-design phase for future programming.

Conclusion #6: Almost all activities use multiple strategies to achieve their intended targets, with distinct programmatic typologies emerging for each of the focus areas.

Within each of the focus areas, clear typologies of activities emerged. In agri-food systems, market systems development (with low-intensity facilitation, high-intensity facilitation, or quasi-facilitation) and research, innovation, and knowledge management paradigms emerged. Two key typologies emerged from the resilience activities: household-level interventions and systems-level interventions, targeted at either adults or youth. Within nutrition, water security, and sanitation and hygiene, one dominant model emerged with variations and linkages to other areas. In nutrition, almost all activities incorporated nutrition service delivery, capacity building, and behavior change communication, and depending on local conditions, might include policy reform as well. Several of the activities also incorporated nutrition-sensitive livelihood activities, linking participants to agri-food systems. Similarly, almost all water security activities included infrastructure development or rehabilitation and capacity building for operations and maintenance and governance, but some also incorporated behavior change communication to achieve sanitation and hygiene goals and economic development activities to ensure sustainability. Finally, sanitation and hygiene activities included access to water and sanitation services, capacity building for sustained service delivery and governance, and behavior change communication to promote desired behaviors. A few also incorporated policy reform and infrastructure rehabilitation based on local needs.

Conclusion #7: PYD seems to be gaining traction, but many TOCs and program designs do not yet account for all facets of context and targeting (of participants and interventions) that drive impact.

Few programs in this review demonstrated effective segmentation of their youth participants. In addition, several programs designed from a youth employment perspective lacked detail about potential entry points for youth entrepreneurs in the marketplace and the level of training/expertise required to compete effectively. Conversely, some of the programs designed from an agri-food systems perspective failed to anticipate the differing needs of youth and adult participants. More thorough youth assessments are needed to assist with targeting/segmentation and identify opportunities for youth to enter the value chain.

Conclusion #8: Private Sector Engagement was an essential strategy in all the projects reviewed.

However, youth-targeted projects must continue to expand their models and objectives of partnership beyond market-led skill acquisition, work experience and employment placement and consider the approaches effectively used by adult-targeted programs. The interests of private sector actors and youth can be aligned and the project can facilitate mutually beneficial models that create youth opportunities for on-farm, off-farm and non-farm employment and entrepreneurship while also benefiting the private sector actor with increased productivity, improved quality, market expansion among other benefits. However, as highlighted by projects like KISAN II (Nepal), YLA (Uganda) and others, the model of "quasi facilitator" may be a better fit in support of market inclusion of youth and other marginalized populations: some higher-intensity facilitation approaches and direct interventions may be necessary to address root causes and supply-side constraints that prevent youth from participating effectively in a market systems.

Conclusion #9: TOCs and program documents show no evidence of a 'Do No Harm' approach.

None of the TOCs addressed the individual-level resilience of youth and the potential for negative unanticipated outcomes. They do not recognize the limitations of youths' ability to take on risk and recover from shocks. Some of the programs that operate in areas where gang activity or violent extremism is an issue do incorporate "Do No Harm" as an operational principle, but it is not well documented, and therefore is not part of the narrative that emerges in the successes and barriers in programming for youth.

Conclusion #10: While USAID has focused extensively on demand-side market-systems development, supply-side vocational agriculture education systems appear largely absent.

Only four of the activities reviewed identified agricultural TVET as an area of investment (in Ethiopia, Kenya, Senegal, and Zambia), and none addressed the present gap in many countries to establish effective vocational agriculture education aligned with national qualifications frameworks and industry standards. A vibrant vocational agriculture and extension system can support the modernization of agri-food systems and foster greater interest among youth in careers in agriculture, agribusiness, and engineering.

Conclusion #11: No programs reviewed identified agriculture as a family business or long-term and succession planning as elements of their extension outreach.

Through much of human experience, agriculture has been a family business, with land and other assets transferring from one generation to the next. In many USAID partner countries, prevailing social norms require deference to elders, and youth therefore may see few opportunities for their own growth as entrepreneurs within the family farm context. USAID may find it productive to engage youth through the lens of succession planning for household enterprises in the agriculture sector, particularly when accompanied by additional opportunities for additional technical skills and agricultural inputs to create a different dynamic on family farms and allow youth to envision futures for themselves that move their family farms into larger scale agribusiness.

I. Introduction

Background

USAID's Bureau for Resilience and Food Security (USAID/RFS) works with a wide range of partners to advance inclusive agriculture-led growth, resilience, nutrition, water security, and sanitation and hygiene in priority countries, including to achieve objectives of the U.S. Water for the World Act; U.S. Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act; U.S. Global Food Security Strategy (GFSS), in particular, cross-cutting Intermediate Result 4 focused on Youth Empowerment and Livelihoods; USAID Multi-sectoral Nutrition Strategy; USAID Digital Strategy; USAID Private-sector Engagement Strategy; and RFS Functional Strategy cross-cutting Intermediate Result on Analytics and Learning. A growing body of evidence demonstrates that an inclusive development approach leads to better development outcomes and is a requirement for self-reliance. As such, USAID/RFS recognizes the central importance of strengthening youth engagement, particularly that of girls and young women, in its activities in each of these sectors and expanding the evidence for effective approaches to this work.

The United States has made substantial investments in programs and policies supporting youth contributions to food security, nutrition, resilience, and water security and sanitation and hygiene, but significant gaps in evidence and learning remain, as documented in a 2019 YouthPower review of learning in these areas. Evidence is further limited on ways in which Positive Youth Development (PYD) approaches are applied to programs and policies in these areas, and more broadly regarding agri-food systems, and their impacts, including with gender-responsive, private-sector engagement. At all phases of the program cycle, USAID Mission teams and partners need to know much more about *how* best to effectively engage youth as drivers of change in agri-food systems (including as relates to agriculture, food security, resilience, nutrition, and water security, sanitation and hygiene) and *how* youth contribute to country self-reliance.

Through the Youth Power 2: Learning and Evaluation (YP2LE) Youth in Agri-Food Systems Learning Activity Task Order, USAID/RFS will advance knowledge on approaches to, and the state of evidence for youth inclusion in international development interventions related to agri-food systems, and more specifically agriculture-led growth and food security, resilience, nutrition, water security, and sanitation and hygiene. This Activity will track strategies, map pathways, and gauge the state of the evidence for youth contributions to the achievement of country self-reliance through USAID/RFS areas of work. As an initial step, the Youth in Agri-Food Systems Learning Activity compiled an inventory of current and recent USAID programming in the aforementioned areas in 28 target countries.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to summarize the results of the compiled inventory of relevant USAID programming. The intended audience for this report is USAID's Resilience and Food Security Bureau, relevant Mission and Bureau focal points, and USAID implementing partners, including youth among them, who may find it useful in understanding the range of approaches that have been utilized to date and the limitations of the data based on current knowledge management practices. This document builds on prior information gathering activities funded by USAID/RFS and will serve as a building block for future research and knowledge-management activities.

II. Methodology

The first task undertaken by the Youth in Agri-Food Systems Learning Activity team was to compile an inventory of USAID-funded investments in agri-food systems, nutrition, resilience, water security, and sanitation and hygiene in the 28 focus countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, West Bank Gaza, and Zimbabwe.

This inventory was compiled utilizing publicly available documents from DEC, GovTribe, and Grants.gov (for original solicitations); USAID Mission websites (press releases); and implementing partner websites. The list of programs was generated by searching for all projects with an end date of 2015 or later using the country name, the term "youth," and the five focus areas listed above as search parameters. These searches generated a list of 160 activities. A further search of USAID's Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) revealed an additional 22 programs. In addition to those, the team members utilized their knowledge of country and sector programs to expand the list to 187 programs.

Once programs were identified, the team compiled a wide range of information about their theories of change, programmatic approaches, and award administration. The team attempted to collect the following key documents for each program: project appraisal document (PAD); original solicitation; work plans; monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) plan; quarterly and annual reports; press releases; final report; youth assessments, gender assessments, and mid-term and final evaluations. In all cases, only some of those documents were available. The PADs and original solicitations were most helpful in identifying theories of change and outlining expected project goals, and, to a lesser extent, metrics to be utilized to gauge impact. Work plans revealed extensive details about programmatic approaches, as did some quarterly and annual reports. MEL plans and quarterly and annual reports identified indicators and metrics, which will be reported on in a separate report. Final reports and evaluations helped document impacts and challenges.

In the team's review of relevant activity materials, 33 activities initially identified as having some youth focus based on language in the RFP or RFA were subsequently screened out as further analysis revealed that the activities did not have any identifiable youth components, reducing the number of activities in the inventory to 154. USAID/RFS shared this inventory with relevant focal points in Missions, Bureaus, and Independent Offices to validate the information collected. Several responded with additional clarifications, and one cited two additional programs (for a total of 156). This validated information served as the basis for the analysis conducted for this report.

Limitations

The design of this activity and the limitations of the data sources themselves introduce the possibility for both over- and understating the extent of and impact of USAID's engagement with youth in its agri-food systems, nutrition, resilience, water security, and sanitation and hygiene activities.

The first key limitation is that the inventory focuses on a subset of the more than 100 countries with which USAID works. Moreover, some of the programs included may have little or no youth programming under their auspices, meaning that they may not be best suited for inclusion in the inventory. The information within DEC, GovTribe, and Grants.gov is very limited, and it is often drawn from requests for information (RFIs) or solicitation documents, but it is not necessarily updated with programmatic information after the award is made. The team attempted to screen out as many of these as possible, but the team was unable to identify youth-specific strategies for 37 activities in the available documents. Therefore, reference could be made to youth in the solicitation documents and was thus included, but the program could have ultimately done little to engage youth.

A related limitation is that information for cooperative agreements and grants is harder to locate than contract information. GovTribe.com and other market-capture services gather a great deal of information about contracts to help their clients understand the competitive landscape. There are no analogous services that capture cooperative agreement and grant information. Unfortunately, award numbers for grants and cooperative agreements are less frequently found on technical documents produced by those partners than by contractors, as they often have marking and branding plans that do not require them to include award information, such as the award number. Consequently, it is highly likely that several activities or sub-awards (such as associate awards under leaders with associates) that should have been included in the inventory are missing.

As noted above, in no case was the team able to identify all the documents listed for a USAID-funded activity. Some USAID implementing partners are more consistent and timely about submitting documents to DEC than others, and some documents (e.g., PADs and MEL plans) are often treated as internal documents. For these reasons, the document review for each activity was less complete than would have been ideal.

Finally, even with the full breadth of documentation that the team sought, some of the details of activities are not included in reports. For example, very few activities that were not youth-targeted reported separately on youth and on adult participants and related age-disaggregated data. Others treated youth as a homogeneous category rather than segmenting the youth population, making it difficult to understand what the differential impacts of activities might have been on participants of varying ages and other attributes. Lastly, some activities may have undertaken a great deal of engagement with youth that was not fully documented in the sources available. There is a possibility that USAID partners have collected information for their own use internally that was not required in reporting and, therefore, may be underrepresented in this report.

III. Overarching Summary of Inventory Results

In the review of USAID's activities, the team identified four specific categories of programming: (1) youth-targeted or programming designed for youth as its participants; (2) adult-focused, youth-inclusive programming, which is designed with adults as its participants but also captures the 18 and older youth population; (3) child-focused, youth-inclusive, which is designed to meet the needs of children, typically including youth under the age of 18; and (4) general population programming, which was focused on systems, governance, and flows of information to the population. For the purposes of this analysis, the general population activities were excluded as they had no discernible youth-focused strategies included in the programming. Many activities had components that fit more than one category, for example, market systems development that included governance and adult-focused, youth-inclusive activities. In those cases, the team categorized the activity as adult-focused, youth-inclusive as some of the activities did engage youth.

Of the 156 activities identified in this review, 22 were youth-targeted (14.1 percent), while the remaining 134 were adult-focused, youth-inclusive (131) or child-focused, youth-inclusive (3). Budget information was not available for 16 of the activities (all adult-focused, youth-inclusive, 15 agri-food systems, and one water security), but the 140 activities for which it was available represent just over $4.4 billion in investment in agri-food systems, nutrition, resilience, water security, and sanitation and hygiene. Of that, **$423 million (9.6 percent) was dedicated to youth-targeted activities, while $4.0 billion was expended on youth-inclusive activities** (excluding the 16 activities for which information on obligations or expenses was not available). More than one-third of that ($1.8 billion), however, was expended on activities that, according to their solicitation documents, should have some youth component to them, but for which the team was unable to identify specific youth strategies or activities.

Tables 1 through 5 show the numbers of activities included by focus area, geographic region, and contract or award status. **The largest numbers of youth-targeted and youth-inclusive activities were in agri-food systems and resilience**, which also represent the largest total expenditures. **Average activity budgets are considerably higher, however, for nutrition** than the other areas. Activities are concentrated in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, reflecting the geographic distribution of priority countries included in the inventory. Finally, 68, or 44 percent of the activities included in the inventory are active as of November 2020.

Table 1. Inventory Activities by Focus Area

rogrammatic Area	Primary Focus	Secondary Focus	Tertiary Focus
Agri-food Systems	92	27	3
Nutrition	14	27	8
Resilience	35	24	11
Water Security	8	4	4
Sanitation and Hygiene	7	6	6
Totals	156	88	32

Table 2. Inventory Activities by Degree of Engagement with Youth

Primary Focus Area	Youth-targeted	Youth-inclusive	Insufficient Information
Agri-food Systems	7	63	22
Nutrition	0	11	3
Resilience	15	14	6
Water Security	0	0	8
Sanitation and Hygiene	0	0	7
Totals	22	91	43

Table 3. Funding for Inventory Activities by Degree of Engagement with Youth

Primary Focus Area	Youth-targeted	Youth-inclusive	Insufficient Information	Average Activity Budget
Agri-food Systems	$108,238,102	$1,481,217,025	$435,715,688	$26,300,920
Nutrition	$0	$476,300,000	$362,449,681	$59,910,692
Resilience	$314,281,675	$555,700,736	$435,715,688	$26,967,705
Water Security	$0	$0	$289,769,524	$41,395,646
Sanitation and Hygiene	$0	$0	$264,912,942	$37,844,706
Totals	$422,519,777	$2,513,217,761	$1,788,563,523	$31,481,947

Table 4. Inventory Activities by Geographic Region

Primary Focus Area	Asia	Latin America and Caribbean	Middle East and North Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	Global
Agri-food Systems	6	14	1	62	10
Nutrition	0	2	0	12	0
Resilience	2	7	1	25	0
Water Security	0	4	1	3	0
Sanitation and Hygiene	0	0	0	7	0
Totals	8	27	2	109	10

Table 5. Inventory Activities by Status of Contract or Award

Primary Focus Area	Active (as of November 2020)	Closed	Data Not Available
Agri-food Systems	38	43	11
Nutrition	7	7	0
Resilience	12	20	3
Water Security	5	3	0
Sanitation and Hygiene	6	1	0
Totals	68	74	14

Key Actors

USAID worked with a wide range of partners to conduct these activities. The partners that captured the most contracts and awards (as primes and subs) across these five areas included: ACDI/VOCA (17), DAI (17), CNFA (14), Catholic Relief Services (10), Winrock (10), Fintrac (9), CARE (8), Mercy Corps (8), NCBA-CLUSA (7), and Save the Children (6). Across these activities, the team identified only five youth-led partners, and none of these were prime implementers.

The activities included in the inventory addressed the gamut of development challenges and programmatic approaches in RFS' portfolio. Most of the theories of change (TOCs) reviewed did not reflect how activities engaged youth (see next section for full discussion). These activities targeted a wide range of youth. Nutrition activities typically targeted pregnant and lactating young women and reproductive-aged women more generally. Agri-food and resilience activities often targeted youth who were out of school, unemployed, or under-employed, and many of them intentionally targeted female participants. None of the water security or sanitation and hygiene activities identified specific youth populations for inclusion. The age ranges for the youth targeted ranged from 10 to 35 years old, with some activities focusing on the younger youth (10-24) and others focusing on the youth who had reached the age of majority (18-35).

Youth Engagement at Key Points in the Program Cycle

Of the 156 activities reviewed, only 36 documented youth engagement at any stage in the program cycle. Only five programs documented how youth were engaged in design. These programs included Building the Potential of Youth (POTENTIAL) in Ethiopia, Agricultural Development and Value Chain Enhancement Feed the Future Activity (ADVANCE II) in Ghana, the Rwanda Hinga Weze Activity, Nutrition-led Agriculture Project for Food Security in Senegal (Yaajeende), and Feed the Future Tanzania Advancing Youth Activity. Several other youth-targeted activities likely also involved youth in the design phase, but their involvement was not documented in any of the materials reviewed.

In addition to the 22 youth-targeted activities, 12 activities documented how youth were engaged in implementation, including Soybean Value Chain Research (Soybean Innovation Lab), Feed the Future DRC Strengthening Value Chains Activity (SVC), ADVANCE II in Ghana, Apprenticeship in Extension Entrepreneurism, and Rural Innovation/Apprentissage en Vulgarisation, Entreprenariat et Innovation Rurale (AVENIR) under the SAVY activity in Guinea, Kenya Feed the Future Accelerated Value Chain Development (AVCD), Mali Cereal Value Chain, Mali Livestock for Growth, Feed the Future Rwanda Nguriza Nshore, Rwanda Hinga Weze, Yaajeende in Senegal, Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel – Enhanced Resiliency (REGIS-ER) in West Africa, and Feed the Future Partnering for Innovation and Development. Despite the involvement of youth, however, few partners reported age-disaggregated data.

Finally, nine projects documented how youth were engaged in monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL), typically as data collectors and data analysts working under the supervision of project staff or stakeholders. These included Soybean Value Chain Research (Soybean Innovation Lab), POTENTIAL in Ethiopia, ADVANCE II in Ghana, AVENIR in Guinea, Livestock for Growth in Mali, Rwanda Nguriza Nshore, Rwanda Hinga Weze, Yaajeende in Senegal, and Feed the Future Tanzania Advancing Youth. Table 6 summarizes the participation of youth in design, implementation, and MEL in the inventory's activities.

Table 6. Inventory Activities by Participatory Aspects and Primary Focus Area

Primary Focus Area	Youth Participation in Design	Youth Participation in Implementation	Youth Participation in MEL
Agri-food Systems	3	17	7
Nutrition	1	1	1
Resilience	1	16	1
Water Security	0	0	0
Sanitation and Hygiene	0	0	0

IV. Patterns Among Theories of Change

Current State of Theories of Change

Theories of change are tools for reflecting on the process of change within a specific context, recognizing that change is a dynamic process involving interrelated contextual factors, of which USAID programming is only one. TOCs are used for strategic planning, communication, accountability, and learning. The TOC is "part of a critical and evidence-based attempt to unpack the black box of causality

between what (in aid jargon) are termed inputs, outputs and outcomes."[3] The TOC therefore should include an analysis of how change occurs factoring in a wide range of contextual factors that interact with the actions of individuals and organizations.

Although USAID requires a theory of change (TOC) for all solicitations and activities, the team was only able to identify or construct TOCs for 67 of the 156 activities. Constructed TOCs were generated based on the causal linkages identified in available results frameworks,[4] and therefore they may not fully reflect the actual TOC underlying the activities. As expected, each TOC composition varies. Ideally, TOCs should not only reflect the differing activity objectives and implementation approaches, they should specify the context and target population/s, as well as identify critical assumptions that underpin the TOC.

Overall, few of the TOCs examined specify how the intervention will interact with the context and target populations to achieve the changes expected. Most fail to identify critical assumptions as well. The following sections identify the current strengths and gaps identified in the TOCs reviewed.

Problem Statements and How They Relate to Youth

Key development challenges were identified for 74 of the 156 activities in the inventory, of which 14 were youth-targeted activities and 60 were youth-inclusive activities. All the youth-targeted activities' key development challenges included a statement about youth, typically their inability to integrate into a small formal labor market as the basis for the USAID-supported activity. In addition to the 14 youth activities, another 8 activities included a mention of youth in their key development challenge. As those eight activities were all agri-food systems activities, the problem statements focused on the need for market systems that are accessible to small-scale producers, including youth, women, and other groups.

Context

Typically, TOCs are strong in one or two areas (the context, the interventions, or the participants), but rarely cover all three in depth. Agri-food systems, water security, and sanitation and hygiene TOCs tend to have solid analyses of the biophysical context, but they are weaker or silent on socio-cultural and political-economic contexts that might impact program outcomes. For example, a case study from the recent Leveraging Economic Opportunities (LEO) report cited one project that faced two critical context issues that were socio-cultural and political-economic in nature:

> The project identified two primary systemic drivers of low levels of smallholder agro-input adoption: first, smallholders were averse to engaging commercially with companies and individuals outside of their social network, and, second, the agro-input supply sector mostly did not view smallholders as a viable market. The focus of the agri-supply sector instead was on larger-scale commercial growers.

Both barriers were significant because they were primarily social, not economic, in nature: the input suppliers' marketing strategy was based on personal relationships with a handful of larger growers, with most buyers carrying in-store accounts on credit. Shifting into the smallholder market segment would require developing a "mass market" approach to retail sales with which most input suppliers were unfamiliar. Similarly, even where farmers understood the agronomic and economic advantages of using

[3] Valters, C. (2015). Theories of change: Time for a radical approach to learning in development. London: Overseas Development Institute. p. 5. Retrieved from: https://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/theories_of_change_odi_2015.pdf.

[4] https://www.usaid.gov/project-starter/program-cycle/cdcs/strategy-and-results-framework/results-framework

improved inputs, they were highly distrustful that products sold to them would be genuine unless they bought from someone they knew and trusted.[5]

Without those critical contextual elements, programmatic interventions may not have addressed the root issues. In addition, almost no TOCs in any sector identify critical assumptions about context that underpinned expected outcomes (e.g., droughts that could derail agricultural production or water security assumptions).

Target Population

As the intent for youth engagement can vary, TOCs can be considered either youth-targeted or youth-inclusive. Youth-targeted TOCs put youth at the center of the activity goals and objectives. In contrast, youth-inclusive TOCs include youth as a subset of a broader participant population. Of the 67 TOCs reviewed or constructed, 13 were for youth-targeted activities, and 54 were for youth-inclusive activities.

Youth-Targeted TOC

Youth-targeted activities focus specifically on youth assets (skills, knowledge, and relationships with a supportive network of adults), contributions (through application of skills gained through interventions or elsewhere), and agency within all implementation functions. Despite the clear premise that youth are not homogeneous, even youth-targeted programs often fail to segment youth carefully, using a rough age proxy for cognitive level and employment status as criteria for inclusion. This is reflected in their TOCs,

The Empleando Futuros TOC provides an example of a youth-targeted TOC that contains some specific criteria for inclusion in the activity. While it is not highly specific on context or interventions, it does more clearly identify the youth to be included in its activities than most other TOCs.

Example: Empleando Futuros Activity Theory of Change

The project will "target high-crime... municipalities to increase employment and income-generating opportunities for youth who are the most at-risk of being violent. This flagship activity will strengthen comprehensive workforce-readiness services, via job linkage and self-employment for at-risk males and females (including those who are LGTBI, persons with disabilities, and Garifuna populations) between 16 and 30 years old, including those who qualify for primary, secondary, and tertiary violence-prevention services. The activity will expand current opportunities for youth as well as strengthen local workforce development (WFD) and youth-oriented programs and inputs through a series of integrated WFD best-practice support and interventions."

Youth-Inclusive TOCs

Of the 54 TOCs reviewed for youth-inclusive activities, only six included the word youth in the TOC. TOCs often segment the intended activity participants by factors that are relevant to the interventions that will be undertaken: (a) sex and socioeconomic status in agri-food system programming; (b) by sex, age, and health status in nutrition programs; (c) by sex and employment status in resilience programs; (d) and by sex in water security and sanitation and hygiene programs. With the exception of nutrition programs, the segmentation factors are quite broad - poor families, without defining poverty for the activity's purposes, or unemployed and underemployed individuals, which conflates individuals with potentially very different experiences facing a wide range of constraints to their economic activities.

[5] LEO Case Study on PROFIT Scalability: https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00M8WC.pdf

Where youth are included, they are treated homogeneously without regard to cognitive level, disability status, or other critical differentiating variables.

In 89 percent of the youth-inclusive activities for which TOCs were identified (48 of 54), no reference is made to youth in the TOCs. Of the six that do mention youth, four are agri-food systems activities, and two are nutrition activities. All six of these TOCs lump youth into a social inclusion category that ensures activities address the needs of women, youth, people living with disabilities, and/or other marginalized populations. These TOCs assume all populations targeted for social inclusion will respond to the same interventions.

The example below of a TOC from the Feed the Future Tanzania Horticulture Activity illustrates the challenge of assuming youth and women will integrate into market systems without comprehensive design. Regardless of this critique, this TOC is one of the few recognizing the importance of reaching youth within the program.

Example: Feed the Future Tanzania Horticulture Activity

To sustainably develop and scale the competitiveness and inclusiveness of horticulture value chains, the market system must be able to grow, upgrade, and adapt to changes (i.e., opportunities and threats) on its own. This evolution requires not only developed service markets (e.g., extension, BDS, finance, etc.) to enable upgrading but also incentives—including reduced risks as well as benefits—for farmers and businesses to invest. Applying the principles of nutrition-sensitive agriculture and ensuring the inclusion of women and youth, using 'smart subsidies' that do not create dependencies or undermine markets, will broaden and deepen the impacts of MBOGA NA MATUNDA.

To intentionally integrate youth into this activity, the TOC could have recognized the need to engage women and youth and signaled that a tailored approach would be required. An example of a modified TOC for this project could be:

> To sustainably develop and scale the competitiveness and inclusiveness of horticulture value chains, the market system must be able to grow, upgrade, and adapt to changes (i.e., opportunities and threats) on its own. This evolution requires not only developed service markets (e.g., extension, BDS, finance, etc.) to enable upgrading but also incentives—including reduced risks as well as benefits—for farmers and businesses to invest. *Ensuring women and youth can meaningfully engage in these markets will require tailored activities that build their specific human, social, financial, and physical capital needs within the Tanzanian context. Additionally, applying the principles of nutrition-sensitive agriculture and using 'smart subsidies' that do not create dependencies or undermine markets, will broaden and deepen the impacts of MBOGA NA MATUNDA.*

Interventions and Approaches

While most TOCs outline only the intended result, others illustrate the fundamental approaches employed to reach outcomes and link them to the specific barriers or needs identified in the analysis of the context and the target population. Specification of the approaches then guides an activity's interventions, and the team found that when specific approaches were identified in TOCs, the activities' strategies and metrics were aligned with those approaches. The team identified two key weaknesses, however, in its review of the most robust TOCs. First, **TOCs for youth-targeted activities were supply-side oriented**, generally focusing on building capacity but less so on facilitating the actual outcomes desired. They frequently lacked viable value chain or economic entry points for youth employment or entrepreneurship.

Second, among the youth-inclusive activities, while several TOCs identify the need to connect small-scale farmers to markets and to provide supports that enable them to increase their incomes (supporting a market systems approach), **only one TOC specifically identified supports youth may need that would differ from those their elders might need**. For example, youth might face additional barriers in business startup and accessing finance, navigating norms in value chains and business operations, and constraints to travel due to a lack of resources or familial responsibilities. The participants' ability or inability to access resources and systems of mutual support in the community and navigate formal and informal requirements within agri-food systems may be a determining factor in outcomes. Therefore, they should not be taken for granted in most cases, and where they are, those assumptions should be clearly identified as part of the TOC. The Feed the Future Senegal Youth in Agriculture TOC does identify some of those supports and the need for their institutionalization, as shown below.

Example: Feed the Future Senegal Youth In Agriculture
This project "builds the capacity and supports the institutionalization of sustainable positive youth development (PYD) and vocational training systems that create dynamic and profitable entrepreneurship and employment opportunities for youth, focusing especially on agricultural value chains and markets"...via "establish[ing] and institutionaliz[ing] a national PYD program, building on the 4-H Senegal Positive Youth Development program started by USAID/Education and Research in Agriculture (ERA) [and] improv[ing] vocational training and business development services by pilot testing innovative approaches to strengthen training institutions' connections with private sector actors and markets."

In addition, there is no discussion of growing household businesses into formal small- or medium-sized enterprises or succession planning, which is the entry point into agriculture for many youth. Another gap is that **only one of the TOCs addressed the underperformance or lack of agricultural technical and vocational education and training systems (public or private) that could provide those services and others to youth and their families beyond what is available through extension services**. This gap indicates a lack of a systems approach on the supply side to match the market systems approach on the demand side. The reference to youth within an activity's TOC not only illustrates the intentional engagement of the youth population but also signals critical design elements and PYD or other youth-centered approaches that work to ensure intended outcomes and impact.

Current TOCs from a PYD Perspective

PYD is a paradigm that views youth as assets and resources within their communities. PYD approaches engage youth along with their families, communities, and/or governments so that youth are empowered to reach their full potential. Only the youth-targeted programs had TOCs that conformed with the principles of PYD. Some of the youth-inclusive programs did include elements to address assets, enabling environment, and agency for youth as well as women and marginalized groups; fewer accounted for contribution. These findings will be further discussed in the section on use of PYD approaches below.[6]

While an activity's TOC cannot encompass all nuances of its potential target population, the limited mentions of youth within most of the recent and current TOCs indicates that the particular needs and strengths of this group may not be fully accounted for in planned interventions. This lack of emphasis within the TOC flows into program design and results measurement. While the caveats regarding the

[6] For more information about USAID's approach to PYD as well as tools and resources, please visit https://www.usaid.gov/youthimpact/tools-resources.

under-reporting of USAID's efforts are relevant here, **it is likely that USAID programming can be made more effective in some cases through the stronger, systematic integration of youth in the development of TOCs and also in the measurement of progress towards the Agency's development goals.**

V. Patterns Among Project Interventions

Primary Intervention Approaches for Agri-Food Systems

The review identified 92 activities with a combined value of $2.03 billion that focused on agri-food systems and engaged youth to varying degrees. Of these, only 7 projects and $108 million of agri-food system funding was invested in youth-targeted projects explicitly designed to be youth-responsive or transformative. 85 projects were initially identified as "adult-focused, youth-inclusive" in that they targeted primarily adults but also mainstreamed youth participation or established sub-projects to reach youth targets, address constraints, or leverage opportunities. However, only 63 projects valued at $543,953,790 had adequate documentation to determine the nature of youth activities. Of these, 45 projects were characterized as "market systems development projects" and 23 were innovation, research, or knowledge management mechanisms that were regional or global in nature. These adult-focused/youth-inclusive projects support varying numbers of youth, however, most adult-focused/youth-inclusive programs either did not track youth participation or did not make this information available publicly.

Table 7: Agri-food Systems Activities and Funding

Population Targeted		Number of Projects (Funding Available)
Youth-targeted Projects		7 ($108,238,102)
Adult-focused/Youth-inclusive Projects	Market-Systems Development Programs	43 ($1,099,666,390)
	Global Innovation or Knowledge Management Programs	20 ($381,550,635) but funding allocated to youth programming was indeterminant)
	Inadequate information available regarding youth activities	22 ($435,715,688)
TOTAL		92 ($2,025,170,815)

Implementation Approaches

The implementation approaches of the agri-food system projects reviewed, both youth-targeted and adult-focused/youth-inclusive, can be categorized by the "intensity" of the facilitation approach to market systems development (MSD), with facilitation, defined as "working through market actors to stimulate sustainable change, minimizing an Activities' direct role." This typology was presented in a series of reports and case studies prepared by the USAID-funded Advancing Women's Empowerment (AWE) project, specifically the "Facilitation Intensity In Youth Market System Development in Uganda" case study, and was useful in understanding the differences, commonalties, and intersection of the approaches to youth integration into market systems development.

The intensity of the facilitation approaches falls on a spectrum between high and low-intensity in terms of the degree to which implementers intervene in the market system. Agri-food programs that target primarily adult populations but are youth-inclusive, generally utilize low-intensity facilitation approaches to MSD that prioritize working through market actors and market-led incentives, minimizing direct implementation and subsidies. These low-intensity approaches generally seek to "mainstream youth" in

existing activities, and as a result, often fail to support significant numbers of youth or achieve adequate breadth and depth of impact on youth inclusion.

On the other hand, many youth-targeted approaches take a high-intensity approach in order to address the root causes of youth exclusion and to design services that consider the unique context of different youth populations. While these activities tend to have deeper impact on youth outcomes, they tend to be less sustainable beyond the period of performance.

A subset of agri-food programs utilize a "quasi-facilitative" approach that combines intensity approaches: discrete high-intensity activities target specific youth barriers to inclusion while low-intensity strategies address general market development. KISAN II (Nepal) is a strong example of a quasi-facilitative MDS approach that successfully integrates youth populations. "…the project recognizes that it is feasible to integrate vulnerable households through partners while continuing with a 'market pull,' 'light touch' approach. KISAN II's 'push' activities include business literacy training to support vulnerable households to catch up in business skills and lift up in opportunity, negotiation guides and trader directories to empower producers to find their best market opportunity, and women's empowerment programming to build leadership skills."

A final category of programs focuses on research, catalyzing innovation, and technical assistance. These are generally centrally funded and global or regional in nature, and therefore do not have an MSD focus on any particular market. Table 8 presents the distribution of projects across these categories.

Table 8: Agri-food Systems Programming by Typology

Facilitation	Youth-inclusive	Adult-targeted/Youth-inclusive	
Low-intensity Facilitation	**None**	**15 Projects**	
		RDC/Bangladesh AGP-LMD/Ethiopia AGP-AMDe/Ethiopia ADVANCE II/XX PRO-INNOVA/Guatemala AVCD/XX LMS/Kenya	KAVES/Kenya Harvest II/Cambodia FTF Inova/Mozambique M-QIP/Nigeria Agricultural EAS/Nigeria PSDAG/ Rwanda IAMS/Uganda
Quasi - Facilitation	**2 Projects**	**18 Projects**	
	FTF Tanzania Advancing Youth (AY) Youth Leadership for Agriculture (YLA)	AVC/Bangladesh SVC VCA SMARTE TMS REGAL-AG LADA/Liberia CVC L4G	YALWA (Niger) KISAN II (Nepal) Nguriza Nshore/Rwanda Hinga Weze (HW)/Rwanda Mboga Na Matunda/Tanzania FTF AG-INPUTS EDGE (Zambia) MALAWI AG Diversification
High-intensity Facilitation	**4 Projects**	**9 Projects**	
	Strengthening Agriculture Value Chains and Youth (SAVY) Mali Out-of-School Youth (OSYP) Huguka Dukore Akazi Kanoze	ERA(Senegal) InnovATE (xx) Hamzari (Niger)	Rural Extension (Guatemala) Ethiopia Farm Service Center RVCP(XX) FTF-ITT (India) Wadata (Niger)

Facilitation	Youth-inclusive	Adult-targeted/Youth-inclusive	
	Senegal Youth in Agriculture		
Research, Innovation and Knowledge Management	**2 Projects** Mapping for Resilience/Global YALI programs	**16 Projects** DLEC Project AfricaLead II FED HSEN Asia Innovative Farmers Alur Highlands Coffee Alliance World Vegetable Center BHEARD Farmer-to-Farmer (SA)	FTF-Innovation Labs • Crop Improvement • Legumes Research • Horticulture • Peanut • Soybean Partnering for Innovation and Development

Facilitation intensity is driven by numerous contextual factors such as the project objective (youth livelihood versus market system development):

- Project objective: High facilitation approaches may be required where the objective is purely youth development and the connection to the market system is distant including building soft skills, delivering health and SRH, gender-based violence.
- Youth profile: Interventions targeting younger populations (aged10-15) or those with low educational attainment and high levels of illiteracy, affected by conflict or migration, living in rural areas, or facing unique challenges (PLWHIV, PLWD, mothers of young children) may not be attractive to market actors due to costs, location, etc.
- Market profile: "Shallow" markets in which there are limited market actors due to rural isolation, conflict, cultural norms, and migration will impact the delivery channels, the use of market-based incentives, and the use of subsidies.
- Eighteen projects were categorized as "Research, Innovation and Knowledge Management" because they supported the development and improvement of MSD and facilitation approaches through pilots and research rather than by large-scale direct implementation. Feed the Future Innovation Labs implemented in partnership with the Global Development Lab sought to drive innovation to address agri-food system challenges, including those specific to youth. and have developed some innovative youth-targeted products and approaches. For example, the Partnering for Innovation and Soybean Innovation Lab focus on the commercialization of and increased small-holder/SME access to productivity-enhancing technology, including innovative youth-targeted approaches to seedling production enterprises (Solutions SA - MRI-Syngenta/Haiti), leasing and maintaining tractors (Hello Tractor/Nigeria), and using low-tech smartphone video trainings (Agrojoven/Rana Labs/Guatemala). The LEAD II and YALI programs are global mechanisms that address the need for technical, managerial, and intellectual leadership skills in the agriculture sector, as does the YouthMappers program which trains university students to create open geographic data in order to address locally-defined development challenges. The FTF Developing Local Extension Capacity (DLEC) seeks to advance the field of private and public Extension and Advisory Services (EAS) through assessments and technical assistance to missions, often with an eye to how EAS can support youth employment opportunities.

Table 9. Programmatic Differences between Low- and High-Intensity Market Systems Development Activities

MSD Facilitation Level	Low-intensity	High-intensity
Intervention Objective	Market systems development (productivity, efficiency, competition, and cooperation)	Youth development objectives including livelihood and personal development; address system-level root causes of youth exclusion (enabling environment, educational attainment, time-use, proximity and unique factors such as SRH, and household gender-dynamics)
Role of Implementer	Low-level of project direction and facilitates co-design and co-implementation	Heavy project direction and direct intervention deliver activities where intervenes because appropriate services (content, proximity, cost, timing, etc.) are not available and market actors either do not exist or are unresponsive to market-based incentives.
Delivery channel	Through private and public sector market actors incentivized by investment, technical and business development support	Direct implementation or through non-market channels, sometimes subsidized, community-based facilitation, peer-to-peer models.
Youth engagement:	Youth inclusion is mainstreamed across activities, with minimal youth-targeting beyond targeted activities to overcome intractable root causes or achieve youth development goals.	Youth-targeted approaches put youth at the center of activities and are actively engaged; interventions are designed to fit the needs, challenges, and strengths of youth rather than that of the market.
Business Case	Strong business case for youth inclusion at different entry points of value-chain nodes. Youth as market actors (formal and self-employment, consumer of goods and services) can increase productivity and quality of or expand market for goods/services.	Weak business case. Constraint to youth inclusion is not aligned with market interest, capabilities of market actors due to high-risk and/or low gains
Incentives vs. subsidies	Market-based incentives designed to buy-down risk or increase returns to market actors increase demand for youth inclusion. investment/grant funding, capacity; little to no subsidy	Subsidies are used to engage private sector where market actors do not respond to incentives or risk is high. Subsidies are time-bound with the objective to overcome intractable root causes or demonstrate the business case for youth inclusion
Examples of Activities	• Technical and business training through market actors • Private sector delivery of EAS, business support services • Investment or grant funds to buy down risk, attract market actors, demonstrate business case or catalyze innovation • Co-design of financial services with MFIs, Cooperatives, commercial FIs • Subsidized design and launch of youth-friendly technologies • Embedded market Services • Scalable business models, often run by youth entrepreneurs, for delivering VC	- Integrated Wrap-around Employment Packages delivered through public or private education entities, CSO, peer-to-peer models, CSOs, community-based facilitators - Transferable/Soft skills training (life, leadership, work-readiness) • Free or subsidized agricultural and business support services • Behavior change efforts to address root causes • Health and wellbeing support including Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH), prevention of gender-based violence (GBV)

MSD Facilitation Level	Low-intensity	High-intensity
	specific and cross-sectoral services and products (inputs, EAS, BDS, technology, raw materials, intermediate/final products) to/from youth and other value chain actors	• Subsidized services (extension and advisory services, inputs, etc.) in "thin markets" with few market actors, or remote, challenging locations • basic literacy and numeracy, Alternative Basic Education • Parental and Community Engagement • Childcare

Targeted Populations

Youth-targeted agri-food systems programs used strategies to reach and attract discrete youth populations. The youth-targeted programs typically targeted youth between 15 and 28 years old, however, several programs targeted participants as old as 35 and young as 10-13. All youth-targeted programs tracked youth per project definition and gender as a subset of all participants, and only Tanzania Advancing Youth program disaggregated to segment youth at the level of five-year bands i.e.,15-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30-35 years old in consideration of lifecycle difference. Four projects targeted out-of-school youth, and three projects focused on youth with tertiary education for formal employment (i.e., Strengthening Agriculture Value Chains and Youth (SAVY)/Guinea, Advancing Youth Project (AY)/Liberia, Tanzania Advancing Youth, and YouthMappers) and leadership development (i.e., Feed the Future: Building Capacity for African Agricultural Transformation (LEADII), Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI)).

All of the youth-targeted projects included gender approaches but only one, Girls Improving Resilience under the Kenya Livestock Market LWA, specifically targeted females. Of the adult-targeted/youth-inclusive programs for which there was adequate information to identify youth-inclusion strategies, 39 included gender mainstreaming approaches.

Example: The **Girls Improving Resilience through Livelihoods (GIRL)** model promotes the inclusion of adolescent girls in market systems through the nine-month GIRL safe space program. The program equips participants with literacy, numeracy, and life skills (knowledge of reproductive health, nutrition, financial literacy, business skills) that enable them to become more engaged within the local markets. Following the training, groups of 25 girls form to support one another and sustain program learnings amongst themselves. The community appoints an LMS-trained mentor to oversee the groups. The LMS Activity continues to work with the groups, allowing them to register as self-help groups with the national government's social services and to open a group bank account. By registering, the groups can access loans and grants for their businesses, which include livestock trading, cereal selling, farming, and tailoring.

Key Actors

Private-sector engagement was critical across all adult-targeted/youth-inclusive and youth-targeted projects with the goal of co-development and implementation of market-driven activities, leveraging resources, and building sustainability. Other implementing partners include international for-profit and non-profit organizations, such as Chemonics, Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA), National Cooperative Business Association CLUSA International (NCBA-CLUSA), and Development Alternatives Incorporated (DAI). The programs partnered with, strengthened the capacity of, and invested in a range

of local youth-led and youth-serving organizations and networks, all levels of government, the private sector, public and private education institutions (e.g., training providers, secondary, tertiary, and TVET institutions, NGOs, community-based trainers, and employers) as well as civil society actors. In line with USAID's Journey to Self-Reliance and the PYD framework, all youth-targeted programs and some youth-inclusive programs invested heavily in institutional strengthening of youth-led partners (e.g., youth networks, youth clubs, farmer groups, Mothers Groups, youth-inclusive producer associations). In a few cases, youth-specific programs and youth-inclusive projects in the same country or sub-national location collaborated in mutually beneficial ways to recruit and target youth participants, "borrow technical expertise," cost share, and leverage resources. This is particularly true where the same implementing partner was responsible for two or more projects that were complimentary. In Kenya, the youth-specific K-YES program accessed agribusiness expertise as needed from the youth-inclusive FTF Kenya Crops and Dairy Market System (KCDMS) project and also referred youth participants so they benefited from both projects. Similarly, the SMARTE program in Guinea was supported by staff from USAID's SAVY program to adapt and train up to train youth agriculture extension enterprises.

Primary Project Intervention Approaches for Nutrition

This review identified 14 key nutrition activities with a total budget of $838,749,681. These activities were implemented in DRC (1), Ethiopia (2), Guatemala (2), Liberia (1), Niger (1), Nigeria (1), Senegal (3), Tanzania (1), Uganda (1), and Zambia (1). Six of the 14 were awarded by cooperative agreement, and two were contracts – one cost plus fixed fee and one firm fixed price. Type of award was not available on the remaining six activities. These projects ran three to five years in their respective countries.

In addition to the 14 activities focused primarily on nutrition, another 27 included nutrition as a secondary focus linked with agri-food systems (24) or resilience (3). Among those, two were youth-targeted (i.e., Mali Out-of-School Youth (OSYP) "Paje Nieta" Program and Strengthening Agriculture Value Chains and Youth (SAVY) in Guinea) and the remaining 25 were youth-inclusive. Finally, another eight activities included nutrition as a tertiary focus, alongside agri-food systems and resilience as the primary focus (3 and 5, respectively).

Key Actors

A number of partners were involved in the design, evaluation, and implementation stages of these projects, including governments, academic institutions, and civil society organizations. Prime implementing partners included Abt Associates, ACDI/VOCA, AECOM, Catholic Relief Services, CNFA, Cornell University, DAI, EDC, Fintrac, FHI 360, Food for the Hungry, IBTCI, Mercy Corps, NCBA-CLUSA, Save the Children, SI Research and Training Institute, TetraTech, the University of Georgia, and Winrock. Having active partnerships with local organizations facilitated activity success in many cases. However, none of the partnerships incorporated youth-led or youth-focused organizations as implementers. Partners implemented activities in consortia with local NGOs as implementing partners, academic institutions as learning partners, and government entities focused on holding partners accountable as an authority.

Project Focus Areas

The projects with a primary focus on nutrition addressed the following challenges; a) improvement of households' food and income security, b) prevention of under-nutrition, particularly among children from conception to 24 months old, and c) improvement of health status of women of reproductive age, and d) changes in knowledge about and consumption of nutritious, diverse diets. Those programs with a secondary focus on nutrition addressed a range of issues with some variant of participant well-being as a goal, but without stating specific goals for the nutrition elements of the program.

Most nutrition activities have multiple target populations. Two focused specifically on children from birth to 24 months old and pregnant or breastfeeding women below the age of 35. Nine others included these groups but others as well, including all women of reproductive age, poor households, and local service providers who have the greatest opportunity to share nutrition-related information with local community members (8). Three activities had few documents available, and it is unclear from what the team was able to gather what the focus of the projects are and who the targeted participants are (Nigeria Multi-sectoral Nutrition Activity, Feed the Future Senegal Cultivating Nutrition, and Uganda Community Connector Project to Improve Lives through Community-level Integrated Nutrition and Agriculture Intervention).

Approaches to Service Delivery

Seven key approaches emerged from the review of nutrition activities. The first four operate at a systems level, and the participants included both youth and adults. First, several activities undertook reforms of specific nutrition policies, standards, and guidelines within partner countries. This approach focused on institutionalization of nutrition-focused policies and practices that have been demonstrated to be effective in reducing under-nutrition, social behavior change communication to promote optimal maternal and infant feeding practices and dietary diversity, and in some cases, proper sanitation and hygiene practices as well. Several different modes of communication were identified in the review, including individual counseling, community support groups, mobile phone messaging, radio, and cooking demonstrations.

The sixth approach was the utilization of high-quality nutrition services, which included accessing the resources provided by local health and agricultural extension workers.

Finally, nutrition-sensitive livelihood projects focused on encouraging the target groups to grow commercial crops with additional home vegetable gardens and other nutritious foods to supplement the family consumption.

Table 10. Program Approaches by Activity

Key Nutrition Approaches	Activities Using Approaches
Reform of nutrition policies, guidelines, and standards	Ethiopia Empowering New Generations in Improved Nutrition and Economic opportunities (ENGINE) Ethiopia Growth through Nutrition Senegal Kawolor
Integration of nutrition into pre-service education of health and agriculture workers	Ethiopia ENGINE
Capacity building for academic institutions to address nutrition and food security	Ethiopia ENGINE
Capacity building for local service providers	DRC Tuendelee Pamoja II Development Food Security Activity Ethiopia ENGINE Guatemala Western Highlands Program of Integrated Actions for Food Security and Nutrition (PAISANO)

Key Nutrition Approaches	Activities Using Approaches
	Liberia Agriculture, Upgrading Nutrition, and Child Health (LAUNCH) Niger Girma Food for Peace Development Food Security Activity Senegal Kawolor Nutrition-Led Agriculture Project for Food Security in Senegal ("Yaajeende") Zambia Economic Resilience Program for Improved Food Security (Zambia Mawa)
Behavior change communication	DRC Tuendelee Pamoja II Development Food Security Activity Ethiopia ENGINE Ethiopia Growth through Nutrition Guatemala Food Security Focused on the First Thousand Days (SEGAMIL) Guatemala PAISANO Liberia LAUNCH Niger Girma Food for Peace Development Food Security Activity Senegal Kawolor Senegal "Yaajeende" Tanzania Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Activity Zambia Mawa
Utilization of quality nutrition services	Ethiopia Growth through Nutrition Guatemala PAISANO Guatemala SEGAMIL Liberia LAUNCH Niger Girma Food for Peace Development Food Security Activity Senegal Kawolor Tanzania Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Activity Zambia Mawa
Nutrition-sensitive livelihoods and agriculture projects	DRC Tuendelee Pamoja II Development Food Security Activity Ethiopia Growth through Nutrition Guatemala PAISANO Guatemala SEGAMIL Liberia LAUNCH Niger Girma Food for Peace Development Food Security Activity Senegal "Yaajeende" Tanzania Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Activity Zambia Mawa

Youth Segment Targeted for Inclusion.

The age range for youth participating in nutrition programs was 14 to 35, with some activities focusing on youth 14-24, others on youth 18-35, and others still not identifying a concrete age range, but focusing on women of reproductive age. All of these projects anticipated the support and inclusion of youth but few documented an actual number of youths supported. The three child-focused youth-inclusive activities identify pregnant women (many of whom would be youth) as a key participant group. Youth inclusion is mentioned as a primary focus for most of these nutrition projects; however, their actual focus was children, and the mothers (who included adolescents or youth) were secondary. Moreover, there was a common pattern of engaging youth as beneficiaries and not necessarily also as partners or initiators as would be the case in a PYD approach.

Only two of the nutrition programs included in the inventory have specific targets for youth or reported specific outcomes for youth, the Nutrition-Led Agriculture Project for Food Security in Senegal (Yaajeende). Yaajeende targeted youth ages 15 to 29 in its program, and while Yaajeende did not specifically track nor seek to address youth underemployment, youth under the age of 30 ran 343 community-based solution providers (CBSPs, self-employed entrepreneurs who serve as the primary link between local producer and leading input suppliers), representing 35 percent of CBSPs targeted. In

addition, the project engaged high school graduates to support citizen working groups in database management. As a result, 70 percent of those youth were employed and given an opportunity to gain early experience, which has improved their skills and employability. Some of these youth were then hired by other projects after concluding their work with Yaajeende. Finally, Yaajeende provided support to an existing network of mother-to-mother groups to expand their activities to include asset building, revenue generation, village and savings loan associations (VSLAs), and advocacy with 49 citizen working groups, which ensured integrated and customized delivery to the core target population and a more complete approach to women's empowerment for adopting key behaviors.

The Girma Food for Peace Development Food Security Activity did not report a specific target for youth but did report that 12,000 youth ages 12 to 24 had been trained in technical skills and life skills to prepare them for job search or self-employment.

Primary Intervention Approaches for Resilience

> "For USAID, resilience is the ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth." USAID, ResilienceLinks

The review identified 35 activities with a primary focus on resilience, accounting for $944 million. Fifteen projects valued at $314 million explicitly targeted youth populations. A total of 20 projects are classified as adult-focused/youth-inclusion, because there was insufficient information on six projects ($73,887,273) to determine the extent of youth engagement, the review focused on 14 adult-targeted/youth-inclusive projects valued at $555,700,736. Projects were geographically concentrated in USAID Resilience Focus Countries including Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, DRC, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Zimbabwe.

Table 11: Number of Resilience Activities and Funding

Population Targeted	Number of Projects (Funding Available)
Youth-targeted Projects	15 ($314,281,675)
Adult-focused/Youth-inclusive Projects with Adequate information	14 ($555,700,736)
Adult focused/Inadequate information available regarding youth activities	6 ($73,887,273)
TOTAL	35 ($943,869,684)

Key Actors

Key implementing partners include international for-profit organizations such as Palladium, Creative, and DAI; and non-profit organizations, such as CARE, Save The Children, Mercy Corp., EDC, ACDI-VOCA, World Vision, National Cooperative Business Association CLUSA International (NCBA-CLUSA), and Development Alternatives Incorporated (DAI).

Project Focus Areas

Projects were categorized according to the level of intervention, specifically whether a household-level or a systems-level approach was taken to prevent, mitigate, and respond to shocks and stresses

Table 12. Resilience approaches by level

	Household approaches	System-level approaches
Objectives	Graduate households to greater resilience to external shocks and resilience through interventions that to prevent, mitigate, and respond to shocks and stresses	" .. the ability of market systems to allocate resources, draw on system-level resources (such as social safety nets, social capital, the financial system, or government assistance), and innovate in order to solve problems in the face of shocks and stresses."
Common Approaches to Youth	• Skills development • Workforce and Entrepreneurship development • Climate smart production • Savings through VSLAs • Youth-friendly business models • Social capital development • Technology transfer • Natural resource management • Income generating activities and microenterprise support	• Improved access to and quality of services; Increased government accountability • Climate smart regulations and regional Early warning systems • Strengthened social safety nets • Public works programs • Climate change adaptation policies • Youth leadership development • Youth voice and representation • Youth networks and organizations
Adult-focused/Youth-inclusive Projects	1. CEO (Guatemala) 2. GRAD (Ethiopia) 3. YESS (Yemen) 4. RWANU (Uganda) 5. PRIME (Ethiopia) 6. L4R (Ethiopia) 7. ICAN (Uganda)	1. PAHAL(Nepal) 2. Partnership for Recovery and Resiliency Partnership (South Sudan)
Youth-Targeted	1. Puentes Project (Guatemala) 2. Ay (Liberia) 3. Zimbabwe Works 4. EHELD (Lineria) 5. K-YES (Kenya) 6. POTENTIAL (Ethiopia) 7. Empleando Futuros (Honduras) 8. Youth Power (Mitra Kunci) 9. GIRL (Kenya) 10. Aprendo y Emprendo (Nicaragua) 11. ADVANCE (Guatemala) 12. Youth Integrated Livelihoods (Somalia/GEEL)	1. Youth Power Jordan 2. Somali Youth Leaders Initiative 3. West Africa/Dakar Young Leaders Initiatives (YALI) 4. Senegal Youth Leaders Initiative

Approaches to Service Delivery

Resilience projects utilized technical assistance, capacity building and institutional strengthening, grant funding, and investment mechanisms to support all levels of the system to work adaptively within the

confines of existing structures and support changes that promote proactive and flexible response to shocks at all levels of the system. Graduation Models targeted individuals and households with strategically sequenced and layered interventions that increased income and strengthened coping and risk-mitigation mechanisms to move out of extreme poverty. (See text box). PSE strategies increase market resiliency and inclusivity through support for market-driven skill building, enterprise-models for producing and delivering affordable products and services to underserved populations, and business models that generate employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for youth, women, and other vulnerable populations. At the national level, capacity strengthening approaches targeted the effectiveness and sustainability of social safety nets, early-warning systems, natural resource management, and climate adaptation approaches.

"The graduation approach integrates social protection (consumption support, health, and social integration), livelihood promotion (market linkages, asset transfers and technical skill development), financial inclusion (savings, financial literacy, linkages to formal financial inclusion), and psychosocial support (coaching and caseworker support to build confidence and life skills)." USAID, ResilienceLinks

Targeted Populations

The majority of projects targeted vulnerable youth and their families. At least four projects included a subset of activities that targeted at-risk and vulnerable populations including youth living with disabilities (Mitra Kunci/Indonesia), ex-combatants (Yemen Economic Stabilization and Success/YESS), victims of human-trafficking, irregular migration (projects in Guatemala including PUENTE, Rural Value Chains (RVC) Project, and Creating Economic Opportunity, KISAN II in Nepal, and in Honduras including Transforming Market Systems), and youth engaged or susceptible to participation in gangs (Empleados Futuros/Honduras) or violent extremist groups (K-YES/Kenya).

System-level resilience programs focused heavily on building the capacity of government to respond flexibly to shocks within the constraints of weak, existing structures while building a more proactive and sustainable shock-responsive system. Civil society was often incentivized to step in where governments were unable or inappropriate. Private-sector engagement was also essential to the development of resilient, inclusive markets that could rebound from external shocks. Resilience interventions emphasized the importance of building the social and human capital in communities to empower community-driven, flexible responses to a spectrum of household- and community-level shocks.

Primary Intervention Approaches for Water Security

Eight activities in this review focused on water security as a primary issue, with a total budget of approximately $290 million (the award amount was not available for one program). These activities were located in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Haiti, Nigeria, and Yemen and were issued by contract (4), cooperative agreement (2), or grant (1) with one activity's contracting mechanism unavailable. All of these activities were adult-focused, youth-inclusive, and none had any specific youth strategy or conducted a youth assessment that the team was able to locate. An additional eight activities included water security as a secondary (4) or tertiary issue (4). Six of these programs were located in sub-Saharan Africa and Haiti, and the other two were global. Of the activities with a secondary or tertiary focus on water security, 1 was a cost plus fixed-fee contract, six were cooperative agreements, and the team was unable to determine the type of award for one activity. Program duration ranged from four to seven years.

Only one of the activities with a tertiary focus on water security was youth-targeted, USAID Mapping for Resilience – Community Solutions Through Student-Led Open Mapping Initiatives, which had a primary focus on agri-food systems and is discussed in that section of this report.

Key Actors

A wide range of implementing partners administered USAID's water security programs: ACDI/VOCA, Adventist Relief and Development Agency – Yemen, Ard, Inc., Catholic Relief Services, DAI, DT Global, International Rescue Committee, and NCBA-CLUSA. No local partners or youth-led partners were identified as supporting these activities. No information was available on the involvement of youth in the design, implementation, or monitoring and evaluation of these activities.

Project Focus Areas

The projects focused on addressing the following water security-related challenges; (a) watershed stability (i.e., protection from flooding and sedimentation in the rainy season and increased water supplies in the dry season), (b) management of communal water resources in pastoralist communities, (c) increase in access to safe drinking water, and (d) alleviation of crisis-induced water and food insecurity. Given the range of challenges addressed, the locus of activities varied by project—on-farm, off-farm, and non-farm.

Approaches to Service Delivery

Five key approaches emerged as common elements of water security programming. First, USAID implementing partners undertook a range of infrastructure improvement activities. These included construction and rehabilitation of borehole-based water systems; water point rehabilitation; and construction of irrigation systems. While youth were likely involved in the construction work itself, These infrastructure activities were always paired with capacity development activities, the second primary type of programming, in the management of the new resources, particularly water quality testing and environmental assessments in watersheds. In addition, USAID activities provided demand-driven, tailored training, and support to local governments to discharge their water management and hygiene promotion duties more effectively.

In addition to these first two, a third programmatic approach was social and behavior change communication. These behavior change efforts focused on hygiene education and instilling the value of safe water, as well as improving key risky behaviors.

Some water security activities also incorporated conservation-related economic development approaches into their work to diversify local sources of income and support the long-term needs of communities. This included sustainable agricultural practices, and in a few cases, eco-tourism.

Finally, a fifth programmatic approach that emerged was policy reform relevant to water management and land tenure, public-private partnerships on land tenure, animal disease control, and integration of agriculture and nutrition. These policy reform efforts were also paired with capacity building and extensive institutional strengthening, typically at the local level. Table 13 below shows which activities incorporated which programmatic approaches.

Table 13. Water Security Approaches and Relevant Activities

Water Security Approach	Activities
Infrastructure	Ethiopia Water Hygiene Sanitation Transformation for Enhanced Resiliency (WATER) Guatemala Communities Leading Development Haiti Water and Sanitation and Hygiene (Haiti WASH) Haiti Watershed Initiative for National Natural Environmental USAID Resources/Feed the Future (WINNER) Yemen Agriculture, WASH and Livelihoods Assistance (AWLA)

Water Security Approach	Activities
Capacity building	Ethiopia WATER Guatemala Communities Leading Development Haiti WASH Haiti WINNER Honduras Governance in Ecosystems, Livelihoods, and Water Activity (GEMA) Nigeria Water for Agriculture Yemen AWLA
Behavior change communication	Ethiopia WATER Haiti WASH Yemen AWLA Multi-country Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Partnerships and Learning for Sustainability (WASHPaLS)
Conservation-related economic development	Guatemala Communities Leading Development Haiti WINNER Honduras GEMA Nigeria Water for Agriculture Yemen AWLA
Policy reform	Honduras GEMA Nigeria Water for Agriculture

Youth Segment Targeted for Inclusion

All of the water security programs reviewed for this report were youth-inclusive, typically focused on the general population with youth benefitting much the same as other participants. None of the eight activities with a primary focus on water security reported participants by age group, nor did the documentation the team reviewed contain any information about youth-targeted strategies. In addition, no youth assessments were identified among the documents for water security activities. Therefore, it is not clear from the current documentation how youth have been engaged. Some activities outside the countries included in this review have intentionally engaged youth, for example as citizen scientists in USAID/Armenia's Participatory Utilization and Resource Efficiency of Water activity. Therefore, the team only concludes that the information provided in the available documents is insufficient to assess the engagement and contribution of youth to water security activities at this stage.

Primary Intervention Approaches for Sanitation and Hygiene

Seven activities were included in the inventory with a primary focus on sanitation and hygiene with a total expenditure of $265 million. These activities were conducted in Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, and Uganda. Four were awarded as cost plus fixed-fee contracts, and the other three were awarded as cooperative agreements. An additional 12 activities had sanitation and hygiene as a secondary (6) or tertiary (6) focus. These activities were conducted in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Mali, Nepal, South Sudan, and Yemen. The project time frame was three to five years and at the time the review was performed, some projects had closed and others were just starting with an aim of responding to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on marginalized communities. Moreover, these projects focused on rural areas and urban slums.

None of these activities with a primary, secondary, or tertiary focus on sanitation and hygiene were youth-targeted activities. These activities were designed to improve the lives of all age groups by providing clean water and health promotion among communities. No youth assessments or specific youth strategies were identified for any of these activities.

Key Actors

The prime implementers for these projects were AECOM, Ard, Inc., DT Global, DAI, International Rescue Committee, Mercy Corps, RTI, Save the Children, and the University of Florida. These prime partners worked with a wide range of consortium members and both international and local agencies. The projects fostered participation by a range of stakeholders, including humanitarian agencies implementing the WASH projects, the local governments and government-aided agencies, community-based organizations, water service providers, and communities at large.

Project Focus Areas

Sanitation and hygiene activities were more concentrated on a discrete set of challenges than some of the other RFS programming areas: addressing a lack of water, sanitation, and hygiene services in targeted areas (urban and rural). The projects focused on the following issues in the implementation countries:

- Sustainable water provision
- Improvement of natural resource management
- Increased access to water sources for beneficiaries' communities
- Improvement of hygiene awareness and access to sanitation among beneficiaries
- Improvement of rangeland management practices among communities

Approaches to Service Delivery

A number of shared approaches emerged in the review of sanitation and hygiene activities. While only a few activities focused on governance or policy reform, all activities included capacity building components for local government agencies or private sector water suppliers in targeted communities. These capacity-building approaches were commonly described as conflict-sensitive, which maximized local capacity to manage natural resources and minimized environmental impact. Capacity building included training of the local governments in dispute resolution, operations and maintenance of the local water supply, and enhancement of community engagement in the management of their environment.

Another key approach adopted by most activities was social behavior change communication to understand sanitation preferences and to develop the most appropriate approaches to move targeted populations from unimproved to improved water and sanitation practices.

A number of activities also included infrastructure and access components – access for households, access for schools and health facilities, and design and construction of water and sanitation infrastructure.

Finally, four activities undertook economic-focused approaches: improving the business environment for service and product providers and increased access to irrigation and nutrition services that would improve agricultural production in targeted areas.

Table 14. Programmatic Approaches in Sanitation and Hygiene Activities.

Sanitation and Hygiene Approach	Activities Using Approach
Governance and policy reform	Kenya Integrated Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Project (KIWASH) Nigeria Effective Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Services (E-WASH)
Capacity building for sustained	Ethiopia Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Activity (WASH) Ethiopia Lowland Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Activity Kenya KIWASH

Sanitation and Hygiene Approach	Activities Using Approach
service delivery	Nigeria Water Resources Management for Enhanced Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WRM-WASH) Nigeria E-WASH Uganda Sanitation for Health Activity West Africa Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene Program (WA-WASH)
Social and behavior change strategies	Ethiopia WASH Ethiopia Lowland WASH Activity Kenya KIWASH Nigeria WRM-WASH Uganda Sanitation for Health Activity WA-WASH
Increased household access to sanitation and water services	Ethiopia WASH Ethiopia Lowland WASH Activity Kenya KIWASH Nigeria WRM-WASH Uganda Sanitation for Health Activity WA-WASH
Increased access to sanitation and water services at health and school facilities (including hygiene audits)	Nigeria WRM-WASH Uganda Sanitation for Health Activity
Water sanitation infrastructure design and construction	Ethiopia Lowland WASH Activity Kenya KIWASH Uganda Sanitation for Health Activity
Support for business environment	Kenya KIWASH Uganda Sanitation for Health Activity WA-WASH
Increased access to irrigation and nutrition services	Ethiopia WASH Kenya KIWASH

Youth Segment Targeted for Inclusion

All the sanitation and hygiene programs reviewed for this report were youth-inclusive, typically focused on the general population with youth benefitting much the same as other participants. None of the seven activities with a primary focus on sanitation and hygiene reported participants by age group, nor did the documentation the team reviewed contain any information about youth-targeted strategies with one exception. The Uganda Sanitation for Health Activity included student leaders in its school hygiene audits and action planning in all 25 districts of the country in which it worked. No youth assessments were identified among the documents for sanitation and hygiene activities. However, information from

the nutrition and agri-food systems activities with sanitation and hygiene as a secondary or tertiary focus do provide some examples of youth engagement, for example in hygiene promotion. Therefore, it is likely that this gap is the result of the absence of documentation rather than a lack of engagement of youth.

VI. Integration of PYD Approaches

More than a quarter of the 156 agri-food systems, resilience, water security, and sanitation and hygiene programs reviewed (43) had no youth-specific strategies articulated in the documents reviewed. Therefore, those were excluded from the review of utilization of PYD approaches. Overall, 37.8 percent of the activities reviewed (59) employed one element of PYD, and 25.0 percent (39) employed integrated PYD approaches, which incorporate three or four of the PYD domains described below. More than half of those using integrated PYD approaches were youth-targeted activities (22), one was a youth-inclusive nutrition activity, and the remainder were youth-inclusive agri-food systems and resilience activities.

Utilization of PYD Approaches

Elements of PYD were used across regions, across types of mechanisms, and at least over the time span included in this review. The key elements of PYD that were included in youth-targeted activities include assets, enabling environment, agency, and contribution. Each of these is discussed in turn below.

Assets. The element of PYD that most of the activities (59) included was programming that supported youth in building or expanding their assets—typically knowledge and skills, but also financial assets and to a lesser extent other forms of physical capital. Few programs reported any approach to increasing youths' social capital.

Agency. The second most common PYD element found in inventory activities was agency, included by 39 programs. Activities incorporating agency support youth in the development of self-efficacy, positive self-image, perseverance, planning for a longer time horizon, and a positive belief in the future. These activities all had a primary focus on agri-food, resilience, and nutrition. Despite the positive development of a significant number of activities incorporating agency, only about a third of the programs documented evidence of thoughtful segmentation of their youth participants. Without a critical segmentation of the youth population, activities may have not been well tailored to meet the varied needs of their youth participants (e.g., the differences in needs between youth at 12 years old and youth at 24 years old).

Enabling environment. The third PYD approach involved reforming the enabling environment, which was incorporated by 37 activities. In addition to the youth-targeted activities, a range of agri-food, nutrition, resilience, water security, and sanitation and hygiene programs focused on policy reform as an element of their work, intending to improve the enabling environment for participants (likely including youth, even if they were not explicitly mentioned). Only the youth-targeted activities, however, addressed the normative side of enabling environment for youth, whereas a wide range of activities incorporated gender strategies and gender-sensitive approached to foster change in gender norms and women's empowerment.

Contribution. The final PYD element found in inventory activities was contribution with 37 of the activities integrating youth contribution, or effective engagement in design, implementation, and MEL as a critical element of their programming. All of these activities, as identified in the section on youth engagement above were agri-food, resilience, and nutrition programs.

One noteworthy trend that the team identified is that more recent programs, 2016 onward for youth-targeted activities and 2018 onward for youth-inclusive activities, had more robust and integrated PYD

efforts than earlier ones tended to focus just on one or two elements of PYD (typically assets and enabling environment).

Commonly Used PYD Approaches

Assets: Training and Capacity Strengthening

The most common activity was technical training or capacity strengthening for youth, as a core approach to building youths' assets in the form of human capital. Most programs offered some type of technical training—hard skills relevant to the goals of the project and results of a market scan identifying opportunities for entrepreneurship or demand in the local labor market. For example, agri-food systems programs supported training in quality standards and certification of a variety of agricultural products; aggregation and marketing of products; improved production of coffee, rice, maize, and chickpeas; grain quality characteristics and standards; animal selection, diet, housing, and disease control; yield-increasing technologies; and climate-smart agronomic practices.

Many of the youth-targeted programs, including YouthPower buy-ins and POTENTIAL in Ethiopia, included life skills or soft skills training, as well as financial literacy. Several programs, including YouthPower buy-ins, POTENTIAL, AVENIR in Guinea, ADVANCE II in Ghana, and Livelihoods for Resilience in Ethiopia, offered training on more general business skills, such as entrepreneurship and business management, development of business plans, and strengthening business linkages. Seven activities (three resilience and four agri-food systems) identified working through public and private technical and vocational education and training (TVET) systems. An evaluation of the Livelihoods for Resilience program found that these efforts tend to be demand-driven, i.e., driven by what potential participants wanted without regard to market saturation or constraints to entry, so the training offered was not always aligned with available opportunities in the labor market. Fourteen of the agri-food systems and nutrition activities engaged with extension and advisory services within their youth-focused work, which aligns with the patterns of engagement with extension and advisory services for agri-food system, nutrition, water security, and sanitation and hygiene programs more broadly.

While training and capacity strengthening was a core function for many activities, it was a very small component for others, such as RISE II for which youth engagement was a small component in a large project. Rather than a centralized plan for training and capacity building, RISE II used subgrants to local organizations to encourage skill-building among target populations.

Another aspect of capacity strengthening addressed among the programs is mentoring and peer learning. Mentoring and peer learning activities were only mentioned in 22 programs, most of which were youth-targeted and concentrated in resilience and agri-food systems with one in nutrition. Most of the YouthPower buy-ins (six of the youth-targeted, resilience-focused activities) have some mentoring component; however, they rarely have enough mentors for the number of youth in the program, and those mentors typically do not have agriculture backgrounds. Therefore, their ability to support youth pursuing careers in agri-food systems may be limited.

Among the agri-food system programs that included mentorship, POTENTIAL in Ethiopia offered mentoring, career guidance/counseling, and access to work-based learning opportunities and a network of business development support services. AVENIR in Guinea had a more limited range of mentoring options, but it did provide internships and some business development services to farm-based organizations and others within their target value chains. ADVANCE II in Ghana has outgrower business networks that identify women leaders and champions for targeted training and advisory services.

Assets/Enabling Environment: Access to Finance

The second most common approach to strengthening youth assets was improving access to finance and credit, which is frequently a significant barrier for youth in agri-food systems. Many programs utilized

savings/lending groups, mobile money, expansion of financial services in rural areas, adaptation of existing financial instruments to the needs of youth, and provision of seed funding. The FTFE VCA program held one-to-one matching sessions with financial institution managers, which provided an impetus for women and youth entrepreneurs to seek credit. The program also explored a range of financing options (e.g., leasing finance, shared ownership models, and supporting youth-orientated provision of chopping services) to overcome the prohibitive cost of key technologies.

Assets: Support for Entrepreneurship

Almost all agri-food and resilience projects that incorporated integrated PYD approaches provided support for entrepreneurship (24), often including access to finance or credit. Some provided coordination, such as AGP-AMDe, which assisted women and youth cooperatives in organizing sales groups among their members. This coordination enabled participating women to consolidate small volumes and increase their bargaining power in the marketing process. Others, however, were more directly involved in sales, such as FTFE VCA, which recruited 146 youth resellers for the sales campaign. ADVANCE II used another approach, in which its consortium member Kosmos Innovation Center (KIC) initiated an information and communication technology (ICT) for agriculture-based mentorship competition (AgriTech Challenge) to select and provide seed money for young entrepreneurs. ADVANCE II also completed a study that showed how youth are playing a critical role in the advisory and extension services as field agents for outgrower businesses and as community input agents, providing information and inputs to smallholder farmers, although this role could be significantly scaled up.

Agency/Contribution: Advocacy

Several projects identified advocacy as a strategy to increase youth voice and effective engagement in their communities. For example, in Ghana the representation of women in a range of value chain actor groups was low, and the project staff held sensitization and training sessions on women and youth inclusion to encourage the networks to promote affirmative action strategies aimed at greater inclusion. In Jordan, YouthPower adopted a community-engagement, problem-solving method to further dialogue, create awareness, advocate for important issues, and solve problems affecting the futures of youth.

Enabling Environment: Staff Support

Reports from many of the **programs using PYD approaches noted that they needed a robust staffing structure, both outreach specialists and operational support, to ensure that they could offer youth, and sometimes women, effective support at a local or regional level.** Effective use of PYD approaches was more labor-intensive than less PYD-robust approaches.

Less Commonly Used PYD Approaches

Agency/Contribution: Social Norms and Behavior Change

Five programs described strategies used to shift social norms and behaviors of adults towards youth in their communities. FTFE VCA used the Transformative Household methodology to alter perceptions of gender stereotypes within the household and create opportunities for women and youth to engage in income generating activities by facilitating community-driven dialogue about gender roles and responsibilities. The project had a particular emphasis on engaging all members of the household: women, men, boys, and girls. Similarly, SVC trained 500 people (400 women, 100 men), of whom more than 30 percent were youth, to use the Gender Action Learning System methodology for their own empowerment, decision making, and leadership.

In the DRC under the Tuendelee Pamoja II Development Food Security Activity, partners used a social behavior change communications strategy to increase youth engagement in agriculture by not only targeting the youth but also targeting the entire community to engage more youth in farming activities.

Similarly, AVENIR in Guinea supported behavior change activities to increase positive risk-taking and enable youth to become agricultural change agents.

Assets/Contribution: Clearly Targeted Value Chain Entry Points

Only three projects had clearly identified entry points for youth in established value chains where they identified few barriers to entry. One of the projects focused on production (poultry and coffee seedlings in FTFE VCA), while another focused on transportation and warehousing operations. Within the Feed the Future DRC Strengthening Value Chains activity, programming streams focused on both lower-skilled activities—cleaning, sifting, and sorting agricultural products—for women in particular, and higher-skilled activities, such as inventory management, warehouse management, accounting, and digital technology for the collection and dissemination of market information, transportation, and marketing of agricultural products. ADVANCE II in Ghana worked to make agribusiness attractive to youth by identifying appropriate entry points (e.g., white collar-type jobs with lower levels of menial labor) and capitalizing on what their documents asserted was young peoples' relatively higher interest in digital technology.

Assets: Access to Other Assets

Three projects documented their efforts to provide assets to youth other than knowledge, skills, or finance. SVC in DRC incorporated access to key assets: access to arable land for small-scale farmers, including women and youth who met certain criteria, and agricultural inputs through 60 village-based advisors—a role targeted for women and youth—linked to agro-dealers for expansion of agricultural input distribution networks to improve the accessibility, availability, and adoption of agricultural inputs in rural areas. In Ghana under its cost extension, ADVANCE II worked to increase access to equipment and agricultural inputs (e.g., land, inoculant, seeds, fertilizer, and agrochemicals), building and improving relationships between dealers and women/youth buyers, combined with advisory services from its outgrower business support unit. Finally, to address the prohibitive cost to small landholders of buying irrigation pumps to address frequent drought in Haiti, AVANSE distributed 10 three-wheeled motorcycles, 20 irrigation pumps, and 3,000 meters of flexible hose to existing agricultural service providers, a sector dominated by youth.

Impacts

Programs that incorporated integrated PYD approaches totaled over $1.2 billion in funds obligated and expended (accounting for all but one of 39 activities which did not have available budget figures). Many of the programs that incorporated PYD did not report targeted and actual numbers of youth participants. Only 19 activities programs reported information about youth targets between 2010 and 2024, which totaled 4,764,654. Across the 11 that reported actual participants (2011-2020), USAID programs assisted more than 465,000 youth. **Given the very limited numbers of activities included here, and the fact that at least another 40 activities do have some youth component for which no disaggregated figures were available, USAID is serving many more youth in RFS areas of work than has been documented.**

Some of the impacts that seem most durable are the partnerships that USAID implementers fostered within communities and region (e.g., between local businesses, government agencies, and global companies). Several activities reported that youth have found new and better employment (i.e., more consistent hours, higher wages, or safer conditions), started their own businesses, and exhibited better financial management skills. Among the 20 activities for which outcomes data were available, those activities with the most intensive wrap-around services and clearly defined entry points into value chains reported the best outcomes for the participants in terms of employment and income measures.

Notably, other programs documented significant challenges despite their use of PYD approaches. Two identified issues were sustainability and viability of access to finance given the mobility of youth

participants, and a lack of trust when there is no organic connection among savings/lending group members or when government agencies or financial institutions require youth to apply as a group in order to qualify for funds. Skills training as a stand-alone intervention (i.e., not integrated with other asset-building supports or interventions from other PYD domains) is also sometimes insufficient for youth to be competitive as entrepreneurs in the marketplace for two reasons. First, knowledge gained may not translate into performance without coaching, mentoring, or other forms of ongoing support. Second, the challenges youth faced were not simply a lack of knowledge or skills, but related to social norms, business environment, or other external factors, and skills training cannot address those effectively.

VII. Integration of Private-Sector Engagement Approaches

Private-sector engagement is a critical part of RFS' portfolio of projects that engage youth, with 90 percent of projects reviewed having varying elements of private-sector engagement. The majority of examples of private-sector linkages and PPPs are found in the agri-food sector projects (126), followed by resilience (13 projects), and nutrition (one project).

PSE Models and Approaches

Adult-focused/youth-targeted and youth-inclusive projects both used similar PSE approaches to incentivize private-sector partnerships to co-create development solutions, leverage resources and address market failures. Available project documents suggested, however, that youth-inclusive projects not only integrated a greater number of PSE approaches and private-sector partners in a given program but also used PSE as a tool to solve a broader spectrum of youth-targeted and general challenges, as well as a greater variety of value-chain nodes.

Projects leveraged their convening power to facilitate and to broker "win-win" models that both solved development challenges related specifically to youth or the general population inclusive of youth, and satisfied private sector goals of increasing its customer base and improving returns through productivity, quality gains, or cost reductions. Engagement also afforded both the private sector and projects an opportunity to better understand the market—different actors, market distortions, incentives, challenges, and opportunities.

Example: Knowledge-based Sustainable Agriculture and Nutrition II (Nepal)

"To promote inclusiveness, we will convey a compelling business case to integrate disadvantaged groups2 and currently non-commercially-oriented farmers. We will then provide entry points for women, youth, and marginalized groups to enter and compete in the market, including developing access to affordable inputs, focusing on aggregation to take advantage of more cost-effective transport, and building capacity of local traders to improve market access."

There were three main models through which the private sector market actors worked with projects to increase youth inclusion: (1) financial incentives, (2) technical assistance, (3) public-private sector dialogue, and collective action.

Financial Incentives: Many projects established competitive grant funds, loan funds, or investment mechanisms to incentivize private-sector partnerships. Co-investment generally required some form of financial or in-kind cost-share or co-investment. Projects implemented rigorous assessment processes to identify the best market-based solutions and followed up with strong monitoring, technical assistance, and capacity strengthening. A small number of projects engaged the USAID Development Credit Authority. Projects also used grant funds to support out-grower schemes to deliver technical assistance

and capacity strengthening to lead firms and producer associations. At least 15 adult-targeted/youth-inclusive programs included investment or grants funds targeting the general population, and at least 11 of these included a specific window targeting outcomes for youth and women.

Example: PRIME Ethiopia

PRIME project in Ethiopia implemented an Innovation Investment Fund (IIF) that cost-shared private-sector, market-driven interventions in support of markets for pastoralists and agro-pastoralists. The IIF investment of $6,000,000 USD leveraged 300 percent additional investment funding from the private sector ($18M USD) toward increased financial access for poultry, livestock, and milk-processing ventures. The IIF complimented PRIME's support of almost 4,000 youth PRIME, 52 percent females, to complete TVET education, benefit from affiliation with youth associations and start their own enterprises or find employment with PRIME investment recipients.

Example: Bangladesh Rice and Diversified Crops Activity (RDC)

RDC implemented a Youth Investment Fund (1$200,000) a part of its $1.5 million Market Accelerator Fund (the Fund) to incentivize a broad range of new and innovative market system approaches with a focus on the establishment, expansion, and improvement of distribution models (for input companies) and/ or procurement models (for output companies) to include more underserved market actors in the rural areas (e.g. women, youth).

Example: Knowledge-based Sustainable Agriculture and Nutrition II (Nepal)

KISAN II depended on a "Partnership and Innovation Fund" to achieve most project objectives including increased inclusion of youth, women and other marginalized populations. Co-financing through grants was used to successfully "buy-down" the entry risk to private sector market actors and at the same time while support farmer groups to meet minimum standards of quality and productivity required by private sector partners. The fund successfully incentivized support for mutually-beneficial business opportunities to integrate youth into MSD (contract farming, firm-led service provision, participatory adaptive sourcing model), to create youth employment opportunities (agrovet/trader, micro-franchising, multi-service hub model), and to develop and scale innovations (firm-developed instructional videos to standardize extension, small-scale or group mechanization opportunities).

Technical assistance: Many projects supported private-sector partners with technical assistance (TA) and capacity strengthening. Projects funded TA both as an incentive to attract private-sector partners and to build private-sector capacity to work with youth and design products and services that matched the unique needs of target youth populations. Projects co-designed with and provided capacity strengthening to formal financial institutions to link with youth saving groups, work with market actors to support the -codesign and roll-out of youth-appropriate financial products. such as embedded finance for the purchase of inputs including consumer financing, warehouse receipts, and consignment financing for inventory.

- Mobile financial products that reduces theft risks and allows youth to access more distant markets (ADVANCE II in partnership with MTN mobile network)
- Equipment loan products to stimulate agricultural mechanization (KISAN II in partnership with an MFI (United Youth Community microfinance) and an equipment manufacturer (Biodynamic Agro Green Company)

- Production contracts and agro input credit sales (Advancing Youth (AY)/Tanzania in partnership with private sector companies including Godson Export Commodities, Ankole Coffee Processors Limited, Equator Seeds Limited among others)

Example: Strengthening Value Chain (SVC) Project, DRC

SVC delivered direct support to two financial institutions, Equity Bank (formerly ProCredit) and FINCA, to help them expand their agricultural lending, leveraging a USAID DCA guarantee. The project built the financial institutions' (FI) capacity in agricultural risk analysis, gender integration and equality, and social inclusion, as well as provided technical assistance to develop and pilot new financial products and services design targeted to youth and women and youth.

Public-private-sector dialogue was a common approach to improve the enabling environment. Projects leveraged their convening power to bring key public and private-sector actors along with civil society and youth representatives together to discuss issues, work toward consensus, and develop action plans.

Objectives of PSE Approaches

In addition to the obvious benefit of stretching development funding through cost-share and leverage to have greater development impact, projects used PSE strategies to achieve a spectrum of different development goals.

Resilient and Inclusive Markets. The most common PSE goal was to incentivize private-sector production and delivery of goods and services that solve a development challenge or produce a public good. Projects engaged business to co-design and negotiate value chain solutions in order to: (i) establish resilient markets for goods and services that support agri-food system productivity and youth , improved nutrition, food security, natural resource management among others; (ii) drive price stability and reduce prices through competition; (iii) meet consumer preferences in order to increase uptake of user-friendly development solutions; and (iv) stimulate innovation through competition.

Development, Transfer, and Scaling of Innovation. PPPs have been catalytic in driving innovations that increase market inclusivity and resilience and even address underlying causes of market-system constraints. Projects stimulated competition and often co-financed innovative technologies (e.g., fintech, mobile platforms, and tools), business models, and products and services designed to reach underserved geographic markets (i.e., "last-mile" distribution solutions) and underserved consumer segments including youth, women, small-holder producers, people living with disabilities, etc. (e.g., "base of the pyramid" products such as microfinance and embedded financial services, single use packaging, affordable irrigation products).

Example: Rwanda Huguka Dukore Akazi Kanoze (AK2)

AK2 is a youth-targeted agri-food systems project that linked rural youth value chain actors with enterprises offering for-fee technical training on agricultural production, post-harvest technologies, and marketing delivered through the project's local consortium of five private agribusinesses. This market-based approach incentivized firm investment in better products and services and did not crowd out private sector providers.

Example: Guinea SMARTE

The program identified an innovative solution — the mobipompe, an accessory that temporarily converts motorbikes into mobile water pumps and then built — the business capacity of youth entrepreneurs to distribute the product to remote villages. Youth were able to stock the mobipompe on consignment at a low-risk and the manufacturer reached a new market for a win-win.

Youth Employment Generation. A large number of projects used PSE models to generate formal, informal, and self-employment opportunities for youth in different value chain nodes and industries. Several common models among the projects reviewed include: (i) out-grower schemes that link "lead firms" and smallholder producers and producer associations to achieve economies of scale and surmount constraint on land and capital and (ii) youth employed as entrepreneurs in agriculture agro-vets (KISAN II, Nepal) or agro-preneurs (Cereal Value Chain (CVC)/Mali) serving rural locations with fee-for-service pesticide treatment, animal health checks, and mechanization products coupled with EAS. Grant funds were also used to co-finance technical assistance to lead firms and producer associations.

Example: ADVANCE II Ghana

Ghana ADVANCE II received a cost extension (CE) in 2020 to implement a revised scope of work with increased focus on youth. The project invested in improving and scaling its Outgrower Model which had been successful in creating youth employment opportunities. In addition to a standard package of support services (i.e., capacity strengthening, market relationships with quality service and input providers, strong government support, etc.), the program developed several aspects that made it particularly attractive to youth. ADVANCE II identified appropriate entry points for university graduates and tapped their interest in digital technology and mechanization to reduce menial labor. ADVANCE partnered with IT product and training providers to produce value-chain-specific digital tools and equipment providers to distribute "crop shellers" to enhance productivity and cut down on the hard labor required from women and youth processors.

Example: Agricultural Value Chains project (AVC), Bangladesh

AVC Bangladesh co-developed with market actors to develop successful models for youth employment. Youth were supported to open retail outlets to promote and sell a newly launched safe food brand called "Shuddho". AVC build the business capacity of youth entrepreneurs and supported the production company, Shwapno, to train young entry-level staff on safe food knowledge and consumer education. AVC saw another mutually beneficial opportunity to facilitate youth inclusion and fill a market need. In partnership with the agribusiness NAAFCO, AVC rolled-out a professional development program to create a cadre of youth to deliver professionalized on-farm services such as spraying, pruning, fertilizing and cleaning.

Improving the Enabling Environment. Bringing private sector actors to the table with government was a comment approach to affect positive change in the enabling environment. These public-private-sector dialogues most often tackled policy and regulatory issues but also addressed societal norms impacting inclusion and were opportunities for youth to amplify their voice, demonstrate leadership and address misperceptions.

Example: Strengthening Value Chains, DRC

The SVC project convened a series of public-private dialogues to address land access for women and youth through the "concessionaire" approach. Consultations brought to the table actors with different perspectives and incentives who overtime built trust and demonstrated commitment. Ultimately, three inclusive market-oriented agriculture models developed with concessionaires to promote access to productive resources (i.e., land, inputs, technology, market) for women, youth, and value chain actors.

Market-Driven Workforce Development Programs. Youth-targeted and youth-inclusive programs engaged the private sector to support the design and implementation of market-driven youth employment and entrepreneurship programs to address "skill gaps" or a labor market mismatch. Based on labor market scans and value chain assessments, projects and partner public/private education providers (i.e., training institutions, TVET institutions, universities) worked with employers and value chain actors to develop curricula and work-based opportunities that match the required occupational capabilities and soft and technical skills required for youth to succeed in high-demand jobs or market opportunities. Private-sector actors contributed to scholarship opportunities and in the co-design and implementation of employer-based training, internship and apprenticeships, mentoring and career guidance, professional networking, and, ultimately, job placements or market linkages.

Example: Feed the Future: Senegal Youth in Agriculture

U.S.-based university partners built "the capacity and support the institutionalization of sustainable positive youth development (PYD) and vocational training systems that create dynamic and profitable entrepreneurship and employment opportunities for youth, focusing especially on agricultural value chains and markets." A priority objective was "Improve vocational training and business development services by pilot testing innovative approaches to strengthen training institutions' connections with private sector actors and markets."

Youth-friendly product development: Assisted MFIs to develop youth-friendly financial products and services (e.g., variable working capital loan product features based on business-specific loan sizes, group lending, repayment incentives, etc.). MFIs piloted the refined financial products and tweaked them to suit young people, including young women borrowers.

VIII. Conclusions

Conclusion #1: USAID activity impacts on youth and youth contributions to self-reliance in their communities and countries is under-reported.

Given the preponderance of youth in the population pyramids in the majority of USAID partner countries as well as high percentages of youth in the agricultural workforce, and, as shown in Table 15

below, USAID programs must include a larger number of youth participants than has been reported by implementing partners.

Table 15. Youth in the population and workforce in key USAID partner countries for agri-food systems programming

Country	Youth ages 15-29 as a percentage of population (2020 estimate)[7]	Youth ages 15-29 as a percentage of workforce (2020 estimate)[8]	Agriculture as a percentage of total workforce (2020 estimate)[9]	Youth as a percentage agriculture workforce[10]
Bangladesh	27.5%	32.1%	37.8%	21.8% (2017)
DRC	26.4%	35.2%	56.1%	34.1% (2005)
Ethiopia	29.9%	47.5%	65.6%	44.3% (2013)
Guatemala	29.9%	41.9%	31.3%	41.3% (2017)
Haiti	28.0%	28.5%	28.3%	20.1% (2012)
Kenya	29.0%	35.2%	53.8%	Not available
Malawi	29.0%	45.9%	43.2%	Not available
Mali	26.9%	46.8%	62.3%	37.1% (2018)
Nepal	31.2%	41.8%	64.5%	24.1% (2017)
Nigeria	26.7%	31.2%	34.7%	Not available
Senegal	27.4%	35.7%	29.4%	38.6% (2015)
Uganda	28.7%	45.5%	72.4%	42.5% (2017)

USAID's new requirement to disaggregate reporting on participants by age group should improve understanding of USAID's impact and youth contributions in coming years, but currently, it is difficult to confidently state the impact or contribution.

Conclusion #2: USAID invests significantly in youth in its RFS activities, but youth may not be included as broadly as intended.

Despite the requirement for inclusion of youth in their solicitations, the team was unable to identify youth strategies or activities for 28 percent of the activities in the inventory. In addition, youth-targeted

[7] Source: Authors' calculations based on United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, World Population Prospects 2019, https://population.un.org/wpp/Download/Standard/Population/
[8] Source: Authors' calculations based on International Labor Organization ILOSTAT, https://www.ilo.org/shinyapps/bulkexplorer30/?lang=en&segment=indicator&id=EAP_2EAP_SEX_AGE_NB_A
[9] Source: Authors' calculations based on International Labor Organization ILOSTAT, https://www.ilo.org/shinyapps/bulkexplorer51/?lang=en&segment=indicator&id=EMP_2EMP_SEX_ECO_NB_A
[10] Source: Authors' calculations based on International Labor Organization ILOSTAT (most recent year available), https://www.ilo.org/shinyapps/bulkexplorer44/?lang=en&segment=indicator&id=EMP_TEMP_SEX_EC2_NB_A

activities accounted for less than 15 percent of the activities and 10 percent of the funding included in this inventory.

Conclusion #3: Most TOCs do not provide sufficient details to describe how the intervention will interact with the context and target populations to achieve the changes expected to guide the activities.

Most TOCs reviewed fail to provide details about the context, the intended participants, and critical assumptions. Youth-targeted activities' TOCs often fail to identify expected labor market or value chain entry points, while most youth-inclusive activities' TOCs fail to segment their participants and take into account the varying needs of youth and adult participants.

Conclusion #4: Indicators and targets drive activities.

Only 25 percent of the activities reviewed documented how they incorporated integrated PYD approaches, and fewer than 40 percent of the activities used any PYD approach despite the fact that many programs' solicitation documents require addressing youth needs. The lack of youth-centered reporting requirements until recently provided little incentive for implementing partners to segment their youth participants or tailor programs to youth needs. An additional analysis of how indicators and metrics were utilized is forthcoming in a complementary report.

Conclusion #5: Youth are a secondary consideration in program design in non-youth-focused programs.

Despite USAID's investments in several different sets of guidelines and frameworks that outline successful ways of engaging youth in livelihoods and employability over the past decade, recent programming reflects that these approaches have not been widely adopted in agri-food systems project designs. USAID programs are not making a convincing argument for the win-win approach of targeted youth engagement. Where youth are incorporated, they are often included in one discrete activity, and typically in production where labor is often most easily absorbed in the value chain. One shift in the last few years, however, is an emerging pattern of a stronger youth-focus bin project cost extensions. This youth-focused approach should be incorporated at the project-design phase for future programming.

Conclusion #6: Almost all activities use multiple strategies to achieve their intended targets, with distinct programmatic typologies emerging for each of the focus areas.

Within each of the focus areas, clear typologies of activities emerged. In agri-food systems, market systems development (with low-intensity facilitation, high-intensity facilitation, or quasi-facilitation) and research, innovation, and knowledge management paradigms emerged. Two key typologies emerged from the resilience activities: household-level interventions and systems-level interventions, targeted at either adults or youth. Within nutrition, water security, and sanitation and hygiene, one dominant model emerged with variations and linkages to other areas. In nutrition, almost all activities incorporated nutrition service delivery, capacity building, and behavior change communication, and depending on local conditions, might include policy reform as well. Several of the activities also incorporated nutrition-sensitive livelihood activities, linking participants to agri-food systems. Similarly, almost all water security activities included infrastructure development or rehabilitation and capacity building for operations and maintenance and governance, but some also incorporated behavior change communication to achieve sanitation and hygiene goals and economic development activities to ensure sustainability. Finally, sanitation and hygiene activities included access to water and sanitation services, capacity building for sustained service delivery and governance, and behavior change communication to promote desired behaviors. A few also incorporated policy reform and infrastructure rehabilitation based on local needs.

Conclusion #7: PYD seems to be gaining traction, but many TOCs and program designs do not yet account for all facets of context and targeting (of participants and interventions) that drive impact.

Few programs in this review demonstrated effective segmentation of their youth participants. In addition, several programs designed from a youth employment perspective lacked detail about potential

entry points for youth entrepreneurs in the marketplace and the level of training/expertise required to compete effectively. Conversely, some of the programs designed from an agri-food systems perspective failed to anticipate the differing needs of youth and adult participants. More thorough youth assessments are needed to assist with targeting/segmentation and identify opportunities for youth to enter the value chain.

Conclusion #8: Private Sector Engagement was an essential strategy in all the projects reviewed.

However, youth-targeted projects must continue to expand their models and objectives of partnership beyond market-led skill acquisition, work experience and employment placement and consider the approaches effectively used by adult-targeted programs. The interests of private sector actors and youth can be aligned and the project can facilitate mutually beneficial models that create youth opportunities for on-farm, off-farm and non-farm employment and entrepreneurship while also benefiting the private sector actor with increased productivity, improved quality, market expansion among other benefits. However, as highlighted by projects like KISAN II (Nepal), YLA (Uganda) and others, the model of "quasi facilitator" may be a better fit in support of market inclusion of youth and other marginalized populations: some higher-intensity facilitation approaches and direct interventions may be necessary to address root causes and supply-side constraints that prevent youth from participating effectively in a market systems.

Conclusion #9: TOCs and program documents show no evidence of a 'Do No Harm' approach.

None of the TOCs addressed the individual-level resilience of youth and the potential for negative unanticipated outcomes. They do not recognize the limitations of youths' ability to take on risk and recover from shocks. Some of the programs that operate in areas where gang activity or violent extremism is an issue do incorporate "Do No Harm" as an operational principle, but it is not well documented, and therefore is not part of the narrative that emerges in the successes and barriers in programming for youth.

Conclusion #10: While USAID has focused extensively on demand-side market-systems development, supply-side vocational agriculture education systems appear largely absent.

Only four of the activities reviewed identified agricultural TVET as an area of investment (in Ethiopia, Kenya, Senegal, and Zambia), and none addressed the present gap in many countries to establish effective vocational agriculture education aligned with national qualifications frameworks and industry standards. A vibrant vocational agriculture and extension system can support the modernization of agri-food systems and foster greater interest among youth in careers in agriculture, agribusiness, and engineering.

Conclusion #11: No programs reviewed identified agriculture as a family business or long-term and succession planning as elements of their extension outreach.

Through much of human experience, agriculture has been a family business, with land and other assets transferring from one generation to the next. In many USAID partner countries, prevailing social norms require deference to elders, and youth therefore may see few opportunities for their own growth as entrepreneurs within the family farm context. USAID may find it productive to engage youth through the lens of succession planning for household enterprises in the agriculture sector, particularly when accompanied by additional opportunities for additional technical skills and agricultural inputs to create a different dynamic on family farms and allow youth to envision futures for themselves that move their family farms into larger-scale agribusiness.